The Attitude of PKS on the Implementation of Sharia in Democratic Indonesia

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University

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Abstract

In its struggle to realize Sharia in a democratic system, the PKS is fully aware that the majority of Indonesian Muslims do not support the Islamist agenda, especially the ideals to implement Sharia and to Islamize the state and the constitution. Some degree of compromise between the party’s principles and general public demand cannot be avoided if the party is to win the mass support. Consequently, the party downplays its Sharia agenda by promoting issues which are appealing to a broader constituency. The party describes this approach as being intrinsic to its da’wa (dakwah) strategy and was intended to bring the party closer to its potential constituents and sympathizers.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Initially launched as an Islamist party modeled on the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and named Partai Keadilan (PK the Justice Party)\(^1\) defined its mission as striving for the enforcement of Islamic law and the creation of an Islamic state in Indonesia. Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS – the Prosperous Justice Party), as it is now known, presents itself as a moderate party whose political manifesto states that the party is focused on promoting religious piety – da’wa.\(^2\) In its platform, PKS no longer aspires to achieve an Islamic state in Indonesia but rather seeks to restore the influence of Islam in the country. According to its platform, the Republic Indonesia cannot be separated from Islam. Rather than working to achieve an Islamic State, PKS now says

\(^1\)Islamism applies to discourses and projects that conceive of Islam not merely as religion, but also as a comprehensive political ideology that provides both a template and a means of changing the entirety of society from the ‘top down’ via legislation that requires people to conform with ‘Sharia’, or ‘Islamic law’, as interpreted and applied by contemporary Islamist thinkers. From the Islamist perspective, politics should aim to establish a complete comprehensive system of government that is regulated by Sharia. In scholarly work, Islamism is often used interchangeably with “political Islam,” and PKS represents the strongest political Islam in the country’s political landscape. It should be noted, however, that many political parties, particularly in Indonesia, drawing on mass-based Islamic support are not Islamist parties, even if their political rhetoric used appears to superficially resonate with Islamist rhetoric. In Indonesia, for example, parties such as PKB and PAN – appealing to the masses of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah respectively – are not Islamist parties. True Islamist parties, by definition, hold to a radical agenda in that they aspire to the complete transformation of the political system from ‘root to branch’. PKB and PAN, in contrast, are clear in the position in supporting Pancasila-based pluralist political in the Republic, and contest any attempt at replacing the current constitutional arrangement with one that forces, top-down, piety upon Indonesians. Importantly, however, today’s PKS, unlike under its founding generation of Islamists, has embarked on a new approach to Islamism with a much longer-term vision of social and political reform. Tactically, it supports a democratic government and pragmatic approach, that advocates taking part in electoral, power-sharing politics. In this way, the party is open to collaborate with other political force and non-Muslims as equal partners in advancing the national interest, at least in the short to medium term. As this dissertation will argue, it justifies this by arguing that the priority must be the implementation of Sharia and that to achieve this a gradualist approach is a sure and more effective approach.

that its goal is “the creation of a just and civil society that is blessed by God the Almighty within the framework of the Republic Indonesia.”

However, with this new platform, PKS is still supportive of the gradual implementation of Sharia, saying that it would not make any sense for a party with a strong background of Islamist cadres to abandon the desire of incorporating Sharia into the legal system of the country. The party’s support to the gradual introduction of Sharia is clearly observed from its position in parliament to amend and propose legislation that uphold the Islamic values. For PKS, Sharia is not limited to the legal injunction and framework; it is a divine value that regulates all aspects of life. By this approach, proposing and supporting the promulgation of the Bill of Pornography and Pornographic Acts (Rancangan Undang-Undang Anti Pornografi dan Pornoaksi), and anti-Alcoholic Beverage is a part of the struggle to introduce Sharianorms through the legislative body of the state. Even though PKS has rarely directly initiated the application of Perda Syariah (Sharia Regional Regulation) itself, the party is undeniably a staunch supporter to the application of the Perda Sharia. When some members of parliament from different parties proposed a petition to annul the Perda Syariah, PKS legislators are quick to launch a counter petition against its removal.

PKS believes that the practice of Sharia within the community must be supported by political structures. Any effort to influence the state must be carried out by an involvement in political activities. In this context, Rofi Munawar, the Chairman of PKS in East Java, said:

“…we know that all policies are decided through political process, not through sermons. We cannot expect good policies if people who claim themselves clean just speak out in sermons or in raising criticism.”

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Regarding the stance of PKS on Sharia, the book entitled, *Yang Nyata dari PK Sejahtera* (*What is obvious from PK Sejahtera*) by a PKS activist, reads:

“Shariah is mercy for all creatures and the proper implementation of Sharia will not bring discrimination. PKS believes that its implementation in Indonesia will provide the solution for the current multi-dimensional crisis. However, it must be done in a peaceful and constitutional way, not through violence or compulsion.”

The same notion on Sharia is also voiced by Hidayat Nurwahid, former president of PKS as he said that:

“The problem is that too many people talk about Sharia and what they mean is cutting off hands and wearing scarves. Our main program is how to make people better off and how to get justice. In order to make Indonesians comprehend the concept and essence of Sharia, I suggest three steps in socializing Sharia, namely educating Muslims, providing examples and creating dialogue.”

According to Yon Machmudi, the attitude of PKS towards the formalization of Sharia in Indonesia is still ambivalent. This is because the party formally has no clear direction on Sharia and its core members have varied in their responses to the issues. He argues that within the party, there are two distinct streams regarding this particular issue: the moderate-substantialist and the conservative-legal formalist. The alleged existence of these two camps with PKS elite, he concludes, has made the attitude of PKS towards Sharia indecisive. Having said that, what is clear from PKS is that to win the mass support, during its political campaign, Sharia has been reformulated by incorporating the spirit of Islam into secular issues, such as clean government and anti-corruption movement. In this way, Sharia has been secularized, i.e. secular issues are being framed within new paradigm to reveal their Islamic nature. In other words, every attempt is made to relate Sharia norms to secular issues in order to bring the party closer to popular aspirations.

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8 Yon Machmudi, *Islamising* Indonesia, p. 204.
Even though no plain-language statements from PKS have been made on the issue of formalizing Sharia, it does not necessarily mean that the party has given up its desire to introduce Sharia into the state legal system. This seemingly indecisive attitude is partly due to the fact that the party needs to balance their agenda between Islamist constituents and the public at large. This attitude has resulted in tension between cadres’ support for the further promotion of Sharia and a fear among party elites of losing votes from middle ground supporters. Its apparently ambiguous stand on issues of Sharia also raised suspicions that should it have a chance to govern, the party will establish an Islamic state and impose Sharia upon Muslim population.\(^9\)

The seemingly ambiguous attitude of the party toward the implementation of Sharia is merely an immediate effect of democracy on religious political parties. By participating in the electoral democratic governance, religious political parties are compelled to moderate their platform and goals. In order to be successful in gaining votes and enter governing coalition, the religious parties need to go beyond their exclusive issues normally invoked by Islamist parties, such as the formalization of Sharia in the state constitution and its enforcement upon the Muslim subjects. By focusing on non-religious issues such as clean governance, anti-corruption and social justice, PKS has translated Islamist ideology into a language of universal values. This approach proves to serve as a political strategy to win a larger constituency.

Participating in the democratic electoral process will involve political bargaining; this includes political alliances with secular-based party and even the Christian party in many regional elections. Political interaction with other figures of different political background also contributes to the process of moderation within PKS party elites. Negotiation and compromise must become the political language of the party in maintaining its position as potential coalition partner and mainstream political party attractive to the middle ground of the electorate.

I argue that socio-political reality of the country has deeply influenced the PKS stance on the implementation of Sharia. As a subsystem much influenced by politics, 

\(^9\) \textit{Ibid.}, 205.
if Sharia is to be integrated into the legal system of the country, it has to undergo a law-
making process that involves extensive political negotiation. Consequently, in relation
to PKS’ stance on the implementation of Sharia, the art of compromise has to be
learned by PKS in order to maintain the loyalty of its core constituents, on the one
hand, many of whom are now unhappy with the party’s political gesture that is
submitting to more secular, instead of Islamic, values, and to win the vast middle
ground electorate, on the other hand, which tend to support “secular” politics.
Therefore, it is safe to say that for PKS the issue of implementing Sharia in democratic
Indonesia is more a matter of politics as the art of the possible than it is a matter arguing
about ideology.

The participation of any party in politics necessitates the process of negotiating
the ideals and interests, and even a religiously inspired ‘da’wa party’ needs to strike a
balance in steering its way through politics. Some degree of compromise between the
party’s principles and general public demand cannot be avoided if the party is to win
the mass support. Consequently, the PKS leadership has long acknowledged that the
struggle for implementation of Sharia needs to be presented in secular terms, such as
striving for clean government and fighting corruption. With this in mind, PKS adopted
a deliberate strategy of not making direct reference to Sharia. It described this approach
as being intrinsic to its da’wa strategy and was intended to bring the party closer to its
potential constituents and sympathizers.

Nevertheless, this strategy of downplaying Sharia is not without drawbacks; in
fact, it presents PKS with a dilemma. Due to this seemingly ambivalent attitude
towards Sharia, PKS is accused by radical and fundamentalist groups as not being
committed to the struggle for Sharia. And due to its implicit support for Sharia, PKS
is categorized by the mainstream parties, including non-Islamist Muslim mass-based
parties like PKB and PAN as being an extremist group aspiring to change the
ideological and political system of the country.

Given the central importance of these issues, a careful study of PKS thinking
about da’wa and Sharia is needed to shed the light on the party’s strategy of
implementing Sharia within the system of democracy. This is what this dissertation
sets out to do. It takes the approach that da’wa in its wider dimension represents the key element to understand the attitude of the party on the implementation of Sharia in democratic Indonesia. How Sharia is understood by the party and how da’wa is used as a strategy and approach to realize the party’s ultimate goal of Sharia implementation will be the focus of the study.

B. Literature Review

The Pew Global Attitude Survey of 2011 revealed that the majority of respondents in Muslim countries prefer democracy to any other systems of government, and that they believe that Islam’s influence in politics is positive. Implicit in these findings is the insight that the yearning for stronger Islamic value does not necessarily translate into the support for an Islamic state. With this in mind, it is not surprising that Islamist political current in the Muslim world is now a prominent feature. Especially when the ruling regimes open a political channel, moderate Islamists will participate in the political process by forming political parties. More than often, “they represent the only means of expressing popular opposition to regimes generally regarded as corrupt and inefficient.”

The participation of Islamist parties in democratic politics has drawn great attention from many scholars. In her analysis on Islamist parties in political process, Ann-Kristin Jonasson qualifies them as a democratic dilemma. It becomes dilemma because allowing them to join the democratic process is tantamount to democratic suicide; they will democratically capture power, only to cancel democracy afterward. Yet, it would be undemocratic to deny them a political participation in a democratic system that guarantee and protect the equal right for all citizens to express their political aspiration. In her study of Islamist parties’ political linkage, Jonasson compares Islamist parties in Jordan, Turkey and Pakistan which she perceives as

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operating in different social context yet presenting a similar behavior. Islamist ideology is something they have in common; accordingly, it is their ideology that is overwhelmingly instrumental in overcoming their institutional constraints. In other words, political behavior of Islamist parties is under the spell of their ideology, making them ideological by default and considering their participation in democratic process as merely a camouflage. In addition, the context in which the parties operate lead us to a conviction of her problematic conclusion that she put too much emphasis on the encompassing role of ideology on the party behavior. As Mainwaring and Scully describe it, the degree of institutionalization of a political system is instrumental in measuring the degree of democracy of a given state.\textsuperscript{12} Jordan, Turkey and Pakistan exhibit a low degree of institutionalization in their political system, which is characterized by authoritarianism, paternalism and clientelism. This implies that countries with a better institution in term of their political system will have a different impact upon the performance and behavior of the Islamist party.

Julie Chernov Hwang’s study of post-New Order Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey concurs with this conclusion. Hwang’s work reveals that, despite some variation, political participation coupled with state capacity is influential in the process of peaceful mobilization the Islamist groups choose. The most notable result of her study could be summed up in twofold. First, a participatory state with effective capacity will encourage Islamist groups to exert peaceful mobilization, whereas states that lack both elements will have no effective impact. Second, authoritarian states with limited participation will put impediment to the mobilization process, which most likely leads to alienation, isolation or even radicalization of Islamist groups.\textsuperscript{13}

In the case of Indonesia, the suspicion toward the participation of Islamist parties in democratic process is also found in the statement of Sadanand Dhume that a ballot for PKS is more or less a bullet for the Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI) organization.


According to Dhume, PKS shares similar ideology with JI, thus it is likely to present a serious threat to democracy in Indonesia. The only difference between them lies in the approach; while the latter readily uses revolutionary and violent action to achieve their goal of establishing Islamic system of government, the first uses evolutionary and peaceful approaches.\(^\text{14}\) This sort of analysis on the incompatibility of Islam and democracy results from the lack of insight to the dynamic of Islamism in Indonesia. This view puts too much emphasis on the fundamentalist nature of political Islam and overlooks its contribution in the democratization process in Indonesia.

A more nuanced and sympathetic view on the Islamist current in Indonesian political landscape is presented by Dirk Tomsa stating that PKS participation in democratic political process leads PKS to a more moderate stance. However, this moderation leads to some serious challenges to the party’s organizational coherence. By softening the party’s ideological viewpoint in order to reach out to broader electoral base, PKS has put at stake its credibility among its original constituents. Tomsa also adds that inclusion and moderation of PKS could increase the risk of PKS being co-opted into Indonesia’s traditional power politics, a prospect that will serve neither the party nor Indonesia’s democratic consolidation. In order to play a vital role in the consolidation of Indonesia’s young democracy, PKS needs to transform itself into a moderate party, yet remain reform-oriented.\(^\text{15}\)

Nevertheless, inclusion-moderation thesis is not without its critics. Based on her research on women’s participation in Islamist parties in Jordan and Yemen, Schwedler, for example, is of opinion that moderation is often a highly complex and multidimensional process, and its effect to democracy can be both positive and negative. Schwedler defines moderation as the “movement from a relatively closed and rigid worldview to one more open and tolerant of alternative perspectives.” According to her, this shift can be identified by what she calls “boundaries of justifiable action


made by political actors about what is possible, who are friends and adversaries, and which of the available options are justifiable in terms of one’s worldview.”16 While this concept is crucial in analyzing the discourse and debates within the party’s leadership, it is likely overlooking the possible discontent at the grassroots that might not follow the highly elitist views. Since ideational change could in fact be easily considered as a lip service unless it is followed by moderate action beyond merely participation in competitive election, it is essential to put equal weight on the analysis of both ideas and action.

Wickham study of Egypt’s Wasat Party attempts to capture these two dimensions. She contends that ideational change is of crucial ingredient for the moderation defined as the abandonment, postponement, or revision of radical goals that enable a movement to accommodate itself to the give and take of normal competitive politics.17 Ideational change is then a prerequisite for a genuine behavioral change.

C. Research Objectives and Questions

With this background in mind, the study aims to scrutiny the attitude of PKS on the implementation of Sharia in democratic Indonesia, and to gain insight into the dual strategy of PKS da’wa in pursuing the party’s ultimate goal of Islamizing society and state. The relevant questions in this thesis are: As the most important vehicle in achieving the party’s agenda, how is da’wa understood by the party? And how it is used in achieving its political goals? How do the party elites understand Shariah? What are the party program, strategy and action to support the introduction of Shariah in democratic Indonesia? In term of its secular agenda, is it simply a political expediency or will the party readily revert to Islamist agenda when it gains power?


D. Methodology

To investigate the issue above, I use data mainly derived from field research. In-depth interview with PKS leaders and other elite-figures within the party is conducted to provide the critical information of the party program, strategies and activities relating to their attitude on the implementation of Sharia in the country. Semi-structured interviews are used to scrutinize the semantic context of statements by both the activists and leaders of PKS. This approach also allows the scrutiny of meaning, both how activists regard their participation and how they understand their social world.

Investigating the issue of PKS attitude on Sharia necessitates a lengthy, in-depth discussions and interviews with the party leaders at district, regency and national level. During interviews over 8 weeks of field work I managed to garner crucial information about the topic under study. During the field research, 25 PKS leaders made themselves available to me for interviews and spoke openly about their position, experience and stories about the issues related to da’wa and Sharia politics of the party.

Before embarking on the fieldwork, contact was made by email and phones to staff at the national PKS office in Jakarta, from which I was given a written permission to conduct interview with relevant sources within PKS leaders. During the first week, I have to familiarize myself with the party bureaucracy and set up appointments for interviews. During the fieldwork, I rented a room in a local boarding house located five minutes’ walk from the PKS headquarters in order to allow me frequent visits to the PKS office to meet with interviewees. It is common practice for some PKS leaders to come to the office for regular meeting or just visiting the cadres, during their working trip to Jakarta. Consequently, during my visit to the party headquarters that I have a chance to meet important figures of PKS, Ahmad Heryawan and Irwan Prayitno, who are now governor of West Java and West Sumatera respectively.

From Ahmad Heryawan, I managed to gather first-hand information about, but not limited to, the meaning of Sharia, the common misunderstandings about it, from their perspective, and Heryawan’s personal experience in implementing Sharia norms in Bandung, West Java. Information I got from the staff members, such as the names
and phone number of PKS leaders in Jakarta and surrounding areas, enabled me to establish set up appointments for further interviews.

A key opportunity to meet and interview numerous PKS leaders came when I was given access to the annual meeting of the party in Hotel Sahid, Jakarta, on 20-21 September 2015. This event brought together more than 1000 PKS cadres from Sabang to Merauke (i.e. from Indonesia’s western-most town to its eastern-most city), who were newly elected members of district, provincial and national consultative assembly. During this two-day event, 13 interviews were conducted from which I garnered important information regarding the main issue of Sharia and politics in Indonesia. From the interview, I collated stories and experiences of the PKS leaders in their effort to implement Sharia norms in their municipalities and provinces. Semi-structure interviews allowed me to be open to lively discussion about various subjects relating closely to the main topics of interview.

From the interviews, I was able to document PKS perspectives on recurrent themes relating to da’wa (often transliterated as dakwah in Indonesian), such as the da’wa strategy of the party, the interplay between da’wa and politics, ‘democracy as a tool for da’wa’, ‘conspiracies against da’wa’, and the result of recent election as a tool for da’wa evaluation. Similarly, I learnt about PKS views on Sharia, such as ‘misunderstandings about Sharia’, the ‘universalistic nature of Sharia’, shift in understanding and practicing Sharia, Sharia politics of the party, and Perda Sharia (local bylaws of Sharia). PKS views on the political situation in other parts of the Muslim world, such as in Turkey and Egypt, and the issue of notorious terrorist group ISIS also emerged during some interviews which helped giving nuance to the discussion of Sharia and politics. With this approach, I was able to identify themes that are considered central to PKS’ struggle in negotiating its dual role as a political and da’wa party.

To garner further insights into the efforts of PKS in advancing the application of Sharia in society, I conducted interviews with the heads and members of the Sharia Council of the party at national, provincial and district levels. Some PKS leaders who are also directors/senior teachers of their own Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools)
were among the subjects of interview. From them, I collected information about the challenge of playing a dual role as a politician and an Islamic missionary. I also travelled to visit leaders of PKS in Padang, West Sumatera, and Solo, Central Java. I considered these places to be of vital importance for several reasons. While Padang is known to be a bastion of Islamist party, Solo is the home of a nationalist Muslim elements. The very different political landscape of Padang and Solo represents different challenges for the party in its efforts to plan and execute the agenda of Islamizing society. From these two places, I could compare the strategy of PKS leaders in dealing with the issue of Shariatization in their respective cities.
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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Position</th>
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<th>Government</th>
<th>Others</th>
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<td>Ahmad Heryawan</td>
<td>17 September 2014</td>
<td>Member of Dewan Syuro</td>
<td>Governor of West Java</td>
<td>DPRD (Provincial Parliament) of Purworejo</td>
<td>Director of Pesantren Nurul Wahid</td>
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<td>Thohari</td>
<td>20 September 2014</td>
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<td>Mayor of Padang, West Sumatera</td>
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<td>Mohammad Yasin</td>
<td>16 October 2014</td>
<td>Head of Provincial Sharia Council of West Sumatera</td>
<td>Director of Pesantren Ar Risalah</td>
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<td>Irsyad Syafar</td>
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<td>Head of Provincial Office of West Sumatera</td>
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**E. Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of eight substantive chapters and a brief concluding chapter. As an introduction, Chapter One describes the background of the study, followed by literature review, research objectives and questions, and methodology.

In Chapter Two, the theory and the concept of ideology are discussed in order to understand PKS’ political behavior and its attitude toward the implementation of Sharia in democratic Indonesia. This chapter also discusses the theory of social movement in scrutinizing the emergence and development of the party.

Chapter Three explores a party’s fundamental shared values, and how these values are implemented, and influence the behavior and attitude of the party.

Chapter Four investigates the strategy of the da’wa party with Islamist credentials to survive against declining popularity and electoral backdrop of political Islam. It elaborates the ideological adjustment and party institutionalization that accounts for its politically moderate behavior.
Chapter Five addresses the interplay between da’wa and politics in democratic Indonesia. Based on interviews with numerous PKS elites of national and municipal levels, this chapter discusses the issues such the importance of da’wa for the political goal of the party, as well as the meaning and the nature of da’wa and its relation to the implementation of Sharia.

Chapter Six analyzes the issue of Sharia legislation and the party’s struggle to negotiate Sharia within the political system of the state. This chapter examines related issues such as the dynamic understandings of Sharia of PKS cadres as well as the party’s political rhetoric, approach, and strategy in implementing Sharia both in national and regional level. Data for this chapter is derived mainly from the interviews with PKS leaders of different regions in Indonesia.

Chapter Seven addresses the political history of Islamic law and its institution during the New Order. This chapter also examines the party’s stance on Sharia during the constitutional debate on Sharia and Jakarta Charter in the early of Reformasi era.

Chapter Eight analyzes the PKS attitude toward Sharia in a democratic Indonesia, and discusses the Sharia politics of the party and its strategy to cope with internal and external challenges in the implementation of Sharia. The concluding chapter brings together the major findings of the study.
CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Justice Party (Partai Keadilan, PK), rebranded the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS) was born out of a populist religious outreach (da’wa/dakwah) movement of the 1980s, inspired, in large part, by Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood movement. It was transformed into political party to contest the 1999 election in the aftermath of the May 1998 collapse of Soeharto’s New Order regime. PK/PKS became the principle vehicle of the da’wa movement first started by Muhammad Natsir, Indonesia’s fifth prime minister and leader of the Masyumi party which gained 21 percent of the popular vote in the 1955 election, the last free and fair election before the 1999 election. Under the leadership of Natsir, the pioneer of Islamism in Indonesia, the da’wa movement aspired to Islamize Indonesian society from below. PK/PKS describes itself as being unswervingly faithful to the raison d’être of its existence, namely the call for the establishment of umma governed by Sharia in every aspect of its life. In the wake of disappointing results in the April 2014 legislative elections, the leadership of PKS found solace in affirming that da’wa, rather than electoral success, was always the primary means of the party in realizing its ultimate goal.

The participation of any party in politics necessitates the process of negotiating the ideals and interests and even a religiously inspired ‘da’wa party’ needs to strike a balance in steering its way through politics. Some degree of compromise between the party’s principles and general public demand cannot be avoided if the party is to win the mass support. Consequently, the PKS leadership has long acknowledged that the struggle for implementation of Sharia needs to be presented in secular terms, such as striving for clean government and fighting corruption. With this in mind, PKS adopted a deliberate strategy of not making direct reference to Sharia. It described this approach as being intrinsic to its da’wa strategy and was intended to bring the party closer to its potential constituents and sympathizers.
Nevertheless, this strategy of downplaying Sharia is not without drawbacks; in fact, it presents PKS with a dilemma. Due to this seemingly ambivalent attitude towards Sharia, PKS is accused by radical and fundamentalist groups as not being fully committed to the struggle for Sharia. And due to its implicit support for Sharia, PKS is categorized by the mainstream parties, including non-Islamist Muslim mass-based parties like PKB and PAN as being an extremist group aspiring to change the ideological and political system of the country.

Given the central importance of these issues, a careful study of PKS thinking about da’wa and Sharia is needed to shed the light on the party’s strategy of implementing Sharia within the system of democracy. This is what this dissertation sets out to do. It takes the approach that da’wa in its wider dimension represents the key element to understand the attitude of the party on the implementation of Sharia in democratic Indonesia. How Sharia is understood by the party and how da’wa is used as a strategy and approach to realize the party’s ultimate goal of Sharia implementation will be the focus of the study.

In realizing its goals, PKS has to operate within a democratic system. Democratization has enabled the party to behave rationally and pragmatically. In its first involvement in national democratic election of 1999, for instance, the party struggled to represent the political preferences of the most conservative segments of the Muslim community - the far right of the ideological spectrum. This ideological self-placement changes following the increasing stability of Indonesian democracy. The necessity to gain political opportunity or to survive the political threat leads the party to be open to the new experience.

The changing attitude of the party warrants a discussion of the nature of ideology as a “belief system” that lends the party actors legitimacy to actions and beliefs. The section below is devoted to the discussion of political ideology and followed by the theory of social movement. While the first provides the framework for the soft-content of the party, the later describe the strategic steps to translate the ideology into social movement. As a party of conviction, PKS maintains that it holds tight to the raison d’être of the party, which is to deliver da’wa (calling to the truth of
Islam). If the core of da’wa is implementing Sharia, then the former serves as a vehicle for the latter. As long as the destination is set, any means to achieve it from any direction will suffice, and it could change over the time and from place to place. While da’wa could vary according to the situational demand, Sharia is a fixed discursive superstructure which inspires the ideology of the party.

A. Political Ideology

The concept of ideology can be traced back to the late 18th century, when it was mainly used to refer to the science of ideas, a discipline known today as the sociology of knowledge. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels adopted and utilized this concept in two different meanings. They used ideology in a neutral sense as a reference to any symbolic meaning system used to explain or justify socio-economic and political reality, and in a pejorative sense to denote a web of ideas that are distorted, contrary to the reality, and subject to false consciousness. Later, Converse defined ideology, or “belief system”, as a configuration of ideas and attitude in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence. Following Converse, most political scientists have treated ideology as a relatively stable and coherent belief system within the mind of an individual.

Below are some famous definitions of ideology that give emphasis on the stability and organization as key features of ideological belief systems.

The term ideology is used … to stand for an organization of opinions, attitudes, and values—a way of thinking about man and society. We may speak of an individual’s total ideology or of his ideology with respect to different areas of social life: politics, economics, religion, minority groups, and so forth.

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An ideology is an organization of beliefs and attitudes—religious, political, or philosophical in nature—that is more or less institutionalized or shared with others, deriving from external authority.  

Ideologies are broad and general, pervade wide areas of belief and behavior, and give core meaning to many issues of human concern. They unify thought and action.

The term “political ideology” is normally defined as an interrelated set of attitudes and values about the proper goals of society and how they should be achieved. An ideology has two distinct and at least analytically separate components—affect and cognition.

All of these definitions conceptualize ideology as an internally consistent belief system that will make it less likely that common people would satisfy the stringent criteria for demonstrating ideological capacity. Defining ideology in even narrow way, Shils listed nine criteria of ideology, namely: (a) explicitness of formulation, (b) intended systemic integration around a particular moral or cognitive belief, (c) acknowledged affinity with other past and contemporaneous patterns, (d) closure to novel elements or variations, (e) imperativeness of manifestation in conduct, (f) accompanying effect, (g) consensus demanded of those who accept them, (h) authoritativeness of promulgation, and (i) association with a corporate body intended to realize pattern of beliefs. With all these criteria, the majority of ordinary citizens find it difficult to meet the challenge of adhering to certain ideology. One would only be considered ideological as long as he or she could satisfy the criteria of stable, logical, coherent, consistent and knowledgeable attitudes. Thus the question about whether

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or not common population possesses ideology is then becoming a part of a question about whether they meet the criteria proposed by the social and political scientists.26

Despite its broadness, the abovementioned definitions give room for the ideological expression of both ordinary citizens and individuals with high level of awareness and knowledge in politics. Kerlinger puts the point well regarding an empirical possibility that ideology has a meaning and significance in people’s everyday lives:

Whether conservatism and liberalism are typical conceptual tools for the man-in-the-street is not the central point. For the scientist, too, liberalism and conservatism are abstractions like any other abstract concepts he works with: introversion, intelligence, radicalism, achievement, political development and the like. To be sure, most people don’t recognize their abstract nature and certainly don’t use them as social scientists do. Nevertheless, they are quite familiar with their behavioral and environmental manifestations.27

I also adopt Tedin’s definition of political ideology as an interrelated set of moral and political attitudes that possess cognitive, affective and motivational components.28 Implicit in this definition is that ideology helps to explain why people do what they do, and how they organize their values and beliefs, and how ideology leads to political behavior. Similar definition with an additional highlight to the role of social groups is proposed by Denzau and North, who suggest that “ideologies are the shared framework of mental models that groups of individuals possess that provide both an interpretation of the environment and a prescription as to how that environment should be structured.”29 This definition suggests that ideology is shared and utilized to interpret the social realities, and specifies proper ways of countering problems in life. By communicating widely shared beliefs and values of certain groups, class, 


27 Fred M. Kerlinger, Liberalism and Conservatism, p. 217.
constituency or community, an ideology functions not only to interpret the world as it is but also to envision it as it should be. In this way, ideology has the capacity of instigating actions. As a life-change driving force, ideology informs its adherents about how they should live and govern the society. It is therefore reasonable to stand that different ideologies express different social, cognitive, and motivational tendencies of their adherents.

Ideological attitudes and opinions are often described in terms of a single left-right wing dimension. Political use of the spatial metaphor of left and right goes back to 18th century seating arrangement in the French parliament, where proponents of the status quo sat on the right side of the French Assembly hall and its contenders sat on the left. The term left-right wing is then widely known in the United States as “liberal-conservative” divide. This bipartite division represents the long-lasting ideological cleavage between preferences for change versus stability.

Social scientists generally consider the left-right distinction to be the most powerful way of classifying political attitudes. This bipartite division of ideology has found resonance in almost every cultural context. However, given that the issues and contents of liberal-left and conservative-right wing are in constant change in different time and places, core or stable aspects of ideology should be distinguished from the peripheral or malleable ones. In an attempt to distill the core components of this bipartite definition of ideology, Jost identifies two core dimensions, namely resistance to change and acceptance of inequality. These two ideological dimensions capture the

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most meaningful and enduring differences between left-wing and right-wing ideology. The following statements treat the liberalism-conservatism distinction in the same vein:

Politicians and the policies they espouse … are usually described as liberal if they seek to advance such ideas as equality, aid to the disadvantaged, tolerance of dissenters, and social reform; and as conservative if they place particular emphasis on order, stability, the need of business, differential economic rewards, and defense of the status quo.  

Conservatives consider people to be inherently unequal and due unequal rewards; liberal are equalitarian. Conservatives venerate tradition and—most of all—order and authority; liberals believe planned change brings the possibility of improvement.

This bipartite definition accords with numerous characterizations of the left and right offered by political scientists. Fuchs and Klingemann associate the left with attitudes and values such as system change, progressive, equality, solidarity, protest, opposition, radical, socialism and communism, and associate the right with the inclination towards advocating system maintenance, conservatism, order, individualism, capitalism, nationalism and fascism. Social scientists often stress resistance to change or traditionalism as a stable key feature of right-wing conservatism. Wilson, for example, defines conservatism as “resistance to change and the tendency for prefer safe, traditional, and conventional

forms of institutions and behavior.”

Some researches on voting preference reveal high correlation between the attitude of resistance to change and the vote for conservative and right-wing parties. The idea that resistance to change is a stable key feature of right-wing ideology is challenged by Greenberg and Jonas, who argue that conservative parties in Europe are quick to call for political change when the left-of-center parties are in power. In response to this challenge, Jost argues that some right-wing conservative might have demand for change, but most of their proposed change are retrograde in nature and often involve a return to traditional cultural values, such as religious tradition and traditional family values. As the second core of right-wing conservatism, acceptance of inequality captures the notion that the political left tends to value equality while the right perceives society as inevitably hierarchical. Since social scientists in general share the idea that right-wing conservatives embrace social and economic inequality, it is expected that acceptance of inequality, like traditionalism, is positively linked to right-wing political orientation.

Different inclination toward dimensional aspects of ideology between adherents of the left-wing and the right-wing indicates that psychological motives underlie political orientation. This statement is consistent with Adorno assumption that “ideologies have for different individuals, different degree of appeal, a matter that depends upon the individual’s needs and the degree to which these needs are being satisfied or frustrated.” It is implicit from this statement that dispositional variables

44 Theodor W. Adorno, et al., The Authoritarian Personality, p. 2.
are capable of influencing one’s psychological needs and therefore one’s political orientation.

Jost also proposes that the attitudinal contents of left-right wing stem from basic social psychological orientation concerning uncertainty and threat. Based on meta-analytical review of 88 studies conducted in 12 countries between 1958 and 2002, he confirms that death anxiety, system instability, fear of threat and lost, dogmatism, intolerance of ambiguity, and personal needs for order, structure and closure are positively associated with conservatism. To the contrary, openness to new experiences, cognitive complexity, tolerance of uncertainty and self-esteem are affirmatively related to liberalism. Further research findings show that when compared with conservatives, liberals exhibit stronger preference for social change and equality, progress and flexibility, over tradition and stability. Based on these findings, it is safe to say that both situational and dispositional variables associated with the management of threat and uncertainty are empirically linked to political orientation.

Most scholars in social and political science believe that ideology represents a learned knowledge structure consisting of an interrelated set of attitudes, values and beliefs. Implicit in this acknowledgement is that ideologies can be analyzed both in

terms of their contents and functions. In this way, ideology can be perceived as having both a discursive superstructure which is socially constructed and functional substructure which is motivational. Discursive superstructure is to be construed as a social representation that guides political judgment in a top-down schematic fashion and transmitted from political elites to the public at large, while functional substructure relates to social needs and motives that drive political interest of common people in a bottom-up fashion and are served by the discursive content of ideology.

Dissemination of discursive superstructure is conducted by political elites in top-down fashion, by simplifying the political environment and influencing the specific contents of a political ideology. Leadership of Lyndon Johnson and his successors is an excellent reference of the elite construction of discursive superstructure, in which he urged supporters of his party to embrace liberal civil rights legislation by supporting racial and ethnic minorities. Another example of strong influences of the political elites from among politicians, journalists, academicians or media representatives in (re)constructing discursive superstructure is demonstrated in the degree of public acceptance of government policy during the war. Citizen’s

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exposure to the elite discourse is apparently responsible to their support for the discourse.\textsuperscript{55}

In order for the ideological contents to be socially shared, that is becoming discursive superstructure, communicative and strategic forms of interaction between political elites and their followers should be established. The communication process will likely allow small and unrepresentative political elites to gain a disproportionate amount of influence,\textsuperscript{56} hence, ideas of the ruling class become the ruling ideas.\textsuperscript{57} The main factor that is responsible for the mass acquisition of ideological contents relates to the awareness and understanding of the message delivered by the political elites.\textsuperscript{58} Individuals with a high level of engagement and relatively well-developed understanding in politics will be most likely to receive, discern and use the information flowing from the political elites.

In many different societies, political elites are capable of (re)shaping the discursive superstructure. Socially constructed by political elites, discursive superstructure can be seen as “anchoring” both ends of the left-right spectrum, thereby giving common citizen diverse options of ideological contents to choose from.\textsuperscript{59} Even though some citizens are capable and willing to learn the content of the discursive


superstructures defined by political elites, the majority of the population is characterized by a relatively low level of knowledge about specific discursive contents of both liberal and conservative ideologies. Ordinary citizens are also relatively incapable or reluctant to understand political issue in rigidly liberal-conservative idioms. Due to their lack of interest and knowledge about the discursive content of ideology, general population’s attitude toward many political issues shows a relatively low level of ideological consistency. However, the fact that most citizens are not knowledgeable about the contents of ideology does not necessarily mean that they are utterly devoid of ideological commitment. According to Lane, the common people have rationalizations of interests that serve as moral justification for daily acts and beliefs. In this sense, as Jost put it, most people possess latent ideology. Even more specifically, numerous scholars suggest that those who are relatively uninformed about politics show some understanding about the core aspect of liberal-conservative differences.

B. PKS as A Social Movement

There is an agreement among scholars of social movement regarding the significance of three theories that propelled social movements: political opportunity, mobilizing structure or resource mobilization, and framing process. In the tradition of social movement research, these theories aim to understand the emergence of social

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63 Robert E. Lane, Political Ideology, p. 15-16.
movement, including the origin, process, and organization of the movement. However, these theories only emphasize one aspect of the social movement; the proponents of resource mobilization theory only focus on the importance of organizational dynamics of a collective action, and those of political opportunity theory play down the significance of social construction of the ideas behind the movement. To give a broader perspective in scrutinizing a particular social movement, this study will merge and integrate all three theories. Relevant to this integrative approach is the theory by Lichbach that social movement can be best studied using three main perspectives, i.e. condition, norms and means of collective actions. Condition of the movement should be examined in order to understand the dynamics of a movement in developing and advancing their claims, mobilizing their supporters and disseminating their ideas and influences. In this respect, the study of social movement focuses on external factors that contribute to ability of the movement to create changes. This external factor is described as political opportunity structure that gives rise to the social movement.

However, political opportunity structure will not suffice to generate a social movement; it is only a prerequisite for the potential structure of the emergence of the movement. Organizational capacity and network should be in place before the movement come into being, since social movement needs means or relational mechanism to pursue a collective action. At least, there are three infrastructural means required for a collective action: membership basis, communication network and leadership. These three means of social movement are collectively known as a mobilizing structure.

66 Doug McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, “Introduction”, in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (eds.), Comparative Perspective on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 7.
69 Ibid.
Social movement study also necessitates the examination of cognitive mechanisms and norms shared by the members of the movement. This mechanism is described by the scholars of social movement as collective action frame. Framing is an interpretation scheme that enables the supporters of the social movement to “locate, perceive and label occurrence.” In other words, the framing process indicates “what to look at and what is important, and thereby indicate what is going on.” Therefore, examining ideas underlining certain social movement should also be taken into consideration to understand the emergence of a collective action.

The paragraphs that follow will discuss the application of this integrative approach to the emergence and development of PKS as a social movement. Some theories of political opportunity structure will be delineated and put it in the context of international and domestic of political opportunity that facilitate the rise of PKS.

a. Political Opportunity Structure

Since its inception in the end of 1970s, the concept of political opportunity structure has drawn much attention from social and political students and triggered many studies on social movement; many dimensions of it has been explained and emphasized. Tarrow, for instance, put stress on the openness and closeness of political system, while Kriese focused more on structure of formal institution. Tarrow defines political opportunity structure as consistent—but not necessarily formal or permanent—dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure.

In order to form a synthesis of many diverse interpretations on political opportunity, Mc Adam enumerates some dimensions of political opportunity structure:

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(1) relativity of the openness and closeness of political system, (2) stability or instability of network, (3) availability of alliances, and (4) capacity or competency of state to take a repressive measure.\textsuperscript{73} According to McAdam, the openness or closeness of the political system is a dominant factor in facilitating the rise of social movement. Dyke is of the same opinion stating that a group of societies is prone to conduct mobilization when the political system is relatively open. Vice versa, the more rigid and tight the political system, the smaller the opportunity to launch a collective action.\textsuperscript{74} However, Eisinger maintains that protest is more likely to emerge in the political system characterized by interplay between openness and closeness.\textsuperscript{75}

In other words, Eisinger’s model indicates that collective action will be likely less frequent in authoritarian political system or democratic system. Repression in the first system will effectively nip in the bud all the potentials towards collective actions by coercion or intimidation. Repressive action by the authoritarian establishment will disconnect the interaction among actors and participants of the movement. In latter system, due to its democratic character, protest and demonstration will be channeled through political institution, so that public aspiration and participation are properly heard. According to Eisinger, a semi-open system of polity is most likely susceptible to mass protest and demonstration. In the period of transition to democracy, the capacity of a regime to control the public sphere is still weak, and the public euphoria to claim their political right is at its height.\textsuperscript{76} This unlikely combination between incompetence of the government to channel the public aspiration and the high confidence of the people to voice their social and political demand will widely open the opportunity for collective action.


\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Ibid.}
Political opportunity structure is useful to explain the emergence of Jamaah Tarbiyah in the context of authoritarian regime of Soeharto’s new order and the establishment of Justice and Prosperous Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS) after the collapse of the regime. In order to examine the external situation that facilitates or inhibits the emergence of PKS, the double-tract of political opportunity structures of international and domestic factor will be utilized. International context of political opportunity structure help to delineate the socio-political dynamics of establishment and development of the party under study. International context of political opportunity structure is offered to challenge the over-emphasis of students of social movement on the state-centered perspective. In the case of PKS, both domestic and international factor have contributed a lot to the emergence of Jamaah Tarbiyah.

The first international factor that generates the emergence of Islamic revivalism in Indonesia is the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran. The revivalism of Islam is understood as an Islamic assertiveness against cultural and political domination of the West.\textsuperscript{77} Revivalist group perceives the influence of western culture and politics as an imperialist encroachment and invasion that undermine socio-cultural identity of Islam and Muslim communities. Islamic Iranian revolution is looked upon as an inspiration for revivalist groups in many Muslim countries to make a step further for the establishment of a community based on Islamic norms with Shariah as the source of guidance.

The globalized phenomenon of Indonesian Islam, which has become steadily more apparent since the 1980s, is the result more of a direct imitation of international orientations than a reliance on local tradition. Due to this global influence, socio-political events in the Middle East, including religious conflicts and scholarly schisms, have had a large impact upon Indonesian Muslims. One example of this impact is the mushrooming of the Middle-East-replicated movements, which have attracted the younger generation of Indonesia Muslims. Trans-national movements, such as Muslim Brothers (Egypt), the Salafi group (Saudi Arabia), Hizbut Tahrir (Jordan), and Jamaah

Tabligh (Indo-Pakistan), because of their “original” and “authentic” cachet and their image of not being co-opted or manipulated by the governing regime, has been so popular among the Muslim youth. Thus, it is not surprising that Jamaah Tarbiyah has adopted new models in carrying out its predication activities (da’wa/dakwah) derived from the Muslim Brothers of Egypt.78

Another important international influence upon Indonesian Muslims is apparent in the establishment of DDII (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, Indonesian Council for Islamic Predication) under the leadership of Natsir who earned a high reputation in Middle East Muslim countries and had a good relation with their leaders. To balance the government program of sending young scholars to Canada, the United States and Europe, during 1980s, DDII sent many students to Middle East universities. With the donors from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Pakistan, hundreds of Indonesian students have obtained scholarship to study oversees, the graduate of which have obtained international degrees and in turn helped DDII to maintain cadres who are committed to global awareness.79

Interaction between these Middle Eastern graduates with the younger generation of Indonesian Muslims in various campuses of Indonesia made possible the introduction of the new model of Islamic movements and thought.80 This new type of devout Muslim, the santri, differed from their parents in terms of political orientation, religious ideology and attitude toward inherited traditions. This new santri is not only influenced by the local and changing dynamics of Indonesian politics, but also subject to international influences in Islam. The Middle Eastern graduates became actively involved in predication, either by setting up their own Islamic institutions, called ma’had, or forming religious circle in many campuses of Indonesia and providing informal religious instructions to the university students.81

79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 30.
81 Ibid.
While international events have facilitated the emergence of Jamaah Tarbiyah, domestic affairs have also given big impetus. The New Order regime’s repression of political Islam and the extension of religious education in public school are held responsible for the changing nature of Islamic activism. The two-pronged policy of the New Order toward Islam in Indonesia contributed to the decline of political Islam. The regime repressed political Islam and encouraged Islamic representation that was non-political in nature. It exercised the policy of excluding politicized Muslims because of the threat they might have to the stability of the regime, should they increase their influence in society and government affairs. Repression of New Order towards political Islam led some Muslims to adopt a more pragmatic approach, by avoiding formal political struggle and turning instead to cultural and social activities.

Despite its policy towards politically organized Islam, the New Order regime served to expand the social role of Islam in other ways. The Soeharto government offered considerable support to religious education and ensure that the students in public schools and universities receive religious education from teachers of their own religion. The teaching of religion in the universities was more open and might well accommodate both traditionalist and modernist views of Islam. Through their religion classes, university students were no longer so concerned with sectarian differences and tended to share traditionalist and modernist practices equally. Since the campuses also provide many extra-curricular Islamic training courses and activities, students are at an increased risk of being diverted from mainstream Islam. Jamaah Tarbiyah proved itself able to channel enthusiastic Muslim students by providing religious training and predication programs.

Since the 1990s, the activists of Jamaah Tarbiyah have succeeded in gaining control of intra campus student organizations. They have organized Islamic programs

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and activities for students based in small campus praying rooms and founded a Forum for Islamic Studies in many faculties. In order to organize and coordinate Islamic activities among universities of Indonesia, they set up Forum for Coordinating Campus Predication. They are subsequently able to take over the central leadership of student senate organizations at the faculty and university level.\textsuperscript{85} It was during this repression of political Islam that the Muslim activists conducted informal religious instruction in many campuses of Indonesia utilizing the method of non-confrontation approach. In this context, the introduction of Islamic predication movement in campuses was perceived as a silent confrontation against the regime. In order to avoid being repressed or controlled by the state apparatus, campus predication determined to establish what Wictorowicz called “the network of shared meaning” with a secretive organizational structure in achieving their goal.\textsuperscript{86}

\textit{b. Resource Mobilization}

Scholars of social movements define resource mobilization as a means or collective vehicle, both formally or informally, in which people are mobilized and actively involved in collective action.\textsuperscript{87} This theory is related closely to the variety of resources used to propel collective action, the dependency of the movement upon external force and the strategic anticipation of the regime to control and co-opt collective action.\textsuperscript{88} In order to understand resource mobilization theory, one should be clear about the meaning of resources for a collective action. Charles Tilly emphasizes that one of the most important resources in social movement are formal and informal networks that connect individuals and organizations.\textsuperscript{89} Networks refer to social

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{85} Yon Machmudi, \textit{Islamising Indonesia.}, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{87} McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (ed.), \textit{Comparative Perspective}, 3.
\end{flushright}
structure that facilitate or inhibit behavior, attitude or likeliness of one’s action. Klandermans emphasizes the importance of leadership in creating mobilization resource for participants of the collective action. Maguire differentiates resources into two categories: the tangible resource which include, among other, money, tools and space, and the intangible one which includes leader capacity, management, ideological justification, and tactics. In the case of Jamaah Tarbiyah which metamorphosed into Justice and Prosperous Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS), their resource mobilization includes aspects of (1) formal and informal organizations, (2) network, (3) financial source, and (4) leadership.

Compared to other resources, organization is the most important aspect to achieve goals without which collective actions will fail to accumulate. However, one equates social movement with that of formal organization and thus excludes informal collective action. Meanwhile, Islamic social movements tend to utilize a means of informal organizations, individual network and cultural associations to start and conduct their movement. Moreover, utilization of informal social network is a common phenomenon within an authoritarian political system that does not allow any open protest, even if it is channeled through formal institutions.

The chief organizational resources of Jamaah Tarbiyah lay in the university-based mosques or small praying rooms in campuses. Many Muslim activists considered campuses to be the safest means for their struggle for Islamization, because da’wa

conducted through the Friday prayers and public sermons was closely monitored and restricted by the Soeharto regime. In most cases, all social and religious activities had to be endorsed by stamped letters from authorized agents of the regime. For that same reason, instead of large gathering and public oration, study clubs and small circles become a viable means to deliver da`wa. Well known as halaqah, this tarbiyah model of the Muslim Brothers became an alternative for students in conducting da`wa as well as preserving idealism within the campuses. Not only providing the students with informal religious instruction, as a gathering place for students, university based mosques also became a potential catalyst for the emergence of collective actions.

From 1990 onwards, the influence of Jamaah Tarbiyah expanded and they managed to penetrate and control formal Muslim student activities within campuses. After winning control of student senates, they established the Forum for Islamic Studies within the faculties under the supervision of the deans of faculty. The existence of faculty-based organizations has attracted great numbers of new students to join their programs. Similar forums under generic names of Forum for Islamic Studies were founded in almost all faculties of state-owned universities. Since then, religious activities have developed and won wide influence among students. The mushrooming of these forums in the faculties has necessitated the establishment of a broader organization to manage and coordinate all Islamic organizations under the umbrella of one body at university level, namely Campus Predication Institute (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus, LDK). Activists of Jamaah Tarbiyah who organized themselves in LDK have begun to participate in a broader network of intercampus predication, namely the Forum for Coordination of Campus Predication (Forum Silaturahmi Lembaga Dakwah Kampus, FSLDK). This forum became an important

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organ through which Muslim activists could disseminate their ideas,\textsuperscript{100} which in turn become a new resource mobilization for the members of Jamaah Tarbiyah.

Another set of important campus organization which functions as a vehicle for Jamaah Tarbiyah to infuse Muslim students with their Islamist ideas is the Student Senate. This body is not only the central leadership of students that organize and manage activities at the campus level, but also very much influenced by the dynamics of national politics, since it leads students to be directly involved in political actions.\textsuperscript{101} The success of members of Jamaah Tarbiyah in securing positions in the student senates at the level of faculty and university in certain prestigious universities has provided them with leadership experience and broader network with many important persons in national level.\textsuperscript{102} It is not surprising that the leadership in the student senate brings opportunity for Jamaah Tarbiyah elites to follow a political path that might lead them to occupy position of leadership in political parties and parliament, at municipality, district, province or national level. In fact, many former student activists of Jamaah Tarbiyah have now been elected members of parliament at district and national level.

Since the establishment of PKS on 20 April 2002, many activists who had previously devoted their energy to da’wa activities have become keen to be involved in politics. The cadres are also encouraged to enter state bureaucracy and to bring about changes in policy toward more Islamic goals. Political institutions are necessary to maintain and promote the existence of the teachings of Islam. As a political party, PKS struggles for the interest of Muslims, or at least to prevent any political moves that obstruct Muslim interests. The state must be able to guarantee its people of performing their religion and faith. Hence, the implementation of shariah must be carried out in a constitutional way, avoiding the use of force or violence.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{100} Ismail Yusanto, “LDK: Antara Visi, Misi dan Realitas Sejarah Perkembangannya,” www.fsldk.20m.com.

\textsuperscript{101} Yon Machmudi, Islamising Indonesia, p. 120.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., p. 125.

\textsuperscript{103} Satria Hadi Lubis, Yang Nyata dari PK Sejahtera, Jakarta: Miskat Publication: 2003, p. 4.
The transformation of an informal religious movement into a political party has made accommodation necessary for Jamaah Tarbiyah’s activists to survive. The structure of Jamaah Tarbiyah is likely of isolated social movement organization; it lacks structural organization and depends heavily on personal contacts. The repressive measure of the government and a hardly conducive political situation forced the organization to form a loose network structure so that it can elude the government control. In the post-Soeharto era, PKS adopted what Klandersmans calls “federation structure,” where branches are established to get closer to its constituents. This federation structure can take three main forms, i.e. the loosely couple network structure, pyramid structure and centralistic structure.

The first structure was introduced by Gerlach and Hine who characterize it as being segmented, polycephalous and reticulate. It is being segmented because myriad of people within the organization have different political agenda. It is polycephalous – literally multi-headed – because its structure allows for a variety of leaders and no single competent leader controls the entire organization. It is characterized as reticulate – literally formed as a network – due to the existence of network that connects them with other groups and organizations. The structure of pyramid is characterized by the top-down interaction between the headquarters and local branches of the organization. In the case of PKS, its organization has central main office; it has Central Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpinan Pusat, DPP) that supervises Local Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah, DPW) in provincial area, and District Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpinan Daerah, DPD) in a district, and Branch Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpinan Cabang, DPC) in a municipality. The entire hierarchy of council is under the supervision of the highest institution of Majelis Syura (Syura Council) that is responsible to formulate vision and mission of the party, to appoint the president of the party, to form members of Party Deliberation Council.

105 Ibid., p. 123.
106 Ibid.
(Majelis Pertimbangan Partai) in charge of running the task of Majelis Syura in supervising the activities of the party, and to decide the party policy and strategic plans.

The dramatic success of PKS participation in the 2004 general elections, by its significant achievement of share in votes, was beyond prediction. Indonesia Survey Institute, for instance, had predicted that PKS would only gain about 2.3% in 2004 election; it proved to be wrong, since the electoral gain of the party significantly beyond the survey’s predictions. On the press conference prior to the National Deliberation Meeting of PKS in Bali on 1-3 February 2008, Tifatul Sembiring, the president of the party, maintained that PKS targets at 20% of the total vote in general election of 2009.

To realize this ambitious dream, the party was forced to tread a new path of becoming an open party, allowing it of the influx of constituents from many different religious and social backgrounds, whose commitment to the party ideology is questionable. This new strategy of becoming an open party arose some criticism from the puritan segment of the party, mostly coming from the previous PK members. Generally speaking, the electoral gains of most Islamic parties in the general election of 2009 were marked by sharp declines. Partly due to the new strategy, PKS gained 7.88% (8,206, 955) of the total vote, making it the fourth biggest party in Indonesia, and the biggest Islamist Party of the country.

PKS’ remarkable achievement during the 2004 and 2009 elections cannot be separated from its capability to provide facilitating infrastructures. In the study of social movement, this infrastructure falls under the term of resource mobilization. Unlike during the Soeharto Era, post-Soeharto Era witnessed the emergence and development and expansion of formal organization, network, and leadership of PKS with its capability of recruiting supporters and cadres which in turn has shift Jamaah Tarbiyah into promising Islamist party with steady increasing votes.

c. Framing

The transformation of Jamaah Tarbiyah into political party can also be explained from the ideas received and adopted by its activists. In the theory of social
movement, the study of social construction of the idea is known as collective action frame. In Snow and Robert Benford’s words, framing is an interpretive schema that simplifies and condenses the “world out there” by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment. \(^{107}\) Collective action frame serve as accentuating devices that either “underscore and embellish the seriousness and injustice of a social condition or redefine as unjust and immoral what was previously seen as unfortunate but perhaps tolerable. \(^{108}\) Social movements are deeply involved in the work of “naming” grievances, connecting them to other grievances and constructing larger frames of meaning that will resonate with a population’s cultural predispositions and communicate a uniform message to powerholders and others. \(^{109}\)

A typical movement mode of discourse is built around what William Gamson calls an “injustice frame.” \(^{110}\) “Any movement against oppression,” writes Barrington Moore, “has to develop a new diagnosis and remedy for existing forms of suffering, a diagnoses and remedy by which this suffering stands morally condemned.” \(^{111}\) Like Gramson and Moore, Snow believes that frames like injustice are powerful mobilizing resources. There is strong relation between framing and ideology in mobilizing collective action. In this context, PKS proved successful in its capability to offer clear ideology that strongly resonates and influences the viewpoint of its activists and supporters. Klandermans maintains that the support to participate in social and political movement fluctuates and depends on aspects of behavior and attitude. Social movements will use consensus mobilization to gain public support for disseminating

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its ideas and point of view.\textsuperscript{112} While consensus mobilization consists of deliberate attempts to spread the views of a social actor among parts of a population, action mobilization refers to attempt of convincing people to be readily available to engage in a collective action by sacrificing their resources, such as money, time, ability and skill for the success of social movement.\textsuperscript{113}

In order to understand the complexity of consensus and action mobilization, scholars of social movements introduced a concept of frame resonance. This concept is aimed to examine the efficacy of a certain social movement to transform potential mobilization into actual mobilization which is dependent on its capability to frame and influence the consciousness of participants.\textsuperscript{114} Frame resonance can explain the capacity of a movement in realizing and interpreting its mobilization potentials into a concrete collective action.

According to Benford and Snow, there are three main elements in social movement framing: firstly, diagnostic framing, which identifies problems and the perpetrators that should be taken care of; secondly, prognostic framing, which provides a solution to the problem and offer strategy, tactics and target; thirdly, motivational framing, which involves a psychological process of calling the participants to move and act after learning the problem and its solution.\textsuperscript{115}

As a social movement, PKS highly involved in producing the meanings and framing the condition of Muslim in Indonesia in particular and Western domination in general. Liberalism and secularism, for instance, are framed as the main source of moral decadence, economy injustice, and political upheaval in the Muslim world, especially in Indonesia; hence, it is the biggest challenge for Muslim community. The president of PKS said that secularism is in contradiction with PKS and irrelevant to the

\textsuperscript{112} Klandermans, The Social Psychology of Protest, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p. 3.

\textsuperscript{114} Wiktorowicz (ed.), Islamic Activism, p. 16.

social reality of Indonesia. According to PKS, secularism made Muslims apart from Islamic principles. In this context, PKS formulated diagnostic framing by identifying the problem of Muslims today. In order to counter secularism and liberalism, PKS offer a notion of “Islam as solution” (al-Islam huwa al-hall) as a form of prognostic framing. By framing of Islam as a solution, PKS has participated in politics. To advance Islam as a solution to multi-dimensional crisis of the country, PKS offers two patterns of Islamization: cultural and structural.

As a prognostic framing, cultural and structural Islamization are aimed to redirect Indonesian Muslims to return to Islamic sources (al-ruju’ ila al-Quran wa al-Sunnah). As a da’wa movement, PKS calls individuals and society to strengthen their cultural basis. This process of cultural Islamization would take gradual and long process. The structural Islamization necessitates the involvement in politics in order that PKS could influence and restructure state policy, because all policies are decided through political process, not through sermons. People who just speak out in sermon would unlikely be able to make a big impact in state policy. Therefore, PKS believes that the practice of Sharia within the community must be supported by political structures. Any effort to influence the state must be carried out by an involvement in political activities.

The commitment of Jamaah Tarbiyah to participate in politics has altered its religious orientation. A new paradigm in viewing the relation between Islam and the state has evolved. Conformity between the movement’s belief and popular issues cannot be avoided by the party if it is to win mass support. In promoting Sharia, for instance, PKS cloaks it under the secular terms, such as ‘clean government’ and ‘anti-corruption’. This attempt is made to relate Islamic teachings to worldly issues in order to bring the party closer to popular aspirations. At the grassroots level, PKS activists have started to educate Indonesian Muslims about the essence of Sharia through da’wa

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activities. By doing so, PKS hopes that the demand for the application of Sharia will be a simultaneously bottom-up and top-down.
CHAPTER THREE
THE CAUSE OF DA’WA AS A DISCURSIVE SUPERSTRUCTURE

This chapter explores the commitment towards the adhered and shared values of the party and its maintenance within the internal members of the party. This is virally important because the commitment to engage in da’wa become the party’s fundamental shared value. This discursive superstructure become an identity for the party members and a guide to the cadres’ behavior and thinking processes. These shared values are delivered by the party elites to the members and cadres of the party through a standardized mechanism, as a means to establish a party disciplines as well as to maintain and protect the uniformity of understanding of da’wa among the cadres.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the party’s most important shared values and their infusion to the party’s cadres. Due to its relevance for the discussion of this chapter, the spirit of collectivism will be discussed in a large portion and followed by the discussion on the preservation of party cohesion in the second section. Numerous examples on how the party struggles to preserve its cohesion give us insight about the situation in which party’s shared values are implemented, and how these values influence the behavior and attitude of the party.

A. PKS’ Shared Values

It could be argued from the outset that above everything else PKS is a da’wa party. Indeed, the slogan “nahnu du’at qabla kulli sha’i” (We are advocates [for God] before we are anything else) is known well by the cadres of PKS. The raison d’être of the party is to conduct da’wa. Da’wa comes first and the party as a tool comes as a secondary, albeit very significant. PKS without da’wa will cease to exist, but not vice versa. The party cadres have a strong conviction that their loyalty is to the cause of da’wa, not to the individual, or even the party itself. Accordingly, in case the party becomes a hindrance for the success of da’wa, it could be dismantled at any time. Regarding this bold statement, Marfendi and Mohammad Yasin, PKS leaders of Padang, West Sumatera, used to refer the success story of AKP of Turkey that had to
metamorphose several times before the party becomes as it is now. More emphasis on da’wa work is also claimed to be the unique aspect of PKS. Unlike any other Islamic parties which are purely political in nature, PKS has been known to be a party with deep involvement in social, educational, cultural and humanitarian activities. Thus, political engagement is only one side of PKS. Again, if the party ceases to exist, the cadres remain in their work of da’wa, as they did before the party came to existence.

Da’wa cause is the central value in the movement and life of the party and its cadres, and the party cadres believe that the existence of the party is a part of da’wa cause. The preamble of the party’s constitution states that the party is created to carry out da’wa messages. The principled aim of da’wa is to create a civilization built on the spirit of respecting morality, rules of law and people sovereignty, in which the people plays a salient role in establishing and controlling the government.

In order to realize this goal, PKS developed several fundamental values to be followed strictly by the party and its cadres. The first main value is the belief that the aim of their involvement in the party is to be a jund al-da’wa (soldier of da’wa) and their activities are solely for the sake of God’s pleasure (ridha Allah). By this very concept, individual interests became irrelevant; private ambition should be put aside for the sake of more important goal, namely God’s pleasure. All activities undertaken by the party and the cadres are considered to be the media of da’wa to advance Islamic norms and values, and to gain God’s pleasure. This shared value of being “jund min junud al-da’wa” (one of the soldiers of da’wa) has eventually developed the sense of militancy among the cadres.

119 The Muqadimmah of The 2005 AD of PKS.
PKS’ cadres conceive of themselves as members of a party with a strong commitment to the religiously-inspired shared values. The spirit to hold tight to such commitment helps to create internal solidity within the party. This solidity is considered responsible for imparting to the party a degree of immunity to the sort of external interventions that could potentially destroy the very characteristics of the party. As will be discussed later, this esprit de corps has proven crucial for the party in dealing with both internal disputes and with political turbulence impacting the party from without in the aftermath of successive scandals involving the party’s elites.

The other main value is the spirit of berjamaah (togetherness). To reach the party’s ideals, as a da’wa party that believes in collective action, PKS endorses the importance of holding the spirit of berjamaah as a means to preserve ukhuwwah (brotherhood). For PKS cadres, this value constitutes an important prerequisite for the success of the da’wa struggle to promote Islamic values and norms. The party’s official documents states that the concept of berjamaah is the prominent feature of the party due to its role as a uniting element of the ummah, and the void of this value is the very cause of any failure, or at best the drawback, to the establishment of Islamic interests. Therefore, for da’wa to be successful, it needs to be conducted collectively or berjamaah.

In connection to the concept of berjamaah, the party’s document mentions the correlation between the weak condition of jamaah (group or party) and the drawback situation of the ummah. The famous saying that al-haq bi la nizam yaghlibuh al-batil bi al-nizam, meaning that “poorly-managed goodness will be defeated by well-managed evil”, is often quoted to substantiate the importance of advancing da’wa cause in an organized manner. In other words, well-organized jamaah is a prerequisite of the success of establishing Islamic values and norms in society. In this regard, the spirit of

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togetherness and brotherhood became a shared value developed by the party and infused into the cadres.

Closely connected to the cadre’s commitment as a “soldier of da’wa” is the spirit of ta’ah (obedience) towards qiyadah (the leaders). PKS believes that with the existence of unshakeable obedience, any da’wagoals could be reached. The concept “sami’na wa atha’na,” meaning “we hear and we obey”, becomes an important feature that characterizes the very relation between the party leaders and the cadres. For the cadres at a higher level, obedience to their leaders is more demanding as a part of total commitment that they should undertake for the party. This structural obedience of the party’s cadres helps the party to easily mobilize its cadres for the political, social, or cultural events. In the practical level, obedience and disciplined cadres have also made it possible for the party to make important adjustments as a response to the current political situation, without creating unnecessary internal commotion.

However, it is important to assert here that the shared value of structural obedience developed in the party is not at all to be considered as an exercise of “blind obedience.” In term of neo-institutionalism of Northarian, it is only the “rules of the game.” According to the concept of obedience, the party’s cadres owe their leader respect and obedience, as long as the latter has strong commitment to the maintenance and implementation of the party constitution. As mentioned by Mushthaha Masyhur, “the obedience to the leader and his leadership in various subjects that do not fall into

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126 Ali Said Damanik, *Fenomen Partai Keadilan: Transformasi 20 Tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia*, Bandung: Teraju, 2002, p. 117. The concept of cadres’ obedience towards their leaders find its basis literally on the Al-Qur’an (4:59), stating that: “Obey the God, and obey the Messenger of God, and those of you who are in authority (ulu al-amr)...” The term ulu al-amr refers to legitimate leaders appointed by the people. To strengthen cadres’ understanding of the importance of obeying the leaders, the party provides readings and training materials under the topic “Qiyadah wal Jundiyah” (the leader/commandant and the follower/soldier).


129 According to North, “rules of the game” means that institutions regulate actors’ behavior by specifying what they can and cannot do. In this way, institutions reduce uncertainty for interaction, transaction and collaboration, by providing information on the range of what is allowed to do. Without such information, actors would proceed interaction on the basis of pure speculation. See Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 27-35.
the category of *ma’ṣiyah* (unfaithfulness) could be regarded as similar to the obedience to God.**130** With this condition, the party’s shared value of obedience is not at all the same as encouraging in cadres’ blind devotion to a single human leader.

Gradualism and moderation are also seen to belong to PKS’ shared values. PKS believes that the success of da’wa requires both a gradual process and moderate approach, which should not be overlooked by da’wa activists and institutions.**131** To some extent, this attitude distinguishes the party from other Islamist movements in Indonesia, which so prioritize their strict Islamist agenda – pushing the immediate implementation of Sharia – that they ignore the readiness of the people.**132** This particular shared value of PKS translates into the party’s inclination to stay away from direct discussion or involvement on highly heated-debated issues such as the state ideology or religion-state relation.**133** Instead, PKS prefers to focus more on being involved in “practical” problems faced by the society, such as corruption eradication and poverty alleviation, or humanitarian programs and community development.**134** Instead of protracted debate on an abstract concept, the practical level of Sharia implementation is what the people need to experience the goodness of Islam, as a preparation for them to more comprehensively implement Sharia norms, not only in their family and social setting, but also in the state level. These shared values of gradualism and moderation represent, in their own understanding, essential characteristics of PKS in its political attitudes, actions and policies.**135**

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135 Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan: Transformasi 20 Tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia*. Furkon, Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Ideologi dan Praktis Politik Kaum Muda Kontemporer; Bubalo and Fealy, *Joining the Caravan? The Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia*, Elizabeth Fuller
From the discussion above, the struggle for the cause of da’wa as the discursive superstructure of PKS, together with some derivative values, has become the central focus of the party’s leaders and cadres, serving as a guide for political judgment in a top-down schematic fashion, transmitted from party elites to the cadres. As will be discussed in the following section, these living values find their relevance in both external and internal dynamic of the party.

Transmitting the Shared Values

In order to preserve and transmit the party’s shared values, halaqah (religious circle supervised by murabbi, a religious teacher, as an ideology apparatus) is designed to facilitate the infusion of the party’s values within its membership. In this regular meeting of halaqah, the shared values are introduced to and developed for the cadres. To allocate the ample time to discuss the study materials of each meeting, the number of cadres in each halaqah does not exceed 12 people. This learning process is obligatory for all cadres of PKS of all levels, including parliamentarians and the general chairman of Majelis Shura (Deliberative Council), the highest institution of the party.

To facilitate this value infusion process, the party standardizes and systematizes the materials used in the halaqah. Materials on obedience, mainly under the theme of Qiyadah wal Jundiyah (The Commandants and the Soldiers) and the importance of togetherness, for instance, are subjects that must be understood by all cadres. In term of tarbiyah process, the cadres are separated into 4 distinct levels, namely kader pemula, kader muda, kader madya, and kader dewasa (beginners, youngsters, intermediates, and advanced), each of which has different curriculum. Materials for halaqah are divided into topics of four themes, namely the fundamentals of Islam, self-improvement, da’wa and Islamic thought, and social science. For this purpose, PKS


publishes several books containing materials that should be discussed in this process by all cadres.\textsuperscript{137}

Within the framework of tarbiyah, PKS has continuously attempted to develop learning activities among its cadres, including halaqah (compulsory weekly meeting), daurah (intensive study), rihlah (physical activity), mabit (night activity) conducted monthly, six monthly and yearly.\textsuperscript{138} These activities are necessary as manifestation of the tarbiyah vision to build an Islamic society, based on Brotherhood principles of Tarbiyah formulated by Hasan al-Banna. These principles include Da’wah Salafiyah (calling for return to the tradition of the first generation of Muslims), Tariqah Sunniyyah (commitment to emulate the path of the prophet and his followers), Haqiqah Sufiyyah (realization of morality), Hai’ah Siyasiyah (preparedness to political and social change), Jama’ah Riyadiyah (attention to the necessity of health), Rabitah Ilmiyyah Thaqafiyah (continuous effort to increase science and knowledge), Shirkah Iqtishadiyah (building economic strength and fair distribution), and Fikrah Ijtima’iyah (active involvement to the resolution of social problems).\textsuperscript{139}

The party also conducts an evaluation of the cadres, the results of which are reported regularly by murabbi to the Cadre Development Body as a formal institution in the party that handle and supervise halaqah. The report is used as one of the references in evaluating and determining the future career of the cadres. The party also established the BPDO (Badan Penegak Disiplin Organisation, the Board for Organizational Discipline Enforcement) as the body in charge of disciplinary issues, hence the main instrument to ensure the cadres’ commitment to the implementation of the party’s mission. At a practical level, BPDO play a significant role in receiving complaints from murabbi or cadres about other cadres who show lack of commitment.


to the party’s shared values when performing their duty. Generally, the main reason for BPDO to exert disciplinary measure relates to the cadres’ inconsistency in following halaqah activities which is of paramount importance for the infusion of the shared values. This indicates the significance of halaqah in preserving the corps spirit and developing the character of the cadres that should not be taken lightly.

The discussion above indicates that the process of shared values maintenance is very carefully managed. These processes are said to be put in place to guarantee the infusion of the shared values among the cadres of all levels. Looking it from this perspective, halaqah is designed to bring about uniformity of the cadres’ understanding and subsequently constraint the cadres’ freedom to act and think independently, thus decreasing the spirit of democracy in this party. For the same reason, Masdar Hilmy maintains that “the lack of autonomy among PKS activists is to a large degree inspired also by the cell system (usroh) inherited from the tarbiyah method, which relies heavily on collective action.”

The indoctrination process of halaqah has been an effective way of transferring and maintenance of the party shared values among the cadres. According to Randall, PKS is one of the parties in Indonesia that has most successfully developed its value system, and it indicates the presence of institutionalization where the party could create “its own value system or culture.” In his research on the behavior of seven political parties in Indonesia, Ignas Kleden also comes to the conclusion that PKS is one of the parties in Indonesia that has most successfully developed its value system.

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The Spirit of Collectivism

PKS cadres believe that only through *berjamaah* can Islamic norms and values be realized. The spirit of collectivism demands that the cadres sacrifice their self-interests and put forward the party’s interests on the top priority. The spirit of sacrifice has been practiced by the cadres in a daily basis, such as joining party activities in a difficult situation, giving financial assistance to the party’s activities, and even devoting their whole life to running the party. In such a situation, ‘self-benefit behavior is seen as having no place in the party. In general, the cadres regarded themselves as the tool of da’wacause for the glory of Islam. This mindset encourages them to uphold the interest of the party above their personal interest.

The commitment to put forward the interest of the party and the existence of *jamaah* over personal interest also encourages the cadres to do their best for the success of the da’wa movement. Cadres are taught that disappointment and regret will ensue when the cadres tint the party with disgraced behavior. In some cases, a cadre chooses to leave the party voluntarily after committing something inappropriate. In Jambi Province, for instance, Zulhalmi Al Hamidi preferred to leave the party after the media reported him among several people caught by the police raid while he was attending a massage center. It has become a policy of PKS that the cadres are not allowed to attend some places associated by general public with vice, mischief, and shamelessness, massage centers (*Panti Pijat*) being one such place. His supporters, however, argue that given that illness meant that he genuinely needed a therapeutic

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144 The party cadres are obliged to donate some percentage of their income to run the party’s programs and activities. The famous slogan of “Sunduqna Juyubuna” (Our [party’s] treasures is [coming from] our own pockets) describes well the source of party financial resources since its inception. See Abu Nida, “Sunduqna Juyubuna” Rahasia Keuangan PKS,” www.pksdeliserdang.or.id also www.tarbawia.com. In addition, for regular event, such as local or national congress (Musda and Munas), the party often launches a donation program such as Galibu (Gerakan Lima Puluh Ribu/Fifty Thousand Rupiah Movement), see “Lima hari dibuka, Galibu Munas ke-4 PKS tembus Rp. 660 juta,” PKS Kota Padangsidimpuan, www.padangsidimpuan.pks.id. Since the party gets its financial support from its members and cadres, the more members and the cadres the better for the party’s income.


massage, he had good reason to go to the Panti Pijat Sehat Bersih. However, due to negative image of the massage clinic as a place often used for illegal prostitution, and in order to save the party’s image, Al Hamidi resigned from the party.\(^{147}\) The party accepted his decision, even though Panti Pijat Sehat Bersih actually has a legal certificate as bona fide therapeutic massage clinic and, unlike many massage centers, is not involved in sexual services and prostitution.\(^{148}\)

Closely related to the cadres’ collective awareness is the willingness to put aside personal opinion upon receiving the party or leaders’ (qiyadah) decisions.\(^{149}\) The obedience of the cadres to the party leadership might be taken as a proof that the cadres are prone to the party’s indoctrination process of blind obedience. In PKS, obedience to the leader is one of the party shared values, and the rules of the game that will strengthen the cohesiveness of the party. As a party with highly disciplinary character, obedience to the decision of the leadership is a necessary tool to ensure the success of the agreed programs of da’wa. In fact, before coming to the decision, opinions of the cadres are taken into great consideration. Not all decisions taken by the party leaders will satisfy the cadres, but once the decision is made, all the cadres are obliged to follow. Cadres’ obedience to the party leadership is partly the result of their unswerving commitment to da’wa, as enumerated in the point of declaration of *sumpah kader* (the cadre’s oath). *Sumpah Kader* mentions loyalty to da’wa and willingness to establish Islamic values.\(^{150}\) There are at least three important points in the cadres’ oath; (1) the establishment of Islamic Sharia, (2) consistent fulfillment of the obligations as a member of the party, including obeying and being loyal to the leaders, and (3) implementation of the objectives of da’wa.\(^{151}\)


\(^{150}\) The 2005 ART of PKS Article 6

As a party driven by ideological motivation, the quality of understanding of the ideology becomes a parameter for making decisions. The level of understanding and commitment of the shared values is considered to be one of the indicators that determine the position of a cadre in the party. The party leaders are considered by the cadres to have the most commitment and understanding of the party’s ideology. Due to the seniority and ideological maturity, members of Majelis Syura are considered the best cadres of PKS, whose decision owes obedience and respect. Despite the concept of obedience to the party leadership, the relation between cadres and leaders tends to be like a member of family, where every cadre had a chance to convey his arguments and treated as a brother and sister rather than as subordinates. In this circumstance, the party could relatively maintain the culture of consultation, which enhanced the collectiveness. The spirit of collectivism helps to create a sense of interdependence that enhances the notion of one community united by similar beliefs, and becomes the foundation for the spirit of sharing and understanding each other.

B. Preserving Party Cohesion

_Halaqah_ plays an important role in developing the cadres’ collective commitment to the party’s shared values that proves advantageous for the preservation of party cohesion. The first advantage is that the cadres perceive the party as a tool where they can develop and pursue their idealism. In other words, despite the shortcoming, the party becomes the cadres’ political vehicle to carry out the spirit of da’wa. As a parameter of cadres’ behavior and thinking, the party’s shared values prevent any individuals from creating and developing alternative ideological positions that will create schisms, fractions or camps within the party. It also protects the party from the presence of figures who might take over the process of understanding and interpreting the ideology or the leadership of the party in the name of improving the party’s situation. This condition makes the creation of alternative camps or parties within PKS highly difficult. Another advantage is that the commitment to the unity of the party encourages the cadres to promote party harmony rather than personal ambition. It created the belief of the importance of being part of one group. This esprit de corps becomes an important reason for many of PKS’ cadres to remain in the group,
or at least restrain themselves from actions or activities that will give a bad name to the party or harm the cohesiveness of the party.

The relative success of the party in infusing the shared values means that the internal conflict will not be about the fundamental issues such as party ideology, but most likely about strategic or tactical issues. As the PKS spokesman, Mardani Ali Sera, once said that internal debate or conflict among PKS leaders is nothing but about “choosing the best vehicle after agreeing about the place to go.” Therefore, conflict is considered as a natural consequence of the deliberative efforts to find the best possible way of implementing the party ideology. Under this circumstance, differences at the technical or strategic level do not jeopardize party’s cohesion. The willingness of the cadres to maintain the unity of the party and their obedience to the decisions of the leaders has rendered the internal dispute manageable. In relation to the cohesiveness of the party, the following sections discuss the way the party manage some politically controversial issues.

On July 2004, Indonesia held the first direct presidential election, with five pairs running for the race, namely Wiranto-Salahuddin Wahid, nominated by Golkar, Megawati-Hasyim Muzadi, endorsed by PDI-P, Amin Rais-Siswono Yudhohusudo from PAN, S.B. Yudoyono-Jusuf Kalla, from Democrat Party. Initially, PKS preferred to refrain from giving support to any candidate, and advised its cadres not to participate in any campaign for the presidency. However, this political stance did not last long. Two weeks before the election day, PKS released a statement that the party supports Amien Rais for presidency. The delay in making this political decision was actually caused by the heated controversies among the party leaders concerning a better candidate to choose from, namely Rais or Wiranto. According to a group who supported the first, the figure of Rais was strategic and perfect in a way that he would

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153 In his interview with Alfred C. Stepan and Mirjam Kunkler, Amien Rais recalled that PKS political support was half-hearted. See “An Interview with Amien Rais,” in Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2007, p. 213.
be a magnet for people committed to the reform, due to his credential in the Reformasi movement that resulted in the Soeharto’s resignation, marking the end of the Indonesian New Order. And as a leader of Muhammadiyah, one of the biggest Indonesian Muslim organizations, Rais will be very supportive to da’wa movement.154

However, for the proponents of the latter, Rais was only popular within the modernist Muslims, intellectual groups and professionals in urban areas, which comprises only a limited number of the total population. They are more convinced with Wiranto chance to win the race due to his popularity at the grassroots level or remote areas. Furthermore, the fact that Golkar was in full support of Wiranto candidacy, his chance to win was even greater. Hence, for the sake of da’wa, they urged PKS to lend support to the candidate who had a better chance to win the race. Moreover, they also saw Wiranto as the figure that was just as sympathetic to da’wa movement as was Rais.155 Wiranto’s track-record showed that despite his military background, he was not hostile to da’wa movement. In fact, his two daughters were members of PKS’ tarbiyah.156 Nevertheless, eventually, all the cadres who supported Wiranto could accept the party’s decision that all the people and especially PKS’ members should support Rais in the 2004 Election.157

The abovementioned case indicates that the prospect of da’wa was the underlying reason of each group in determining the support for certain presidential candidates, meaning that despite differences in their political preference, they shared a similar commitment to the struggle and continuation of da’wa movement. From the neo-institutionalism perspective formulated by Douglas C. North, PKS’ political


157 Anis Matta was among the party elites who support Wiranto for president. However, when the decision was reached, he was readily abided by the decision. See Sapto Waluyo, Kebangkitan Politik Dakwah. Konsep dan Praktik Politik Partai Keadilan Sejahtera di Masa Transisi, Bandung: Harakatuna Publishing, 2005, p.213.
behavior represents the party ideology. When PKS finds that existing institutions are advantageous to them, the party tends to behave rationally and pragmatically, but otherwise, it will resort to its ideological underpinning. As the case of 2004 presidential election kick-off show us, PKS was facing a hard choice. More pragmatic elements, such as the chance to win the election, led the party to incline more to Wiranto, but a final decision to lend support to Amien in the last minute signifies the greater influence of ideology in the party’s political inclination, since Amien was considered to have very close ideological as well as organizational relation with the party. This particular case also indicates that, despite serious debate among the party’s cadres, the party is still able to maintain its solidity due to the strongly held commitment to shared values among the cadres.

Another delicate case, or perhaps the most significant issue, was the party’s decision to support the government policy to raise the price of petrol by reducing the very generous government subsidiary. Initially, PKS leaders explicitly rejected the government plan to cut the subsidy in 2005. Despite its coalition of President Yudhoyono’s cabinet, the party clearly understood that supporting unpopular government policy would incite unfavorable reaction from its supporters and constituents. This attitude changed after the party elites met with the president. This sudden change of attitude triggered a strong reaction from PKS supporters, especially from KAMMI, the student organization affiliated with PKS and the tarbiyah community. Many of them even urged PKS to withdraw from the coalition, since the party’s support for the government’s policy was having a debilitating impact upon its popularity.

Despite the strong reaction from PKS cadres,\textsuperscript{158} the commitment to preserve the unity of the party remained an important element in party’s cohesiveness. In this case, cadres’ attitude of obedience to the leader becomes the main reason to accept the decision of the party’s leadership, and most of the cadres eventually accepted the

party’s policy to remain in the coalition. Even though their opinion was in diametrical opposition with party policy, due to the spirit of *jamaah* and obedient attitude toward the leaders, the cadres finally agreed to accept it and kept their decision as individual preferences. Again, this case reflects the party’s capability to preserve its unity through the cadres’ commitment to the shared values.

PKS decision to be an “open party” in 2008, hence the willingness to join coalition with a Christian party in regional election and campaigning for non-Muslim candidates, is also one of the most controversial issues faced by the party’s cadres. This policy generated protest and resentment from the party activists, who perceived the party as giving priority to political success over da’wa movement. The primary issue is actually a dispute between ideological purity and political expediency. Ideological purists of the party argued that PKS must uphold the basic Islamist characteristic that provides guidelines for the Islamization of the society, and compromising this very characteristic of the party will imperil this mission. For the pragmatists, PKS aims to bring change to Indonesian society. However, since PKS is not in power, the party needs to gain support from the political mainstream. Ideological inflexibility will not do but a hindrance to the party’s prospect of expanding the constituency.

Other component of the openness strategy of the party is the decision to conduct controversial campaign ads in the run-up to 2009 election. The political advertisements displayed Soeharto as one of Indonesia’s greatest heroes. The advertisements were obviously targeted to win the support of military families and Golkar grassroots, at the risk of alienating the core supporters, who still remember the repression that the Islamists faces during the regime’s power. Other advertisements with the theme “Partai Kita Semua” (the Party for Everyone) also irked purist cadres and supporters because they portrayed women without headscarves. The Great Indonesians and Party for Everyone ads were considered by the purists to be responsible for the PKS’ decline in core base areas of Depok, Jakarta and Bandung in the 2009 election, because supporters of the party previous election took them as evidence that the party has

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changed.\footnote{The share of vote in Jakarta, Depok and Bandung showed a significant decline by 330,990 and 343,476 between 2004 and 2009. See \textit{Ibid.}, p. 73.} As a strategy of constituency expansion, these advertisements attempted to reach various segments of society to gain sufficient vote of twenty percent that will enable the party to run its own presidential candidate. However, this strategy proved to have adverse effect on the party’s core base; it might have appealed to small segment of new voters, but it alienated its core voters.

Apart from the result of the 2009 election,\footnote{See “Tanya Jawab dengan K.H. Hilmi Aminuddin,” in \textit{Bekal Untuk Kader Dakwah}, Jakarta: DPP Partai Keadilan Sejahtera Bidang Arsip dan Sejarah, 2012. “Bayan (Penjelasan) PKS Seputar Isu Partai Terbuka dan Caleg Non-Muslim,” \url{www.dpccipayung.wordpress.com}.} both purists and pragmatists have unshakeable belief of the significance of da’wa cause as a shared value of all party’s cadres; they differ only on the methods and praxis, not on the substance and ideology. In this regard, the party leaders seek to develop an inclusive approach to include more segments of Indonesian society into PKS constituencies. The openness strategy is believed by the party leaders to give the party a better chance to win the election, hence increasing the possibility for the party to promote Islamic norms, values and ideals in Indonesian pluralist country. In other words, this strategy is merely a conceivable tool to further the da’wa movement. Although the leaders have tried to rationalize their policy,\footnote{“Yusuf Supendi dan Simpul Perpecahan PKS?” \url{www.detik.com/berita/1595480}. “PKS Terjangkit Sindrom Kekecilan Baju,” \url{www.suara-islam.com/read/index/954}. “PKS Seberapa Terbuka?” \url{www.azisaf.wordpress.com}.} many of the cadres did not yet have a similar understanding on this issue, and took it as an indication of the party’s failure to maintain the very characteristic of the party.\footnote{“Forum Kader Peduli (FKP) Tizar Zein Menilai Mata Hati Para Elite PKS Sudah Tertutup Oleh Materi dan Jabatan,” \url{www.politicalislamnews.blogspot.com.au/2011/03}. “FKP: Peringatan dari Kader buat PKS,” \url{www.mediaumat.com/news-dalam-negeri/348}.} They also assumed that this decision was driven by political and material gain at the expense of party idealism. Some of them set up a forum named FKP to criticize this policy.\footnote{“Tanya Jawab dengan K.H. Hilmi Aminuddin,” in \textit{Bekal Untuk Kader Dakwah}, Jakarta: DPP Partai Keadilan Sejahtera Bidang Arsip dan Sejarah, 2012. “Bayan (Penjelasan) PKS Seputar Isu Partai Terbuka dan Caleg Non-Muslim,” \url{www.dpccipayung.wordpress.com}.} For the party’s cadres who are in favor of this strategy, they believe that the party needed to be flexible in order to be acceptable to the plural
Indonesian societies and more influential on the life of the people. Furthermore, they maintain that being more inclusive does not contradict da’wa. In fact, the very characteristic of da’wa was the flexibility of delivering message for people of different background.

The differences of opinion among the party cadres are inevitable, but these differences do not lead to the fragmentation of the party, nor to precariousness. The shared value of obedience prevents the cadres from prolonging the controversies. Instead of making counter statement on the controversies that might add fuel to fire, the party elites shift their focus on the practical social and political issues. PKS leaders believe that the presence of the commitment to the unity of the party will eventually manage to put an end to politically unnecessary debates on the openness strategy. Eventually, following the concept of sami’na wa atha’na, most of the cadres preferred to understand the leaders’ instructions and began implementing them. Although some ex-cadres might have a strong opinion on such policies, many of PKS cadres ceased to complain about such political accommodation, and refrained from seizing upon it as ammunition to attack the party leadership. The presence of the cadres’ consciousness to keep the party united in difficult situations is an indication of the success of the party in infusing the shared values. The majority of the cadres also refused to follow FKP, which recently rebranded into LDKI (Lembaga Dakwah Kemuliaan Islam, Da’wa Council for the Glory of Islam) and attended mainly by the


167 According to the initiator of LDKI, the word “Kemuliaan/Glory” denotes that LDKI is established to redirect da’wa into its original path, namely the glory of Islam. The initiator of the council observes that many activists of da’wa movement have in fact used Islam for their personal glory. See “Para Aktivis Dakwah Resmi Dirikan LDKI,” www.islampos.com.
disenchantcd cadres and individuals who wanted to expose some wrongdoings of this party and how far this party has deviated from its initial platform.168

However, some important figures are still very critical of their former party.169 One of them is Yusuf Supendi, the former vice chairman of DSP (Dewan Syariah Pusat, The Central of Sharia Council) dismissed in 2009.170 After his dismissal from the party, Supendi expressed his resistance through the mass media and directly attacked the leaders of the party.171 The interesting point was that he did not attack the party for deviating from its ideology; instead, he accused the two leaders of the party, Luthfi H. Ishaaq and Matta, for committing improper behavior namely corruption, defamation and terror towards him,172 which was denied by both Ishaaq and Matta. He then also accused ten PKS leaders for illegally dismissing him from the party.173 This personal allegation did not create a serious impact on the cadres, nor the solidity of the party. Supendi’s maneuver to expose an internal issue within the party to the media, as well as attacking his former fellows in the party, indicates that he did not find any available support inside the party.174 According to Sembiring, all PKS’ cadres in all regions of the country were still solid and were not influenced by Supendi’s political

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maneuvers.\textsuperscript{175} Hence, Sembiring’s statement can be seen to highlight the basic fact of the cadres’ solidity and maturity to the extent that they cannot easily be persuaded to uncritically follow certain figures or a group of people, especially when these people’s motive is obviously to make faction in the party. Consequently, the case represents further evidence of the close relation and relevance between the presence of shared values and the preservation of party cohesion.

The much bigger scandal of “Beef-gate” is, nevertheless, undoubtedly having a devastating impact on the party whose reputation is heavily built on personal morality and zero tolerance for corruption. The scandal began in 29 January 2013, when investigators from Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, KPK) raided a five-star hotel room in Jakarta and arrested a man named Ahmad Fathnah caught sharing a room with a college student, and confiscated suitcase containing IDR 1 billion (approximately $103,000).\textsuperscript{176} The next day, PKS chairman, Luthfi Hasan Ishaq (LHI) was apprehended in connection with the same case. Later on two business executives of Indoguna were also arrested. These four individuals were accused of involvement in arranging additional beef import quota from the Ministry of Agriculture, whose minister was also a member of PKS. The allegation was that Indoguna executive paid a bribery in return to LHI’s assistance in helping them gaining government approval to get additional beef-import quota.\textsuperscript{177} Declaring innocence, LHI tended his resignation from the PKS leadership. His arrest was followed by an outcry among the party members as well as its elites that LHI’s case is nothing but a set-up and a frame to discredit the PKS chairman and destroy the party’s image and reputation. Hidayat Nur Wahid, a senior parliamentarian of PKS, mentioned the likelihood of conspiracy against PKS due to the party’s strong anti-corruption


\textsuperscript{176} “‘Beef-gate’ Transfixes Scandal-Prone Indonesia,” in www.nytimes.com/2013/05/17/world/Asia.

\textsuperscript{177} Ibid.
stance. Anis Matta also alleged that KPK is being used as political tools, and he “feels the presence of a big conspiracy.”

While this indignant response resonated with the party faithful, it drew widespread criticism toward the party. One comment argued that attack on KPK would further undermine the party’s reputation, since the public faith in KPK was still much higher than it was in the party, and PKS criticism on this popular institution made the party’s stance on zero tolerance to corruption questionable. Furthermore, constructing a conspiracy theory was tantamount to blaming ‘invisible enemies’, serving only to further damage to the party’s image. PKS leaders took this criticism wisely, and as a result the party’s handling of the scandal shifted away from denial to distancing the party from the any association with the case. Deputy Secretary-General of PKS at that time, Fahri Hamzah, for instance, stated that the case was a personal matter of LHI and Fathanah. Even much further, the party took a step back from the case by issuing a decree prohibiting the cadres from giving a comment on the case.

As the investigation continued, bribery and money laundering aspects of the scandal were followed by much more salacious elements that provided endless fodder for the media. The private lives of Fathanah and LHI were unpacked. During the investigation, it is revealed that Fathanah had affairs with dozens of women, and possibly had intimate relationship with many of them, in spite of being a married man. As for LHI, his third marriage to a high school student took a further toll on his image.

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as media painted an increasingly negative picture on the relationship between 52-year-old man and a teenager.\(^{184}\) On the 4\(^{th}\) of November 2013, Fathanah was found guilty of corruption for receiving grants on behalf of LHI and sentenced to 14 years imprisonment and a fine of IDR 1 billion or an additional six month in prison.\(^{185}\) As for LHI, despite his defense plea, he was sentenced to 16 years in prison on 9 December 2013 and a fine of IDR 1 billion or additional year imprisonment.\(^{186}\) Predictably, LHI asked for appeal and maintained his innocence.\(^{187}\) Upon the issuance of the sentences, PKS responded that it was unfair judgment compared to other sentences given to politicians found guilty of corruption.\(^{188}\) In addition, PKS publishes Luthfi’s defense statement in its entirety without any commentary.\(^{189}\)

This scandal of corruption and sexual intrigue led to speculation that PKS was marching towards its ultimate demise. Reporting in the mainstream media, polling results and opinion surveys made the general public believe that PKS was doomed. Surveying by Pol-Tracking Institute found that PKS was on the top list of political parties to have received the most negative media coverage throughout 2013.\(^ {190}\) A study by CSIS (the Center for Strategic and International Studies) found that in term of electability, PKS was ranked the seventh out of twelve parties competing in 2014 election, while the National Survey Institute ranked PKS as eighth most electable.\(^ {191}\) Surveys by other polling organizations also showed grim prospects for PKS.


\(^{186}\) “LHI Divonis 16 Tahun Penjara,” www.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/hukum/13/12/09.


\(^{190}\) “PKS Mengalami Titik Balik,” www.politik.rmol.co/read/2014/01/14/139946.

Survey Indonesia predicted that PKS would not pass the parliamentary threshold of 3.5%, leading to speculation that PKS will eventually face “electoral extinction” in 2014.

Badly damaged by a major corruption scandal widely covered by national media, PKS’ image and reputation seemed to be beyond repair. It was predicted that the Beef-gate would seriously undermine the chance of PKS candidates to win the gubernatorial posts. The results of gubernatorial elections in West Java and North Sumatera, however, contradicted this prediction. The wins in these two provinces boosted the morale of PKS’s cadres and drew positive comments from some observers. According to Firman Noor, “PKS’ victories were a result of the candidates’ positive image and programs, generated mainly through social activities, including humanitarian activities and pengajian (Quran recital gathering).” Some observers also gave their comment that PKS’ victory in two gubernatorial elections demonstrated that despite wide media coverage, the case of LHI corruption scandal did not influence the grassroots voters, and the party’s reputation was not beyond repair. PKS leaders point to the triumphs as a solid proof that PKS was not only a resolute political survivor but also a solid political contender, and the party did not lose public trust.

PKS’ success in winning the gubernatorial elections amid the scandal beleaguering its chairman warrants some explanations. First of all, the party structure is responsible for the political survival of the party. The party is strongly based on grassroots membership and its cadres’ network constitutes one of the strongest political

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party networks in Indonesia. Because ‘the cadres are the most precious assets of the party’, it is not surprising that the first response in handling the LHI case is to deal with the cadres’ concern first. They badly need to know what happened. As an effort to consolidate the cadres, PKS leadership aired their genuine concern about the survival and existence of the party. The presence of existential threat faced by the party was translated into the rhetoric of anti-PKS conspiracy. This rhetoric was deliberately used for two purposes, namely to mitigate the negative impact of the beef-gate upon the cadres’ solidity, and to mobilize reactionary support from among core cadres who found their party under attack and found themselves in uncertain and tumultuous situation. These psychological and situational factors contribute to the party’s inclination to stay true to its ideological underpinning.

Conspiracy theory may draw criticism from political observers and general public, but it is effective in cultivating the support of PKS cadres, who are sincerely moved to defend their party’s reputation. Unlike PKS leaders who restrained themselves from making public statement regarding the scandal, the party cadres made use of social media to accuse other political parties, and even other countries, of orchestrating the scandal to undermine PKS. Using information platforms such as Twitter and online news Web site, PKS cadres presented their version of the story. As for the party elites, instead of making counter-response through national media, they chose to reengage with cadres and reaffirm their commitment to the core values of the party. This popular move proves to be effective in regaining the grassroots support of the cadres who might have been disappointed by the scandal. At the rally in Central Sulawesi after the fasting month of Ramadan, PKS apologized to all its members and

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197 Frequently visited and PKS-affiliated website, www.pkspiyungan.org is full with comments supporting LHI and saw him as a victim of conspiracy to undermine PKS.


asked them not to lose faith in the party’s vision. The party’s high concern to consolidate the cadres is not without reason. As a cadre-based party, cadres are the most important asset for PKS. It is the cadres who “give life” to the party, not the outsiders like Fathanah. Based on the public statements and actions made by PKS local branches of Magelang, Semarang, Solo, Sukabumi and Yogyakarta, to mention only a few, asserting their support for the party and its leadership, the party elites knew that PKS was never really in danger of losing its coherence amid the bombardment of negative media coverage.

When the PKS leadership was confident enough with the solidity of its cadres, they could focus more on the future of the party, especially in the upcoming election of 2014. For this purpose, PKS leaders began adopting a strategy of detaching the party from the scandal. This approach was in stark contrast to the outcry among PKS members when LHI was first arrested. Now, the party left the case to the investigation of the anti-corruption commission and let the judicial system handle the case. Without attempts to intervene, PKS assigned lawyers to defend the LHI case. This shift of PKS strategy in managing scandal was a consequence of party’s commitment to its ideology and shared values, and the external factors, namely national media with its intellectual and political network.

The initial approach of PKS on the LHI scandal can be understood as an act of minimalizing “mortality salience.” Experimental studies demonstrate that mortality

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salience would urge the people to incline more toward established belief systems and identities. Other qualities, such as greater patriotism, religious fanaticism, stereotyping, support for traditional gender norms, and preference for aggressive response to ideas, individuals, or groups perceived as threatening to the socially shared values and beliefs are some examples of the products of one’s awareness of mortality salience.  

During the initial stage of the scandal, PKS leaders are facing an obvious threat of the demise or, at best, fragmentation of the party. There is a strong expectation that such relentless media coverage of the scandal involving a top leader of PKS would tarnish the party’s image and reputation to the point of beyond repair. Faced with this existential threat, PKS leaders attempted to find refuge in the established ideology and shared values of the party. The rhetoric of anti-PKS conspiracy is a natural response of the party to protect its cohesiveness and existence. This strategy also aimed to consolidate the cadres’ support for the party’s struggle to avoid or minimalize the mortality salience created by unknown actors through the scandal. When the situation became clear and the party leadership was reassured of the cadres’ solidity and support, with the LHI case being declared a personal issue, the party’s strategy changed accordingly.

**Conclusion**

The discussion above shows that the PKS cadres’ commitment to shared values provides a positive impact on the cohesion of the party. It prevents the party from fragmentation or fictionalization from within. Persuasion, provocation or defamation, even from some founding fathers and important figures who had officially left the party prove to be unsuccessful. PKS has shown considerable capacity to preserve unity of purpose by focusing on da’wa as its raison d’etre. Shared values such as collectivism,

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obedience, and gradualism, are transmitted to the cadres through the halaqah. The unique identity as “a soldier of da’wa”, whose main duty is to struggle for God’s pleasure, creates commitment to preserve the ideals of the party, and the cadres regarded such ideals as their priority.

For the cadres, the party is not merely “a disposable tool” for material and personal gain, rather it is a vehicle to advance the da’wa cause. Since da’wa should be collectively conducted, the commitment to obey the leaders is of paramount importance to maintain the spirit of togetherness. Thanks to the cadres’ commitment to the shared values of the party, PKS was relatively successful in effectively executing conflict-management strategy, hence avoiding internal fragmentation. The rule of the game is a significant foundation to base their attempt to resolve conflict, which, over time, satisfied most of the cadres and decreased any disappointment that may have ensued from it. On numerous occasions, issues emerged that had the potential to shake the unity of the members. Nevertheless, thanks largely to the cadres’ commitment to shared values, PKS was able to avoid serious or prolonged conflict and was generally able to maintain its cohesion and focus.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE SURVIVAL OF A DA’WA PARTY AND THE MOBILISATION OF ITS BASE

Since its inception in 1998, PKS has managed to recruit a large number of committed Muslim youth and expanded its organization to build one of the most dynamic Islamist parties in Indonesia. The party successfully expanded its organization against the declining popularity and electoral backdrop of most of Islam-based national parties in the last two elections of 2004 and 2009.205 Popular support for religious parties collectively has shrunk at the national level over the last ten years.206 In the post-New Order election of 1999, these religious parties managed to collect only 36.5 per cent of the total vote, and secure 163 seats in parliament (DPR, Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, People’s Representative Council). The increasing support to 38.35 per cent in 2004 is chiefly due to the dramatic expansion of PKS, while most of religious parties experienced a decrease in votes. The vote in 2009 election showed a drop in vote percentage, where the religious parties garnered only 29.6 per cent. In 2014, they managed to saw a modest improvement in their collective vote to 31.8 per cent. Compared to secular-nationalist parties, such as Golkar, PDIP (Struggle Democratic Party), Partai Demokrat (Democrat Party) and Gerindra, parties which identified with political Islam failed in improving their electoral gain due to their exclusive and puritanical ideology.207

205 It is predicted that the declining popularity of religious parties indicates popular disapproval of Islamism in Indonesian political life, and its relating ideas such as the enforcement of Sharia. See Saiful Mujani and William R. Liddle, “Muslim Indonesia’s Secular Democracy”, in Asian Survey, 49, 4, 2009, p. 575-590.

206 Defined as party that is based on an Islamist ideology or depend on Islamic symbols and resources for mobilization, Islam-based party includes large spectrum of religious parties such as the Crescent Star Party (Partai Bulan Bintan or PBB) and the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or PPP), which are orthodox and conservative; Justice and Prosperous Party (PKS), which is Islamist and inspired by Ikhwanul Muslimin model of ideology; the National Mandate Party Partai Amanat Nasional or PAN), which is modernist and associated with Muhammadiyah organization; and the National Awakening Party (PKB), which is religious and nationalist, and established by the Nahdlatul Ulama.

The polling trends for Islam-based party’s in the last four successive elections since 1999 point to a minimal role for political Islam in electoral politics. At the same time, against the declining trends of political Islam, secular-nationalist parties and their elites compete to become more ‘Islam-friendly’ and assertive in advancing religious-based policies and agendas in efforts to appeal to the median Muslim voter. Secular-nationalist parties also managed to establish Islamic institutions within their own parties; PDI-P, Golkar and Partai Demokrat (PD) have Islamic wings. Through this soft Islamic policy, they have successfully courted Muslim voters away from Islamist parties. It is against this highly competitive electoral politics that political Islam, particularly the PKS, must search for a way to survive politically. How the PKS manages to mobilize and survive under such competitive democratic conditions is the main topic discussed in this chapter.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the PKS organizational cohesion achieved through the party institutionalization that accounts for its political survival and the expansion of the party in democratic Indonesia. The second part of the chapter discusses the party’s community building strategy in delivering social welfare that is considered to contribute to the party’s expansion of its

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210 For example, PDI-P set up a Bait al-Muslimin Indonesia (House of Indonesia Muslims), which conducts Islamic education and assists PDI-P Muslim members who need to travel for haj (pilgrimage) to Mecca. PD also established Nurussalam Dhikir Council (Light of Peace) which regularly arranges dhizir berjamaah events (collective remembrance of God) which includes recitation of ninety-nine names of Allah (asma al-husna) and supplications, and also religious speeches by high-ranking officials and Muslim clerics.
relatively solid mass support base. The third part analyzes the ability of the party to frame its social and political activism as religious duty and its ability to use institutional structure that allowed the party to provide the politically ambitious cadres an upward mobility for their political career. The last section deals with the result of party’s moderation in regard to its electoral gain.

A. Building Party Cohesion

In the last decade of the New Order era, socio-economic transformations have brought about a new breed of educated young Muslims, who were assertive in advancing their religious identity and metropolitan life-style. After the demise of the New Order regime, a range of non-state religious movements and organizations competed with one another to address the interests of these nascent Muslims of urban middle and working class, which were generally neglected during the reign of undemocratic secular regime. These organizations offered competing spiritual and socio-cultural functions, services and ideologies for these newly-emerged religiously-committed youth. There is a long list of organizations to choose from; young Muslims aspired to build social ties and achieve spiritual rewards could join more established organizations such as the NU, Muhammadiyah or the prominent Islamic Student Association (HMI), or youth wings of religious national parties. Besides, the youth are also presented with multiple choices of religious groups, including Islamist ones such as the PK and Hizbut Tahrir.

Even though faithful membership has not become a norm among these youth, competition to court the young and promising Muslim leaders grows intense among religious-based organizations. In practice, these organizations were in competition with one another to gain control or influence of state power and get state patronage. It came natural that in the wake of New Order’s collapse, one of these religious-based


organizations found a political momentum to create their own political parties, such as PK, while others chose to keep their intimate associations with particular parties, such as Muhammadiyah with PAN, and NU with PKB. The rise of the PKS and its aggressive recruitment of young cadres have accounted for antagonism of these two-biggest religious organizations toward the party. The fact that Islamist organizations have gained popularity among the newly ascending urban middle class Muslim constituencies has led scholars to understand the cause of successful Islamist mobilization, especially Islamist recruitment of the Muslim youth.

The PKS mobilization power can be illustrated by its electoral performances during 1999 to 2009. In the first democratic national legislative elections in 1999, the party’s predecessor, PK, won just 1.4 per cent of the vote, gaining only seven seats in the 500-member House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR). In the next election, PKS witnessed the increasing vote of 7.3 per cent, from which the party secured 45 seats in the DPR, and also in 2009 election, with slightly increase into 7.8 per cent, winning 57 seats of the 560-member House.\(^2\) It is important to note that PKS electoral success in 2004 and 2009 elections was at the expense of the sharp decline of all other Islamic faith-based parties, and against the dramatic rise of the relatively new Democratic Party (PD) led by the previous President Yudhoyono. While all other parties of religious or nationalist background have lost most of their popular support, the PKS has managed to retain a steady support base and become the fourth largest party in the DPR and the most prominent religious party in the country.\(^3\) The relatively solid mass support base, both among members as well as sympathizers, is responsible for the mobilization power of the party. Based on the national survey of CSIS in 2008, PKS enjoys the highest level of loyalty (above 75 per cent) among party supporters, while other parties show comparatively modest rates ranging from 32 per cent to 61 per cent.\(^4\) While many other parties suffer opportunistic behavior and


\(^4\) The loyalty rates of other major parties are as follows: Golkar 61%, PDI-P 55%, PKB 48, 5%, and PPP 32%, respectively. CSIS, Jakarta, Perilaku Pemilih Indonesia 2008, Jakarta: CSIS, 2008.
severe factionalism among party members that weaken their organizational cohesion, PKS has a better cohesiveness in term of party-member relationship.\textsuperscript{217}

Well-organized party machinery makes a substantial contribution to the strength of PKS. The organization has grown rapidly and steadily since its inception in 1998 to achieve a more than ten-fold membership increase in the past ten years. Currently, approximately 800,000 members are registered with PKS.\textsuperscript{218} The party’s ability to recruit committed cadres ready to serve the party’s collective cause in the long term is particularly intriguing. Furthermore, the party’s relative success in recruiting the Muslim youth against the backdrop of democratization and Islamization is also worth investigating because the youth in general and students in particular are always vital brokers for political change in Indonesian politics.\textsuperscript{219} The following section explains the recruitment and cadrerization method that contribute to the cadre’s loyalty to the party and leadership.

\textit{Merit-Based Recruitment}

In regard with recruitment, PKS establishes internal organizational mechanisms which are different from other political parties. The party establishes a mechanism that enables young active and potential members a fair chance to pursue a career in the organization. The main purpose of this mechanism is to guarantee fair and meritocratic recruitment and promotion instead of personal loyalty and/or connections to prominent figures.\textsuperscript{220} Without exception, every single cadre is obliged to follow the process of cadrerization through \textit{halaqah} or \textit{liqa}. The cadres are organized into core

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study groups at the district level. Each group forms the basic unit, called an *usrah* system, which is inherited by the party from the Tarbiyah movement. Throughout the mandatory weekly group meeting, the senior cadres, called *murabbi*, grade the cadres’ (1) commitment to service, (2) qualification, and (3) grassroots support for promotion and selection of cadres for higher office. Cadrerization results are used as a guide in the process of recruitment and promotion. Only the cadres who are qualified for particular positions and offices will be promoted for a higher office. New cadres cannot be promoted quickly without participating in cadrerization process, even if they are well-connected to a prominent figure.

There are certain steps to follow before the team come to decision regarding the cadre’s promotion. At the local level, the *murabbi* monitors the potential cadres and then, based on his/her observation, promotes the cadres to the special team consisting of senior members of the party and representatives of the cadrerization department. The team will check the cadres’ *halaqah* or *liqa* performance, selected some names and convey them to all of the cadres for the selection. Because of the meritocratic dynamics of internal elections, the opportunity to find the best candidates for the party leadership is greatly increased, because only the most-qualified cadres will pass the fit and proper test before joining the election. Therefore, in general, the top figures in the party structures and bodies are the cadres with a high level of commitment and capability to lead the party.

The same is true for MP recruitment. To determine the most eligible MP candidates, the team would evaluate and scrutinize the personal and political capability of the candidates. The result of the election could not be determined solely by the party elite, because opinions of thousands of senior cadres should be considered. This internal election is conducted in such a transparent process that it is protected from any

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221 The party decided one special day to hold the election, where eligible cadres should join it. On the latest situation on this occasion see for instance, “PKS Memilih Majelis Syuro dengan Suara Bermilai,” in *kabarpolitik.com/2015/03/30*; “Demokrasi Senyap Ala PKS,” in *www.news.detik.com/berita/2988534/;* “Kader PKS Berbondong-Bondong Mengikuti Pemilu Raya Majelis Syuro,” in *www.pks-dpcpancoran.blogspot.com.au/2015/03/*

form of collusion and nepotism. Through the recruitment process, the cadres witnessed that the main tools to have a better rank and position in the party is the personal character of the person, not the connection with certain figures in the party, and regardless of the background, only the best candidate is eligible to lead the party. In the long run, this recruitment system contributed to developing and nurturing the trust in the party’s system.

The case of Anis Matta, the previous President of the PKS and the General Secretary of PKS for three periods, demonstrated how the merit system works in the party. Due to his exceptional capability and strong commitment to the party’s ideals, he was appointed a top leadership of the party. Despite a rumor that his ascension to the top leadership of the party is due to his closeness with Hilmi Aminuddin, one of the founding father of the Tarbiyah movement, it is, the party maintains, his own character and vision for the party that made the members of Majlis Syura (Shura Council) elect him the General Secretary and then the President of the party.

Over the years, the principle of recruitment process for the public offices (i.e., governors, mayors, district and municipality heads) seems to be violated by the party nomination of non-cadre figures, typically rich businessmen, prominent local figures, well-known celebrities, or retired officers of military or police. This has caused some discontent among the cadres, who has well-grounded reason to be unhappy with the leadership decision. The cadres question the motive of this breach. The remark from the party’s legislator, Zulkieflimansyah, is indicative of the pragmatic approach of the party in electoral politics. He said, “Immediately the grassroots will come to you, shake your hand, and just admire the beauty of the movie star and … you’re saving a lot of money.”

The nomination of non-cadres for the public office is merely political strategy to secure economic resource for the party success in the local election (Pilkada, Pemilihan Kepala Daerah). Zulkieflimansyah continued that the party cannot go blind

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223 “Caleg PKS Ditentukan Melalui Pemilu Internal”, Republika, 30 December 2003.
224 Lopez B., “No hearts and flowers in Islam: Indonesia’s conservative Muslim party abandons valentines to woo voters,” in Asia Sentinel, 12 February 2009.
to the political behavior of the mass. People will flock to meet the celebrity during the campaign and vote for him, because they know him/her well from the media. This campaign strategy does not only help with the low funded-campaign of the party, but also helpsin winning the election.  

The same is true with Ahmad Heryawan, the governor of West Java, who is said to have won the election partly due to the popularity of his running mate, Dede Yusuf, a well-known celebrity. PKS also chose Marissa Haque, a popular actress and the wife of well-known rocker, Ikang Fawzi, as a running mate of Zulkieflimansyah of PKS in Banten provincial election of 2006, and Helmi Yahya, a successful television producer and news presenter, as a running mate of Syahrial Oesman of the PDI-P in the South Sumatra gubernatorial elections in 2008.

Diverting from the initial principle of recruitment and cadrerization process, in 2008 the party declared itself an open party and allowed non-Muslim to become rank-and-file members of the party. This “open party” policy is declared to combat the popular perception of the exclusivity of the party and to enable the party becoming one of the top three parties in Indonesia. As a theological back-up, the party refers to the nature of Islam as rahmatan lil 'alamin (blessing for all humanity). Accordingly, as a party based on Islamic teaching, the PKS should reflect the quranic norms. Regarding non-Muslim membership and nomination, the previous head of Shura Council of PKS, Hilmi Aminuddin, maintained that inclusivity is the character of Islam, so the PKS becoming an inclusive party is an inseparable part of the party’s struggle for the realization of inclusivity of Islam; it is not merely political strategy, but it is the fundamental belief (aqidah) of the party leadership. In the Muslim minority areas, such as Papua, East Nusa Tenggara and Central Timor province, the party supported non-Muslim candidates for legislative and executive elections in provincial (DPRD I, Provincial Representative Assembly) or district level (DPRD II, District Representative Assembly). PKS and PDS established coalition to lend the support to

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225 Ibid.


two Christian figures, Lukas Enembe and Laurentius Kadir, for the governorship in Papua and West Kalimantan respectively. This “open party” strategy has raised concerns among purist cadre and party leaders, who fear the impact of an increasingly diverse membership for the overall long-term plan of transforming Indonesia. Besides, there is no solid evidence that non-Muslim are joining the party in significantly huge numbers.\(^{228}\)

For the purist cadres, the policy of non-cadre nomination and promotion proved to be a double sword for the party. In one hand, this strategy is effective as a short-term politics. The popularity or the social status of the candidate can be capitalized as a vote getter. But, in the other hand, it gives a strong signal to the public that the party has become increasingly pragmatic, and in the long run the party idealism will dwindle. According to the party internal survey in 2009, PKS is the popular choice (75.2 percent) of the respondents who expect bigger role for Islam in politics.\(^{229}\) This image of the PKS as a party that represents the struggle for Islam will diminish if the party continues nominating non-cadres who do not share the party’s ideals. The purists point the result of 2009 election where the party’s electoral gain decreased by 119,065 votes vis-à-vis 2004, as a valid indication of the failure of the party to maintain the voters. According to the purist, the PKS image as the defender of Islamist ideology has been tarnished by the pragmatic maneuver of the party. The case of non-cadre PKS legislators, Misbakhun, who was arrested in 2010 for alleged involvement in the Bank century bailout scandal, is also an unfortunate example of the fallout of non-cadre nomination policy. Misbakhun was a successful entrepreneur who chose the PKS as his political vehicle to win the ticket to the parliament. The party was oblivious to certain controversial aspects of his personal background and proceeded in nominating and promoting Misbakhun to be a member of parliament in 2009-2014. Apparently, the party did not have any knowledge about the controversial past activities of the candidate until they were raised in the wake of public scandal. Had the party know that


\(^{229}\) Riset Perilaku Pemilih PKS, Powerpoint presentation on results of PKS internal survey conducted between August 30 and September 6, 2009.
Misbakhun had an issue about Letter of Credit of Century Bank, the party might have to reconsider his nomination. Recruited from non-cadres, Misbakhun’s loyalty to the party was also questionable. After being declared “not guilty” by the Supreme Court in July 2012, Misbakhun left the PKS and chose Golkar as his party for recent 2014 legislative election.

*Cadrerization and Loyalty Maintenance*

As a cadre party, the PKS emphasizes the significance of cadrerization. The paramount importance of cadrerization can be observed from the party’s instruction to establish cadre development at every level of the party’s bodies, from the party’s national level to the lowest party structure. The 2005 statute of the party states that the DPP was “to hold cadrerization for party’s members” as a duty that has to be performed by each level of committee.230 It also states that every lower party structure has to establish *Bidang Unit Pembinaan Kader* (the Cadre Development Board), whose main duty is to organize and supervise cadrerization process.231 The objective of cadrerization in the party is to create cadres with a strong Islamic personality, commitment to Islamic visions and values, and readiness to implement PKS’ da’wa method232 and play an important task of building civilization.233 In this regard, cadrerization becomes important source for the success in da’wa and the revivalism of Muslims.234 Regarding the importance of cadrerization, Mahfudz Siddiq said that

“... The cadre is the secret of life and the revival of any nation. History of this umma (nation) is the story of militant cadres who have a strong spirit and determination. Indeed, the strength or weakness of the umma is determined by

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230 The 2005 ART of PKS Articles 22 (c), 34 (c), 47 (c), 56 (h), and 59 (h)

231 The 2005 ART of PKS Article 57 (1.d.1)


234 This opinion to some extent becomes one of important aspects that differentiate this party with other Islamic movements, since such an opinion infers the importance to build individuals (cadres) before establishing the Islamic system or syariah. In some Islamic movements, including for instance Hizbut Tahrir, the establishment of an Islamic system (syariah) is a prime objective that should be prioritized.
our success in generating cadres with the characteristic of mujahid (the Islamic warrior).”

This remark indicates that cadrerization is designed to create militant cadres who are committed to develop Islamic civilization. For the purpose of party survival, programs and activities developed in cadrerization process will deepen the cadres’ understanding of party ideology and shared values, party management, and political insight. Through the cadrerization, the party could strengthen the organization management and obtain qualified cadres and future leaders.

The cadrerization has a dual-practical function: to develop the cadres’ potentials and to prepare them for internal party positions. In this regards the party’s strength, survival and expansion depend so much on the growth of the cadres, both in quality and quantity. To maintain the quality of the cadres, the party establishes six levels of cadrerization, namely Anggota Pemula (the Beginner), Anggota Muda (the Junior), Anggota Madya (the Intermediate), Anggota Dewasa (the Advanced), Anggota Ahli (the Expert), and Anggota Purna (the Elder). In order for the cadres to get their rank upgraded, they need to join and pass several training and activities. The party’s

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237 Ibid., p. 223-226.
241 The ART of PK Article 8.
242 To become a party member, the candidate needs to sign for the Party Orientation Training (TOP). He/she can continue with several trainings such as First-Basic Training (TD-I) for Junior Level, Second-Basic Training (TD-II) for Intermediate Status, and Advanced Training-I (TL-I) for the Advanced Member. The next membership is the Expert Member who is eligible to join Management and Social Leadership Training (TMKS), used as a base to evaluate their membership before reaching Elder/Senior Members. There are also compulsory activities for the members, namely Party Routine Training (TRP), Cadre Routine Training (TRK), Party Training (PPK), Social and Political Science
constitution dictates that every cadre has to participate in the training programs and pass them before they could hold certain membership status.\textsuperscript{243} For Beginners who had passed the evaluation process, for instance, the party introduced them to the \textit{halaqah} activities, which include some informal activities such as \textit{daurah}, \textit{rihlah}, \textit{mabit}, seminars and critical book reading as part of cadrerization process.\textsuperscript{244} These activities are actually derived from the Tarbiyah model of cadrerization developed in 1980s and inspired mainly by the Ikhwan Muslimin movement. This tradition is preserved as a core institution of the PKS.\textsuperscript{245}

Training programs are the soul of the cadrerization. Every cadre has to join the established programs and activities.\textsuperscript{246} One of the most crucial training programs for all cadres is \textit{halaqah}. Attended by a maximum of 12 cadres, this compulsory weekly training is supervised by a \textit{murabbi} who is responsible of delivering standardized materials and instructions. The party tried to preserve the continuation of \textit{halaqah}, as one of the main cadrerization institutions. The Department of Cadrerization in every local committee down to the lowest structures has to ensure the continuation of \textit{halaqah} and cadrerization process.\textsuperscript{247} It is very often that the cadres at the municipal level are sent to help running the \textit{halaqah} at the village level. The preservation of \textit{halaqah} method is unique to the party, which also becomes trademark of the PKS and distinguishes it from other parties and organizations.

Every cadre is obliged to join the \textit{halaqah} because information regarding the party’s policies and the reasons behind them are delivered during the session. Even

\textsuperscript{243} The 2005 ART of PKS Article 5 (2).

\textsuperscript{244} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 187-200.


\textsuperscript{246} Interview with Tifatul Sembiring, President of PKS (2005-2008), in “PKS Masih Seperti yang Dulu”, Koran Seputar Indonesia, 10 December 2007.

\textsuperscript{247} In a normal condition, cadres are obliged to hold this meeting once a week. However, cadres living in a minority position, such as in Papua or Moluccas provinces, or where they are scattered in a wide area that makes them difficult to hold a regular meeting, the less frequency of meeting is permissible. In such areas, the form of \textit{halaqah} can be modified that best suit to the need of the cadres. The point is that the continuation of \textit{halaqah} was a must.
though the cadres might not be able to change the policy, they will be well-informed about its rationale, so they can understand the situation better and will not be easily misled by any rumors and gossips. In this regard, *halaqah* acted as a device to clarify the party’s political choices. During the meeting, the cadres are also exposed to ideology maintenance, which recalls the party’s ideology to the cadres, the most important of which is the vision and mission of da’wa. The *murabbi* also reminded the cadres about the importance of being loyal to the party and its leadership. As the soldier of da’wa, the party cadres are also provided with materials for self-improvement to help the cadres develop high-quality character and excellent behavior, so that they will become example of the goodness of Islam. The *halaqah* session is also used to raise the spirit of brotherhood and togetherness among the cadres. For this purpose, each cadre was asked to share experiences, aspirations and even difficulty they face in regard with the party issues or personal problems. Through this sharing activity, the sense of togetherness and brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) between the cadres is hoped to grow stronger.\(^{248}\) It is safe to say that *halaqah* functions both as political tools and medium to develop and maintain the spirit of brotherhood.

Systematic cadrerization is put in place for a crucial reason; it implants the sense of loyalty for the cadres. The development of loyalty is conducted gradually through *halaqah* and other training subjects, during which issues of loyalty is an inseparable part. Loyalty to the party is based on the belief that the party is the vehicle to realize Islamic ideals, not merely a power-seeking medium. During the *halaqah*, the cadres are indoctrinated that the loyalty is to the cause, not to the figures. However, there is an established code of conduct to obey the party’s leadership that results in mono-loyalty. It has become an accepted tradition that the cadres should regard the leaders’ decision as the best policy for the party, because they are considered to have a better knowledge and commitment. In this regard, the loyalty to the party’s ideals is transferred to the loyalty to the party’s leadership. Hence, obedience toward the leader’s decision is a trademark of party’s membership.\(^{249}\) The loyalty to the party’s


leadership has effectively closed any chance of dual-loyalty. This would enable the party to maintain a chain of command within the party membership. Assisted by the party apparatus, the party’s leaders could maintain its position as the only authoritative body in managing aspects of party’s programs and activities. The cadres are to implement the decision and policy made by the party’s leadership. However, the obedience of the cadres is well-compensated by the leadership’s commitment toward the party’s procedure and ideology. In other words, the cadres owe their respect and obedience to the elites due to the latter’s commitment to the party’s ideals. Through the *halaqah*, both the elites and cadres control each other so that it helps both parties with their commitment toward the shared goals.

**B. Social Engagement**

The party institutionalization that has greatly contributed to the organizational cohesion has important effects on the party’s political mobilization and expansion. The cohesiveness of the party structure has made PKS well-equipped to run election campaigns effectively despite a relative shortage of financial and socio-cultural resources. The PKS has adopted a campaign strategy to build regular and intimate contacts with electorates not only during elections, but also during nonelection periods. To this end, party cadres are committed to a range of welfare and social services on a regular basis as part of their duties.²⁵⁰ Such grassroots activism has helped to reinforce “caring” and “clean” images in the eyes of the electorates, factors that have contributed to the political expansion of PKS.²⁵¹

The party engagement in social activities and popular programs has a strategic value for the image of the party, and it also become a social or political investment for the party. When the party works hard for the people, it is natural if they would be


supportive to the party. This politics of welfare service (khidmat) can be considered as the advancement of the resource mobilization approach which further emphasizes the organizational structures and strategies devised by PKS as an alternative strategy to attract greater masses. By providing welfare services to the lower class of the community, this strategy is devised to build a sustained mass-party relationship. The politics of khidmat serves material and spiritual needs of underprivileged Muslim constituencies, which in turn not only helps the party to expand its support base, but also boosts the party image and commitment within the recipients at large. Among the cadres, the welfare service for underprivileged communities is framed as a “religious duty,” reminding them that the party is committed to the Sharia norms of helping out the needy people. In other words, the party commitment to welfare services keeps alive its religious image, and helps the party recruit new members into the movement, against the fact that the party elites are becoming more politically pragmatic.  

There are at least two conditions that substantiate the value of politics of welfare services in attracting general people in the context of Indonesia’s electoral political system of democracy. First, the weak legal enforcement has led to rampant money politics during intensive electoral competition. Opportunistic behavior and political apathy among the general electorates help the practice of money politics widespread and escalated especially during the heat of election days. Besides, voters are becoming more pragmatic and resistant towards party ideology; they care more about whether a party could bring them welfare and material assistance. Second, the government ineffectiveness in delivering welfare service needed by the majority of the people, such as basic healthcare and good education, has left an open gap to be filled by social service providers. Especially since the late 1990s, welfare service provision


conducted by religious welfare movements has forged the link between the party and the masses.\textsuperscript{255}

Lacking the financial capital to engage in more competitive and expensive electoral politics, PKS capitalize its capability and capacity of social welfare provider to recruit and mobilize supporters. This provision is integrated into an essential component of da’wa program of building a caring and just society.\textsuperscript{256} Staffed with skilled and dedicated youth working within disciplined and adaptable organization, this social service and program become a key success of keeping the loyalty of their recipients to the da’wa movement. To expand its welfare service, the party establishes strategic coalitions with various Islamic non-governmental organizations, which make it capable to cut across class boundaries to forge a party-mass linkage.

The special party’s office responsible to manage and mobilize the cadres to run the operation of welfare provision nationally at the grassroots is called Kesra (People’s Welfare). In the district level across the country, Kesra establishes service stations called Pras (Pos Rakyat Adil Sejahtera, People’s Justice and Prosperous Service Station), which provides services in health care and family consultation for the underprivileged. One of the services provided by Pras is free health care, which is especially popular among poorer communities neglected by the government. In districts with scarcity of doctors and health care experts, for instance, PKS deploys qualified personnel to provide free medical checkups and medication. Circumcision operations for Muslim boys or immunization for children are often held in coordination with local schools. In many remote areas, Pras dispatches doctors from among the party’s cadres with vehicles equipped with basic medical equipment. In the run-up to the 2009 legislative election, it is reported that the central board of PKS provided its


local branches with 467 health care service vehicles to facilitate the cadres for electoral campaign.\textsuperscript{257}

Social welfare provision is also provided by the women’s wing of the party called PWK (Pos Wanita Keadilan, Women’s Justice Station) whose task focuses on services targeted at housewives, mothers, and children. Depending on the local need and the availability of resources, the services provided include, but not limited to, donation of books and school materials, mobile libraries for children, parenting course, classes on home health care and baby nutrition. Various trainings, such as growing herbs, sewing, making cakes, catering, and handcrafting from recycled products are also provided to empower housewives with simple skill that enable them to earn moderate income for their household.\textsuperscript{258} Such social empowerment activism by female cadres of the party helps to build connection with people in the grassroots. More than a decade after its establishment in 2002, PWK have reached more than 45,000 households nation-wide, and with more than 200 PWK, women cadres of the party manage to build close communication with families and communities untouched by the government development projects.\textsuperscript{259}

\textit{Strategic Coalition with Islamic NGOs}

Since political parties are not allowed to run charity foundations, PKS has to circumvent such institutional constraints by forging strategic coalitions with numerous Islamic civil society organizations. Functioning as PKS service brokers to deliver a range of social services across the archipelago, these NGOs are of crucial channels for the party to gain access to state-funding sources and projects as well as CSRs of private companies, domestic and abroad. From the political perspective, strategic coalition with religious NGOs is a means to penetrate society, especially the grassroots communities, and to minimize common suspicion and resistance among Muslim

\textsuperscript{257} “Wow! PKS bagi-bagi 467 mobil”, www.inilah.com/news/detail/


communities towards political parties. Some well-known social organizations and foundations associated with PKS cadres include JSIT Indonesia (Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu Indonesia, the Indonesian Network of Integrated Islamic Schools), Rumah Zakat (Islamic Charity House) and PKPU (Pos Keadilan Peduli Ummat, National Humanitarian Foundation). The last two institutions, which have grown rapidly since the democratic transition, offer prominent examples of strategy of penetrating marginalized Muslim communities. Also, the expansion of these institutions indicates the PKS increasing penetration, both in urban and rural areas.

Established in 1993 by Fahmy Alaydrous, one of PKS founders, JSIT Indonesia is religious education movement that introduces a modern type of Islamic school emphasizing a comprehensive approach that incorporates both secular and religious curricula. Starting from only five Islamic primary schools in the area of Jabodetabek (Jakarta, and its surrounding areas of Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi), the school network has now housed 1,926 schools, comprising of 879 kindergartens/preschools, 723 elementary schools, and 324 high schools nationwide. The recent chair of JSIT, Sukro Muhab, reveals that JSIT was inspired by the party concern about secular system of national education that separate secular and religious subjects, and the JSIT expansion cannot be separated from the increasing demand of Muslim families to find schools that provided balanced system of education for their beloved children. Apart from conducting training for teachers and educational staff members, JSIT also establishes cooperation with internationally recognized institutions, such as International Center for Educational Excellence of Malaysia, Association for Academic Quality of Pakistan, Al-Irsyad and Al-Juneid Islamic School of Singapore, Smart Bestari of Thailand, and Khoirat Foundation of Turkey.

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262 See www.jsit-indonesia.com

263 These schools are SDIT Nurul Fikri of Depok, SDIT Al Hikmah of South Jakarta, SDIT Iqro of Bekasi, SDIT Ummul Quro of Bogor, and SDIT al-Khayrat of East Jakarta.

264 See www.jsit-indonesia.com
A charity-based welfare foundation named Rumah Zakat (Zakat House) is also linked to PKS. Founded in 1998 by a PKS prominent figure, Abu Syauqi, Rumah Zakat (RZ) has developed into one of the largest zakat institutions in the country, running 28 branches in Bandung alone, and delivering various innovative nationwide welfare programs for the poor. The program is categorized into six main fields, which is education, economic empowerment, health care, green environment, and charity. In the field of education, RZ helps students from underprivileged families with scholarship. For economic development, RZ provides micro financial support, together with one-year assistance and product development, to help small and micro enterprises stand on their feet. Health service is given for the needy which includes free maternity clinic, mobile clinic service and cataract surgery. Building water well and distributing clean water becomes a popular program of RZ that contributes to preserve the environment and maintain healthy life style. Last but not least, RZ also runs a special charity program during the month of Ramadan to put a smile on the face of the needy. This special program provides complete and nutritious menu for breaking the fast which is distributed to the targeted areas and communities.

Rumah Zakat (RZ – Zakat House) has built a reputation as a leading Islamic philanthropy movement whose program is well known among both urban middle-class Muslims and the corporate sector, whose yearly donation amounts to 110 billion rupiahs, making RZ one of the biggest zakat collection management organizations in the country. In 2014, RZ achieved Top of Mind Zakat Management 2014 Award in Indonesian Middle-Class Brand Forum III held by SWA Magazine and Center for Middle-Class Consumer Studies for various assistances given to outermost areas in Indonesia. The adoption of modern technology and management has enable RZ to coordinate large-scale operations of humanitarian aids such as natural disaster relief programs and war victims. In 2013, for instance, RZ participate in aiding the victims of Mount Sinabung eruption and Haiyan thypoone in the Philippines and civil war in Rohingya.

265 By helping and encouraging marginalized population to live in healthy,
dignified, and financially independent life, RZ has contributed to community-building and empowerment of the poor.

**Mass-Party Relations**

As discussed above, community service leads to community networks developed by the PKS functioning as a means of connecting the PKS cadres and their service beneficiaries in the grassroots to the party elite. Both cadres and sympathizers have built a collective identity that go beyond narrow class boundaries. Recruited mainly from educated middle class, the cadres provide leadership and services to their constituents and become the representatives of the party within the grassroots, while the service beneficiaries primarily coming from underprivileged lower-class communities provided a basis for the party electorates. In the long run, they are also expected to join into the rank of the party cadres and serve the da’wa movement program.\(^{266}\) The party frames this welfare service as an integral component of da’wa upon which the cadres should show commitment, and the service beneficiaries are expected to give their vote in return for the service they have received from the party cadres. The welfare programs conducted by the party cadres compensate the limitation on party’s financial capacity and on state bureaucracies’ access. With this welfare program, the party are able to penetrate directly into the ‘mind and heart’ of the electorates. By providing them with material and spiritual needs, the party has forged relatively solid party-mass relations at the grassroots.

The party elite are fully aware that utilization of services provision for political and religious mobilization of the party does not entirely remove or limit the opportunistic behaviors among service recipients.\(^{267}\) To minimize the occurrence of commitment problem among pragmatic electorates, especially relating to the program involving financial fund, the party invents a mechanism of “communal responsibility.” This mechanism is designed to keep the service recipients attached to the party. The attachment to the party is possible by the obligation of the service recipients to form a

\(^{266}\) Platform Kebijakan Pembangunan, p. 37-50.

group of 10 to 15 members to take joint responsibility for managing their loans. For the success of the group, PKS cadres give supervision and hold regular group meeting to discuss various business and financial problems. With this cooperative scheme, the service recipients are enmeshed in the community-based network, and, it is hoped, become prospective supporters of the party.²⁶⁸

Socioeconomic treatment of the party towards underprivileged communities provides the PKS elites an instrument to introduce, encourage and finally incorporate the service beneficiaries into the rank of party cadres. The process of this gradual process of recruitment and cadrization explains the pattern of the party mobilization. Through the regular meeting between the cadres and the people, in their homes or public places, such as village hall or mosques, the service recipients’ familiarity with the party programs and leadership is gradually increasing. The party acts as an anchor for members of the community who were previously isolated and vulnerable. Through service provision, the community familiarize themselves with the party activism.²⁶⁹ The bond between these social segments of communities and the PKS cadres can be converted into social and political capital, ready to be utilized effectively during the campaign.

The welfare services have become a part of the party strategy to expand its electoral base. The policy of gradual incorporation and mobilization of the people affiliated with the party’s socioeconomic network is also adopted in other social, religious, and educational institution linked to PKS. All the students, teachers and parents affiliated with school network of JSIT, for instance, will be fully coordinated and mobilized to support the party’s political programs. The efficacy of this socioeconomic treatment for the vertical mobility of the cadres can be observed by the mere fact that almost all female cadres securing legislative offices both at the national and sub-national levels originates from an activist committed with these community services.

²⁶⁹ “Istimewa, Gerak Kader PKS”, in Kompas, June 10, 2005.
The commitment and efforts of PKS cadres to welfare provision for the underprivileged have contributed to “clean and caring” (Bersih dan Peduli) images that account for the electoral rise of the party. Due to the party’s strategic emphasis on welfare services, and its commitment to the struggle of da’wa in building an Islamic society, the party finds the cadres supportive to the party program, even when they find that the leadership of the party has relaxed their Islamist ideals and engaged in pragmatic political maneuver. While reminding the cadres that PKS is still committed to da’wa, the party platform also reminds them that the cadres’ dedication to service and people’s welfare is a part of “religious duty.”

C. Ideological Framing and Opportunity Structure

In theory and practice, the PKS is not simply a political party; the first and foremost it is a mass-based religious movement with the ultimate goal of propagating Islamic teachings and practices, and building a society submitting to the Islamic rulings. As a da’wa movement, the PKS strives to disseminate Islamic norms and values within its cadres and their family, and then society and government. Politics is only a means to fulfill the mission of da’wa. In this regard, the PKS was created as a political wing to carry out the da’wa mission. Accordingly, all of the party’s activism is framed under the notion of da’wa. PKS leaders particularly emphasize their political activism and social service as religious obligation (wajib) and service to the God (ibadah).

This ideological framing approach is indeed helpful to explain the reason for devout Muslim youth to join the PKS in the first place. Religiously conscious Muslim youth were mainly attracted to the activism of the PKS that is framed as a religious duty. There are socio-political conditions accounting for the appeal of PKS’

270 Greg Fealy and Anthony Bubalo, Joining the Caravan: The Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia, Sidney: Longueville Press, 2005, p. 69.

271 See for instance Greg Fealy, Anthony Bubalo and Whit Mason, “Zealous Democrats,” 2008; Yon Machmudi, Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), Canberra: ANU E-Press, 2008; Islamist party and democratic participation: Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia 1998-2006, Thesis unpublished, Graduate School of Politics, Muenster, Germany: Westphalian Wilhelms-University, 2008. These studies, albeit implicitly, substantiate a theoretical claim advanced by Wicham in her study on Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, Mobilizing Islam. She argues that the technique used by the Brotherhood in framing their political activism as “religious
religious ideology among young urban Muslims, especially students at many secular universities such as university of Indonesia (UI) or Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). The first condition is sociological. In a sociological perspective, university students from all over Indonesia who come to Jakarta or other metropolitan cities found themselves in unfamiliar settings. In this situation, they need a social anchor for bonding and security. They find PKS’ religious training and activities attractive and fulfilling, not only for their personal moral guidance but also for social networking.\(^{272}\)

From the political perspective, these post-authoritarian Muslim generations are exposed to the ideas of democracy, and eager to make a political and social change. These devout Muslim youths found in the PKS prominent figures who were active in campus da’wa movement that led the students in a mass-demonstration to topple down the “un-Islamic” New Order regime in 1998.\(^{273}\) They were considered as representative voices of new generation of pious Muslim that struggled to bring fundamental change in the socio-political landscape of post-Suharto regime. Regardless of their backgrounds, these socio-politically conscious new generations of Muslim youth felt attracted to the ideology of the party established by these campus da’wa activists who consider their involvement in socio-political arena as driven by religious duty as Muslims.

The PKS did not limit its membership to any certain socio-religious background. Both traditionalists (associated with the NU) and modernists (associated with Muhammadiyah) are welcome to join the party. In fact, there is no clear association between the PKS and certain socio-religious stream, nor factionalism along socio-religious line in term of cadres’ promotion and leadership succession. Although the party tends to attract more members from modernist background, numerous cadres of the party come from traditionalist background, the most prominent of which is Irfan

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Asy’ari Sudirman, widely known by his nick name Ipang Wahid, the oldest son of Solahudin Wahid, Abdurrahman Wahid’s younger brother. It is true that in its initial stage, the party has a relatively narrow social constituency; mostly from among pious, educated, young professionals and students from urban lower-middle-class of metropolitan cities, especially in Jakarta and its surrounding satellite cities such as Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi. However, general policy of party recruitment is not concerned with the socio-religious background of the cadres.

Starting from only 60,000 cadres in 1999, PKS’ membership has grown steadily and registered more than thirteen-fold to more than 800 thousand cadres in 2014. Over the years, the PKS has expanded its membership beyond its traditional urban constituencies into areas long-known as the PKB stronghold, such as Central and East Java. The PKS’ inroads into the PKB communities cannot be separated from the sustained efforts by the party’s cadres in emphasizing the similarity and avoiding the differences regarding the ritual practices. The allegation is often made that PKS rejects the NU devotional practices, such as *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, and *mauludan*. Through the *bayanat* of Sharia Council of PKS on 21 October 2008, the party refuted the allegation and sought to clarify that the PKS is religiously moderate. As a party and religious movement, the PKS does not adhere to some certain Islamic ritual practices. According to the *bayanat*, the practice of *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, and *mauludan* is not a principle issue of religion; it is merely a matter of *khilafiyah* (opinion differences) and the unity of umma should be taken precedence over differences. Instead of rejecting these ritual practices, the PKS considered the practices a good tradition and a part of cultural da’wa that should be preserved. The *bayanat* also mentions list of the party’s figures who have the NU family background, such as Nur Mahmudi Ismail, Hidayat Nurwahid, Surahman Hidayat, and Muslih Abdul Karim. The PKS claim of close connection with the NU tradition proves beneficial for the party expansion in the PKB strongholds.

In addition to the appeal of the party ideological framing, growing number of state offices is also a strong reason for politically ambitious religious youth to join the

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PKS. Their commitment to the party cause is not without any political reward. The opportunity to higher political career for any potential cadres is open wide, especially with the existence of numerous provincial and district election, both legislative and executive. This institutional structure has allowed the party to provide the politically ambitious cadres an access to the state corridor in return for their commitment to the party and service to the society. Each cadre has an equal opportunity to win the office, which is a natural step for the potential party’s leaders to conduct da’wa in a wider arena.

The decentralization program starting in 2001 witnessed the allocation of more power to locals where the government approved the mounting aspiration of the locals to form new provinces and regencies. This institutional change happened at the same time when the PKS was in its stage of organizational expansion. In 1999, there are only 26 provinces and 300 districts, but now there are 34 provinces and 514 districts across the archipelago. The increased number of public offices means a bigger opportunity for the cadres to fight and win the offices. For the PKS, direct elections at various sub-national levels introduced in 2005 offered good opportunity for mobilizing and promoting qualified young cadres. Until 2014 the PKS has succeeded in securing 4 provincial offices and 26 district offices. Provinces won by PKS cadres include North Sumatera, West Sumatera, West Java, and North Maluku. In this regard, Anis Matta claimed that the PKS have won 10 per cent of the provincial election and since all the four provinces are populated by 60 million people, he further claimed that the PKS have led 25 per cent of Indonesian population.275

Not only promoting its own young cadres for the governor or mayor candidature, the PKS also openly supports many young figures from other parties. Zainul Majdi of Democrat Party, for instance, was supported by the PKS and elected as the youngest governor in Indonesia at the age of 36. Previously, the governor of West Java from the PKS, Ahmad Heryawan, was at his 41 in the time of the election. Both cases have motivated and inspired other ambitious young cadres of the PKS to follow

275 “Anis Matta: PKS telah memiliki 30 kepala daerah di seluruh Indonesia,” in www.bandarlampung.pks.id/
suit. It is safe to say that without the decentralization process and its ramification, such as the more election and availability of state offices, it is unlikely that the PKS could achieve such a rapid organizational expansion. For the PKS, this opportunity structure serves well the leadership training program of the party, and provides a wider opportunity for the cadres to pursue their political career in the government offices. However, this institutional change may become a source of friction among the party cadres, since the party sometime forms coalition with other parties to nominate non-cadres that have a better chance to win for the local offices.

D. Political Moderation and Electoral Gain

PKS has slowly expanded its constituency against the background of the challenge from nationalist parties and competition from other Islamists. This obstacle from both ends of the political spectrum has left PKS little room for maneuver. The party has well-grounded evidence from the electoral history of Islamic parties that the truly Islamic constituency is always a minority. Historically, the combined electoral gain of Islamic parties never exceeds 40 percent of the total votes. The party elites also believe that the shift toward more moderate and pragmatic political positions that would appeal to the large median voters is one key to political success. To gain widespread inroads into the center, PKS has to repackage its Islamist agenda and focus more on non-Islamist issues.

The party’s effort to move toward the center of the political spectrum was driven by a desire to increase the votes and the pursuit of public offices. PKS shifted toward the center for the purpose of winning the election. For the party with an Islamist agenda, the move to the center means the sacrifice of some aspects of its ideological standpoint as a political requisite to initiate centripetal tendencies of gaining wider popular support and integrating the party into the democratic system. Despite its political necessity, adaptation of moderate ideology may not an easy option; it could potentially create internal conflicts within the party and confusion among party’s core members and potential supporters in the election. The PKS leadership realizes that to be a “big” party, sustained effort to capture the politico-religious center should be done. While the party leadership is convinced with the idea that moderation is necessary for
power, the purist groups within the party, both among *Tarbiyah* founders and the core base, prefer that the party stay true to its origin and reinforce its commitment to its Islamist base.

In February 2008, PKS elites declared that the party is inclusive and also nationalist, ready to accept different groups and faiths into the party membership. The policy was taken as the party has set a target of 20 percent of the vote in the upcoming election on 8 July 2009, which would enable the party to nominate presidential candidate from its own cadre. However, the election results dashed the hope of the party leadership; the party only made a half per cent (0.48 per cent) increase in votes vis-à-vis 2004, with a decrease of total number of votes from 8,325,020 to 8,204,946, slightly decreased by 120,074 votes. For the purist wing of the party, the electoral gain of the party indicated that the leadership’s effort to capture the median voters has failed, and at the same time the “open party” strategy has failed the expectation of many potential supporters who started to see that the party has abandon its idealism and turned to look like other parties.

The data from the 2009 and 2014 elections shows two significant trends for the party: the decrease support from among the traditional voters of the party, and the inroads into new communities. The first trend can be found in Jakarta, West Java and Banten, where the party used to get a majority votes in the previous election. Jakarta showed a sharpest decline of support; from 1,057,256 votes in 2004 to 726,356 and 424,400 in 2009 and 2014 respectively. It is a drop from 37 percent, to 18 per cent and then 10 percent of the votes.

A similar loss was also witnessed in West Java, the birthplace of the *Tarbiyah* movement, where the party lost 343,476 votes in 2009 and again 122,207 votes in 2014. In Banten, the electoral gain of the party decreased from 520,202 in 2004, to 422,275 in 2009, and 379,328 in 2014; a decrease by 97,927 and 113,787 in 2009 and 2014 respectively vis-à-vis 2004. By contrast, the party made an increase in East Java and Central Java, by 260,043 and 236,022 votes, respectively in 2009 and 105,535 and 1,140 votes in 2014. While the Party has made inroads into new rural communities, the decline in total votes in traditional strongholds of Jakarta, West Java, and Banten shows
that the strategy to be the “party for all” (partai kita semua) cost the party its vote in its traditional bases. Efforts to moderate the party have had a consequence for the electoral gain of the party.

**Conclusion**

The political survival and expansion of the PKS in the Muslim democracy of Indonesia have much to do with the party’s organizational cohesion. This achievement defies common assumption that Islamist ideology would harm the party’s survival in light of Indonesia’s secular state as well as moderate Islamic tradition. The party cohesion and well-institutionalized machinery are responsible to the party’s ideological adjustment to moderate its Islamist agenda without causing serious political rifts within the party. The ability of party leaders to provide organizational structure and ideological instrument in order to mobilize targeted constituencies also contributes to the expansion of the party membership. These organizational structures and mechanism provide fair and institutionalized opportunities that enable young qualified members to achieve political careers both in the organization and in the corridors of state power. In short, institutionalized organizational structures become the key of survival.

PKS has well-established organizational characteristics that resemble those of merit-based well-institutionalized parties around the world. The party recruitment system based on the merit-based assessment has strengthened the cadres’ dependency on the system, not on personal relationship. This meritocratic recruitment system secures the cadres’ loyalty to the party, because they believe that the career promotion will depend more on individual efforts rather than an elites’ exclusive recommendation. In this situation, dependence on certain figures for the promotion is kept in a minimum. This merit system eventually contributes to the cadre’s performance and professionalism, and reduces the favoritism.

The process of party’s recruitment accelerates following the institutional change in Indonesian democracy. The aggressive democratization and decentralization has created numerous elections in the local level, hence the increasing availability of executive and legislative offices. This “opportunity structure” allows the party to work
hard and win as many state offices as possible to meet the political ambition of the politically ambitious cadres that they have recruited. To some extent, the relative success of the recruitment and mobilization is explained by “ideological framing,” that is, the party’s ability to frame its social and political activism as religious duty. The PKS cadres are indeed initially inducted into the organization through religious activism and service. As a da’wa party, PKS urges its cadres to involve in welfare provision, propagated as “religious duty.” This distinctive community-building strategy is designed to attract the service recipients into the reach of the party, and also to bind the cadres and sympathizers with the party elites. By direct involvement in community development and social service, the cadres have forged relatively solid party-mass relations at the grassroots, and have provided the party with community networks mainly in the urban areas and recently also in rural areas. The social welfare strategy is undoubtedly designed to reinforce the party’s image as “clean and caring.” Moreover, for the purpose of party cohesiveness, the social program also functions as a reminder for the cadres that the party is still committed to da’wa, as a struggle to realize justice and equity for all people.
CHAPTER FIVE
DA’WA AND POLITICS

This chapter examines the interplay between da’wa and politics in democratic Indonesia. How da’wa is conducted in the political setting of the country and why PKS uses da’wa in politics constitute the main focus. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will explain a rationale of engaging da’wa in politics. Related issues, such as the importance and goals of parliamentary da’wa (da’wa fi al-hukumah), and the meaning of da’wa in politics will also be discussed. The second section will be devoted to the analysis of the struggle of the party in conducting da’wa. Specifically, this section attempts to scrutinize the importance of da’wa for the political agenda of the party, the avenue as well as the nature of da’wa of the party, and the relation between da’wa and Sharia implementation. Good understanding about these issues will provide better insight into the strategies and attitude of the party in implementing Sharia in democratic Indonesia that will be discussed further in the next chapter. The discussion about how the party evaluates and understands the result of the recent election of 2014, as well as its meaning and relation to the work of da’wa, will be presented in the last section of the chapter.

A. Engaging Da’wa in Politics

Da’wa has become well-established as the raison d’etre of PKS. Practical politics is seen to constitute but one locus of da’wa. The establishment of the party should be seen as a necessary tool for da’wa in political arena. Within PKS circles, a politician is also a missionary (Arabic: da’i, pl. du’at) at the same time. In the evangelical PKS worldview, when it comes to da’wa, there is no difference between a politician and a preacher or a farmer; they are all burdened with the same obligation of calling and inviting people to the cause of Islam. Regardless the occupation and social or educational background, all cadres of PKS are trained to be individuals with the passion for da’wa. According to Thohari, PKS parliamentarian of Purworejo regency, every cadre of PKS has a duty of da’wa according to his or her capacity and level of

authority. Following this logic, just like a preacher conducting da’wa on the pulpit, PKS cadres in executive and legislative branches of the state have thus an inherent duty of conducting da’wa in the parliament. This form of da’wa is known within PKS cadres as parliamentary da’wa (da’wa fi al-hukumah).

For Thohari, the task of a parliamentarian in the house of consultative assembly is similar to that of a preacher on the pulpit, in which both use their persuasive communication skills to deliver goodness for the people. However, he continues, the impact of their da’wa is different; while preaching in the pulpit can only reach hundreds of people and his sermon has no binding power, regulations promulgated by the members of legislative body can reach and bind millions. Therefore, in order to be effective and successful, Najamuddin, PKS parliamentarian of Bogor, West Java, believes that da’wa needs power and authority. This is exactly something that makes PKS, as a da’wa party, different from other parties: it brings da’wa into politics, and uses politics to advance Islamic norms.

“Whoever witnesses evil, use your hand to change it. If you are not powerful enough, use your tongue, and if you are unable to speak up, just deny it in your heart” is the popular saying of the prophet that is invariably used to encourage the party cadres to become involved in parliamentary da’wa through legislative and executive body of the state, where they can exercise power and authority. Once they succeed in capturing the power, they are obliged to use it to enjoin good and prohibit evil, which is actually the essence of da’wa. Through parliamentary da’wa, for instance, PKS cadres can introduce Sharia norms into the state law.


Article 3 of the Article of Association of the party states that da’wa at state level aims at realizing universal goodness, such as justice, prosperity, security, and good governance. This article points out that working hard to realize universal norms through the instrumentalities of the state is considered as a part of da’wa cause. Interestingly enough the party leaders believe that the most viable tool and system to realize these goals is democracy. Implicit in this statement is that democratic system is not a hindrance for the implementation of Sharia norms; it is actually a means to realize them, and Sharia norms can thrive within democratic state.\(^\text{280}\)

PKS involvement in democracy is not without a risk; PKS has been accused of being excluded from the path of da’wa and of being a power-chaser.\(^\text{281}\) Merely due to the *ijtihad* of forming a party and promoting democracy, PKS is conceived as being casual to the struggle of Shariatization.\(^\text{282}\) Refuting the accusation that PKS has betrayed its da’wa cause and abandoned Sharia, Thohari has this to say:

“Indonesia has chosen democracy as the system of politics. We cannot deny that fact. All we can do is to conduct da’wa within this system. It will be counterproductive to work against the agreed system of democracy. … we would like to work within the system. So far, we have joined in the process of democracy and gained power in some areas. It is very obvious for everybody to see that all of the regents and governors of PKS as well as the parliamentarians are working within the system. … our agenda is to implement Sharia norms within the system.”

There remains the accusation that PKS uses democracy only to capture power, and once in power, the party will hijack democracy and substitute it with *khilafah*, an Islamic system of government.\(^\text{283}\) According to PKS common opinion, this allegation


\(^{281}\) See for instance debates at http://www.pkswatch.blogspot.com

\(^{282}\) Ismail Yusanto, “Untuk Apa Berkuas Jika Tidak Menegakkan Syariah?” in *Al-Wa’ie, Media Politik dan Dakwah*, No. 120, Year 10, 1-31 August 2010, p. 22-26.

is far from reality, hence baseless and only good for media coverage. On the contrary, PKS believes that democratic mechanism is a necessary tool for the party to deliver its da’wa. Democratic attitude of the party is shown in its participation and contribution to the process of democratization of the country. Similar response is voiced by Surahman Hidayat, a head of PKS National Council of Sharia, who points to the fact that some cadres of PKS are elected governors or mayors in West Java, Depok and South Halmahera for the second tenure, and none of them works against democracy. In his opinion, this fact shows that PKS leadership would not end up in turning over democracy, as some observers may predict about the involvement of Islamist parties into the system of democracy.

It has been a matter of firm conviction within PKS circles that the party does not have any problem with democracy, because it does not contradict Sharia; both are not antithetical. According to Ahmad Heryawan, a leading figure of PKS who is also a governor of West Java, to say that Sharia contradicts democracy, or vice versa, is a misleading remark. To substantiate his position, he points to the fact that Indonesia is now the third-largest democracy in the world, and the majority of Indonesians are Muslims. Ahmad Heryawan continues that PKS has also practiced democracy in electing its leaders, and has joined several elections since its establishment. However, it is important to note that Sharia, for the party, is much more comprehensive than democracy. While the first regulates all aspects of life, ranging from private to public, from sacred to mundane, and from ethics to law, the later concerns only on issues about governing the people living in a particular country. In other words,

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democracy is only a system in running the state, while Sharia covers not only principles regulating human relation in social and political life (mu’amalah), but it also consists a guidance to worship God (ibadah). Thus, efforts to make apple-to-apple comparison between the two will not do justice to Sharia. In other words, democracy is of lesser importance when one compared to Sharia. Implicit in this statement is the superiority of Sharia over democracy. However, this line of thought does not necessarily translate into an agenda or political action of removing democracy and substituting it with Islamic governmental system.

In a monochromatic perspective, Jamal Lulail, PKS leader in Malang, East Java, understands democracy as a tool to present fairly the struggle between good and bad. In a democratic system, he asserts, both proponents of good and bad are given an equal chance to manage their affairs. In this contest between good and bad, people are granted with the freedom to choose. A popular dictum la ikrah fi al-din (there is no compulsion in religion) guarantees this freedom, and all parties should play fair. A party who losses the contest in a democratic process should wait for the next round. What happened in Egypt in the aftermath of Arab Spring, according to Jamal Lulail, is the example of unfairness. He explains further that military regimes just cannot wait to capture the power. Not only unfair, for him, military coup in Egypt is an example of treachery against democracy. Quoting the quranic verse (17:81 reads “ja al-haq wa zahaqa al-bathil, inna al-bathil kana zahuqa”) regarding the battle between good and bad, he substantiates the idea that the good comes to remove the evil). He also quotes the famous saying: al-haq bi la nizam yaghlibuh al-batil bi al-nizam, meaning that poorly-managed goodness will be defeated by well-managed evil. Relating this popular saying to the political reality, Jamal Lulail asserts that Mursi came to power purely by democratic election, but he does not have a good managerial skill to run the country, and fails in running the state. Compared to Mursi, Erdogan of Turkey is perceived by him as having an excellent skill in managing people conflicting interests, so he can survive political turbulence. Needless to say, these observations were recorded well before Erdogan’s recent authoritarian turn.
B. Da’wa Before Daulah (Islamic State)

One of the functions of political party is to navigate da’wa in the state level. As agents of da’wa, PKS cadres are encouraged to equip themselves with skills and capabilities to engage da’wa through the parliament. Political party is a tool for the cadres to learn and train themselves in matters relating to state management. Before aiming at the state, the cadres are prepared to conduct da’wa within their household and community. Only after succeeding in conducting da’wa within the community, as the small unit of the state, that the PKS cadres are considered well-prepared to hold a bigger responsibility to conduct parliamentary da’wa. With this in mind, da’wa should be conducted in a gradual and systematic fashion. Fahmi Fuad is of the opinion that da’wa should precede the establishment of daulah (Islamic state). For this reason, he is critical toward individuals or groups which demand the reestablishment of caliphate and formalization of Sharia without making serious preparation for managing good government. He asserts that such a demand also neglects political landscape and social fabric of the country, as well as the complexity of the ummah, and is thus tantamount to wishful thinking. Commenting on such a demand, Fahmi Fuad expresses his strong opinion:

“To those who can only talk loud about implementing Sharia and establishing khilafah, but lack action, I challenge them with this question, ‘what have you done so far to walk the talk?’ Talking is easy, but walking the talk is hard.”

Implicit in this rhetoric question is the struggle and work of PKS in realizing its political goal through da’wa, including the predicaments and challenges the party had to face along the way of da’wa. In order to gain a better understanding about the

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287 Hilmi Aminuddin, the previous head of PKS Deliberative Council (Majlis Shura), names the cadres in the parliament as junud al-da’wa (the soldiers of da’wa), who should equip themselves with any skill needed to win the battle. See Hilmi Aminuddin, Menegakkan Kepemimpinan Dakwah, Sekretariat Jenderal DPP PKS Bidang Arsip dan Sejarah, 2012, p. 113-150.

party’s da’wa activities in implementing Sharia and Islamizing society, discussion about the predicaments, challenges, avenues and strategies of da’wa follows.

Finding Equilibrium

In the work of da’wa, everything starts with individuals. Individual awareness of the ideals of Islam and Sharia should be improved through *Tarbiyah* (systematic education on Islamic ideals), defined as a movement which preaches Islam as a total way of life, and which began to gain ground on Indonesian campuses in the 1970s. Since an attempt to a comprehensive implementation of Sharia is considered a utopia, PKS aims instead to raise the bar of people awareness, understanding and acceptance of Sharia norms, and draw them as close as possible to the idealism of Islam. According to Jamal Lulail, the da’wa to the cause of Islam is a negotiating process between idealism and pragmatism; when idealism meets pragmatism, then the point of equilibrium is achieved.

It is a common conviction among PKS circles that Sharia norms needs to be implemented by taking into the account the level of people’s readiness, awareness and understanding. Knowing so well the varied level of people’s commitments to Sharia, PKS avoids using a top-down approach in implementing Sharia. With this in mind,

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PKS tries to strike the balance between the ideals and the reality, by relaxing the rigorous Sharia agenda of the party and at the same time raising the bar of people awareness towards Sharia through education (Tarbiyah). The majority of PKS leaders are well aware that this middle strategy does not come without criticism. The PKS flexibility toward Sharia leads fundamentalist and radical groups to perceive the party as being casual in its attitude toward Sharia, while at the same time its consistency to practice Sharia norms has made the party an extremist in the eyes of the secular and liberal groups.

PKS identifies that the biggest challenge to the effort of Sharia implementation is the internal factor of the umma itself. In term of Sharia implementation, there is a gap between expectation and reality of the umma. Islamist Individuals, groups or parties have often mistakenly believed that the mere number of Muslims in Indonesia will entail substantial support for the implementation of Sharia and the establishment of Islamic state. On the contrary, the history of political Islam in Indonesia shows that attempts to incorporate Sharia into the constitution, as a legal basis for the establishment of Islamic state, end in failure. PKS’ strategy of the implementation of Sharia is not by imposing it to the people, but rather it should be carried out voluntarily. Accordingly, good knowledge, awareness, and understanding of Sharia should be in place before the state could impose Sharia upon the people. It is for this very reason that PKS works slowly but surely in preparing and educating the people to live under the Sharia. It is no wonder that da’wa should take a gradual and simultaneous way, by directing people to live according to Sharia norms, which starts from individuals.


al-fard), then families and communities (islah al-usrah wa al-mujtama), and finally the government (islah al-hukumah).\textsuperscript{296}

PKS gradual step of da’wa dictates that before the state could be Islamized, individuals should at least govern themselves by Sharia norms.\textsuperscript{297} This is the first step of the journey to the establishment of an Islamic state. In other words, the long journey to establish Islamic state starts with building individual awareness, as the frequently cited tarbiyah motto states: “establish the state of Islam in your own self,” meaning that if we are not capable of establishing Islamic system of government, then at least we govern ourselves by the Sharia norms.

**Islamic State: Substances, not Labels**

It is repeatedly mentioned by PKS leaders that name and label are not important. What matters is the substance. As it applies to Sharia implementation, it also applies to the establishment of Islamic state. According to Mohammad Yasin, the head of PKS Sharia Council of West Sumatera, Islamic state is a country run by Muslim democrats who have commitment to the implementation of Islamic norms, such as eradicating corruption, improving public education, empowering women, dispensing justice and delivering prosperity, in the life of the people.\textsuperscript{298} He further asserts that a true Islamic government will not implement Sharia only in a formalistic way, let alone only a name or label, at the expense of the substance. About the difference between an Islamic and a non-Islamic government, he has this to say:

“We should struggle for comprehensive implementation of Sharia norms, i.e. both formally and substantially. We cannot divorce justice from Sharia rules, for instance. So, it is not considered a struggle for Islam when we implement Sharia law of hudud (criminal laws) but at the same time we are also repressive, authoritarian and doing injustice towards others. I dare to say that governments such as Saudi Arabia or Egypt, is not at all Islamic, because they are not hesitant


\textsuperscript{297} Yon Machmudi, p. 199.

to eliminate political enemies or restrain the rights of women. Both countries are violating universal norms of Sharia, such as justice and freedom, which makes them unislamic.”

This opinion is also shared by Fahmi Fuad, in which he states:

“We do not need Islam only as a label on the state polity. What we are badly in need of is the state that implements Islamic values. As long as the state promotes Islamic values, the label we put onto the state, whether Islamic or United Republic of Indonesia [NKRI], is no longer relevant. Take a look at Turkey. We should look upon Turkey as an excellent example of a state which promotes Sharia norms and struggle for the glory of Islam.”

The history of Islamic government is often cited to substantiate the argument that Islam does not command its adherents to follow a particular system of government. History of leadership in Islam shows us that the system of succession in Muslim communities varied from one generation to the other. It is due to the fact that the prophet Muhammad did not leave any specific instruction on how the succession of leadership (khilafah) should be conducted. He left it to the ummah to invent the mechanism of succession and government by taking into consideration the context of their time and place. For this very reason, Islamic history of leadership shows us that the khalifahs (heads of state) were elected in various modes of succession, but it did not include yet the process of general election as we know today in a democratic system, because the system is not known until the modern era.\(^\text{299}\) This is not to say that democracy is not Islamic, or Islam gives no room for democracy. Even though a fully-fledged concept of the state is absent in the Quran and prophetic tradition (sunna), Islam does provide a set of ethical values of political principles, such as justice (‘adl), consultation (shurâ), and egalitarianism (musâwâ). Since the current form of the Indonesian nation state, with Pancasila as its ideological basis, is sufficient to accommodate the realization of those Islamic socio-political injunctions, the Indonesian nation state deserves religio-political legitimacy from and acceptance by Muslims.\(^\text{300}\) The fact that these principles have not been fully realized, should not be a


\(^{300}\) There are some valuable works by Indonesian Muslim scholars on the relation between Islam, state and democracy in Indonesia, see for example, Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam and the State. The
reason to transform the national unitary character of the state. Efforts to reinstate those principles should be carried out within the framework of the present ideological construct of the state. Furthermore, the concern of the state with the implementation and development of religious values is considered to be the gradual evolution of the state into a ‘religious state’ without having to become a “theological state” which is constitutionally base on certain formal religious institutions. The acceptance of the current form of the state has also been strengthened by the Muslim favorable perception of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Both the ideological and constitutional foundations are perceived to reflect the substance of Islamic teachings.  

Historically speaking, Muslims throughout the world have not seen or lived under the system of khilafa after the dissolution of Turkish Ottoman Empire in 1924. Reestabishment of khilafa has often become a political goal for Islamist parties or groups. The phenomenon of ISIS has drawn worldwide attention, because despite all of its atrocities and brutality, ISIS labels its movement with Islam and brings Islamic symbols and institutions of great magnitude, namely Islamic state. This issue has created apprehension among PKS leader. Far from being a state governed by the abovementioned principles of democracy, a sudden emergence of ISIS, according to Thohari and Jamal Lulail, is nothing but a conspiracy to discredit Muslims and political


301 According to Hasbullah Bakri, a former professor at the IAIN Yogyakarta and Jakarta, Indonesia can be considered to be a non-constitutional Islamic state in the sense that given the nature of Pancasila, which is in tune with Islamic principles the state would not embrace any policy which contradicts Islamic values. See his “Lima Dalil Indonesia Bisa Disebut Negara Islam Non-Konstitusional,” Panji Masyarakat, no. 439, August 1, 1983, p. 29-31, cited in Raden Cecep Lukman Yasin, The 1991 Compilation of Islamic Law. Socio-Political Study on the Legislation of Islamic Law in the New Order Period, Malang: UIN Press, 2010, p. 32-33.


303 The same concern is also voiced by other Muslim leaders, including Bachtiar Nasir of MIUMI (Majelis Intelektual dan Ulama Muda Indonesia, The Council of Indonesia Muslim Intellectual Youth) who finds out that the issue of ISIS in Indonesia’s neighboring countries, such as Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, is not as popular as in Indonesian soil. See Hidayatullah, Vol. 5, No. XXVII, September 2014, p. 51-57.
Islam. For Thohari, ISIS is not a representation of true Islam or Islamic state, even though they used the label of Islam and Islamic state as a justification for their action. Representing the opinion of PKS cadres, Thohari maintains that the ISIS case is designed to associate Islam and political Islam with terrorism. As he perceives it, wide media coverage on the terrorist acts carried out by ISIS will give the strong impression in the people’s mind about the danger of political Islam and what the Islamic state will actually do to the world. According to Thohari, the case of ISIS is used as an effective means for media to discourage people from any participation in and from something associated with political Islam. Jamal Lulail also shares the same opinion that PKS is not worried about the impact of ISIS on the national security, but he has a deep concern on the impact ISIS could have on the image of political Islam in Indonesia. Regarding this concern, he further states:

“Moderate Muslim groups often [felt to] become a victim of discredit, because they have concern on politics, economy, social and cultural issues. The war of ideas has always been in place between Islam and the West. They are not worried about Muslims going to mosque for praying or to Mecca for pilgrimage. But once Muslims talk about politics and economy, they will sound the alarm. This is what we call ghazwul fikr (war of ideas). The recent phenomenon of ISIS, for instance, is no more than a product of ghazwul fikr to discredit Islam and Muslims, by depicting these as brutal, violent, uncivilized, and terrorist. Muslim individuals and groups then become the target of accusation, by associating them as affiliated with ISIS. If ISIS is a genuine Islamic state, we wonder why they do not act to help Palestine.”

By this statement, Jamal Lulail has turned the case of ISIS into the issue of liberating Palestine from what he calls a Zionist colonialism. It is not surprising that the issue of solidarity to the Palestinian cause resurfaces following the emergence of ISIS. Adhered to many PKS leaders, such a statement describes well the party’s position on foreign affairs relating to the issue of Palestine. In his bold statement about ISIS and terrorism, Thohari opinion will make it clear the position of PKS on the global issue of terrorism, and the party foreign policy that has a strong anti-Israeli discourse:

“Islam as I understand it would not conform what ISIS is doing. Killing people for no reason, let alone your Muslim brothers, is strictly prohibited in Islam. ISIS is a new phenomenon which is described as a threat to the world. My only concern is that this issue will be engineered to become another form of accusation against Muslim groups as did the issue of terrorism. If this is about
terrorism, what is the substance of terrorism? Who is the real terrorist? Are the fighters of Gaza in Palestine considered terrorists while the Zionist colonials are not?”

**People’s Sovereignty**

For the time being, as a party PKS is not yet talking about an Islamic state (*daulah Islamiyah*) in the Indonesian context, they argue, there is no need to campaign for an Islamic state. Establishing an Islamic state is considered as too far a goal. According to Abdul Ghofar, PKS parliamentarian of Solo, Central Java, what is more crucial and also obviously very viable, is to educate people about their religion so they will have a good awareness about their religious duties. He calculates that when Muslims practice their religion, they will automatically practice Sharia; when Muslims understand the goodness of Sharia, there will come a time when they will demand that the government implement Sharia for them. 304 The phenomenon of popularity of headscarves among Muslim women is taken as an example for this case, i.e. the increasing awareness of Muslim about Sharia, to which Abdul Ghofar gives his opinion:

“Nowadays it is very common to find Muslim women wearing scarf voluntarily. There is neither regulation nor fatwa forcing them to wear scarf. I am convinced that when da’wa is diligently delivered to the people, the establishment of Islamic state will automatically follow.”

Implicit in this statement is that Islamic symbols, such as the headscarf, constitute an important indication of Muslim observance towards Sharia. It might be considered a micro-practice of Sharia, but since PKS always starts da’wa from a personal level, the phenomenon of individual piety is deemed a great success and a building block for a further step of da’wa. 305 Citing the popular slogan “*ishadu bi anna muslimin*” (witness that we are Muslims), Abdul Ghofar suggests that:

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“We cannot negate or remove the symbol of our faith, neither can we emphasize too much on Islamic symbols. If scarf is considered a symbol of Islam, then wearing it becomes an inseparable part of our Islamic identity. So, it would be incorrect to say that taking off the scarf is permissible as long as we have a good attitude and character. We still have to value the symbol of Islam while at the same time we also show an excellent behavior towards others. Moderation is a path we should take in dealing with Sharia.”

The discussion above demonstrates that educating the public about Islamic norms so that they become aware, understand and then practice the Sharia in their individual and social life, is the first important step for the realization of ultimate goal of political Islam, i.e. establishment an Islamic state, in which people are willing to regulate themselves by Sharia norms. However, the demand to establish an Islamic state should originate from the majority of people, not from a few Islamist figures or politicians. In this way, PKS firmly believes on the people sovereignty in making a decision about how they would govern themselves as a nation; it is not up to the PKS or any other parties or groups to decide. Regarding the general consensus of people and a diligent work of da’wa as a prerequisite for the establishment of Islamic state, Thohari suggests that:

“Because Islam is shamil (comprehensive), nothing can escape from Islamic rulings. Daulah Islamiyah is not unnecessary; it is a part of Islamic system of government. However, daulah Islamiyah is too high to achieve in a short period of time. It takes much preparation and political structure before we can establish the real daulah Islamiyah. For the time being, our concern should be focused on the political reality on the grassroots. We could learn from the result of the recent election in some parts of the country. In Solo, for instance, more than 60 percent of the people vote for the bull [PDIP]. It indicates the lack of affinity of the majority of the people in Solo to our vision and mission. In this situation, our main duty is to conduct da’wa among them so that they will have good understanding about Islam. We do not have to propagate for daulah Islamiyah, because when the people have already had high awareness about Islam, the establishment of daulah Islamiyah is only a matter of time.”

Implicit in this statement, Islamic state is not an immediate goal of the party. Besides, it is not an easy endeavor, and not relevant to the political context of the country. However, despite its highly demanding requirement, an Islamic state is not impossible to establish. Thohari then enumerates the widely-known recipe of achieving

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that goal. The first step, he explains, is to work on the individual character (islah al-fard). Individuals with excellent character would give good influence to their families and surroundings. Once the family and society have been Islamized (islah al-usrahwa al-mujtama’), the establishment of daulah islamiyah will come naturally. He concludes that the four-step process of Islamization (islah al-fard, -usrah, -mujtama, -dawlah) should run gradually and simultaneously.

**Character Building**

Before its involvement in politics, as early as the 1980s, PKS was already concerned with character-based education. Accordingly, PKS has built private schools and Islamic boarding schools (Pesantren) to raise a new generation with an excellent character, and encourage the government to have such schools as well. Marfendi, the Vice of PKS Provincial Office of West Sumatera, believes that character-based schools (Sekolah Berkarakter) will give a significant contribution for the successful development of the country. He believes that if government-owned schools adopt this system, the country will advance. He further argues that Indonesia is in need of leaders as well as society with character, therefore, from the outset, PKS da’wa aims to build the character of the people.

According to Marfendi, the aim of building character-based schools is not to indoctrinate people with PKS values, but to inculcate in the people an excellent attitude and manners. “PKS will be happy to have persons [with excellent moral and character] in PDIP or Golkar,” said Marfendi, and he continued with his reasoning:

“We are not dreaming of our cadres to flock into the party. The party cannot accommodate all the cadres to sit in the legislative or executive powers. [In Padang, West Sumatera], there are only 65 seats available for the legislatives, 19 regents, and only one governor. Our cadres are expected to play an active role in many fields of profession. They are also encouraged to be active members in NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) or Muhammadiyah. For us, names or labels are not important; substance is more important. If we focus only on names or labels, we as the ummah will be divided and lost. They can be cadres of PKS, and at the same time remain active in NU or Muhammadiyah. We expect them to be a flag bearer of Islamic virtue.”

Marfendi points to the example of previous parliamentarians of PBB (Crescent and Star Party, Partai Bulan Bintang), who were also active members of tarbiyah. He
had a dream that the two biggest Muslim organizations, namely NU and Muhammadiyah, would join force with PKS to build the ummah. For him, PKS gives more emphasis on the important issues, such as the unity and glory of the umma, rather than names or labels of organizations or political parties. Marfendi claims that the PKS cadres have already had an active involvement in Muslim organizations, such as NU, Muhammadiyah or Perti (Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam, The Unity of Islamic Education). He explains that the party’s cooperative attitude results from its conviction that, as a unifying force, the party never intends to make any further split or chasm within the ummah.

As a part of educational system in Indonesia, madrasah (a school for the study of Islamic religion) has also become a concern of PKS. So far, private teachers and/or institutions run the madrasah without proper support from the state. As a da’wa party, PKS considers religious education, whose system is generally called Diniyah Taklimiyah (Religious Lecture, DT), as important as formal secular education, and discrimination against madrasah should be ended. Najamuddin, PKS Parliamentarian of Bogor, argues that the Law of National Educational System dictates that education aims to create God-fearing students (Pelajar yang Bertakwa) with excellent morality, ethics and character. Najamuddin believes that instilling God-awareness to the students necessitates the religious teaching. So, due to its substantial role in realizing it, he insists that DT be promoted. As the initiator of the Perda on Diniyah Taklimiyah of Bogor, Najamuddin expresses his concern about the DT:

“From my experience and observation, I am confident to say that DT has been marginalized. Teachers or schools running DT received no support from the government. For so long, they have been running the DT by their own efforts; underpaid and with minimum facilities. With Perda no. 2/2013 on DT, we have a legal umbrella to give financial or managerial support to madrasah.”

As he perceives it, the government has done little to realize this particular aim of education. He continues lamenting that government seems to neglect the development of DT which is actually the vanguard of religious education for Muslims. So, he concludes that it is high time that government pays attention to DT.
**Religious Tolerance**

As PKS cadres come from different backgrounds, so that the party, its leaders assert, should exercise great tolerance toward different opinions (*khilafiyah*) of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) among the cadres. In order to keep unity among the cadres, from the outset, PKS leaves the door open for the matters of *khilafiyah*; it is up to the individual cadre to follow the opinion most suitable for them. The cadres are free to adhere to certain school of *fiqh*. PKS Sharia Council is only concerned with discussing and dispensing fatwa (*legal opinion*) on the real issues faced by the cadres, such as money politics, gratification money, non-Muslim candidates, or female president. As a rule of thumb, Sharia Council will not interfere in traditional *fiqh* issues. The cadres are free to practice their *fiqh* according to their schools of law (*mażhab*). As an open party, PKS houses diverse religious affiliations of the people. According to Mohammad Yasin, PKS never intends to create new *mażhab* within the *umma*, but instead, the party wants to be seen as a unifying force of the *umma*.

The fact that PKS membership is composed of people from many different social backgrounds and mass organizations, such as Persis, Muhammadiyah, NU, and al-Irsyad, leaves PKS no viable choice, the leaders argue, but to exercise tolerant attitude. Differences in ritual practices (*khilafiyah*) are of no political party business, but of a personal preference. However, it is important to note that PKS tolerance does not extend to Ahmadiyah, because PKS leaders consider it as a deviant sect in Islam whose ideology and teaching contradict with the fundamental principle of Islamic faith.\(^{307}\) In regard to the ban of Ahmadiyah, Jajat Sudrajat, PKS parliamentarian of Bogor, West Java, has this to say:

“Regarding the issue of Ahmadiyah, PKS follows the fatwa of MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Indonesian Council of Ulama). One might judge us as intolerant to other faith, but we should remember that in the municipality of Bogor, we are only operating and implementing the instruction from the higher authority in Jakarta. It is unfortunate that in an effort to implement the fatwa,

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mostly in municipalities, some clashes occurred between the followers of Ahmadiyah and those of the religious mainstream.”

Jajat Sudrajat argues that the ban on Ahmadiyah is the right decision, because this sect has deviated (kelompok sesat) from the true religion of Islam. For him, being tolerant to a deviant sect is to misplace tolerance, because the concept of tolerance only applied to the entity of different religion. Ahmadiyah claims to be a part of Islam but, according to Ahmad Heryawan, this group actually corrupts the fundamental basis of faith, which is the belief in Muhammad as the last prophet, because never do the Muslims have a conviction other than the shahada (pronouncement of witnessing the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad). Accordingly, in his opinion, those who have a different shahada would consequently be considered as non-Muslims. Regarding the ban of Ahmadiyah in Bandung, West Java, Ahmad Heryawan argues that:

“We have to be clear to the public that we would ban any activities of a group who claim to be Muslims while their shahada is at odds with the basic teaching of Islam as taught by the prophet and understood by his companions. If Ahmadiyah claim to be a new religion, separated from Islam, the concept of tolerance would apply to them as it applies to other religions in Indonesia. However, if they remain on their claim to be a part of Islam, they would be banned, due to their deviation. In my opinion, this measure is not tantamount to discrimination. Some might have different opinion, or some would say that we have discriminated them. Furthermore, the issue of Ahmadiyah is not unique to Bandung; it is a national issue. MUI has issued a fatwa saying that Ahmadiyah is a deviant sect. The governor edict on the ban of Ahmadiyah should be understood as an effort to implement the fatwa in a provincial level.”

This particular issue of the ban of Ahmadiyah raises a question about the party position regarding a universal value of the freedom of faith. Just as the difference in Islamic jurisprudence should be tolerated, the difference in Islamic theology does not deserve intolerant attitude. If we agree that faith is a personal matter, fatwa or decree prohibiting particular belief or sect would amount to the violation against the freedom of faith, and it also means the state intervention toward personal belief. This particular issue of Ahmadiyah prohibition might be interpreted by a general public as a negative signal about PKS stance on religious tolerance. However, if we look it from other perspective, PKS stance on the issue of tolerance is consistent to the concept of the rule
of law. As Ahmad Heryawan argues, the ban of Ahmadiyah is based on the join decree (Surat Keputusan Bersama, SKB) no. 3/2008 between Minister of Religious Affairs, Minister of Interior Affairs and the Supreme Judge on the Prohibition of Disseminating Ahmadiyah Teachings (Larangan Penyebaran Faham Ahmadiyah). Ahmad Heryawan continues that since the year of its issuance, the authorities have made da’wa to Ahmadiyah adherents in order to take them back to Islam, but all to no avail. The spread of Ahmadiyah teachings and followers has raised great concern among certain Muslim communities and often led to atrocity between the proponents and opponents of Ahmadiyah. Heryawan asserts that it is only after years of da’wa and numerous communal clashes that the governor of Bandung decided to ratify the SKB and rendered all the activities of Ahmadiyah throughout West Java illegal.

The case of Jasmine Church of Bogor is also worth mentioning, because it shows us the delicate relationship between freedom of faith and the rule of law and the place of tolerance in this equation. Jajat Sudrajat suggests that the case has been internationalized by media which created an opinion to the effect that the Christian congregation has been denied permission to build their own place of worship. According to Sudrajat, this case was actually due to the lack of appropriate building permit that led the court to issue a verdict to halt the building, and the community within the vicinity of the church has also conducted protest against the enactment of the church. According to Sudrajat, there are at least two reasons for people’s refusal: the legality of the building and the location of the church. Sudrajat explains that the people are complaining that their signature has been manipulated, and the church locates in the street bearing the name of a prominent Muslim figure of Bogor, Kyai Haji Saleh Iskandar. In this particular issue, PKS is in agreement with the government position that the case of Jasmine Church is more about the issue of building permit than that of religious freedom. PKS and other parties in DPRD (municipal parliament) of Bogor, to the exclusion of PDIP, agree that the issue of Jasmine Church is about the legality of the building. Sudrajat is of the opinion that for the church to be enacted, the permit must be legally obtained. As in the case of Ahmadiyah, tolerance comes after the rule of law.
Politics of Service (Khidmat)

The primary function of da’wa in politics is to give a real example about how a good politician and party should look. PKS wants to lead by example. Arif Ramdani, PKS parliamentarian of Bandung, believes that people will not hesitate to lend their support, if they experience the goodness of da’wa; otherwise, people would be a priori toward PKS. Ramdani continues that as agents of da’wa, all of PKS cadres are encouraged to observe Sharia norms by showing their religious observance and social involvement, while in the state level the parliamentarians are obliged to give good example, such as denouncing and avoiding the practice of corruption and bribery. It has become a consensus in PKS that the party cadres in the parliament are not allowed to accept gift in any form. In a community level, people have seen the involvement of PKS cadres in social services and humanitarian act, ranging from Bakti Sosial (social service) to bazaar, and from health service to natural disaster relief. It is safe to say that participation of PKS in political engagement is coupled by the work in building excellent individuals and society.

People generally perceive PKS more as a political party than a party of da’wa. Accordingly, the party social and humanitarian activities are more often seen as merely political maneuver and invariably perceived from political perspective. The following statement of Mohammad Yasin captures the discontent feeling of majority of PKS parliamentarians towards the public perception of the involvement of da’wa party in politics:

“People often interpret our development program as political. We find it hard to believe that provincial programs such as express highway and character-based schools are perceived to be PKS hidden political program. These programs will actually benefit the people of West Sumatera as a whole. To be honest, PKS wants to work together with other parties; however, they seem unwilling to accede to PKS popular program. The root of their refusal actually results from the way we communicate with others. As a new comer in politics, PKS needs time to tune in with the political reality in the parliament, and it also takes time for them to feel convenient with us.”

PKS engagement in social activities and popular programs might have a strategic value for the image of the party, and it might also become a social or political
investment for the party. When the party works hard for the people, it is natural if they would be supportive to the party. However, the real politics does not follow this logic. As the recent election indicates, the vote of PKS in numerous provinces and municipalities is in decline. Regarding the socio-political engagement of the party, Sudrajat maintains that when da’wa engages in politics, all the work of da’wa will be perceived as having political agenda. According to Jajat Sudrajat, despite this public misperception, PKS continues giving social service as a part of implementing Sharia norms; whether or not the people would vote for them at the ballot is not the party concern.

The issue of sincerity is important to discuss in relation to the politics of service. Perceiving parliamentary da’wa and engagement in politics as a part of religious duty to promote Islamic norms, PKS emphasizes the sincerity in action as a necessary ingredient of da’wa. While the work of da’wa is noble and sacred, the political arena is murky and requires compromise in all senses of the word.308 How the party handles the temptation of the murky world of politics is a matter of great interest. As Marfendi suggests, engaging da’wa in politics will put sincerity to the test; whether or not they work for the greater good of society or for their own accomplishment. The sincerity is also central in keeping the wheel of da’wa moving forward.309 As a da’wa party, PKS should never cease giving service to the people, and, as Marfendi again suggests, the party is well aware that the cadres in all levels of the party structure have worked hard to deliver the service, but despite years of service in the community, PKS often finds that people in the community do not lend their support for PKS cadres to win their position in government offices. The commensalism between PKS and general subjects of da’wa would become a potential discontent on the part of PKS cadres. The recent PKS slogan “keep giving service” (Tetap Melayani) following the result of recent election seems to keep the cadres’ moral high.


In terms of media coverage, the sincerity of PKS cadres in government office is also put to the test. Bearing the noble and religious task of da’wa, PKS cadres in legislative or executive body should fulfill a high public-satisfaction index. Marfendi asserts that if PKS elite are reported of making a mistake, people tend to remember their shortcomings and forget their achievement. He laments that media coverage of the fault of PKS cadres tends to be unfavorable, not to say damaging, to the party image. For PKS, negative media propaganda is like rubbing the salt into the wounds. Especially a year before the election of 2014, Marfendi perceives that in relation to the topics about PKS, the motto “bad news is good news” seems to be a media norm, to which he comments that media is silent regarding the achievement of PKS, but quick in covering the scandal involving the party. Regarding the bias of media coverage and the sincerity of the party cadre, Marfendi has this to say:

“Our cadres sometime feel irritated with negative media coverage about PKS, and urge the governors or regents of PKS background to counter it with positive media coverage. However, many are reluctant to get their work covered by media. Their work is only for God pleasure, not for publicity. In one hand, this attitude is not good for political investment, but on the other it is the success of PKS in creating individuals with sincere and honest character.”

Negative media propaganda is understood by Marfendi as a conspiracy to halt the da’wa progress of the party, which should be responded by improving the work and performance of the cadres, so the people will witness and experience the goodness of their work. He gives example of Governor of West Sumatera, Irwan Prayitno, who is one of the most successful governors from PKS cadres. He narrates that when he took the office, Padang was just hit by the earthquake. Prompt actions were taken by the governor to alleviate the impact of the disaster, and to put the city back to normal. Mohammad Yasin explains that it is during his tenure that West Sumatera witnesses one of the best road networks that contribute to the development of economic activities of the people. Mohammad Yasin continues that despite this achievement, the governor refuses to expose his works in the media, saying that his work is for God alone. PKS leaders consider the work of serving people as a work for God’s pleasure alone (ikhlas), so it does not need media coverage. With this in mind, Marfendi asserts that media
conspiracy against PKS is considered a test for sincerity, as well as a challenge for the da’wa cause. In regard with this challenge of da’wa, Marfendi states:

“The challenge of da’wa will definitely increase, and so does our spirit of da’wa. That the challenge will increase by the passing days is the nature of da’wa itself. In doing da’wa, we will always be tested, and our real victory is not in this world, but in the next world. Entering paradise is our ultimate goal. If our intention is only to chase the worldly glory, such as winning the election, then it can be easily achieved by money politics. What is the point of being elected president or ministers, but we end up in the hellfire? All the tribulation in the path of da’wa is a sign that da’wa is in the right course.”

To keep the cadres’ spirit high, PKS designs a weekly meeting called *lawazim* (great obligation). Having paramount importance in maintaining sincerity and loyalty, the *lawazim* should be fulfilled regularly. If the cadre does not show up in 3 meetings consecutively without any valid reasons, he or she is liable to a warning of disloyalty, and the membership is at stake. The soul or engine of the movement lies in this weekly meeting, where the cadres get recharged and reminded about the party’s ultimate goal. So, no matter what the position within the movement or the government they may have, all of PKS cadres have to follow this *lawazim*. The system of *lawazim* is also responsible for the solidity of the movement. According to Marfendi, the key success of PKS in going through political turbulence lies in this *lawazim*, without which PKS would not survive.

**C. Da’wa and the Recent Election**

General elections are reliable tool, the PKS leaders argue, to measure and evaluate the da’wa performance of the party. To conduct a survey on the number of people accepting PKS da’wa would be prohibitively expensive. The result of recent election provides the party with a real number of people who accept the party da’wa. A ballot is a tool to figure out the progress or the stagnancy of da’wa. The fact that PKS share of vote is only 7 percent indicates that PKS da’wa is only acceptable to a very small number of people. It is also a wake-up call that the party still has so many things to do ahead of them. Therefore, according to Marfendi, there is no reason for the PKS cadres to be satisfied or proud with their work. Even if the party’s vote hits 10 percent, there are still 90 percent who refuse to join the party. With this in mind,
Marfendi suggests that becoming members of parliament, or elected governor or regents, is only a bonus, because for PKS, the most important thing in the election is that the progress of da’wa is well-recorded through the election.

An optimistic look at the election result is made by Mahyeldi, PKS leading figure of West Sumatera who is also major of Padang, West Sumatera, stating that PKS da’wa has been appreciated by the people. The issue that should be addressed by PKS is not about public acceptance, but more about the method of recruitment. Mahyeldi maintains that:

“Our vote in the recent election is actually increasing, indicating a good public acceptance. It was quite something that our vote slightly increased by 200,000 in the time of political turbulence. Compared to Democrat Party and Golkar, which suffers dramatic loss of vote, PKS still survives the storm. In the next election, we should change our strategy of reaching out the people. We cannot depend on conventional strategy of social programs. In its formative period, PKS programs of social activities might contribute a lot to wide public acceptance. Decades have gone by, and it is a high time that we find other modes of social and political program and strategy that could raise public acceptance and vote as well.”

PKS share of vote in the recent election was indeed below the party expectancy. However, Jamal Lulail perceives the result of recent election as a blessing for the party. The success in maintaining loyal voters and surpassing the electoral threshold is something the party is grateful of. In recent election of 2014 PKS garnered about 200,000 votes higher (8,480,204 or 6.79 percent) than that of the last election of 2009 (8,206,955 or 7.88 percent), but the parliamentary seat drops from 59 (10.59 percent) to 40 (7.1 percent). Jamal Lulail suggests that despite insignificant increase of vote, PKS is considered successful in keeping the vote stable. According to him, the case of previous PKS president, Luthfi Hasan Ishaq (LHI), in corruption scandal does not seem to give adverse influence on PKS loyal voters who are considered mature enough to understand a political nuance behind the case.

It has become a matter common belief within PKS circle that the case of LHI and the political fitnah (tribulation) in its wake was manufactured to retard the progress of PKS in politics, and PKS does not see the decrease of its number of seats in
parliament as a failure, but more as a success in resisting the negative campaign by the media. Representing the standpoint of PKS cadres, Jamal Lulail has an intriguing opinion about the issue of corruption that has tarnished the image of PKS as a party with a noble work of da’wa:

“In 2012, PKS was predicted by many observers to be leading in the upcoming election of 2014, because PKS is widely known as a clean party, with very minimum corruption case, compared to other parties. For some, the prediction is considered a threat. Something should be done. The worst possible scenario should be drafted and put in motion. They know that catching a small fish would not inflict maximum damage to PKS, hence targeting the big fish. I can say in full confidence that the case of LHI is politicized.”

According to Jamal Lulail, normal and legal procedure does not apply in case of LHI. He compares LHI case with that of Anas Urbaningrum of Democrat Party. It takes almost a year after the latter conviction of corruption suspect that he was finally apprehended. In Anas case, KPK (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, Corruption Eradication Committee) needs long process of collecting evidence and witnesses before arresting the suspect. Jamal Lulail explains that unlike Anas, LHI is not convicted suspect, nor proven evidence of corruption. PKS leaders are convinced that the LHI case is not merely a legal but a political maneuver. It is a common conviction among PKS leader that the real target is not to imprison LHI, but to dismantle PKS. Jamal Lulail explains what he believes as the KPK scenario in arresting LHI:

“They tried to find evidence that PKS as a party is receiving fund from illicit source, i.e. the money LHI got from alleged corruption. To their dismay, such evidence never exists. So, they lower the target: no longer dismantlement of PKS, but preventing it from achieving electoral threshold, hence its disappearance from political arena.”

In his taujih (directive speech) in Silagnas (Silaturahmi Anggota Legislatif Nasional PKS) on 20 September 2014, Anis Matta, previous PKS president of 2013-2015, announced that PKS should be grateful with the result of the recent election, because despite a political tsunami, PKS still survives. Right after Hidayat Nur Wahid and Fahri Hamzah were elected the vices of MPR and DPR respectively, Anis mentioned that it was a great success for PKS, the success that might raise the rivals’
eyebrows. The fact that both figures are the most mature, influential, and experienced among MPR and DPR deputies would make PKS bargaining in the parliament even higher. Furthermore, in the KMP (Koalisi Merah Putih, Merah Putih Coalition), PKS is acting as a backbone and eager to cooperate with other parties. For all this achievement, in his taujih, Anis urged that all the cadres keep a low profile and seek to gather more friends.

Establishing communication with different groups and parties as well as building coalition is one of the strategies of da’wa. Despite the small vote share of 7 percent, PKS still have to meet people’s expectation and give voice to people’s interests. Knowing that the party does not have enough voice in the parliament to be heard and followed, the natural way to advance the party’s goals is to establish coalition with other parties. PKS might constitute only 10 percent of all the coalition power, but the party can multiply its power by working together with parties of the same vision. PKS cannot work alone; it needs a coalition to exchange ideas.

The coalition in KMP is made to be a permanent one, and PKS will be consistent with its decision and work hard to maintain the cohesiveness of the coalition. So far, as Marfendi suggests, PKS has shown its loyalty to the coalition, especially during the political campaign for Prabowo presidency where PKS cadres were mobilized to support the presidential election through their active participation in every step of vote counting from the village level all the way to the national counting by KPU (Komisi Pemilihan Umum, General Election Commission). PKS Headquarters also released their own quick count. All these efforts were acknowledged by the chief of KMP, Prabowo, as Mahyeldi has this to say:

“Prabowo has acknowledged the party’s significant role and contribution within the coalition. In many occasions, Prabowo himself expressed publicly his appreciation for the hard work and loyalty of PKS cadres. That is actually our attitude and character, as a result of tarbiyah. When we are given a trust, we will keep it to the last breath. Minang philosophical expression says: Kato pertamo ditapati, kato kaduo bacari-cari (first words are binding, the second words are lying). So, PKS holds to its first words and will never budge. Decision to join the coalition was taken after a long process of deliberation, because it is meant to last for a long-term period of time.”
According to Marfendi, one of the reasons of PKS support for Prabowo in the recent presidential election is that the party saw in him the readiness to work together for the best interest of the nation. Prabowo is considered by PKS as having a deep concern of protecting national natural resource from the exploitation of foreign countries, and ready to use it for the greater benefit of all the people. The protectionist rhetoric of Prabowo was congruent with the goal of PKS da’wa of realizing prosperity of the people by protecting and managing the country’s natural resource. Regarding this goal, Marfendi states that:

“We are now in a big coalition. Our target is to build the country, maintain our dignity, and free ourselves from the control of foreign nations. Indonesia is a big country with highly rich natural resources, but these are seized by foreign countries. We have a huge gold deposit in the mountain, but it is under the control of Freeport. So, we should work together to build our country.”

PKS decided to form a coalition with KMP partly because PKS platform has a close affinity with Prabowo’s vision about self-reliance and sufficiency. According to Marfendi, Indonesia is becoming a big market for the foreign producers, due to her huge number of population. He substantiates his claim with the fact that Indonesia starts importing sugar and rice now, and this situation needs to be ended. It is in this particular issue that PKS sees the affinity between the popular program of Prabowo and the aim of PKS da’wa of social empowerment. Both Prabowo and PKS seem to come to terms with the issue of economic platform. Marfendi explains that numerous dialogs between Prabowo and the party elite were responsible to the smooth join force between an Islamist party and ultra nationalist party of Gerinda (Gerakan Indonesia Raya, Greater Indonesia Movement Party). Referring to the initial process of coalition with Gerindra, Marfendi states that:

“Prabowo had once been apprehensive about PKS due to the image of the latter being an extreme group. However, once engaged in dialogue with us, he admitted that he found in PKS what he strove for all this time, and in numerous occasions he asked PKS to help mentoring the cadres of his party. If Prabowo wins the presidential election, we will have a big chance to begin realizing our dream of welfare and prosperous society.”

Being in the coalition is not without disadvantage to the PKS image. There exists a perception that the party is of no difference from other parties in KMP, which
is perceived as a coalition of corrupt parties or parties fraught with problems. That the coalition is merely based on interest, not on ideology, so it is destined to be unsuccessful is another critical comment of the public. By joining the coalition, PKS is also accused of having abandoned its ideological belief, preference, and goals. Addressing to this issue, Marfendi maintains:

“We cannot counter this perception by delving ourselves into debate and argument. We would rather counter it by our real work for the society. Our cadres who become regents or mayors in many municipalities are actually ambassadors of PKS. Due to their closeness to the community, regents or majors have strategic role and position to deliver da’wa in a widest sense of the word. If they succeed in delivering justice and prosperity, they will become representations of PKS value. Someday, if people want to know about PKS, we can simply ask them to see our cadres.”

The coalition of KMP is formed as a balancing power and a ‘watchdog’ for the government’s performance. In the recently established administration of Jokowi, PKS decided to be with the coalition of KMP and become a loyal opposition. According to Jamal Lulail, this position is taken due to the lack of confidence in working with the ruling party, whose ideology is relatively antagonistic toward PKS ideals. It is feared that the inclusion of PKS in the Jokowi cabinet would be counterproductive. Joining the cabinet was also seen as unhealthy for the party-political investment. Jamal Lulail gives his opinion about the reason for PKS to be outside the cabinet:

“Since PKS cadres are known to be outspoken in defending the principled value, it is easier for PKS to be outside the Jokowi cabinet. We are free to express our criticism against government policy that we deem inconsistent with public interest. Being outside a government is not a novel experience for PKS. We have a long history of being an opponent during the new order era. So being inside or outside the government is not a big issue, the important thing is that we keep working for a good cause.”

Since da’wa is a collective duty of all PKS cadres, the absence of PKS cadres in the Jokowi’s cabinet does not necessarily mean that PKS ceases in doing da’wa in politics. If one gate is closed, others are open. Commenting on the absence of PKS cadres in the state cabinet, Surahman has this to say:

“Being inside or outside Jokowi cabinet is a blessing for us. When we are assigned the posts in the cabinet, we consider it as a means to enhance our performance and capacity in delivering our mission of da’wa for the benefit of
the nation, but when we are not, then it is an opportunity for us to learn and train ourselves on how to become a good critic and control for the government. So, in both situations, we can still perform our duty of da’wa.”

However, there is also a concern among PKS leaders about the decision of becoming an opposition. Since da’wa needs power and authority, the absence of PKS cadres in Jokowi’s cabinet would entail a difficulty for da’wa. While still hoping that Prabowo is elected president, Marfendi states the benefit and disadvantage of being outside the cabinet:

“If Prabowo won the president election, our da’wa would run much easier, and knowing that he lost the election, then we should multiple our energy and perseverance for da’wa, especially, when we are now choosing to be outside of Jokowi cabinet. To be inside the cabinet is not always easy; it puts us on a dilemma. In the last part of SBY’s administration, for instance, we were given 3 ministerial posts in his cabinet. Being critical to the government’s policy which we often found unfavorable for the people, was interpreted as disloyal to the government in which we were parts of its coalition. After ten year within the coalition with government, our share of vote seems to be in stagnancy. It is around 7 percent. There is no significant increase. Now, being outside Jokowi administration makes us easy to be critical to the government. However, it also comes with serious consequence. Remember that LHI was apprehended and sentenced to 18 year of imprisonment, and revoked of his political rights. It happened while we are inside the government coalition. You can imagine what would befall on us now. So, we should all the time be ready for the worst.”

Conclusion

PKS claims that it brings da’wa into politics, and use politics to advance the cause of Islam. This, it argues, makes PKS different from other parties. As a da’wa party, the ultimate goal of PKS is the realization of universal Sharia norms in the everyday life of the people. In the era of democracy, efforts to achieve this goal necessitate their involvement in politics. The political party is utilized as a means to combines da’wa and politics. Therefore, PKS is not only a political party but also a party of da’wa, and politics constitutes only a part of da’wa channels. The engagement of da’wa party in politics is not without criticism. Due to its participation in politics PKS is conceived by many as degrading its commitment to da’wa and merely appropriating da’wa as a vehicle to power. The radical Islamists conceive party-political promotion of democracy as a evidence of being indifferent to the struggle for
Shariatization, but at the same time, the liberal secularists accuse PKS of participating in democratic process as mere subterfuge. The PKS leaders respond to these accusations by arguing that this is the price that they pay for following the middle path advocated by Islam.

The engagement of PKS in national politics, the leaders argue, aims to promote Sharia norms in the state level. Having a firm conviction in the superiority of Sharia over democracy, PKS acknowledges that Sharia norms can thrive in a democratic system of government. Through democratic mechanisms, PKS is struggling to incorporate, promote and support Sharia norms into laws and regulations on one hand, and on the other hand to prevent and remove any policy or regulation that potentially contradicts Sharia norms. However, the support for Shariatization does not necessarily translate to the call for the establishment of an Islamic state. That is considered too distant a goal to be discussed now. Nevertheless, it has become a commonly expressed conviction among PKS leaders that considerable prior preparations are required to establish an Islamic state, the most importance of which is the consent of the people and the implementation of universal Sharia norms in the state, such as justice, consultancy, public participatory, transparency, accountability, equality and freedom, to mention but a few.

From the perspective of da’wa, the party aims, it says, to Islamize society and government. To achieve this goal, the PKS leaders say that the party is working hard to enhance the awareness, understanding and practice of Sharia norms in individual level (islah al-fard), as a building block for the further Islamization of the government (islah al-hukumah). For the party, this immediate goal of da’wa should take into consideration the varied level of people’s commitments to Sharia, hence the demand of gradual approach. Any attempt at a hasty and untimely implementation of Islamic norms within Indonesian society and in the state level will only lead to resistance and destruction. This gradual strategy of carrying out Islamist agenda has distinguished

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PKS from other more radical Islamist groups in Indonesia. To this end, tarbiyah training programs form the backbone of PKS da’wa. Tarbiyah is designed, the leaders explain, to build individuals with good character, and to make sure that once the cadre is appointed to a leadership position in the government, he or she will be trustworthy and hold the responsibility to the fullest. The paramount importance of tarbiyah can also be observed from its ability to standardize the cadres’ understanding and perception about Sharia. Through tarbiyah, PKS proves successful in promoting tolerance in the matters of fiqh differences, which can help strengthening the unity of ummah. In the controversial cases involving Ahmadiyah and the Jasmine Church, the PKS leaders argue that they seek to put the rule of law before gestures of tolerance.

*Tarbiyah* is considered successful in keeping the party safe from the political tribulation in the aftermath of LHI scandal. One year prior to the election of 2014, PKS was hit by severe political turbulence. It was a year of tribulation for PKS. Notwithstanding, the party still maintained its share of the national vote at the 7 percent level. Without this turbulence, PKS was convinced of gaining 10 percent of the vote. Despite relentless negative bombardment from the media, PKS cadres held fast in maintaining the party’s electoral threshold. As Anis Matta said about the result of the recent legislative election of 2014, that PKS today is lean and fighting fit – it is genuinely cadre-based, blessedly free from the flab of hangers-on.

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CHAPTER SIX
NEGOTIATING SHARIA

This chapter is devoted to the discussion of the party’s struggle to negotiate Sharia in the political landscape of the country. How Sharia is presented and the strategy the party uses to legislate Sharia is the main topic of the chapter, which is divided into three parts. Discussion of the (mis)understanding of Sharia among Muslims, including that of the earlier cadres of tarbiyah movement, will be presented first, followed by the shift of understanding Sharia within PKS cadres and what PKS means by Sharia. The last part will analyze the role of Sharia by-laws (Perda Sharia), and how Perda are used as a new avenue to formalize Sharia norms.

A. Misunderstanding and The Shift in Understanding Sharia

In the 1980s, a new form of Islamic activism emerged. This new religious movement was known widely as Jemaah Tarbiyah. The Tarbiyah (‘education’) movement saw the cleavage of the Muslim community (ummah) into “traditionalist” and “modernist” as being outmoded, and they tried to find alternative points of connection to established Muslim groups. Very often, this group is dubbed as ikhwani, due to their close contact with the Muslim Brothers (al-Ikhwan) of Egypt. They themselves are more comfortable with Tarbiyah - the name given to them by their Indonesian counterparts. In the early 1980s, campus based Islamic activist were less united than they would later become. Like their counterparts in Middle East, the Indonesian campus Islamic movements were dynamic. PKS and HTI represent the two most important political forces to emerge from the Tarbiyah Movement. Growing out of campus da’wa initiatives, Jemaah Tarbiyah adopted a non-revolutionary

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313 Ibid., 44.
approach, contrary, they assert, to what some authors may have described.\footnote{Some books give emphasis on the role of Jemaah Tarbiyah as a resistance group towards the regime. See Andi Rahmat and Mukhammad, \textit{Gerakan Perlawanan dari Masjid Kampus}, Surakarta: Purimedia, 2001, and Ali Said Damanik, \textit{Fenomena Partai Keadilan: Transformasi 20 Tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia}, Bandung: Mizan, 2002.} They focus rather on cultivating cadres and enhancing their understanding of Islam. Through weekly meetings, mostly conducted in praying rooms of university campuses, the pioneers of Jemaah Tarbiyah claim to have made a significant success in converting some radical young generation into moderate Muslims.\footnote{Yon Machmudi, 2006, p. 93.} These efforts in deradicalization continue up until the present according to leaders like Hilmi Aminuddin. Commenting on the problem of extremism and radicalism among the youth he proudly proclaimed:

“Please, [ask them to] join PKS. God willing, it is guaranteed, [after joining] they will no longer become extreme or radical. Even many of them turn to become outstanding cadres and contribute tremendously to the cause of da’wa.”\footnote{Hilmi Aminuddin, \textit{Menegakkan Kepemimpinan Dakwah}, Sekertariat Jenderal DPP Partai Keadilan Sejahtera: Bidang Arsip dan Sejarah, 2012, p. 204.}

This statement from the previous head of Deliberative Council (Majlis Syura) of PKS also indicates the diversity of PKS cadres in term of their social, religious, educational, and cultural background.

The two decades of 1980 to 1990 represented the height of New Order regime power, which was as wary as its predecessor in dealing with the ideological and political articulation of Islamic groups. The repressive policies of the regime lead Jemaah Tarbiyah activistshabitually avoiding any expression of a confrontational attitude, because any effort to oppose regime policies was very risky.\footnote{Yon Machmudi, 2006, p. 100.} From the perspective of social theory movement, when the regime tightens its grip over all civil society groups, the highly political constraints and low opportunity compel a social movement to avoid confrontation. Jemaah Tarbiyah activists adopted a dual strategy...
of avoiding conflict with the authorities and keeping their followers away from being targeted by the regime.\textsuperscript{320}

Direct resistance was replaced by learning and training activities within small groups, called \textit{halaqah} (Islamic circle).\textsuperscript{321} Through these circles, the activists made efforts to strengthen their spiritual practices and religious knowledge. Consequently, the government’s policy of restricting student’s political activities in 1980s and 1990s helped Jemaah Tarbiyah activists to expand their influence on campuses. The success of Jemaah Tarbiyah in expanding its membership in campuses during these two decades is claimed to have led to a significant reduction in the number of radical groupson campuses.\textsuperscript{322}

Rahmat Abdullah, one of the pioneers of Jemaah Tarbiyah recalled what the radical and extreme orientation could have impact to the students:

“In the 1980s, there were many students who dropped out of university because of their rigid and extreme understanding of Islam. They considered that what they learned at university made no contribution towards the development of Islam. The English language was perceived as the language of the infidels. Architecture was in violation of the Prophet Muhammad’s injunction, because there was a prophetic tradition (hadith) saying that whoever built two-storey building would be crushed by the angels. As a result of these excesses, many Muslim students become too lazy to study, turned to a kind of escapism and even refuse to wear the gifts of shoes that were bought by their parents … This issue was very naïve, but true as it happened at that time. Here Jemaah Tarbiyah functioned as a bridge between hardliner and soft-liner orientation. If we did not think of saving them from that situation, the da’wa of Islam would be blamed for their role in hampering the national development program of Indonesia. We started to give them sensible arguments to change their orientations. Their resistance towards the regime was accumulative and reached the situation where they even rejected wearing clothes that were associated with the regime, such as batik shirts and dress coats. Such was the repressive attitude of the regime towards Islamic groups and they reacted to its repression in radical ways and with physical confrontation.”\textsuperscript{323}

\textsuperscript{320}Ibid., p. 96.


\textsuperscript{322}Yon Machmudi, 2006, p. 97.

\textsuperscript{323}Interview with Rahmat Abdullah, Jakarta 11 Mei 2000 cited from Yon Machmudi, p. 97-98.
In the early years of their movement, Jemaah Tarbiyah activists had distinctly different profile compared to the rest of community, especially in matters of dress and in interaction between men and women. This was partly due to their rigid implementation of Sharia as they understood it. In this phase of ta’sis (building the basis), the cadres were still in the process of social detachment and identity formation. Hence, they focused on maintaining their distinctiveness from mass public. Strong individualistic pattern of Islamization become one of the distinctive hallmarks of Jemaah Tarbiyah in comparison with mainstream Islam in Indonesia. By this template of individual conversion, new adherents accept not only the new religion but also a new cultural and ethnic identity. Consequently, they broke off ties with their old social and traditional entities. Their high level of commitment to new doctrine came with the possibility of alienation from their former convictions and practices.

This pattern of Islamization requires that adherents “define crossing of religious frontiers and the acceptance of new worship as useful supplement and not as substitutes.” One example of the detachment or passive resistance of Tarbiyah activist is the practice of women wearing the hijab or veil. Not only regarded as a religious symbol, the hijab for them also symbolized the sharp turn in conviction and their new identity. In 1982, when the Ministry of Education issued a decree forbidding female student from wearing head-scarves at schools, most activists of Tarbiyah refrained from rallying protests on the streets as other student groups or organizations did. They practiced silent resistance against the decree by keeping themselves covered wherever they went in public, until finally on 16 February 1991, wearing the hijab at school and on campus was declared permissible.

Regarding this issue, Aus Hidayat, PKS leader of Depok, explains that “at that time, we did not want direct confrontation...

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324 Ibid., p. 65.
326 Rifki Rosyad, A Quest of True Islam: A Study of the Islamic Resurgence Movement Among the Youth in Bandung, Indonesia, Master Thesis, the Australian National University, 1995, p. 91.
with the government. We just needed to encourage our cadres to adopt Islamic thinking and practice.”

Stringent practice in gender relation also marks the phase of ta’xis (formative period). Abdul Ghofar, PKS parliamentarian of Solo, Central Java, describes how the PK cadres often practiced strict gender separation during their meetings, where men and women were separated with a high curtain. Furthermore, female voices in public were considered taboo (awrah). Accordingly, women were not allowed to become public speakers. Through the course of time, their understanding and practice of Sharia developed. The separating curtain got lower and lower, and finally there was no curtain at all; then women voices were no longer seen to be taboo and women were finally given a chance to be speakers. The, PKS cadres negotiated the interaction of Sharia with the social and cultural norms. Regarding the reason for this shift, Abdul Ghofar asserts:

“It seems to me that our cadres are adaptable to the cultural and social imperatives as long as they are not diametrically in contradiction with Sharia. To the best on my knowledge, I have never heard of any official instruction or edict from PKS National Sharia Council (Dewan Sharia Pusat, DSP) regarding the legal validity of these shifting of attitudes.”

It is important to note that, as Abdul Ghofar said, no official statement from DSP of PKS is needed to validate the change in social and cultural attitude of the cadres. However, the policy relating to the political realm will be made public, such as the decision to be an open party in 2008.

During the early period of da’wa, most of Tarbiyah activists, who are generally educated on secular university campuses, had only limited and partial understanding of Sharia and of Islam in general. Coming from different backgrounds, they did not learn about Sharia properly before joining PK in 1998 onwards, so they have to reshape their understanding about Sharia. Irsyad, a PKS parliamentarian from Padang, West


Sumatera, remembers his involvement in Tarbiyah movement during its formative years that Tarbiyah activists had an antagonistic approach toward the state and non-Muslims. They tended to label the government as being at odds with Sharia, as they understood it, and as being thagut (oppressive tyrants). The activists at the time tended to be opposed to any practices considered to be violating Sharia, such as the school assembly ceremony every Monday morning, where students should sing the national anthem and salute to the flag, and learning PMP (Pendidikan Moral Pancasila, Pancasila Civic Education), where students are infused with state ideology, Pancasila. Regarding non-Muslims, they assumed them to be kafir (infidel), hence the enemy of Islam. Regarding the initial rigidity and awkwardness of earlier cadres in applying Sharia norms in social and political context, Irsyad also has an interesting comment to say:

“Involvement of PK in politics is considered to be a historical accident. Comparing it to the school curriculum, the cadre has not actually finished grade 2 when they have to join junior high school. We did not have a slightest idea that we had to join the political arena and formed a party as early as 1998. Therefore, awkwardness and rigidity may occur when we have to implement Sharia, as we understand it, in a wider social and political context.”

Hilmi Aminuddin spoke in a similar way on the need for reevaluation of the cadre’s understanding and practice of Sharia:

“When they were still radical, they did not want to have an identity card with the logo of eagle (burung Garuda—Indonesian state symbol), to which I ask them a rhetorical question, such as ‘why don’t you throw your money, since the same logo is also printed on it?’ Many activists of 1980s were also against wearing batik (traditional cloth) because it is considered as clothing of the arrogant, to which I respond by wearing it during my meeting with them. Some activists even quit their study because they perceived the rector as thagut, to which I told them that the rector could be thagut, but the campus is still a place to seek knowledge. Some others were reluctant of working as government servants, to which I responded that we are the ones that have more rights to manage the country, or else, somebody will take it over. Now, all of these radical activists have joined PKS and most of them have a high-level post within the party. Therefore, once again, I would like to emphasize that the method of eradicating radicalism is simple: come and join PKS, then, God’s
willing, radicalism will soon be over. On the contrary, radicalism will thrive if PKS cease to exist.”

This statement gives us insight into the thinking of Tarbiyah activists, in terms of their ideology, culture, and knowledge of Islam. Not all of tarbiyah activists ended up becoming members or cadres of PK and PKS; many of them join other groups, such as Salafi group or Hizbut Tahrir. This statement should not be taken as a proof that radicalism is accepted in PKS, or that PKS is a hub for radical Muslims. On the contrary, the PKS leaders claim that they worked hard to deradicalize those with extremist views. Rahmat Abdullah, one of the founding fathers of PK, explained it this way:

“Our group is immune from radical activities and groups, because we strictly avoid them. Before, we had personal contact with them, but then we finally realized that we had a different agenda and orientation. We left them and kept our distance because the regime apparatus launched its operations without compromise. When many Muslim activists from a particular group were arrested during training sessions in Puncak, West Java, we did not get arrested, even though we held similar training there. We always emphasize the need to protect our movement from radical influences. Rather than recruiting cadres with radical backgrounds, it is better to train and educate ordinary people with no Islamic knowledge at all.”

It was due to socio-cultural and political demands that PKS cadres decided to adapt. When PK was founded in 1998, most cadres were devout and idealistic young people from middle class, privileged, secular backgrounds. Those who came from the Tarbiyah movement came with a strong sense of Muslim identity, but limited knowledge of Islam and Sharia. As a political party, PKS is interested in expanding its constituency. However, the highly diverse nature of Indonesian society in terms of ideological, cultural and religious backgrounds presented the party with a dilemma. Sticking with a rigid interpretation of Islam and Sharia would alienate sympathizers of less rigid platform. To cope with this problem, the party had to temper its ideological

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strictness and broaden its base and constituency. On the other hand, tempering its ideological position threatened to alienate the core base of supporters.

In order to be successful, da’wa, the PKS leaders explained, it needs to be adaptable and flexible as well. For the purpose of da’wa, PKS cadres have to fit in with people, by correcting their understanding and practice of Sharia and at the same time recognizing social and cultural practices of the people. The example of manifestation of this cultural strategy was seen in February 2011 when PKS held a national convention in Yogyakarta. By being hosted in the home of traditional Javanese culture, including mysticism, this convention was intended to send a signal to general public about the new image of PKS as a culture-friendly party. The apparent embrace of traditional culture accords with the party’s gradualist approach. As the leaders explain it, adaptation is actually the nature of da’wa. And too, for the pursuit of electoral gain PKS has to moderate its position on the acceptability of local culture. Because da’wa operates in stages, the public announcement of party, the leaders explain, does not necessarily reflect the party’s core values. It is possible for party cadres to advocate “deculturalized” Islam, while their elites publicly announce the openness to culture and traditional practices. Arif Ramdani, PKS parliamentarian of Bandung, West Java, put it this way:

“During the early phase of PK, we did not have adequate experience and understanding of how it is like to be in political field and in interaction with wider community. I can say that intermingle with socio-cultural and political reality results in the shift of our understanding of Sharia. However, this shift is still within the boundary of Sharia and under continuous supervision. We oblige all cadres to join weekly meeting, the purpose of which is to evaluate and remind them”

After being involved in social and political realms, PKS cadres become steadily more mature, socially and politically. They moved incrementally to the middle, indicated mainly by two distinct features. Firstly, the platform of the party is now less explicit about religious issues compared to that of its predecessor. The platform is

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translated into the selection of neutral themes of election campaign, such as social justice, the fight against corruption, and poverty alleviation, which are appealing to greater segment of the population.  

This strategy bore fruit; PKS managed to quintuple its share winning 7.3 per cent of the vote and 45 seats in the parliament. Secondly, the inclusion into the ministerial post and national as well as local parliament draw the party more into the middle. Deep involvement in electoral politics and democratic system required the party to adjust its ideological belief and preference.

Cooperation and negotiation with parties of different ideologies become the normal value in politics, where the party often has to give up some ideals and satisfy with whatever seats or office it could win.

In politics, idealism should come to terms with reality. PKS learnt from its predecessor that used to push Islamist ideology and emphasize its exclusiveness as an Islamist party. PK’s failure to garner significant votes in the 1999 election was a signal for its successor that its political agenda and policy was not adequate for the expansion of the party’s constituency; it was only appealing to Tarbiyah activists and a limited range of like-minded sympathizers. The image of PK as a party of deeply committed Muslims was thought to give a hope for a country assailed by multiple crises and facing moral decline. This overtly uncompromising religious image, however, proved to be a disadvantage to the party, since non-Islamist voters would not appeal to the Islamist agenda of the Islamist party.

Voters of nationalist orientation were suspicious of the party’s hidden agenda to change the secular NKRI (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia.)


334 The three national elections conducted since 1999 indicate the electorate’s inclination to reject candidates who campaigned on exclusive platform, see Marcus Mietzner, “Indonesia and the Pitfalls of Low-Quality Democracy: A Case Study of Gubernatorial Elections in North Sulawesi,” in Marco Bunte and Andreas Ufen (eds.), Democratization in Post-Suharto Indonesia, London: Routledge, 2009, p. 141.
Indonesia, the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia) into an Islamic state. Muslim traditionalist and modernist voters, associated with NU and Muhammadiyah respectively, would be reluctant to give their vote for a newly emerging Islamist party considered to be a threat to their religious, cultural and political credentials.335 When PKS da’wa manages to expand and penetrate into NU and Muhammadiyah followers, concern rises among the leadership of these two biggest Muslim organizations. In order to protect NU’s principle of Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-Jamaah from the infiltration of allegedly neo-Wahhabist ideology of PKS, NU chairman, Hasyim Muzadi, repeatedly warned NU followers to be alert and stay away from PKS incitement.336 The same is true with Muhammadiyah which issued a letter denying access for PKS to involve in managing Muhammadiyah’s mosque and schools and another letter forbidding the use of Muhammadiyah’s facilities by any political party.337

The social and political reality required PKS to be flexible and accommodative to cultural demands. Otherwise, as a political party, PKS would face continuous difficulties in expanding its constituency. Accordingly, if PKS cadres want to win the hearts of the people, the leaders explain, they should intermingle with the people and adapt to their culture. Adaptation to the religious practice and tradition, is a necessary


336 Despite the denial of PKS, many figures from NU have a strong belief that the party subscribes to Neo-Wahhabism, due to its negative evaluation of culture allegedly originating from pre-Islamic traditions, such as rituals concerning the veneration of the tombs and prayers for the dead, practices which are central to traditionalist Islamic life within NU circles. Claiming to be derived from the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328) which were ‘revived’ by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792), neo-Wahhabism is revivalist as well as puritanical cum reactionary and seeks to establish a new-global ummah based on the social and religious practices of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions according to neo-Wahhabist interpretation. Ideologically speaking, neo-Wahhabism is a global movement that champions the concept of the Muslim community (ummah) that surpasses ethnicity and nationality. Thus, in positive terms, transnationalism and transculturalism are defining hallmarks of neo-Wahhabism. On the other hand, while ideologically global, neo-Wahhabism is socially and politically a diverse group which represent an array of local variants of the new Ummah; and PKS is an example of an Indonesian variant of the New Global Ummah. In rejecting tradional, local cultural practices and beliefs neo-Wahhabism sets its self at odds with mainstream Islamic practice across the Muslim world. This is especially felt in non-Arab cultural contexts.

approach to being culturally accepted by a given society. The case of PKS of South Kalimantan gives a clear example of how the flexibility and adaptability to cultural and religious practices are important for PKS to gain ground in a society largely practicing traditional Islamic culture and rituals linked to NU.

For Muslims in Banjarmasin, Sharia is not something new. Sharia was implemented in Banjarmasin at the time of Sultan Adam (1825-1857). Since then, Sharia became the constitution of the Sultanate of Banjarmasin. Therefore, the PKS strategy to gain ground in Banjarmasin was not by introducing or promoting Sharia. From the outset, the PKS approach in South Kalimantan was more cultural than legalistic. Cultural engagement became the main strategy. The party needed to show that it valued local religious practices and traditions. This included the established cultural symbols of Muslims of Banjarmasin, such as recitation of Surah Yasin (36th chapter of the Quran), Qunut (raising hands during prayer) and Burdah (the Prophet’s story), and practices of Tahlil (supplication for the deceased) and Maulud Nabi (the celebration of the Prophet’s birthday). All these practices are central to the culture of Nahdliyyin (members of NU, Nahdatul Ulama), and the overwhelming majority of PKS cadres in Banjarmasin are Nahdliyyin. PKS’ accommodative strategy toward local culture succeeding in winning the hearts of Nahdliyyin, who came to comprise the biggest element of PKS in South Kalimantan. According to Ibnu Sina, a PKS parliamentarian from Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, from the beginning, PKS had to declare that NU is the madzhab (school of law) of PKS of South Kalimantan. Consequently, in South Kalimantan, the ritual practices of PKS cadres do not differ greatly from those of NU.

In terms of the understanding and practice of Sharia, the diversity of PKS cadres mirrors the diversity of Muslims in Indonesia. There exists a wide spectrum of understanding about Sharia among Indonesian Muslims. Some groups have an extreme attitude toward Sharia such that they focus more on symbols and formalities rather than substance. On the other end of the spectrum, some groups are ‘allergic’ toward Sharia,
even though it has actually become a part of their cultural practices. The PKS leaders explain that a long process of da’wa is needed to drag these two extremes towards a middle position. At the one end of the spectrum, radical Muslims may give a label of “kafir, fasiq or zhalim” (infidel, sinner and transgressor) to other Muslims who are not seen to be applying the God’s law in the Quran and Sunna (prophetic tradition) in their personal and public life. They demand that Sharia be applied in the private and public sphere. Meanwhile, in the other end of the spectrum, liberal and secular Muslims associate Sharia with a draconian rule, such as amputation of limbs, flogging and stoning, hence Sharia is seen to be devoid of humanitarian aspects.

According to Arif Ramdani, this Sharia-phobia is worsened by the stigmatization of the West about Sharia. Therefore, he continues, in response to the radical views of both far ends of the spectrum, PKS offers a middle path, which is not without adverse effect; there remain the conflicting accusation of both sides that PKS is being casual toward Sharia and at the same time is considered being very Sharia-minded. In treading the middle way, PKS invites the umma to revisit Sharia by trying to understand the ultimate aim and main contents of Sharia. Understanding these twin issues about Sharia, he argues, will give a comprehensive understanding about how to implement Sharia norms in the life of Muslims as individuals and as a member of bigger community.

B. PKS’ Understanding of Sharia

Muslims in Indonesia have been long practicing the major elements of Sharia rules in their daily life, such as praying, circumcision and marriage. In the last decade, the term Sharia has even become more popular in the business enterprises, such as

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338 Yon Machmudi put Muslim approaches toward Sharia implementation in three categories, with formalist on the far-right end of the spectrum and the substantialist on the far-left end, while the pragmatic is not in fixed position; it could swing to both end, depending on the context and situation. See Yon Machmudi, 2006, p. 69-71.


cosmetics, fashion, banking, hotel, insurance, and travelling.\textsuperscript{341} Nevertheless, it is asserted, Sharia-phobia still exists among many people, including mainstream politicians. People in general associate Sharia with severe punishment, such as flogging, amputation and stoning (hudud punishments), while the politicians perceive Sharia as a threat to national legal and political system. According to the common conviction among PKS leaders, this false perception about Sharia has resulted in the comprehensiveness and the humanitarian aspects of Sharia being overlooked and misunderstood; it has long been stigmatized as a draconian law, so the call for the implementation of Sharia is often misunderstood as practicing the law of \textit{hudud}. Contrary to this common perception, Ahmad Heryawan, for instance, explains that the execution of \textit{hudud} is actually the sole authority of the government, so individuals or institutions are not granted the authority to execute the \textit{hudud}. Also, he adds, the application of \textit{hudud} law for theft or fornication, for instance, is only applicable in a country where the basic needs of the people have already been fulfilled.

To emphasize the humanitarian element of Sharia, PKS leaders often refer to popular legal incidents occurred during the time of the Prophet and his successor, the caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. In the time of Umar reign, a thief was exempted from \textit{hudud} due to poverty; his abject poverty forced him to commit the crime. This policy of suspending the law of \textit{hudud} upon the people who stole due to their poverty is a solid argument for PKS to suggest that punishment is not the goal of Sharia.\textsuperscript{342} Instead, Sharia means to protect wealth and life, and bring justice to all. To punish the poor for stealing due to the negligence of the rich or the government failure to deliver justice and prosperity is the act of injustice. The vulnerable should not bear the burden of social and governmental system failure. In short, the realization of social and economic justice should come before the enforcement of severe punishment of \textit{hudud}.

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342 The relevancy of \textit{hudud} implementation in Indonesia is discussed also in liberal Muslim circle, for instance in Masdar F. Mas’udi, “Keadilan Dulu, Baru Potong Tangan,” in \textit{Islamlib}, 22 July 2001.
Legal precedent in the time of the Prophet is repeatedly cited by PKS leaders to give a close look at how *hudud* was implemented. It is narrated that a pregnant woman confessing of adultery came to the prophet to ask for *hudud* law, to which the prophet responded that she has to deliver her baby, then to raise him and to breastfeed him for 2 years before she could come to see him again for his legal decision. It is narrated that her repentance would be enough to cleanse all the sin of the inhabitants of Medina. Commenting on this narration, Jamal Lulail suggests that if Muslims have high awareness toward Sharia, they will ask the government to implement it. If they are not ready yet, the work of da’wa to raise their awareness, understanding and practice of Sharia norms should be conducted diligently.

In regard to the objective of Sharia, Ahmad Heryawan refers to the popular classical theory of *maqhashid al-Sharia* (purposes of Sharia), formulated and popularized by Shatibi (d. 1388) in his magnum opus, *al-Muwafaqat*. According to this theory, Sharia aims to protect unassailable interests of people, i.e. religion, life, mind, honor, wealth, which is known in Islamic legal theory as *dharuriya al-khams* (five fundamental necessities). Efforts and activities to protect these five principles are considered parts of Sharia implementation. In his capacity as a governor of West Java and based on this theory of *maqhashid*, Ahmad Heryawan gives detailed examples of how Sharia can be implemented in governmental level. In his opinion, government program of providing education for the future generation in such a way that they are able to manage the country and its abundant natural resource for the benefit, prosperity and advancement of the whole nation is a part of Sharia implementation.

For Ahmad Heryawan, Sharia is also concerned with living a healthy life, both as individual and a community. While providing health services, which include hospitals, doctors, and medicines, is important for the health of people, in Heryawan’s opinion, it is the healthy environment and lifestyle that contribute a lot to the individual and communal health. Thus, Heryawan continues, every effort to educate people about healthy lifestyles, such as the program of clean water and rivers, and the obligation for Bandung civil servant to join morning exercise every week, is also considered a part of struggle on the path of Sharia. The same is true in the economic field, such as building the infrastructure to facilitate the quick and steady flow of people, goods and
services. Therefore, Heryawan concludes, it is safe to say that the whole government program of developing and building the country falls under the definition of struggle for Sharia implementation.

The discussion above demonstrates that Sharia is understood by PKS as a blessing for humanity (rahmatan lil-'alamin); it is a universal norm that aims to preserve the five fundamental necessities of humankind. Any act, means or struggle to the realization of these necessities is certainly a part of Sharia. From a legal perspective, Muslims should follow all laws or regulations that are not in contradiction with the objective of Sharia, even if they are not referring to Sharia. Accordingly, PKS leaders are of the opinion that one is not at all becoming kafir, fasiq or zhalim merely by abiding oneself to the state law, as long as the laws are not legalizing the unlawful or prohibiting the lawful. In other words, the content is more important than, and should take precedence over, the label or name. If the content is good, the label or name is no longer relevant. Labels or names should not narrow universality of Islam.

**Framing Sharia**

Despite its popularity and wide acceptance in the world of business and economy, again the term Sharia in politics is quite a taboo. There still exists Sharia-phobia among the people, including politicians. In the general public Sharia is associated with draconian rule, while in the politics Sharia is perceived as threat to democracy and modern legal system. The key for success in dealing with this situation is to present Sharia in such a way, which is acceptable in social and political realms. This section will examine the strategy of PKS in framing the Sharia. The main topics of discussion are, firstly, why the strategy of framing is utilized, and second how the party applies this strategy.

a. **Sharia as a ‘Universal Goodness’**

PKS understands Sharia as constituting universal goodness. In promoting the Sharia norm, PKS claims that it is not bombarding people with the term Sharia, since it will irk people. Therefore, instead of talking about Sharia, PKS prefers to talk about ‘universal goodness,’ such as health protection, social and economic justice, and
equality before law, in which people from all walks of life would agree. Besides, all goodness would be in line with Sharia, and the essence of Sharia is nothing but goodness. Therefore, in drafting, discussing and promulgating the regulation, PKS chose to focus on the formalization of common goodness that benefits the society as a whole.

It has become a consensus among PKS leaders that Islam is revealed to deliver blessing, justice and prosperity for all humanity (*rahmatan lil- ‘alamin*), so any instrument or struggle that could lead to this objective is considered Islamic. The birth of PKS as a political party was partly driven by the concern that universal Islamic values, such as justice, transparency, accountability, equality, and egalitarianism, have not yet been delivered. Jamal Lulail believes that the struggle through the political arena (*jihad siyasi*) would enable the party to be involved in the process of policy making. Through the state instrumentalities, universal values of Sharia could be delivered to a larger segment of the people.

PKS cadres in the legislative and executive branches are encouraged to implement Sharia norms utilizing the power and authority at their disposal. This is in line with the saying of the prophet (*hadith*) that “whosoever witnesses evil, change it with your hand.” Using the hand to call people to live according with Sharia norms necessitates power and authority to draft, promulgate and enforce the law. Sharia-inspired Perda related to public order is the realization of the abovementioned *hadith*. The proliferation of Perda (regional regulation) in Indonesian provinces and municipalities is a product of unprecedented process of decentralization of the country. Initiated in 1999 during the B.J. Habibie administration, decentralization program in Indonesia’s political landscape is anchored in Law 32/2004 on Regional Government, which gives wider authority for regional administrations to self-government, except for matters which are held to be the exclusive powers of the central government, such as foreign politics, defense and security, court justice, monetary and religion. The Law is designed to meet popular demands for democratic reforms.

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PKS parliamentarians are fully aware that efforts to implement Sharia norms should be channeled through the process of legal drafting, without making direct reference to Sharia; it should be expressed in a neutral and universal language. Should the bill mention the term related to Sharia, it would be dropped right away during the hearing session of the parliament. With this in mind, Irsyad has an interesting insight that in order to be formalized, Sharia should be camouflaged and secularized. This strategy seems to downplay Sharia, and is not without disadvantage to the party image; the party was accused of being casual to Sharia. Responding to this criticism, Fahmi Fuad asserts:

“Those who criticize us of being unfaithful to the cause of Sharia do not understand how the real politics works. Members of parliament would not pass any bill heavily loaded with Islamic terms in its wording. In order to convince them to agree with us in matters related to Sharia, we have to frame it in a neutral language that is acceptable to general people. Sharia norms should be carefully worded. Perda about Late Night Hour (Perda Jam Malam), for instance, has been promulgated; this Perda discourages women of coming out after dark in order to protect them from being molested. No doubt, this regulation is inspired by Sharia, but it is worded in terminologies acceptable to the people.”

The PKS stance against alcoholic beverage, for instance, is a part of the struggle to promote Sharia norms for the benefit of all people, regardless of background or religion. However, when the bill of anti-Miras (Minuman Keras, intoxicated drink) is drafted and discussed, no reference to Sharia was made. In the struggle for Sharia norms, PKS avoids using Sharia label, because again the important thing is the substance rather than labels or names. For PKS, any bill that aims to protect public’s health is actually in line with Sharia injunction. Even without mentioning the rule of Sharia about Miras, people can figure out themselves about the negative impact of Miras for individuals and society. Having this in mind, PKS can save the bother of doing Sharia labeling in drafting a bill that PKS believes will bring good to the people. In other words, what is more important is the realization of the Maqashid of Sharia (the purpose of Sharia), rather than the label of Sharia. Therefore, according to Abdul Ghofar, all bills or regulations that are not in contradiction with Sharia should be
supported and followed by Muslims, even if they do not make direct reference to Sharia.

PKS is among the staunch supporters of Perda Anti-Miras. As Fahmi Fuad explains in detail, some may accuse the Perda as a form of Islamization or Shariatization, which is truly a false accusation, because, he continues, sensible people would agree that unfettered distribution and consumption of alcohol will create problem for health. He refers to some secular European countries that strictly regulate the purchase and consumption of the liquor. He also points out that efforts have been made for so long to fight the damaging impact of alcoholic beverage; through the mosque pulpits, the preachers have delivered hundreds of sermons about the evil of alcoholic beverage, all but to no avail, and distribution of the liquor is still widespread. He concludes that it is only through legislation that Sharia rule on the liquor can be enforced more effectively.

In some areas where the Perda Anti-Miras is promulgated and implemented, such as in Tangerang, Bogor, and Padang, PKS leaders of these regions are proud to see that bottles of alcoholic beverage are not available in all the shops throughout the municipalities. This local government also prohibited from selling the liquor within the vicinity of places of worship, schools, government buildings, and hospitals. In these municipalities, only at four-star hotels and above can people purchase and consume the alcoholic beverages. However, in Moluccas, distribution and consumption of the intoxicated liquor is still high. Most of the liquor, called shopi, is local made and home production, and widespread among youngsters. According to Sudarmo, PKS parliamentarian of Moluccas, uncontrolled consumption of alcoholic beverages is responsible for social disorders, such as inter-community fights, petty crimes, and juvenile brawl. Actually, Perda on Alcoholic Beverage Control (Perda Pengendalian Minuman Beralkohol) has been issued, but it only serves as a control mechanism; it does not prohibit the distribution or the consumption of the liquor, so people can easily find it in many places. The Perda cannot be implemented effectively without the intervention of the authority. To cope with this issue, the action has been taken by PKS mentioned in details by Sudarmo as follows:
“We cannot ask the provincial government to make Perda specifically implemented for Muslim population, because Perda is for all people in Moluccas regardless of religion. Accordingly, we are now struggling to break down the Perda on Alcoholic Beverage Control into district regulations, so they will be implemented in areas where Muslim composes the majority of the population. The Perda has been promulgated by the local parliament with no significant resistance from the people in general. However, it only controls the distribution; it does not prohibit the consumption. In this case, we imitate the approach of the Quran towards \textit{khamr} (intoxicants). Quran teaches us the gradual steps of handling the \textit{khamr}, the final end of which is to ban it altogether. In the first step, we have to educate the people about the greater harm of the liquor compared to the little benefit they might get from it. So, for now, we are still in the first stage towards prohibiting the liquor. The high consumption of liquor is parallel with drug addiction problem, which is trending up year by year. Unfortunately, I do not have accurate data about it. The misuse of drugs is followed by the spreading of HIV. If we do not have a swift, serious and massive response to the pressing issues of alcohol, drug, and HIV, the future of our generation will be at stake.”

Unchecked distribution of alcoholic beverage in Solo also becomes the main concerns of PKS. In 2010, the city of Solo drafted a bill on Miras (Miras, an acronym for Minuman Keras, or intoxicated beverage). Abdul Ghofar explains that the draft triggered a heated debate among Solo’s parliamentarians. PDIP was reluctant to support the bill for the fear that it will become an opening gate to the prohibition of Miras all together. This fear is actually baseless, because in terms of hierarchy of legislative instruments, Perda is in subordinate position to the president instruction (Keppres, Keputusan Presiden) or ministerial regulation (Permen, Peraturan Menteri), and both Keppres and Permen only prohibit Miras containing 5 percent of alcohol and above. Accordingly, all varieties of Miras containing less than 5 percent of alcohol are not regulated and available in shops and malls. As Abdul Ghofar confirms, the bill was actually not different from Keppress and Permen; it did not regulate Miras containing alcohol below 5 percent. After some consultation with Muslim figures and religious leaders, Abdul Ghofar continues, PKS decided to struggle for the insertion into the bill some clauses that regulate Miras containing less than 5 percent of alcohol. After prolonged debate and discussion in the parliament, parliamentarians of all parties agreed to regulate all categories of Miras, and the distribution is limited only in high-
class hotels and cafes. It is safe to say that, should this bill be promulgated into a Perda, Miras will not be available to common public in Solo.  

However, Abdul Ghofar explains that some elements of Muslims disagreed with the bill and conducted waves of demonstrations. They demanded the total prohibition of the distribution of Miras, and argued that by regulating Miras and its distribution, the bill still gives room for Miras. For them, the bill contradicts the Sharia, because it permits something that is prohibited by Sharia, hence demand for the cancellation of the bill. They argued that all type of Miras is prohibited by Sharia. The fact that Keppres and Permen do not prohibit Miras containing less than 5 percent of alcohol will make it difficult for PKS to acquiesce to the demand of total prohibition. In this situation PKS applied the Sharia principle that “what we cannot achieve all together should not be left all together” (ma la yudrak kulluh, la yutrak kulluh), and while confronting two potential harms, we are obliged to choose the least (akhaff al-dlarurayn). PKS failed to convince them that to drop the bill is tantamount to return to the status quo of Keppres and Permen; it only means that the wide distribution of Miras containing 5 percent of alcohol is unchecked. Finally, PKS was forced to give up to their demand for the fear of being accused of permitting the prohibited (menghalalkan yang diharamkan).

In the issue of Miras in Solo, PKS proved to be in a difficult situation. The party had to face a two-pronged opposition from whose interests were not favorable to the success of the bill. In one hand, PDIP, a party of majority seat in municipal parliament of Solo, was reluctant to support the bill restricting Miras of less than 5 percent alcohol, and in the other, elements of Muslim organizations demand that the bill ban all types of Miras altogether. Interest and agenda of the two camps render the progress of the bill impossible, and in the end, it leads to the final drop of the bill. PKS had to drop the

bill in order to avoid unnecessary debate that would only create commotion within society. One of the important reasons for PKS final decision to drop the bill is given by Abdul Ghofar, as he relates it with the PKS political maneuver of supporting Jokowi and Rudy F.X. for the governorship of Solo, whose end result has tarnished the image of the party. This comment also hints the social and political predicament and challenge faced by the party in the effort to realize its political agenda.

“We have already had a bad experience of being accused [by elements of Muslim organization in Solo] for supporting a non-Muslim leader in the local election. In 2010, Jokowi and Rudy F.X. were in their highest popularity for the governorship of Solo. PKS tried in vain to find a candidate from among Muslim figures to compete Jokowi-Rudy in the election. No one seems to prepare for the battle. PKS knew it for sure that even without the support from PKS and PAN, the two biggest Muslim parties in Solo, Jokowi-Rudy would win the election by a landslide. After long deliberation, we came to a decision that for the sake of parliamentary da’wa it is better for us to be inside the government. Therefore, PKS and PAN decided to join the winning team. In the media, we said we support Jokowi, without mentioning Rudy. We would like to send a message that our support is only for Jokowi and we are as reluctant as the Muslim elements in lending a support for a non-Muslim to be a leader. It was sad that PKS was held responsible for the ascension of a non-Muslim into governorship of Solo, especially after Jokowi left the office following his governorship of Jakarta and then the presidency of Indonesia. Interestingly enough, PAN is spared from any accusation.”

Relating to the strategy of framing Sharia, Perda on KTR (Kawasan Tanpa Rokok, Cigarette-Free Zone) is also worth mentioning. PKS initiated the bill on KTR, in which the party does not make a direct reference to Sharia rules in convincing the parliamentarians about the harm of smoking. Preserving public health is the main reason behind the bill. In order to protect the public from the harmful impacts of cigarettes, smoking is prohibited in eight public areas, which includes working and recreational place, place of worship, kids’ zones, public transportation, schools, health facilities, and sport centers. These areas combined only cover hundreds of square kilometers out of approximately eleven thousand square kilometers of total area of Bogor. Najamuddin, PKS parliamentarian of Bogor, argues that the cost to cure cigarette-related sickness outweighs the government revenue from cigarette tax. He explains that the government earns around 7 billion Rupiah from cigarette tax, but has to spend around 12 billion Rupiah to combat the cigarette-related disease. The party
argument about the benefit of the bill for the public health convinced the parliamentarians, and Perda no. 12/2009 on KTR was promulgated. According to Najamuddin, this Perda is considered unique, because the majority of Bogor parliamentarians who issued the Perda are actually active smokers, so it is as if they have made themselves stop smoking.

From the perspective of da’wa, the effectiveness of Perda in enforcing the Sharia injunction is much higher than the preaching on the pulpit. While the preachers can only reach hundreds of people and have no binding power, Perda can reach and bind millions. Living a healthy life is a part of Sharia teachings, and the legislation of Perda of Anti-Miras and Perda on KTR is one form of government intervention in promoting the public health. Promulgating Perda that will benefit people in general is a part of work of parliamentary da’wa. As Najamuddin proudly explains, under the umbrella of the Perda, the government can launch campaign against liquor and cigarette in every school to educate the students about the harm of its consumption.

In the effort to legislate Sharia norms, PKS does not see any significance of Sharia labels on the Perda; there is no other consideration for this strategy but the preference of substance to labels. Sharia label will only narrow the room for maneuver. According to Mahyeldi, PKS leader and also major of Padang, West Sumatera, PKS capitalizes the culture of the society as a strategy to broaden the room for maneuver. In its effort to implement Sharia in West Sumatera, for instance, PKS utilizes the well-known philosophy deeply entrenched in the cultural life of the Minang people (Minang is short for Minangkabau, a popular term used for a whole area of West Sumatera). The philosophy says: *Adat basandi Syarak, Syarak basandi Kitabullah* (Custom is based on Sharia, Sharia is based on Quran) and similarly, *Syarak mangatur, Adat mamakai* (Sharia guides, custom follows). These two expressions encapsulate the affinity between Sharia and cultural norms of the Minang society.

According to Mahyeldi, Sharia norm has imbedded in the culture of Minang people. As a cultural norm, Sharia obligation of wearing scarf, for instance, is followed without resistance. Implementation of Sharia norms of dress code becomes easy because at the same time it is also culturally right. The regulation of Islamic dress code
at schools or government offices in West Sumatera is actually inspired by the cultural reality of the society. The regulation is only an accentuation of the culture. Furthermore, Sharia is considered the highest form of culture of Minang people, so as to become a measurement of people observance to the culture itself. Wearing scarf becomes a symbol of cultural attachment. Muslims woman without scarf in West Sumatera are considered ignorant about their Islamic cultural heritage. Thus, culture and religion in Minang society is like two sides of the same coin. It only comes natural for PKS that in the effort of inviting people to Sharia norms the party always refers to this philosophy, and to gain wider acceptance within the people of Minangkabau, the implementation of Sharia norms should be fashioned into adat (customary law). In short, Sharia norms should find root in adat. Due to the uniqueness of Minang society, PKS once proposed to the national parliament to give West Sumatera a special status as the special province of Adat Basandi Syarak. Marfendi, Vice of PKS Provincial Office (DPD PKS, Dewan Pengurus Pusat PKS) of West Sumatera, gives the reason for this unique proposal of PKS for West Sumatera Province:

“We have already had Aceh, Jakarta and Yogyakarta as special provinces. Now, we want the same thing for West Sumatera, due to its unique social and cultural characteristic. If we can realize this idea, the issue of Sharia in West Sumatera will come to an end, because Sharia norms will be implemented as adat.”

b. Reaching a Common Goal

PKS leaders believe that the struggle to realize goodness is not a monopoly of certain individual, group or party. Accordingly, PKS would welcome individuals, groups or parties who have the same vision to work together for the realization of this common goal; they could participate in promoting goodness for all. It is for this very reason that in 2008 PKS was declared to be an open party. With this new political platform, PKS hopes that people who share the same vision can work together. According to Jamal Lulail, this new platform is actually congruent with the nature of Islam as an open religion, in a sense that it offers blessing for all humanity (Rahmatan lil Alamin). He continues that Islam obliges all Muslims to spread the Prophet mission
of delivering *rahma* (blessing) to all people, regardless of their background, since they also have the same undeniable right to the blessing of Islam. Following the footsteps of the Prophet, it is natural for PKS to be an open party since its inception. PKS was and will always be an open party. Jamal Lulail explains that people’s perceptions of PKS as a closed party mainly result from the fact that PKS cadres have distinct attitude and behavior, especially during the formative phase of Tarbiyah movement. It is for the purpose of removing this misperception that public announcement was made about PKS new platform as an open party.

Due to the openness of the party and the universality of the Sharia, PKS is ready to cooperate with any party that shares the same political platform and action of delivering goodness to the people. For Marfendi, political achievement of the party is not measured merely by the numbers of the party cadres in the parliament, but by the breadth of the party’s ideals. He believes that due to its universality, Islamic value will gain wide acceptance of the people. This confident attitude toward the party platform and the nature of Sharia has translated into the eagerness of the party to form coalition with other parties, or cooperate with people of different backgrounds. As a sign of the maturity of the party, PKS is ready to share its goal and work together in realizing the ultimate goal of delivering social order, justice and prosperity. The struggle of PKS to prohibit anti-alcoholic beverage, for instance, will be discussed in length to provide an example of the joint effort between PKS and other parties of the same vision.

Regarding the cooperation with others in achieving the goal of da’wa, Mohammad Yasin refers to the *sirah* (prophet’s life story) in which the Prophet was ready to cooperate with people of diverse religious and cultural background in his effort of spreading the message. He also mentioned that Ummayyad and Abbasid dynasties were known to have helpers from local non-Muslim subjects in running the administrative affairs of the state. With this in mind, PKS is supportive to the agenda of individuals, groups or parties that promote a bill that is in line with Sharia norms. For instance, when the Governor of Pontianak, West Kalimantan, drafted a bill prohibiting the consumption of alcoholic beverage, PKS gave full support for the bill, knowing that it will bring goodness for the people in general. The fact that the governor is a non-Muslim politician of PDIP (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan-Struggle
Indonesia Democratic Party) did not prevent PKS from lending its support. Regarding the support for goodness regardless the source, Marfendi asserts:

“PKS support goes to the goodness … If we learn that certain political party proposes some bills which uphold Sharia norms, we should be happy and ready to lend support. Even if the party uses the bill for political purpose, such as garnering vote from the people, we still have to support them.”

The case of Perda on Anti-Alcohol in Tangerang is another example of PKS support for goodness, regardless individual or party promoting it. Fahmi Fuad reveals that in 2005, Tangerang municipal parliament has successfully promulgated Perda no. 7/2005 that limits the distribution of alcoholic beverage. The issuance of Perda No. 7/2005 was made easy by the political will of the major. As a major, Wahidin Halim, a politician from Democrat Party, perceived that the bill on anti-alcoholic beverage could be capitalized for his political investment. Fahmi Fuad explains that the people in Tangerang felt a pressing need to tackle the issue of alcohol once and for all, so it has become the issue of high selling point for the incumbent. It would be politically incorrect to ignore the growing public demand. For political investment, he argues, the major should acquiesce to the popular demand. It only comes natural that the major finally felt urged to initiate the bill, bring it forth to the local parliament for deliberation, and make it legislated as Perda. As one can predict, the incumbent succeeded in capturing his position for the second term.

As demonstrated above, political investment often becomes a strong drive behind the promulgation of Sharia-inspired Perdas. This phenomenon is perceived by PKS leaders as an opportunity to introduce more norms of Sharia into the legislation. In Padang, for instance, Perda Pendidikan (Perda on Education) was issued in 2011. As Mahyeldi explains in detail, the Perda maintains that students are obliged to have Quranic literacy, and the memorization of some Quranic chapters is considered an achievement and point of credit to admission for higher education. Under the same Perda, character-based education highly inspired by Islamic norms is promoted. Under the umbrella of character-based education, Islamic and local values can be introduced into the subject of studies. While teaching Physics, Chemistry or Social Sciences, for instance, teachers can insert local wisdoms or Islamic norms. Here, Mahyeldi
concludes, the integration of science and Quranic teachings is introduced and strengthened. It is important to note that there is no single Sharia term mentioned in the Perda; the word is deleted from the bill and replaced by the term commonly accepted by all members of the municipal parliament. With the word Sharia removed from the initial draft, all parties finally accepted the bill unanimously.

The promulgation of Perda on Education and other similar Perdas, such as Perda on Zakat (Alms giving) and Perda on Cigarette-Free Zone, would not be possible without political cooperation. Not only Islamic parties, but also “nationalist parties” contribute to the promulgation of these Perdas. Mahyeldi believes that since all matters regulated in Perda are actually derived from Islamic universal values already practiced by the society, parties refusing to translate it into regulation will only put themselves at risk of losing their constituents. He further asserts that due to the universality of Sharia, any political party could promote Sharia value for whatever reason, including political investment. The case of “nationalist parties” in Padang shows clearly the political motive behind the promotion of Sharia norms. Sharia issues have been capitalized in securing the vote. As a da’wa party, PKS perceives this opportunistic approach as something positive for Sharia legislation.

To achieve its goals in politics, PKS should build a good relationship with other parties. Forming a coalition becomes a necessity. Since the number of PKS cadres in the legislative body is relatively small, Najamuddin is certain that the key success in achieving its political agenda will depend very much on the ability to influence others and to create a common agenda. In order to successfully promulgate the bill of Diniyah Taklimiyah in Bogor, for instance, PKS takes the initiative of persuading others to support the bill. No quotation from Quranic verses is used to get the point across. PKS leaders of Bogor know too well that normally people despise of being told what to do. Instead, the party regards them as partners in discussing the issue, so that the bill becomes a common agenda. Jajat Sudrajat reveals the PKS approach towards the parliamentarians during the deliberation of Perda Diniyah Taklimiyah:

“As parents, they [i.e. the parliamentarians] also need to see their children growing and becoming good and pious persons, and some might also have friends or neighbors who are the teachers in madrasah (Islamic school). So, our
duty is to convince them that their needs and interests are catered in the bill of Diniyah Takmiliyah. I have an opinion that PKS will not succeed in struggling Sharia norms without cooperating with other parties in the parliament. We are not talking about the success of PKS, but the success of all people. PKS president encourages us to build close relationship with other parties. For this purpose, we should improve the skill of team work and influencing others. We should be able to work together with other parties and avoid being selfish or becoming know-it-all type of persons. We invite people to participate in developing the society according to their position and capability. By doing it, we are exchanging our ideas. So, our ideas become theirs and vice versa.”

PKS dubs the Perda of Diniyah Taklimiyah a “Perda of MURI” (Museum Record Indonesia or Indonesian Record Museum), because it undergoes a very long process of discussion and hearing in the municipal parliament of Bogor. And it takes PKS an extra effort to convince 45 members of parliament of Bogor, most of whom have no madrasah background, and some are non-Muslims. Najamuddin explains that as the initiator of the Perda, PKS has to explain to other parliamentarians that the bill of DT does not give preference to Islamic education, or discriminate other religious education. Through the Perda, he said, PKS is trying to get the government involved in the development of madrasah. He adds that other parliamentarians are free to draft similar bills for their religious education. Whether or not the bill will be accepted and promulgated is dependent upon the success in building political communication.

The key to success in politics is communication. As long as PKS can build good communication, the party can achieve its goal in politics. According to Najamuddin, parliamentarians in Bogor are not at all a priori with the implementation of Sharia norms. However, he explains in detail that efforts to promote Sharia should be done by formulating Sharia norms in a language that is friendly to the people. Besides, the bill should not be in conflict with the Constitution or the regulations of higher rank. Before bringing the bill to the discussion and hearing session, PKS parliamentarians will conduct numerous informal communications with all their colleagues in the parliament to formulate a better draft. During this informal meeting, any suggestion for the betterment of the draft will be cordially welcome. According to Najamuddin, at that time, PKS of Bogor constituted only 11 percent of the total seat (5 out of 45). But, due to good communication and relationship with majority of parliamentarians, the quality of PKS political bargaining in the local parliament surpasses the quantity of its
parliamentarians. The power of communication, he concludes, has multiplied the nominal numbers of PKS parliamentarians by three times or more, as if PKS shares half plus one of the total seats in the parliament.

It is common for PKS cadres to work together with parliamentarians from other parties in similar issues relating to public affairs. Agenda or action might be the same, but the mindset would vary. Jajat Sudrajat makes an analogy of the mindset behind PKS actions and those of others that might be different:

“The act of removing a branch from the street might look the same. However, some do it as an act of following the *sunna* of the Prophet, which is an act of *ibadah*, while for others it is merely an act to clean the road. So, while the motive is different, the result is the same.”

The initiative to eradicate the poverty, for instance, has been successfully formalized into a Perda. According to Jajat Sudrajat, PKS cadres in municipal parliament of Bogor conceive the program of eradicating poverty as an act of helping *dhu‘afa* (the poor) as commanded by God and His Prophet, while others might have a different motive. In this case, the program has become the common issue, the result of which is a regulation namely Perda K3 (Kebersihan, Keamanan dan Ketertiban or Cleanliness, Security and Order).

According to Thohari, outwardly, as a party, PKS might look similar to other Muslim parties, such as PKB, PAN, or PPP. He explains that what makes PKS different from other parties is that the party has a well-structured training program (*tarbiyah*) that includes the supervision of their religious observance and social activities. PKS cadreization department issues a small book of 158 pages consisting of some guideline for the party cadres. The book is divided into seven chapter delineating practical seven desirable character of PKS cadres, namely (1) strong and independent, (2) dynamic, creative and innovative, (3) specialist and global-oriented, (4) productive supervisor, (5) diligent and excellent in collective action, (6) agent of change and (7) community leadership. In each of the chapter is list of indicators for each character, followed by some questionnaires and practical tips and solution to improve the performance. To give a glimpse of what the book intends to achieve, here are some examples. One of indicators for the first character is to be sincere in conducting da’wa, to which attached
some questionnaires of list of activities relevant to the character discussed. The questionnaire box is to be filled voluntarily and honestly by a cadre within the scale of four, namely very rare, rare, often, and very often. Then tips and steps for the improvement is provided after each questionnaire evaluation. The cadres are grouped based on a training level, and they have to pass the test to proceed to a higher level. Weekly tarbiyah aims to maintain the loyalty and militancy of the cadres. PKS makes training program (tarbiyah) a serious business of the party, because the party believes that the change of a nation and country necessitates the change of individuals. Through tarbiyah, PKS is trying to implement Sharia norms in the cadres’ daily life, starting with themselves and their families. Thohari believes that implementing Sharia outright within the state level would be a long and difficult process. The time has not come yet. Partly due to the gradual approach of implementing Sharia that requires a slow but systematic process of da’wa, some people often accuse the party of not being serious with implementing Sharia. According to Thohari, this accusation is neglecting the fact that PKS has been practicing Sharia in a daily life of the party cadres.

C. Perda: A Means of Shariatization

As autonomous regions, provincial or municipal administrations have the right to issue regional regulations to implement their autonomy. Art 136(3) of Law 32/2004 provides that the purpose of Perda is implementing and refining higher-level regulations in line with individual characteristics of the region. However, despite its mission of empowering previously weak local government and society, art. 136(4) of Law 32/2004 states that Perda is not allowed contradicting the public interest and/or regulation of higher hierarchy. In case of the breach, mechanism to review and invalidate Perda is elaborated in the Law. Two main avenues for evaluating the Perda include the executive review by the government and the judicial review by the courts.


It is widely reported that thousands of Perdas have been reviewed and finally annulled by the central state institutions, either the executive or judicative. Interestingly enough, there are only 2 Perda Sharia under serious review and then abrogated by the government. On 11 September 2006, regent of Pasuruan enacted the Perda 4/2006 on Opening Hour of Restaurant and Kiosk during Ramadan, the fasting month. The Perda requires restaurants and kiosks to close during the day of Ramadan and only open after 5 in the evening. Five months later, the provincial government stated that the bill potentially contravenes Art 6(1) of Law 11/2005 on The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to the effect that it should be annulled. The reason for the annulment is given in a letter signed by the governor secretary, Soekarwo, on 2 February 2007. The letter states that Pasuruan locates strategically in the national road of Bali, Surabaya and Malang that makes it an important transit city with economic significance. Therefore, implementation of the Perda will potentially hamper economic activities of the people.

The case of Qanun 3/2008 of Aceh province on Local Political Party is also under review of Ministry for Internal Affairs. The Qanun obliges parliamentary candidates in 2009 election to have proficiency in Quranic recitation. The Minister did not revoke the Perda altogether, because provincial parliament of Aceh is invested with the legislative powers. However, he compels to revoke the art 36 of the Qanun, which stipulates that nominees should take the Quranic proficiency test to be eligible for the election. According to the Minister, this stipulation contravenes the Perda with Law 10/2008 on the General Election. As this paragraph demonstrates, the reason for the

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annulment of these two Perdas involves the breach with the regulations of the higher hierarchy. How the Perda Sharia is formulated so it could survive the judicial and executive review will be examined in some paragraphs below.

There are around 78 Sharia-inspired Perda enacted in 52, out of more than 500, districts. Provinces with vast Muslim majority population and strong roots of Islam, such as West Java, West Sumatera, and South Sulawesi, have promulgated more Perda Sharia than provinces with more religious plurality or syncretism. The reason is very clear. For territories with mixed-religious affiliation and syncretic traditions, politicians are likely disinclined to enact the Perda that could displease non-Muslims or less-devout Muslims. Therefore, we have very few cases of Perda Sharia in provinces of North Sumatera, Maluku, or Central Kalimantan. In the first territory, enactment of Perda Sharia will boast a pious image on the drafters in executive or legislative branches of the state. By acquiring a more devout image, they could gain support from the vast majority of Muslims. Perda Sharia often becomes a vehicle to build up Muslim support for electoral purposes; it is used simply as a strategic move for political upward mobility. Any sign of reluctance to support or promote Perda Sharia will thus jeopardize their political goals. Furthermore, by promoting religiosity, piety and morality enshrined in the Perda Sharia, career politicians and government officials could drag the intention of the public from the government failure in social and political issues, such as economic injustice, corruption practice, public service mismanagement, and bureaucratic inefficiency, to mention only a few. In short, Perda has been effectively used as a protective shield against any popular criticism, by


transferring the blame for social and political crisis from the government officials’ inability to the morality and religiosity of the people in general. Looking from this perspective, it is safe to say that the primary beneficiaries of the Perda are the politicians of Perda Sharia proponents and government elite in the executive and legislative body of the state.\textsuperscript{353}

The so-called Perda Sharia is a legal instrument issued by provincial or municipal administrations that contains element of Sharia norms of morality, ethics and religiosity. However, in presenting such a Perda, regional governments often label it as public order regulations rather than as stipulations of Sharia law. In this way, the Perda manages to conceal its religious tone in both the title and the text, suggesting that it does not interfere with the exclusive authority of central government on matters relating to religious affairs. The Perda Anti-Alcoholic Drinks, for instance, delineates in its preamble that the reason for its enactment is to anticipate the unfettered distribution of alcohol, which cause a bad effect on the peace and order of the community, and especially the health and morality of the youngsters. Most Sharia-inspired Perdas are designed in a similar fashion, with the goal of preserving public order taking precedence over the application of Islamic law. Accordingly, these so-called Perda Sharia cannot be put under the classification of religious legislation. The authors of this Perda argues that prostitution, gambling, sale as well as consumption of alcohol are also legally regulated in most countries, disregard the religious conviction of the majority population. Like any other similar regulation in other countries, be it Islamic, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, secular or atheist, Perdas of anti-vice (Perda Anti-Maksiat) are aptly perceived as an exercise of the public order. PKS leaders believe that to save the Perda from the potential conflict with art 10 of Law 32/2004, Perda Sharia should be packaged as public order directives or should refer to sources other than Islamic law. By concealing its Islamic character and by referring to national legislation, Perda Sharia succeeds in strengthening its legitimacy within the legal system of Indonesia.

Perdas with heavily Islamic tones often try to anchor themselves in legislative instruments of higher rank. In the case of Perda of Education in Padang, for instance, in justifying the provision that students are required to obtain Quranic reading proficiency, art 3-6 on the Basis, Function and Aims of Perda 5/2011 on Education referred to the goal of education as stipulated in the Law 20/2003 on National Education System, art 3 of which provides:

“National education, besides having the aim of developing skills and building character of dignified nation and enriching the intellectual life of the nation, also has the aim of nurturing students to become individuals with faith and piety towards Almighty God, excellent character, healthy, knowledgeable, astute, creative, independent, democrat and law abiding citizen.”

Reference to the superior legislative instrument allows the parliamentarians to defend their Sharia-inspired Perda as legitimate contribution to the development of morality and religiosity of the student.

As demonstrated above, Sharia rules cannot become a basis for legal consideration. With this in mind, the regent of Bogor, for instance, issued an edict stating that public servants are obliged to perform their pray on time. According to Fahmi Fuad, the legal reasoning for the edict is not to enforce the religious observance of praying, but simply to improve the performance of public servants. Many public servants of Bogor, he says, often abandon their office on the pretext of praying. To end this belligerent attitude, the regent promulgated an edict about the punctuality in praying. By this edict, it is now unacceptable for the government employees in Bogor to pray late at the expense of public service. In other words, praying is no longer an excuse for them to abandon the office during working hours, hence negligence of public service.

The vulnerability of the Perda Sharia of being challenged and finally abrogated due to its interference with the exclusive right of the central government on religious matters has forced some regional administrations to frame their Perdas as regulations guided by local custom, or adat. Various regencies in West Sumatera, for instance

354 Vulnerable aspects of Sharia-inspired Perda are highlighted by some Indonesian scholars, see S. Umam et al., “Pluralisme, Politik, dan Gerakan Formalisasi Agama: Catatan Kritis atas Formalisasi Agama di Maros dan Pengkep,” in Ahmad Suaedy et al. (eds.), Politisasi Agama dan Konflik
Solok (Perda 6/2002), Sawahlunto (Perda 2/2003), Lima Puluh Kota (Perda 5/2003), Pasaman (Perda 22/2003), Pesisir Selatan (Perda 4/2005) and Agam (Perda 6/2005), have formalized Islamic dress code into Perda. The Obligation to wear Muslim clothing is anchored into the customary principle of Minang people: *Adat Basandi Syarak*. In this way, the religious content of the Perda is intermingled with the local custom. By linking Sharia norms with *adat*, the regency has buttressed the Perda from the potential challenge against its legal validity. Furthermore, Law 32/2004 also provides living *adat* a legal protection. Article 2 (9) of the Law asserts that the state acknowledges and respects local *adat* communities and their traditional rights as well, as long as they are in accordance with the principles of Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Under art 2(9) of Law 32/2004, customary law derived from Islamic norms and values deserves protection. Based on the principle of preserving *adat*, prevalence of Islam as a cultural norm and local tradition of many Indonesian regions, especially in West Sumatera, has been exploited to pursue PKS political agenda of legislating Sharia norms in the form of regional regulations.

Regarding PKS political stance on Perda Sharia, it is important to state that the so-called Perda Sharia is not known in PKS political platform. In his interview with Republika, Jazuli Juwaini, Deputy of Commission VIII of Deliberative Assembly from PKS, gives some response following the polemic of Syaria by-laws that in Indonesia, “Perda Syariah” is not known in Indonesian legal nomenclature, because Indonesia is not a country base on particular religion. In his opinion, the first article of Pancasila (Indonesian ideological basis, consisting of five principle, the first of which read the Oneness of God), sanctions the norms and values of all religion adhered by Indonesian citizen. He explains that Sharia is blessing for humanity; it is not to scare people. Therefore, some controversial by-laws suspected to be discriminative toward certain

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segments of the population or in violation of public interest are not to be associated with Sharia.356

However, the so called Perda Sharia can be promulgated only in the regions where the people have already had high awareness of Sharia and are prepared to implement it. According to Jamal Lulail, enforcing Perda Sharia to the people who are not ready to accept it will be counterproductive. He explains that Sharia-inspired Perda would only create havoc if it were promulgated without taking into consideration the level of people awareness and understanding of the Sharia norms. It is very situational; it is applied only for the people who need it. Therefore, Perda Sharia in Aceh Province raises some concern among PKS circles. According to Jamal Lulail, the large population of the country does not yet demand Perda Sharia. Giving some reasons for his opinion, he says that the majority of the people are still living below poverty line, so their biggest concern is how to fulfill the basic needs, such as seeking a job and feeding their family. Therefore, he argues, it would take a long way before they could reach enough level of awareness to implement Sharia law; it is not the time yet to implement Sharia outright. He believes that it is mainly for this reason that the implementation of Perda Sharia in Aceh meets with public resistance and protest. Lack of understanding and awareness of Sharia, people in Aceh are not ready yet to submit themselves to Perda Sharia. Accordingly, Sharia becomes a social nuisance in Aceh.

Some concern about the promulgation of Perda Sharia in Aceh is also voiced by Ahmad Heryawan, in which he says that:

“Unlike other province, Aceh has a Perda that obliges women to cover themselves. As a province with special status of autonomy, Aceh is permitted to have such regulation, as long as it has been socialized to the public, and the people are aware of their obligation. Public awareness and education should be in place before the rule is implemented. However, for the initial stage, it is fine to use the law to manage, encourage and even force people to abide by the religious obligations. It has become the nature of the law to manage, control and force people. Even though the women in Aceh are now wearing the scarf as an obligation by the law, at the end it is hoped that they would wear it

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voluntarily as a religious obligation whose reward will be given in the hereafter.”

PKS concern of Perda Sharia in Aceh informs us that forcing people to implement Sharia comprehensively would not be wise, due to the fact that people have a diverse understanding about Sharia. Moreover, the majority of the people are not well educated in Sharia; only a small number of people have good awareness and understanding of Sharia. However, PKS is supportive to the effort of Aceh Province in realizing Sharia as the law of the land. Perda Sharia in Aceh is considered as a form of local consensus and has been approved by the state. Due to the special status of the province, the executive and legislative powers of the region have been invested the authority to issue their own Perda which could represent entrenched Acehnese Islamic identity.

From the above discussion, it is safe to say that the implementation of Sharia norms through Perda Sharia should not be counterproductive. Thorough public education about Sharia norms should be introduced, provided and propagated before Sharia is made obligatory for the people. In other words, the emergence of Perda Sharia should be the natural step of the ongoing process of gradually increased public understanding of Sharia.

For PKS, Perda Sharia is not a goal in itself. It is only an instrument to direct the people to live their life according to the Sharia norms. In other words, Perda is needed to force people to implement Sharia norms in their daily life. Upon the issuance of the instruction of regents on the obligation to wear scarf, for instance, it is now a common phenomenon to see Muslim women wearing a headscarf to work and school. They feel obliged to wear it only at work and school. For Marfendi, this mindset should be changed. Since Perda Sharia is only a means of realizing Sharia norms, a mere Perda is not enough to Islamize society. In his opinion, da’wa to the people still needs to be done diligently so they will abide by Sharia norms voluntarily.

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In disseminating Sharia norms, PKS uses a dual strategy: horizontal da’wa and vertical da’wa.\textsuperscript{358} The former consists of the effort to disseminate and instill Islamic norms within Muslim community so that they will have solid awareness that Islam provides the most viable norms for managing their daily life in individual, societal and governmental level. This form of da’wa aims to provide social basis for Islam. This strategy of da’wa consists of the struggle of the cadres outside political party. They work in mass organizations, educational institutions, and other professional institutions to enhance religious awareness among the people. The latter consists of the effort to prepare and enable the cadres to capture strategic position in government. With the authority and power in their disposal, they could break down Islamic norms into regulation or policy. This strategy involves PKS engagement in politics by supporting or initiating some regulations accommodative to the operation of Sharia norms. These two strategies are going hand in hand and create an integral da’wa; in government level PKS prepares the regulation and policy favorable to the Sharia norms, while in social context PKS creates a condition favorable to the implementation of Sharia. Arif Ramdani explains that da’wa activists used to debate on the strategy of Islamizing the state; whether they should start with working in government or start the basis in society. PKS chooses to work in both areas simultaneously, namely by active involvement in government and also by social engagement, because both realms should not be separated.

\textbf{Conclusion}

PKS cadres are constantly in the process of learning, and in the course of time, their understanding about Sharia grows and becomes more mature, in parallel with the wider knowledge and experience they gain after years of social and political engagement. Ideologically, the PKS cadres’ understanding of Sharia has shifted, and institutionally, the party has declared itself to be open to social and political imperatives. This openness is reflected in the way the party realizes its political goal of implementing Sharia. PKS is fully aware that focus on the label of Sharia will only

narrow the room for maneuver. PKS believes that any bill that contains or refers to Sharia, for instance, will not pass the parliament’s approval. Sharia phobia still prevails. Therefore, the party is now focusing on substance of Sharia that would provide wide room for maneuver. By presenting Sharia as a universal goodness, for instance, PKS is ready to cooperate with any party that shares the same programs and agendas of delivering goodness to the people. PKS believes that due to its universality, people from all walks of life will accept Sharia norms, such as justice and prosperity, transparency and accountability, or public health and education. The struggle to realize this universal goodness is considered by the party as the struggle for Sharia implementation.

To successfully incorporate Sharia norms into the state legislation process, the PKS leaders argue, Sharia should be formulated in a neutral language. It should be carefully worded. In its effort to implement Sharia norms, PKS does not make a direct reference to Sharia because some people may carry a priori bias against the term. Besides, any bill that contains or refers to Sharia, they argue, will not pass the parliament approval. PKS will also support any legal draft or regulation that is in agreement with the teaching of Islam even though if it makes no reference to Sharia. The most importance for PKS, the leaders say, is the realization of the substance. With this in mind, PKS supports Perdas regulating morality and public order, such as Perda on Anti-Miras, KTR, or Muslim Clothing, as a part of commanding right and forbidding evils (*amr al-ma'rufi wa-nahy an al-munkar*).
CHAPTER SEVEN
SHARIA AND THE STATE

This chapter discusses the political history of Islamic law and its institution during the New Order and the early Reformasi era. Divided into three sections, the first two sections of the chapter examine the relation between state and political Islam during the New Order period. How the new-breed of Muslim intellectuals and activists coped with this issue is discussed in the first section, and followed by a discussion on accommodative stance of the state towards the Muslims’ interest as a fruit of decades of effort to establish viable synthesis between Islam and the state. This accommodative Islamic policy of the regime as strong evidence of the relaxing relation between state and political Islam is discussed in second section. This section also provides discussion about the legislation of Islamic family law, as the heart of the Sharia and the major area of Islamic law that has remained largely applicable in Muslim countries of today. The last part of the chapter is devoted to the discussion of constitutional debate on Sharia and Jakarta Charter in the early of Reformasi era, which shows the initial attitude of the PKS toward the implementation of Sharia in democratic Indonesia.

A. Islam-State Relation in the New Order

An abortive coup of the Communist Party, PKI, in 1965 resulted not only in the suppression and the proscription of the party, but also in the end of the Old Order...
period and the beginning of the New Order period. In spite of the tremendous role of the Muslim community in general and Muslim political parties in particular in crushing the communist supporters throughout the country, Muslim political leaders and activists, especially those with Masyumi origins, soon discerned that their hope of regaining great influence in the discourse of national politics was far from a reality. Feeling abandoned and rejected, at the meeting of reformist Muslim leaders on June 1, 1972, Natsir was reported to have said that the military dominated government of the New Order had treated them like ‘kucing kurap’ (cats with ringworm). The new ruling government seemed to follow the policy of the previous regime in consistently undercutting the Muslim political power. They were determined to prevent Muslims from ever again becoming an independent political force.

The successive events following the accession of the New Order regime suggested that in dealing with the ideological and political articulation of Islamic groups, the New Order regime had the same wariness as did its predecessor. In the wake of the release of many Masyumi leaders who had been detained by the Soekarno regime for their alleged involvement in 1958-1959 PRRI (Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, Revolutionary Government of Indonesian Republic) rebellion in Sumatra, a great hope of rehabilitating the Mayumi burned briefly among its former leaders. To their dismay, in early 1967 Soeharto and the military generals on whom he relied firmly rejected the resuscitation of the party. Adopting an even harder line, the government then barred the former Masyumi leader Mohammad Natsir from occupying a position of leadership in the newly established Parmusi, a party formed by Natsir in 1968 and intended to be an electoral voice for modernist Muslims.

363 For detailed account on the foundation of Parmusi, see Kenneth E. Ward, The Foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia, Ithaca: Modern Indonesian Project, South Asia Program, Cornell University, 1970.
These measures were taken to contain Islamic politics becoming established in the New Order period. Clearly, the military-backed regime remained suspicious towards political Islam. Armed encounters with several Muslim-inspired regional rebellions in the past led the ruling elite to adopt a hostile attitude towards any form of political Islam. Further deliberate attempt to contain Islamic political idealism occurred during the session of MPRS (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara, Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly) in 1968 when the government resolutely refused to recognize the Jakarta Charter as the preamble of the national constitution, thereby dashing Muslim hopes that the state would be obliged to implement Islamic law among its Muslim citizens.

An remaining support for political Islam was seriously eroded by the results of the 1971 general election, in which the total number of votes cast for Muslim parties considerably decreased in the wake of the heavy-handed government interference in influencing the outcome of the election. In the two years following the 1971 election, the government again took a further step to contain the political Islam by coercively consolidating the existing nine political parties into two new parties, one of which was supposed to represent the interests of Muslim constituents. By reconstructing the party system, the government calculated that the internal conflicts and rivalries within the parties would result in weakening political Islam, and the

364 A comprehensive study about Muslim-inspired regional revolts, especially that of Darul Islam, is presented by C. van Dijk in his Rebellion under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981.


366 Electoral gains of the Muslim political parties in 1971 election were as follows: NU, relatively free from outside intervention, was able to gain 18.67 per cent, slightly better than their 1955 performance (18.4 per cent), Parmusi, perceived to be Masyumi successor, scored only 5.36 per cent, far below Masyumi votes in 1955 (20.9 per cent), and the other two small parties, the PSII and the Perti, also lost votes. They won only 2.39 per cent and 0.70 per cent respectively, compared to 2.9 per cent and 1.3 per cent in 1955. These figures are modified from Herbert Feith’s The Indonesian Election of 1955, Ithaca: Modern Indonesian Project, South Asia Program, Cornell University, 1957 and Masashi Nishihara’s Golkar and the Indonesian Election of 1971, Ithaca: Monograph Series, Modern Indonesian Project, Cornell University, 1972.

367 For further accounts on the government efforts to score a resounding victory in 1971 election is given by Masashi Nishihara, Golkar and the Indonesian Election of 1971; See also Ward Kenneth E., The Election in Indonesia: An East Java Case Study, Clayton: Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, no. 2, Center of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1974.
scheme was quite successful in this regard. In the ensuing years, the political performance of the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan – PPP) was plagued by internal disputes. Accordingly, the ability of PPP to attract voters, especially during Djaelani Naro’s tenure, was significantly in decline.\footnote{368 For a further account, see Umaidi Radi, \textit{Strategi PPP 1973-1982: Suatu Study Tentang Kekuatan Politik Islam Tingkat Nasional}, Jakarta: Integrita Press, 1984: See also K.H. Syaifuddin Zuhri et al., \textit{PPP, NU dan MI: Gejolak Wadah Politik Islam}, Jakarta: Integrita Press, 1984.}

The hostility of the Muslim community towards the state was reinforced by a number of government’s policies deemed to be offensive to their religious beliefs. It was during the legislative session in 1973 that the government proposed the elevation of traditional mystical belief systems (\textit{aliran kepercayaan}) to the same status as the five officially recognized religions. In the same session, the government also introduced a bill on the Marriage Law. These proposals met with strong opposition from the large segment of the Muslim community because they were seen as being contradictory to the legal and theological teachings of Islam. Finally, debates over these contentious proposals ended in a compromise which conceded to the Muslim demands.\footnote{369 The marriage law was ratified by removing and modifying articles considered most disagreeable to Islamic principles. In regard to \textit{aliran kepercayaan}, it was recognized as an element of Indonesian culture instead of religion and therefore supervised by Department of Education and Culture instead of Department of Religious Affairs.} By these incidents the Muslim leaders and activists could only conclude that the New Order policies were designed not merely to restrain Muslim political power, but to challenge against their religious beliefs as well.

The final blow to political Islam came in 1983 when the government enforced the state ideology Pancasila as a sole basis of all the social and political organizations. The government considered the existence of a rival ideology to Pancasila as potential threat to national consensus. This ideological pressure left all the existing political parties and social organizations no choice but to endorse state philosophy of Pancasila as their ideological basis. All non-complying organizations would by then have been illegal and had to dissolve themselves. The imposition of Pancasila as the only appropriate ideological foundation deepened the discontent among the Muslim
Many perceived the program as undermining Islam. Only a few years before, the government had launched massive campaigns to socialize Pancasila indoctrination program. Formally approved in the 1978 session of MPR, the mass indoctrination of Pancasila was undertaken by means of training courses and its obligatory integration in the educational curriculum. This program was not accepted without opposition in the 1978 Assembly. It was reported that the NU members of the PPP walked out of the Assembly as a protest against the program.

It suffices to say that the implications of these political developments were far reaching. In the first place, mutual distrust and hostility between the leaders and activists of political Islam and the ruling elite worsened. The former perceived the latter as gradually secularizing the country and relying increasingly on Christian leaders. The latter considered the former support for Pancasila as tactical, expedient and suspect. For all of the above-mentioned reasons, it was not surprising that the major opposition to the New Order regime frequently came from the leaders and activists of political Islam. This uneasy relationship often provoked violent incidents associated with Muslim activists in the 1970s and up to the mid-1980s. Violent expressions such as Komando Jihad in Sumatra (1977), Tanjung Priok case (1984), and Warsidi movement in Lampung (1989), to mention only three incidents, were among the most shocking examples of the Muslim radical dissent which were bloodily suppressed by the army as a symbolic message that no dissent was to be allowed.

Antagonism between political Islam and the state in the first decades of the New Order period was largely due to the former’s legalistic and formalistic idealism and activism. Numerous political episodes throughout the course of the modern political history of Indonesia have indicated that efforts to establish a formalistic and

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legalistic relationship between Islam and the country’s political system ended up in corrosive ideological and political enmity. In spite of the fact that the problems confronting political Islam emerged in the practical domain of politics, the crux of the matter related mainly to a typical understanding of Islam common among many Muslim political thinkers and activists. They adopted an organic approach to the holistic nature of Islam which led them to establish the relationship between Islam and all aspects of life in a legal and formal manner. Moreover, as a divine instrument through which to understand the world, Islam is often conceived of as more than religion. This notion has led them to believe that Islam is a total way of life, the embodiment of which is expressed in the Islamic law (Sharia). Islamic law is believed to govern all aspects of life. This particular viewpoint inculcated the understanding that Islam recognizes no separation between the spiritual and temporal realm. Furthermore, they believed that Islam furnished its adherents with a fully-fledged concept of state or system of governing. They maintained that the state is an integral part of religion (Islam). It was on this religio-political stance that many leaders and activists of political Islam pursued their social and political agendas. Accordingly, they insisted that it was imperative that they propose Islam as the ideological basis of the state.

The rigid orientation towards politics and religion left the defenders of political Islam an inadequate room for maneuver. When the position of political Islam appeared to be worsening, particularly following the New Order’s political scheme of restructuring the political format of Indonesia, many of its leaders grew increasingly reactionary. This attitude proved the inability of Islamic political thinkers and activists to give intelligent religio-political responses to these new challenges. In the view of some younger Muslim leaders and activists, the early generation of Islamic political elites had suffered from inflexibility and were almost dogmatic in their responses to practical consideration. They argue that unless such a political orientation becomes more flexible, it seems unlikely to establish a viable synthesis between Islam and the state.

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374 Nurcholis Madjid, “The Issue of Modernization among Muslims in Indonesia: From the Participant’s Point of View”, in Ahmad Ibrahim et. al., op. cit., p. 383.
Emerging from the weakening situation of political Islam and attempting to remedy the discouraging relationship between Islam and state, since the early 1970s the new generation of Muslim thinkers and activists sought to develop a new format for political Islam in which substance, rather than form, serves as the primary orientation. Their intellectual endeavor revolved around three important areas: (1) theological renewal, (2) bureaucratic reform, and (3) social transformation. Even though these three spheres of renewal operated in different arenas, they combined in a serious campaign for a new enunciation of Islamic political ideas and practices. So far, these attempts have been carried out mainly through the articulation of new Islamic political thoughts and actions which are perceived to be more compatible with the diverse characteristics of the socio-religious structures of the archipelago as well as with its political orientations.

The new generation of Islamic thinkers, particularly those operating in the theological renewal, also believed in the holistic nature of Islam, but they asserted that it does not necessarily require a mixture between the divine (i.e. Islamic values) and the profane (i.e. state, party, ideology, etc.). Nor does it imply that these two different realms should be placed on the same level, since doing so will only lead to confusion in the structure and hierarchy of Islamic values. This new theological underpinning of political Islam has often been associated with Nurcholish Madjid’s idea of secularization. His fundamental viewpoints stem from his radical understanding of the concept of tauhid (oneness of God), that only God who possesses absolute transcendence and divinity. Consequently, Muslims should liberate themselves from the tendency to transcend values which are supposedly profane into the domain of divinity. In other words, they should perceive the world and its temporal affairs as they are, for to view them in a sacred and transcendental manner is considered theologically contradictory to the concept of Islamic monotheism. This theological stance has significant implications for the political ideas and practices of the new emerging Muslim thinkers and activists, especially with regard to their strategies and tactics.

After critically examining the stipulations of the Qur’an and Sunnah, the newly emerging generation of Muslim intellectuals found no clear indication that Islam has a profound interest in regulating issues pertaining to the affairs of the state. In the absence of the Quranic and Sunnaic precepts about this specific issue, they opined that Islam does not oblige its adherents to establish a state.\textsuperscript{376} Even though a fully-fledged concept of the state is absent in Islam, Islam does provide a set of ethical values of political principles, such as justice (‘adl), consultation (shura), and egalitarianism (musawa). Since the current form of the Indonesian nation state, with Pancasila as its ideological basis, is sufficient to accommodate the realization of those Islamic socio-political injunctions, defenders of the new Islamic intellectualism believe that the Indonesian nation state deserves religio-political legitimacy from and acceptance by Muslims. The fact that these principles have not been fully realized should not be a reason to transform the national unitary character of the state. Efforts to reinstate those principles should be carried out within the framework of the present ideological construct of the state.\textsuperscript{377} Furthermore, the concern of the state with the implementation and development of religious values is considered to be the gradual evolution of the state into a “religious state” without having to become a “theological state” which is constitutionally based on certain formal religious institutions. Their acceptance of the current form of the state has also been strengthened by their perception of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Both the ideological and constitutional foundations are perceived to reflect the substance of Islamic teachings.\textsuperscript{378} A number of Muslim intellectuals have even argued that Pancasila is comparable to the Constitution of Medina in that both substantively recognize the relationship between religious values and the affairs of the state, and functionally represent common flat forms for socio-


\textsuperscript{378} According to Hasbullah Bakri, a former professor at the IAIN Yogyakarta and Jakarta, Indonesia can be considered to be a non-constitutional Islamic state in the sense that given the nature of Pancasila, which is in tune with Islamic principles the state would not embrace any policy which contradicts Islamic values. See his “Lima Dalil Indonesia Bisa Disebut Negara Islam Non-Konstitusional,” \textit{Panji Masyarakat}, no. 439, August 1, 1983, p. 29-31.
As has been discussed previously in the introduction, the Muslims’ acceptance of Pancasila as the *asas tunggal* proved to be beneficial to their strengthening political influence. According to Nurcholis Madjid, in the post-*asas tunggal* period “Muslims cease to ask whether this [Pancasila] is valid or not. It is valid, but how do we interpret it?” He continued that Muslims are more confident and self-assured and they see that Pancasila does not need to be problematized. Muslim abandonment of the opposition to Pancasila was possible partly because it became apparent that through the *asas tunggal* Pancasila was guaranteed by the President that it will not become a civil religion or turn Indonesia into a secular state.

In contrast to the theological renewal stream of the new Muslim intellectuals who to some extent indulged themselves in the theoretical discourse of Islam, those who operated in the pragmatics of bureaucratic reform are more apt to be involved in the state and its bureaucratic institutions. They believe that the problem of an easy relationship between political Islam and the state, which was partly responsible for the dismal condition of political Islam, can gradually be eradicated by becoming directly involved and participating in the mainstream of political and bureaucratic process of the state. In this context, the proponents of this intellectual stream can be regarded as the political arms of the theological school.

Commenting on the bureaucratic participation of political Muslims, they have argued that political Islam, with the exception of the 1950s era when many of its leaders were appointed to head cabinets and a number of important bureaucracies, has played

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381 In his autobiography, Soeharto says that it was never his attention to secularize the state because Pancasila stipulates that Indonesia must be a religious state. See Soeharto, *My Thought, Words, and Deeds: An Autobiography*, as told to G. Dwipayana and Ramadhan K.H., English Translation by Sumadi, Jakarta: PT. Citra Lamtoro Gung Persada, 1991, p. 352.
no significant role in state bureaucracies.\textsuperscript{382} This feeble tradition of governing explains the peripheral position of activists of political Islam in the state institution and their detachment from the state in the first decades of the New Order regime. The proponents of this intellectual stream have argued that to cultivate the tradition of governing as well as to eliminate the myth of \textit{santri} detachment from the state, it is necessary for the activists of political Islam to keep in contact with the political and bureaucratic institutions. Only by entering the formal bureaucratic institutions will the activists and leaders of political Islam become effectively involved in the decision making of the state. In the view of this intellectual current, these approaches will ensure the administering of Islam in the nationally accepted socio-political framework.\textsuperscript{383} Furthermore, by working within the state bureaucracies, the proponents of this intellectual group could strive for the integrated socio-political aspirations of Islam without being suspected of being outsiders or as representatives of treacherous political and bureaucratic agendas. In other words, these endeavors would contribute greatly towards Islamizing the bureaucracy.

Like their counterparts in previous streams, proponents of the social transformation school have been acutely aware of the marginal position of political Islam. However, they do not consider the issue of the uneasy relationship between Islam and state as being their primary intellectual concern. Instead, they are more interested in the socio-political and economic policy of the regime which gives high priority to stability and growth at the expense of popular participation and equity. In this regard, the substance of their socio-political programs is in line with the concern of Indonesian society at large, such as social emancipation, popular participation, and economic equity.\textsuperscript{384} Given the populist nature of their concern, their activities could


\textsuperscript{383} For useful description of the administration of Islam in modern Indonesia, see Deliar Noer, \textit{Administration of Islam in Indonesia}, Ithaca: Modern Indonesian Project, Cornell University, 1978.

\textsuperscript{384} Adi Sasono, “Islam dan Sosialisme Religious,” in Bosco Carvallo and Dasrizal, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 110.
not be implemented through a partisan approach. Rather, the success of this intellectual breakthrough was determined by their ability to muster the support necessary from various institutions as well as individuals. Accordingly, this intellectual stream called for adherence to a broader meaning of politics by abandoning the party politics as the sole avenue for the articulation and realization of Islamic socio-political objectives, and trying to broaden and diversify programs, strategies, and playing fields.\footnote{Adi Sasono, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 109-116.}

It is through these various routes that the new generation of Muslim activists has struggled to achieve the articulation and realization of Islamic socio-political ideals. Their primary purpose has been to transform the earlier outlook of political Islam, from formal legalism to substantialism. With regard to the original aims of this renewal, viz. developing a viable relationship between Islam and state as well as redeeming the political role of Islam, it can be said that this new Islamic political activism has brought about many positive results. It has been widely noted that since the last two general elections, more Muslim political thinkers and activists have occupied important ministerial posts as well as substantial seats in the executive and legislative body.\footnote{In two successive five-year official tenures (1987-1992 and 1993-1998), several former HMI activists have occupied ministerial posts. They included Saleh Afif, Azwar Anas, Hasrul Harahap, Akbar Tanjung, Arifin Siregar, Syamsuddin Sumintapura, Sya\\’dilah Mursid, Syarifuddin Baharsyah, Mar’ie Muhammad, and Abdul Latief. The number of Islamic representatives in the parliament has also increased, although not necessarily via Islamic party, see “Menyingkap Sayap Islam di Golkar,” \textit{Panji Masyarakat}, March 1-10, 1990, p. 26-27; “Beringin Makin Hijau,” \textit{Tempo}, October 3, 1992.} This means that they can fully participate in the process of policy decision making.

Evidence of this new development has been the political reconciliation between Islam and state which is signified in the latter’s agreement to implement a number of policies considered necessary by the former’s socio-cultural and political interests. Included in this accommodative actions are the passing of education law which stipulates the obligatory nature of religious instruction in state as well as private schools (1988), the passing of religious court law (1989), the establishment of ICMI (1990), the Compilation of Islamic law (1991), a joint ministerial decision concerning the zakat (religious alms) collection and distribution agency, Bazis (1991), the holding
of an Islamic festival, Festival Istiqlal (1991), the reversal of jilbab (scarf) policy (1991), the establishment of an Islamic bank, BMI (1992), the rescinding of national lottery, SDSB (1993), the development of religious infrastructure, the teaching of Arabic language on national television, and the sending of Muslim religious preachers to the remote transmigration areas.

B. Sharia in a National Context

Along with strong rejection of the demand of the Muslim leaders to give an official status to the Jakarta Charter, the New Order government stated that Indonesia was neither a theocratic state nor a secular one. This meant that religion provided a spiritual, ethical, and moral basis for national development. In this context, Islamic values have a fair chance in coloring the process of the policy making of the state. Simply by virtue of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the country’s inhabitants are Muslims, they argued, the basic contours of the state governing principles are in tune, if not influenced by, Islamic values. Within this framework, at least theoretically, the state will not implement laws and policies which are in direct conflict with Islamic teachings. Although Islam is not mentioned in the Constitution, it has undoubtedly become one of the important inputs in the process of public policy making.

The government’s refusal to ratify the Jakarta Charter does not necessarily mean that the Muslim leaders have dropped their intention to enhance the implementation of Islamic law in everyday life. In their eyes the Presidential Decree of July 5, 1959, concerning the return to the 1945 Constitution, in which it was mentioned that the Jakarta Charter “inspired the 1945 Constitution and it linked in unity with that Constitution”, has guaranteed that observant Muslims are free to practice Islamic law in their daily lives. Mohammad Roem is of the opinion that whether or not the Jakarta Charter was included in the Preamble to the Constitution or in the President Soekarno Decree, Muslims are obliged to observe Islamic law. It is “an obligation not in a ‘legal’ sense, with legal consequences which could be enforced but an obligation in the religious sense.” In this sense, the Jakarta Charter is of no legal
consequence, but it has “the permanent religious significance” which explicitly reminds the Muslims of their responsibility to keep Islamic law.\(^{387}\)

As was said above, many Muslim leaders now no longer strive for an official Islamic state. They are working from a different angle, by infusing society with Islamic precepts and moving towards a gradual Islamization of the country. Moreover, nowadays many of them no longer speak of Islamic law in general, but only of the partial realization of it, i.e. of certain elements of Islamic law, through regulations issued by the government. Traditionally priority is given to the area of family law. With the exception of family law, they do not actually make any demands that Islamic law be legislated explicitly. Most of them seem to consider that the implementation of Islamic law can be accommodated without formal legislation. It is enough to integrate its principles into national law. Considering that the national legal system is still in its formative stage, it is perfectly feasible that Islamic principles may be introduced into national law. As a previous minister of justice, Ismail Saleh, said, the national legal system is an open system in that it considers any existing laws in the world as its raw materials as long as they are not contradictory to the Pancasila values, the Constitutional norms, and national interests as well as being in line with the legal need of Indonesian state and nation.\(^{388}\)

Islamic law as expounded in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) literature and consciously practiced by the Muslim community has been accepted and has been successful as one element in the legal sources for the formation of national law. Even though a greater part of it has become a living law in the legal consciousness of its adherents, only Islamic family law has gone through the mechanism of becoming national positive law. In order to become a positive law, Islamic law has to go through the mechanism of national law-making. The first efforts are directed towards finding out the universal norms of Islamic law so that they could be transformed into a national


legal order acceptable to every segment of population. To the extent that there are differences between Islamic law and other sources as the common denominator among these sources has to be found. Failing either of these efforts, the concept of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) should be adopted to subject each discrete group to its own distinctive law without making the others subject to it.  

The enactment of the Marriage Law in 1974, Religious Court Law in 1989 and Compilation of Islamic Law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam) in 1991 indicate an obvious recognition by the state of the validity of Islamic law and its judicial institutions. The success in adopting some elements of Islamic law into national positive law is partly due to favorable political conditions. The contribution of Muslim bureaucrats and professionals who are generally not conversant with traditionally formulated Islamic law is also critical in this process. Mutual co-operation and constructive dialogue between these proponents of Islamic law are both required to invigorate Islamic law as an actual legal system that can meet the demands of a modern society.

Demand for marriage law reform had been an issue since the mid-1950s. According to Lev, these demands arose from a growing intellectual liberation of upper- and upper-middle class women, an easing of control over women in urban society, the impact of egalitarian ideologies, and the influence of foreign examples. Enacted after becoming a fierce political issue between the Muslim and other groups in parliament, the Marriage Law of 1974 gives Indonesian Muslims a clearer picture of their marital rights and responsibilities. Many of the original provisions which were considered contrary to Islamic law were dropped, including provisions that required use of a civil rather than an Islamic court by Muslims for some purposes, demanded

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390 The struggle to accommodate the interests of Islam is no longer an exclusive commitment of proponents of political Islam, so-called abangan Islam has also the same commitment. See Munawir Sjadzali, “Islam Milik Semua,” Tempo, July 6, 1992.
registration to validate a marriage, allowed mixed marriages, and had given legal status to an engagement.\textsuperscript{392}

In the early New Order period, the government enacted the Law no 14/1970 concerning the Basic Rule of Judicial Power (Undang-Undang tentang Ketentuan-Ketentuan Pokok Kekuasaan Kehakiman) in which the authority of the Supreme Court was extended to religious courts. Even though the law stipulated that appeals cases against before the religious courts may be taken to the Supreme Court, its application was hampered by the absence of appropriate procedural laws. Consequently, the status quo of the colonial regulation, which stated that the decisions of appeal from the high religious court were final, continues to be in force. This situation has contributed to the weak position of religious courts in relation to other judicial institutions in the contemporary Indonesian legal system.

The passing of religious court legislation (Undang-Undang Peradilan agama, UUPA) in 1989 restored and strengthened the status and function of the religious court in adjudicating marriage, inheritance, and religious endowment for Muslim citizens. From the perspective of history, there is nothing new with respect to the enactment of this law, since in their simplest form and function, religious courts have existed in the archipelago for centuries. Through these religiously-based judicial institutions indigenous Muslims have generally settled their disputes on matters related to family law including inheritance and endowments. In spite of their long-standing, religious courts have suffered from a number of critical defects. These major defects include (1) the lack of legal autonomy,\textsuperscript{393} (2) administrative discrepancy,\textsuperscript{394} and (3) the absence of a unified legal reference.\textsuperscript{395}


\textsuperscript{395} To mitigate this condition, the Minister of Religious Affairs issued a letter of instruction in 1953 limiting the number of texts upon which the judges established their legal decision. Those texts are \textit{Bughyat al-Mustarshidun, Al-Fara’id}, \textit{Fath al-Mu’in}, \textit{Fath al-Wahhab}, Hashiyah Kifayat al-Akhyar,
Basically, the passing of the Religious Court Law of 1989 was designed to remedy those defects by providing the legal autonomy necessary to religious courts so their decisions are final and binding, and a validation from civil courts is no longer needed to execute their rulings. While the Compilation of Islamic law (Kompilasi Hukum Islam) was aimed to equip religious courts with a unified legal reference, consisting of three books on matters related to marriage, inheritance, and endowment upon which judges in religious courts can base their decision.

Indubitably, the passing of these three pieces of legislation pleased the Muslim community, but it also generated alarm among non-Muslims and nationalist circles. The fundamental concerns which underlay their objection to these laws are twofold. First, given the very nature of these laws which regulate the legal interests of Muslims only, these legislations are deemed to violate the principle of the unification of law in Indonesian legal system. Second, the compilation of the laws is considered to be a cloak for the Jakarta Charter which obliges the state to implement Islamic law (Sharia). Their opposition to these laws has nothing to do with the substance of the laws, but it is related to their traumatic experiences with the political Islam in the past, when its overriding purpose was to create an Islamic state.

It also has to be said that the relaxation of political tensions between ‘Islam and the state’ also contributed to the legislation of the Compilation. The process of state accommodation towards Islamic interests can be traced back to the 1970s when the government appointed a handful of Muslim activists to post in state agencies. As the beneficiaries of the progress of the modern education and economic development during the New Order era, many Muslims occupied the country’s middle and professional sectors. Because of this social mobility, they could no longer be perceived as representing a backward and marginal group. As a new emerging socio-political group, they need structural avenues to channel their interests. Their socio-political agendas have been reformulated in the framework representing the interests of the

whole nation, such as the realization of justice, participatory, and egalitarian construction of the state. Their political approach is no longer partisan.

This sociological and political shift of Muslim Politics has reduced the suspicion of the state towards political Islam and this has led the former to provide the necessary structural mechanism to enable the latter to express and realize their interests. Then, in the mid 1980s, Muslim activists were assigned to a number of important political and bureaucratic posts, providing a relatively easy access to power pertaining to the realization of Islamic interests. Since then, this structural accommodation has grown in numbers and substance. Not only were more Muslim activists recruited into the bureaucratic and political machineries, but they were promoted to the higher posts which culminated in the aftermath of the 1992 election, when a large number of Muslim leaders and activists were recruited into the parliament, although not necessarily via an Islamic party.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the recent increasing representation of Islam in parliament and the cabinet is largely due to the diversifying approach of the new generation in articulating and realizing Islamic socio-political interests. Considering the nature of the political relationship between Islam and state in the past, these accommodative ventures undoubtedly serve as important indications, however symbolic it may be, of the declining hostility of the state towards political Islam.

The changing nature of the state in favor of Muslim interests leads us to the question about the main forces driving the state to initiate these accommodation moves. As a part of the accommodative moves of the state, the legislation of the Compilation has often been seen in terms of a personal rule type analysis, rather than in a broader sociological and political perspective, in the sense that it is perceived simply as Soeharto’s political project, designed primarily to cultivate Muslim political support.


397 This has led to a public assessment of the parliament becoming “greener”, the colour often perceived as the colour symbolic of Islam, see “Beringin Makin Hijau,” Tempo, October 3, 1992, p. 21-31.
More specifically, it was intended to boost his position in the run-up to the 1993 presidential election.

There are at least two important arguments to substantiate this viewpoint. Firstly, the initiative to undertake these accommodative enterprises evolved over a five-year time span, a period which was characterized by the growing concern about the presidential succession. Moreover, the fact that in September 1989 and May 1992 a number of prominent Muslim figures and Islamic socio-religious organizations echoed unequivocal support (kebulatan tekad) for Soeharto’s sixth-term presidency in 1993 only reinforced this sort of analysis.398

Secondly, there was a notion of the weakening Soeharto’s grip on the military which has long been the backbone of the New Order. As Liddle states, the first important evidence of the declining control of Soeharto over the military came in March 1988, when the former’s nominee for vice-president (Soedarmono) was publicly and angrily opposed by the latter during a tumultuous session of the assembly. The military’s tacit insubordination towards his leadership had cast serious doubt on their traditional support for his presidency. This viewpoint went on to argue that to offset the decreasing backing from the military, the president extended a hand to an old adversary, Islamic political groups.399 The legislation of the Compilation was perceived as one of these political moves to cultivate Muslim political support. In addition, the fact that the issuance of the Compilation happened just before Soeharto’s leaving on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1991, an action hailed at that time as a sign of the government’s new attitude towards Islam, gives weight to the view that those shifting attitudes of the state were merely deliberate attempts to seek Muslim political support for his presidential office.

These two factors put forward by the line of argument above seem to be more complementary explanations rather than determinant ones in relation to accommodative attitude of the state toward Muslim interests. It is possible for us to


analyze this enterprise in a broader sociological and political perspective, in a sense that it was driven by political necessity in response to the development of the country’s societal dynamism.

There has been some mention earlier of the fact that Indonesia’s economic development and the broadening access to modern higher education during the New Order regime meant that Muslims have experienced a rapid process of socio-economic and political mobilization, which in turn have transformed them into an “intermediate” entity, socially, economically, and politically. As a new emerging middle class, they have carved themselves a niche in the state bureaucracy and professional sectors, and also share certain aspirations that require appropriate responses from the regime which are in fact relevant to the enhancement of its own legitimacy. It is in this context that the state initiated those forms of accommodation. Reluctance to accommodate societal demands will eventually undermine the legitimacy of the regime, but to be responsive to the needs of the society will boast its legitimacy. Moreover, considering that the legitimacy of the New Order government was built primarily upon the success in the country’s economic development and national political stability, accommodating Islamic interests would provide it with the necessary political legitimacy.

In addition to the societal dynamism, another decisive factor behind the undertaking of such forms of accommodation by the state has been the Muslim intellectual transformation that has succeeded in developing a viable political relationship between the state and Islam. The new format of political Islam, which emphasizes substantialism over legal-formalism, has contributed greatly towards eliminating the suspicion felt by the state about the Muslim political activities; hence a political relaxation between Islam and state was established. This new development has rendered it inappropriate to exclude political Islam from the country’s political process. Accommodating the transformed ideas and practices of political Islam thus

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becomes an imperative task for the state in effort to avoid tensions and to enhance its legitimacy.

C. Constitutional Debate on Sharia

The post-New Order era, or Reformasi Era as it is popularly known, witnessed the struggle of both Islamist and secular nationalist parties to foster democracy and combat corruption. The parties from all political spectrums considered these issues as their paramount agenda and having great popular appeal. Due to this shared conviction of defending reformasi ideals, for the first time in Indonesian political history, ideological differences between “left- and right-wing” of the political spectrums were blurred. For the Islamist parties, the reformasi movement led by the students did not give them a blank cheque to Islamize the state or pursue their Islamist agenda. Therefore, in the initial stage of the reformasi era, no Islamist party had an official stance and a full pledged strategy on Sharia. Instead, their agenda was very much focused on a broader reform. The democratic euphoria of the masses very definitely dictated the policies and strategies of the Islamist parties; it was clear that they needed to avoid any controversial issues that would bring their democratic credentials into question. The Sharia issue is undoubtedly neither appealing to the majority of the voters and nor an agenda of reformasi. The lack of voters’ response was the obvious reason for the Islamist parties to downplay Sharia agenda and focus instead on issues of broader political reform. So, it is combination between political survival and sectarian issues that led the Islamist parties to momentarily avoid accentuating Sharia issues.

The popular demand during the early reformasi era was the Constitution amendment. There was a popular belief that the New Order regime was successful in maintaining the power due to the vague of 1945 Constitution; it enables the preservation of authoritarian rule and the breach of checks and balances which is central to the establishment of democratic governance. The public and press mounted strong pressure to the parties to empower the legislative body of the state by strengthening its power to conduct its function of checks and balances. Other popular demands include direct presidential elections, establishment of regional
administrations autonomy, removal of military participation in parliament, known as dwifungsi ABRI (Army force dual function) and protection of human rights. Islamist agenda items such as the insertion of Jakarta Charter into the Preamble of the Constitution were excluded during the immediate reformasi era, just as the unitary state of Indonesia, presidential system and Pancasila as state ideology. By highlighting the non-Islamist agenda, the party aimed to preserve the religiously neutral characteristics of the political system.

The memory of parliamentary deadlock during the constitutional debate on Konstituante in 1969 (Constituent Assembly) that resulted in the end of the era of Parliamentary Democracy (Demokrasi Parlementer) also contributed to the Islamist party readiness to postpone the debate on Preamble of Constitution; resuming it will surely open the can of worm. Disputes over installing the Jakarta Charter into the Preamble were sure to be politically counter-productive. Instead of debating the Preamble, the Islamist parties proposed the changes regarding Paragraph 29 on “religion.” These changes were proposed on the parliamentary session of June 2000, a year after the first post-New Order democratic election on June 1999, during which Islamist parties proposed two different clauses into Paragraph 29 of the Constitution. The first proposal made by the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, United Development Party) and the PBB (Partai Bulan Bintang, Star Crescent Party) which maintained the original wording of Jakarta Charter, Negara berdasarkan Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi para pemeluknya (the State is based on the One All-Powerful God with the obligation to carry out Sharia Islam for its adherents). This clause gives exclusivity to the Muslim population of the country (henceforth called Sharia-minded Clause). The second clause was proposed by

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402 The other proposal was made by The Army and Police Faction, the Golkar Party, PKB (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, National Awakening Party), and PDI-P (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle), which maintain the current wording, Negara Berdasar atas Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa (the State is Based on the One All-Powerful God).
the PK and PAN (Partai Amanah Nasional, National Mandate Party), which together form one fraction, the Fraksi Reformasi (Reform Faction). The clause took a pluralist variant of the first clause (henceforth called Religiosity-based Clause), emphasizing the “religious teaching” (*ajaran agama*) in the place of “Sharia Islam”. It reads: *Negara berdasarkan Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa dengan kewajiban menjalankan ajaran agama bagi para pemeluknya* (the State is based on the One All-Powerful God with the obligation to carry out religious teaching for its adherents).

In its apparent support to the reformist agenda, PK remained staunchly devoted to double-track approach in politics: Islamist ideologically and pragmatist politically. More than the other Islamist parties, PK neatly separated its ideology from political commitment. While supporting reform and democratization, the party struggled to achieve its Islamist ideal to Islamize society. This Islamization process is deliberately incremental in nature, the ultimate goal of which is the voluntarily popular embrace and support for the Sharia rule so that any election results will automatically lead to the Islamist parties’ hold of power. For the meantime, the party will not see ideological accomplishment any time soon. The best possible achievement would be a minor share of the vote. This is the obvious reason for the party to give priority to establishing long-term partnerships with other political camps.

Creating political relationships with other parties entailed ideological adjustment and focusing more on shared commitment, hence, the avoidance of quarrelsome themes and controversial issues. Islamist stereotypes, the PK leaders argued, such as fanaticism and radicalism, could be brushed aside, and in their place moderate, temperate, and accommodative attitudes should prevail. It is not a coincidence that the party’s statutes quote a hadith highlighting moderation and accommodation. The hadith reads:

> Make things easy and do not make things difficult. Give glad tiding and do not make people running away from you.⁴⁰³

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⁴⁰³ *Sekilas Partai Keadilan*, Jakarta: Sekretariat DPP Partai Keadilan, 1998, p. 34. The quote was put under the heading “moderate”.
The approach highlighted in the hadith inspired the party to conduct a gradual approach toward Sharia implementation. The party’s gradualist attitude explains its reluctance to support the insertion of Sharia-minded Clause into the Constitution, considering that the Clause contradicts the injunction of the hadith to apply a moderate path in the effort of implementing Sharia rulings. Despite its conviction that the state is obliged to implement Sharia, the party was skeptical about the wisdom of hasty inclusion of Jakarta Charter into the Constitution. Looking back PK/PKS leaders say that the party was convinced that the promotion of Sharia and the Jakarta Charter clause by PPP and PBB was done with no plan for their realization; the Islamists only gained a minority seat, accordingly the promotion of Sharia-minded Clause would be rejected and defeated in the parliament. A plain reason for this defeat was the lack of Islamist political power in the parliament. The reluctance of PK to support the Sharia-minded Clause was also driven by its political commitment to avoid any conflict with other groups that would tarnish the party’s self-claimed image as a national unifier. Therefore, should the Clause potentially bring the party in conflict with other groups and endanger the common commitment toward broader political reform, it was argued, it was best for the party to drop it from its agenda.

Due to the persistence of the party toward its strategy of moderation and facilitation in regard with Sharia issues, accusations were spread that the party has ceased fighting for Sharia. To the party, this charge was tantamount to slander and was very misleading; it was, they said, as if to say that Jakarta Charter is a divine inspiration that is fixed, flawless and undebatable. The party claimed that reluctance towards supporting the Sharia-minded Clause should not be understood as being unsupportive toward the implementation of Sharia. To back up its claim as a staunch supporter of Sharia, the party listed its commitment to the broader Islamic issues such as the inclusion of zakat (alms) into the tax system, the fight against corruption, and its support on the pornography bill. More than anything else, the party pointed to their persistent implementation of Islamic teachings in their individual and family life as a

\[\text{Qamaruddin, Beginilah Partai Keadilan Sejahtera Menegakkan Syariat Islam: Klarifikasi Fitnah Piagam Jakarta} \] [This is how Partai Keadilan implements Sharia Islam: Clarification of the Jakarta Charter Slander], Jakarta: Pustaka Tarbiatuna, 2003, p. 45.
central argument for its commitment to Sharia. For that reason, the party urged the people to fairly observe and assess the dedication and commitment of the party toward Sharia from the everyday life of the party elites. Regarding the party’s dedication toward Sharia implementation, one of PKS leaders explained that people needed to see examples from Muslims whether they observe Sharia in everyday life or just pay a lip service and turn Sharia into merely a political rhetoric:

“We observe it [i.e. Sharia] first, only then we preach it. We deal it first in our families, only then we speak it in public. There is no point talking about Sharia if our families are not observing it. If people find the family member of Muslim leaders smoking, committing drug abuse, or removing their headscarf, what is the point of talking about Sharia? In that case, we only set a bad example to society. We can only talk but do not walk the talk. It is exactly for this reason, that people including Muslims have little belief in Islamic leaders.”

To boast its claims that the party elites understand the importance of Sharia and know how to implement it, the party point to the fact that a large number of party leaders have graduated from the Middle East with degrees in Islamic studies.

Often acting from a position of moral superiority and self-perceptions of being the only true defenders of Sharia, the PKS leaders tended to take a cynical view towards the other parties’ motives of implementing Sharia. For instance, regarding the people who often talk loud about Sharia and proclaim that “Sharia has to be implemented now”, Tate Qamaruddin wrote that in fact they are neither well-versed in Sharia nor knowledgeable on how and where to start.

The party’s coalition with PAN, a Muslim party but not an Islamist party, with pluralist platform, further strengthened the political commitment of the party regarding

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405 Ibid., p. 35.
408 Tate Qamaruddin, 2003, p. 19.
the Sharia agenda. The coalition with PAN was a calculated strategy of the PK to downplay its Islamism, and it helped to soften the party’s doctrinaire image. From a different perspective, the party elites considered PAN’s stance of pluralism as being based on pragmatic reason, not driven by conviction. For example, in applying pluralism, PAN did not go so far as giving up the party leadership to non-Muslims, despite their equal status within the party. Discrepancies between claims of pluralism and their actual application, the PK leaders said, provided strong indication that PAN would not “deviate too far” from Islam or sacrifice its deep relationship with the biggest reformist Muslim organization in Indonesia, the Muhammadiyah, as the party origin. So, according to the PK leaders, the difference between the PK and PAN was only a matter of “political expression,” not on the principle tenets of Islam.

The coalition between PKS and PAN made the Jakarta Charter agenda nearly impossible to implement, because of the latter’s claim to represent religious diversity. Both parties are of the opinion that Religiosity-based Clause suits best to Indonesian plural society. This clause is considered as respecting religious plurality, arguing that the Sharia-minded Clause is flawed because it was only concerned with the religiosity of Muslim citizens. The Clause offered by the Reformasi Coalition was considered by the party to do more justice to all religions, because the special status for Islam was lifted and thus it put other religious communities on the same footing. Above all, the Clause obliged adherents of all religions to implement their religious teachings. It is an act of injustice to enforce religious observance only upon Muslims, the PK leaders said, while leaving other religious communities free to obey or disobey their religious teaching.409

The party claimed that the Reformasi coalition proposed a middle way because all religions were explicitly included in the Clause. The Religiosity-based Clause also recognized the implementation of Sharia while ensuring the rights of other religious communities. Furthermore, the Clause reflected the identity of Indonesia as a religious nation and mirrored the spirit of Pancasila as a “word of concord” (kata persamaan, 409 “Sikap PK Tentang Amandemen Pasal 29 Ayat 1 UUD 45 Dalam Sidang Tahunan MPR 2002”, Suara Keadilan, No. 23, 15 May-15 June 2002.

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For this matter, the party maintained that since the majority of people are Muslims, the implementation of Sharia should be given a chance. It does not have to be in the formulation of the “seven words” of the Jakarta Charter, but in a wording whose substance is similar but acceptable to all religious communities. Therefore, the party claimed that they have consulted with representative of other religious leaders, especially of Christian organizations, and they had lent support for the proposed Clause because its wording concerned the piety of all religious communities.410

The justification for the Clause was characteristically Islamist; the state must encourage piety and morality, by ensuring that all people of different religions observe their religious teachings. Maintaining the morality of individuals and the general public is the key to overcoming the nation’s problems. Both parties’ leaders of Reformasi Coalition argued that if people obey their religion, there is a big chance that they will also obey the law, and avoid committing big scale crime, such as corruption, collusion and nepotism. The two parties have a common commitment to fight corruption, calling the corrupt “national traitors” or “rats of the state” that needed to be “eliminated”.411 The party believed that one of the best ways to eliminate corruption was to increase individual piety. Therefore, to ensure that religious life develop well and to remind the people that adherence to religious teaching is an obligation, the Reformasi Coalition suggested that the Religiosity-based Clause mention the obligation on the state to realize it as a fundamental sentence within the Constitution.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that due to their organic approach to the holistic nature of Islam, the proponents of political Islam experienced great difficulty in synthesizing their theological or philosophical foundations with the existing socio-cultural and political realities of their time. Their idea that Islam be adopted as the state ideology along with its socio-political ramifications was challenged and rejected by large and


powerful political groups who concern mainly with the nature of the nation state of Indonesia with Pancasila as the national philosophy and the state ideology. In the early New Order period of late 1960s, political Islam became a target of ideological-political distrust and was consequently curbed by restrictive policies as is clearly seen in the government rejection of the Islamic group’s political agendas, i.e. legalization of the Jakarta Charter, rehabilitation of the proscribed Masyumi, and involvement of the former Masyumi leaders in Parmusi.

The rigid orientation towards politics and religion left the defenders of political Islam with inadequate room for maneuver. When the position of political Islam appeared to be worsening, particularly following the New Order’s political scheme of restructuring the political format of Indonesia, many of its leaders grew increasingly reactionary. This attitude proved the inability of Islamic political thinkers and activists to give intelligent religio-political responses to these new challenges. In the view of some younger Muslim leaders and activists, the early generation of Islamic political elites suffered from inflexibility and was almost dogmatic in their responses to practical consideration. They argue that unless such a political orientation becomes more flexible, it seems unlikely to establish a viable synthesis between Islam and the state.

By the late 1980s a changed political context had induced the regime to shift its posture toward Islam by adhering to a number of policies favorable to Muslim interests. Although the government’s attitude towards official Islam had seemingly been reversed, its accommodative enterprises have not actually represented a decisive break with the policies of the early New Order. The government was still adamant about political Islam. Through the course of its governmental career, the New Order regime remained essentially obsessed with depoliticization programs as a means of preserving rule. Rather than competing with Islam for legislative authority, the government is seeking to appropriate the power to declare Islamic law. Instead of defeating Islam, the New Order regime has decided to confiscate it.

The collapse of the New Order regime brings a new hope for Muslim activists to achieve their vision of society. Some chose to establish political parties based on the
Islamist platform, in which the enforcement of Sharia became one of the main political aspirations. The result of several elections showed that there was a gulf between the Islamist ideals and the political reality. The little support they could get from most Indonesian Muslims gave a strong signal for them to reevaluate their strategies. The electoral share of Islamist parties in 1999 election strongly suggested that the majority of Indonesian Muslims did not support the Islamist agenda, especially their ideals to Islamize the state and the Constitution. Realizing the limited popular support and insignificant seat in the parliament, PK withheld the Sharia agenda and focused more on reformist issues, which could have broader popular appeal, such as amending the Constitution to strengthen parliamentary powers, enhancing economic growth, combating corruption and removing the army’s political role.

The reluctance of the party to support the Sharia-minded Clause during the constitutional debate in 2000 was a calculated strategy to appear pluralist and moderate. Together with PAN, the party formed a coalition to overcome the controversy around the insertion of Jakarta Charter into the Constitution, by proposing an alternative wording that omitted Sharia terms from the Clause. The party’s policy of downplaying Sharia did not necessarily mean that it has abandoned its Islamist ideology. While being faithful to its ideals of bringing about Sharia rule, the party decided that it should adjust its behavior in accordance with political circumstances.
CHAPTER EIGHT
PKS’ LONG-TERM STRUGGLE FOR THE APPLICATION OF SHARIA

This chapter draws together and consolidates the analysis of the preceding chapters about PKS’ long-term attitude towards the implementation of Sharia in Indonesia. It starts with revisiting what we know about the Islamist movement and its underlying ideology. This first section of the chapter provides the context of the PKS motive in struggling for Sharia implementation in Indonesia. The challenges from internal umma as well as from external forces toward the Sharia implementation, and how the party responds to them are discussed in the second section. The next section discusses how the party implements its approach on Sharia, or Sharia politics, in socio-political context of the country. And the last section provides the discussion on the nature of the PKS as both a party and a movement that gives a significant influence to the attitude of the party toward the implementation of Sharia.

A. Sharia at the heart of Islamist Movement

In the first decade after the fall of Suharto in May 1998, Indonesia witnessed a rising tide of Islamist activism, which shared a common ideal of promoting the implementation of Sharia. According to Islamist ideology, Sharia is the highest law and, ultimately, the sole source of all legislation. As divine law, Sharia, for the Islamists, provides a comprehensive and universal guide that gives solution to every problem the human being faces. Consequently, the Islamists believe that they have to continuously strive for the nation to implement Sharia. In their mind, the application of Sharia is a panacea that will liberate people from materialism, capitalism and secularism that have created prolonged crises.

In order for the Muslims to reclaim their glory, the Islamists believe, there is only one path to take: the return to Sharia as the only Islamic system of life. Implicit in this Islamist ideology is the denial and removal of any other system that contradicts Sharia. They point to the rampant corruption and injustice that prevails in Indonesia, and the nation’s dependence on Western countries as a valid proof of the failure of the
existing secular system, and accordingly called for a return to the path of God, i.e. the implementation of Sharia in personal, communal and national life. “Save Indonesia with Sharia” becomes their popular jargon and outcry when they take to the streets to demand the comprehensive implementation of Sharia.

While their ideas and activism can manifest in a variety of groups or movements, the Islamists have shared common ideas. Firstly, they believe that Muslims should implement Islam ‘in its literal form as set out in the Quran and Sunnah’ (Islam kaffah). Emphasis is given to the Quranic teaching on devotion (ibadah), social relation (mu’amalah), and criminal punishment (hudud) which should be carried out to the letter. Secondly, they display hostility toward ideas, practices, or institutions deemed contradictory to the fundamental teaching of Islam, and through the slogan of da’wa and amr ma’ruf nahy munkar (preaching Islam by commanding the good and forbidding the evil), they prepare to uproot the status qua and in its place rebuild the new society and state. Islamist groups do not necessarily resort to violence to realize their ideas; some are known to use non-violent and incremental approaches to achieve their long-term goal. Despite their distinct interests and varying points of agenda, the twin-issues of establishing an Islamic state and implementing Sharia constitutes the heart of the lowest common denominator shared consensus.412

All of the Islamist groups have the same broad diagnostic framing about the current situation of Muslims in the country and the Muslim world in general. One excerpt from long opening speech by Irfan S. Awwas during the first congress of Mujahidin portrays the common state of mind among the radical Islamists regarding the interconnectedness between the Sharia and the fate of umma in which Sharia being the remedy for the current situation of the Muslims.

“Muslims comprise the majority of the entire population of Indonesia, but the injustice and humiliation alternated relentlessly and insistently upon Muslims. Yet, until now, there is not a single effective and representative Islamic institution functioning as an umbrella for protecting Islam and Muslim from being insulted. Therefore, there are at least three reasons why this congress of Mujahidin favors a major theme of Sharia enforcement. Firstly, from the

ideological (aqidah) perspective, every Muslim with a straight aqidah indeed has a desire for the implementation of Sharia as a natural consequence of their declaration as Muslims, in order that they will be free from disaster, calamity, devastation and destruction. Secondly, from historical (sirah) reason, the history of the umma since the time of the Prophet to the era of the rightly-guided caliphs until the demise of Ottoman empire under Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1924, shows that Muslims lived in an Islamic system of government, namely caliphate, that enable them to preserve the unity of umma (nation) and imamah (leadership). Approximately 76 years to this day, Muslims no longer feel the pleasure of living in one leadership, under a caliphate, but they instead engineer their own lifestyle by creating separate communities (jamaah) and group (firqah) or factions that take proud for what they have. Thirdly, from the perspective of today’s reality, Muslims suffered from the protracted multi-dimensional crisis. It is the time when Muslims are required to be more determined to offer the gems of the Quran and Sunnah without any hesitation and insecurity as a solution to all sort of problems that afflict mankind. Now it is the time for Muslims to involve in maintaining national agenda, namely continuing the reformation process, upholding the supremacy of Sharia for the sake of truth and justice, and preserving peace, order and security within the communities to create political stability in the country, improving national vigilance against any possibility of economic, politic, social and military intervention of Neo-imperialism, Neo-colonialism and Neo-communism that clearly threatens the dignity, sovereignty and integrity of the nation. Based on the above reasons, the need for the enforcement of Sharia is absolute. What we still need to be defined further are the technical aspects of the implementation of Islamic Sharia in the midst of the roaring storm of secularism.  

The fact that the various Islamist movements use diverse strategies for implementing Sharia does not necessarily mean that they lack a point of agreement; indeed, they share the same ideas of the mandatory implementation of Sharia. They believe that only the establishment of an Islamic government can bring genuine prosperity, justice and order. However, they carried out their agenda utilizing a variety of methods, ranging from regional Sharia regulations, as employed by KPPSI; influencing public policy and participating in the parliament and in the law-making process, as pursued by PKS, PPP, and PBB; or taking to the street and sweeping and

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raiding cafes, discotheques, casinos, brothels, and other reputed dens of iniquity, as practiced by FPI.

All Islamist activists agree with the diagnosis that Indonesian Muslims and the Muslim world are caught in an economic, political, cultural, and moral crisis, and they have identified the same perpetrators that should be taken care of. Firstly, the “infidel” (*kafir*) Western power is portrayed as the main source for the crisis; they have used their economic and military power to subjugate, exploit and enfeeble the Muslim communities.\(^{414}\) Western domination of the Muslim states is cast in terms of a global Jewish and Christian conspiracy, driven by an innate hostility toward Islam and Muslims. Secondly, the Muslim community is also responsible for the onslaught of the West, by their straying from the true teaching of Islam set out in the Quran and Sunnah. In this context, the blame is directed more to the Muslim leaders who are deemed to have betrayed their fellow Muslims by siding with the Western power for the sake of preserving their own interest at the expense of the *umma*. Thus, Islam is seen as facing dire challenges from enemies within and without.

Despite their different approaches to rectifying this situation, all of the Islamist movements come to develop the same prognostic framing to providing a solution to the problem, which is redirecting Indonesian Muslims to return to Islamic sources (*al-ruju‘ ila al-Quran wa al-Sunnah*) as practiced by the *al-Salaf al-Salih* or “righteous ancestors”, who gained their Islamic knowledge directly from the Prophet Muhammad, so their practice was considered pure, pristine, and authoritative. Muslims of later generations should look to them for the “purer” form of the faith, because Islamic practices now have been increasingly contaminated by foreign elements, resulting in Muslims going astray from the true path of God.

This desire to recapture the true essence of Islam is widely known as Salafism,\(^{415}\) which is now used to describe a broad range of organizations, ranging

\(^{414}\) Vedi R. Hadiz, *Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East*, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 48

\(^{415}\) Salafism is an Islamic movement of the modern era that claims to emulate the pious predecessors (*salaf al-shailih*, i.e. the first three generations of Muslim community) by returning to the Quran and the sunna of the prophet in accordance with the understanding and example of the Salaf. Born nearly one century after Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab had successfully exerted his influential ideas
from groups that committed to da’wa, such as Hizbut Tahrir and Jemaah Tabligh, and involved in peaceful participation in electoral politics, such as PKS, to those who resort to violent actions, such as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI, or the Islamic Community), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, or Indonesian Islamic Warriors’ Council), Front Pembela Islam (FPI, or Islamic Defenders’ Front), Forum Komunikasi Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamaah (FKAWJ, or Communication Forum for the Adherents of the Prophetic Tradition and the Community) and Laskar Jihad (LJ, or Warriors of Jihad).

All groups believe that the key to build a pious Muslim community is through the comprehensive implementation of Sharia and strict interpretation of the Quran. For them, Sharia is timeless (shalih li kulli zaman wa makan, suitable for every period and place), therefore it does not need “reinterpretation,” “contextualization” or “modernization”, which will only dilute the true command of God. Consequently, for the Islamists the piecemeal application of Sharia which is confined to family law, devotional practices, such as hajj and zakat (pilgrimage and alms), and small parts of Islamic economic law is not enough. Until the Sharia is implemented in its totality which includes hudud (Islamic Criminal Law) can the Muslim society be free from the multi-dimensional crisis that recently blights them.

throughout the Arabian Peninsula, the movement aims to reconcile Islam and modernity. Therefore, the early proponents of salafism, such as Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1838-1898), Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) dan Muhammad Rasyid Rida (1865-1935) are themselves reformists and modernists, who adopted modern progress considered necessary to regain the triumph of Islam. The Salafi movement shares the characteristic of neo-Wahhabism which actively championed the calls for a return to the Quran and the sunnah and condemnation of pre-Islamic cultural practices which are tinted with bid’ah, takhayyul and khurafat (reprehensible innovation, superstition, and myth). The emergence of Salafism was closely connected with the rise of Muslim political awareness in the Muslim world to free themselves from Western colonialization, hence the obsession to reconstruct the new Muslim ummah. Some aspects of salafism, notably its anti-Western sentiments, inspired the birth of Islamist movement, including Ikhwan al-Muslimun (Muslim Brotherhood) and Jama’at-I Islami (Islamic Community). Hasan al-Banna and Abul A’la al-Mawdudi, respectively the founder of the two movements, endeavored to define Islam primarily as a political system. This Islamist political movement embarks on a project to reconstruct society based on Islamic principles. Representing the growing strength of political Islam in Indonesia, PKS is in the front line of the project to establish Islam as a comprehensive system that regulate all aspects of the country’s life. As has been discussed earlier (see footnote 336 on page 141) PKS’s particular approach to Salafism is often described as neo-Wahhabism.

As an ideological basis of Islamist movement, Salafism encompasses a diverse range of Islamist movements including Saudi Wahhabism, the neo-revivalism of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood and the jihadism of Al-Qaeda. The influence of the Muslim Brotherhood and of Wahhabi thought upon the Islamist movements in Indonesia is especially pronounced, and many of them have highly idealized the pious early Muslim generation (al-salaf al-shalih). While their ultimate demand is that the state be responsible for enforcing compliance of its Muslim citizens with Islamic Sharia, they help their fellow Muslims to be pious of its own accord through da’wa (proselytism) and amr ma’ruf nahy munkar (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil), two noble terms that are so familiar to the Muslims. The lure of Islamists lies in the way in which they effectively employ these concepts of Islam.

According to progressive Islamic intellectuals such as Abdurrahman Wahid, the Islamist’s call to “struggle for Islam” is a disguise to cover their specific political agenda. In their hands, Islam becomes a weapon to discredit anyone who holds political views or religious beliefs different from their own. This strategy is highly effective, since anyone opposing them can be accused of being an enemy of Islam itself. He further explains that whenever Islam is transformed into an ideology, it becomes narrow, restricted, and constrained by ideological limits and political platforms. Furthermore, he asserted that due to their narrow understanding of Islam, these groups will readily label any contradictory view as inimical to Islam itself. The fundamental nature of such an ideologically-driven interpretation of Islam is to eliminate opposition and justify political supremacy and power. This transformation of Islam into an ideology clearly reduces the supreme teachings of Islam into a narrow and rigid ideological framework.


The rising tide of Islamist activism in the socio-political arena of post-Soeharto era has not come without meeting with response and resistance from moderate mainstream Muslims, especially those from the two mass-based organizations, Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama. These two biggest Muslim organizations of the country stand in the front line of battle against the widespread of Islamist ideas. The moderate Muslim leaders, such as Abdurrahman Wahid and Ahmad Syafi’i Ma’arif, set up various NGOs to support moderation and promote democratic views of Islam, and raising the people awareness of the present danger of Islamists’ call for the Sharia to multiculturalism and democracy.

These NGOs organize discussions, seminars, and workshops to disseminate moderate and progressive views of Islam that aim at strengthening pluralism and multiculturalism in Indonesia which is perceived under the threat of radical Islamism. Interfaith dialog and cooperation is also facilitated and established to raise awareness among the Muslims of the importance of equality, rule of law, pluralism and democracy. As opposed to the Islamist campaign for the Sharia which is understood by the moderate Islam as circumscribing the minority rights, contradicting democratic values and anti-pluralism, the proponents of moderate Islam relentlessly wage a campaign asserting interfaith harmony, egalitarianism, gender equality and the compatibility between Islam and democracy.

B. Sharia as Muslim Identity

It has been a strong belief among the PKS leaders that Indonesian Muslims experienced the crisis of identity as religious communities and as a Muslim nation because they have deserted their Islamic identity. According to the PKS elites, the core issue of Indonesia as a nation is the absence of strong value of faith to form the spirit for developing the nation and state. With the great majority of Indonesians being Muslim, the party leaders assert that the chances of Sharia to be effective in Indonesia

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420 Examples of these kinds of organizations include Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL, Liberal Islamic Network), the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), the Wahid Institute (TWI), and the Ma’arif Institute for Culture and Harmony, to mention only a few.
are extremely good considering the fact that before the coming of the colonial powers, Sharia had been adopted as law in many areas of the archipelago.

The most explicit evidence of the influential existence of Islamic law during pre-independent period was the issuance of the so-called Compendium Freijher in 1760, which consists of Islamic matrimonial and inheritance law to be applied by VOC courts in solving disputes between Muslims living in areas under its control. The recognition of the existence and the importance of Islamic law and institutions during the colonial period subsequently found its way into the State Basic Law (Regeringsreglement) 1855:2 Article 75 and 78. The formal recognition of the position of Islamic law was partly due to the idea, widely believed at that time, that the native population followed their respective religious law and accordingly Muslims were regulated by Islamic law. A well-known proponent of this view was L.W.C. van den Berg who popularized the Receptie in Complexu Theorie meaning that despite many deviations, by being a Muslim, one surrendered oneself into Islamic law.

This view was then challenged by C. Snouck Hurgronje, Van Vollenhoven and Ter Haar who came to conclusion that a number of field studies and reports did not...

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421 Supomo, Sejarah Politik Hukum Adat 1609-1848, Jakarta: Djambatan, 1955, p. 26. Apart from Compendium Freijher there were many other legislative manuals promulgated during the VOC period. For the Semarang state court, in VOC issued a manual of Javanese law, which was derived from the Kitab Mugharrar, a well-edited fiqh book compiled by Ar-Rafi’i (d. 1226) and is an adaptation of three well-known fiqh books by Al-Ghazali, namely Khulasah, Wajiz and Basit. See Th. W. Juynboll, Handeling tot de Kennis van de Mohammedaansche Wet volgen de Leer der Sjafi ’itische School, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1930, p. 373-374. Other legislative manuals issued during this time were the PepakemCirebon (Cirebonsche Wetboek) and regulations drawn up for the Bone and Goa areas in Celebes (Compendium Indiansche bij de Hoven van Bone en Goa), see Soekanto, Meninjau Hukum Adat Indonesia, Jakarta: Rajawali, 1981, p. 24.

422 Article 78 of the Regeringsreglement (RR) 1855 :2 instructed the judicial bodies to use religious laws (Godsdienstige wetten), indigenous tradition and usages in dealing with native disputants as far as these were not in conflict with generally recognized principle of equity and justice. In regard to a civil code, Article 78 of the Regeringsreglement (RR) 1855:2 provided that in the event of a civil crime committed by one indigenous person towards another or crimes among those classified as indigenous people, those involved had to abide by the decision of the judge or religious or community leader to solve the case in accordance with religious laws or traditional guidelines. These provisions clearly recognized the existence of Islamic law as one of legal systems to be applied to Muslim population. See Sajuti Thalib, Receptio A Contrario. Hubungan Hukum Adat dengan Hukum Islam, Jakarta: Bina Aksara, 1980.

support the argument that native people were actually practicing Islamic law. They advocated the so-called *Receptie Theorie*, meaning that Islamic law was followed provided it was acceptable to *adat* (local custom) rules. In other words, they maintained that it was its traditional rulers rather than Islamic law that were followed by the population. Furthermore, they maintained that some elements of Islamic law had been immersed into *adat*, but they were followed not as Islamic law but more as *adat*. It was by dint of their efforts that Articles 75 and 78 of the Regeeringsreglement 1855:2 were gradually amended, first in 1907 by Staatsblad 1907:204 Article 1 (1) and revised by Staatsblad 1919:621, and finally by Indische Staatsregeling 1929 Article 134 (2).

Based on the long history of Islamic law in Indonesia, the party leaders believe that Sharia has become the cultural identity of Indonesian Muslims long before the independence, but the long-term impact of colonization and global conspiracy of Jewish and American-led operation is believed to be the prominent cause of the declining role of Sharia in Muslim societies. However, this setback is only temporarily, as the *umma* has previously gone through many cycles of crisis and recovery during the course of history. The PKS believes that Muslims can respond and resist the influence and intrusion of Western culture by returning to authentic Islamic norms.

The party sees the struggle to rectify Indonesian Muslims’ religious identity as a part of global clash of ideologies. In this sense, the notion of *ghazwul fikr* is crucial for the party. Defined as “a system for cultural defense [*system pertahanan budaya*] to withstand all regulations and systems that are not based in Islam and take mankind to apostasy [*kesesatan*],” *ghazwul fikr* becomes a combative doctrine against the cultural, political, and intellectual assault of the West. The Western systems have

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424 The article concerned stated that in the case of a civil dispute between Muslims, this will be settled by a religious judge if the case concerned has been accepted as falling within their adat rules and so far as it is not stipulated otherwise by law. Under this article, the authority of Islamic law was no longer recognized to the effect that Islamic law could only be administrated by a religious judge as long as it was accepted by *adat* rules. This article was also considered the formal legal basis of the *Receptie Theorie*, of which the purpose was to eliminate the existence of Islamic law from the Dutch East Indies legal system. See, Sajuti Thalib, *Receptio A Contrario. Hubungan Hukum Adat dengan Hukum Islam*, Jakarta: Bina Aksara, 1980, p. 39.

become known as *jahiliyah*, a notion made famous by Sayyid Qutb. Because of this *jahiliyah* system, Islamic education and culture is weakening; their politics and economy, therefore, were infected by secular concepts like nationalism, secularism and capitalism, which eroded the authority and authenticity of Islamic institutions and brought moral hazard to the Muslim community in general.\(^\text{426}\)

The PKS offered the solution to counter the forsaking of Muslims by systematically developing ideological awareness among cadres. Materials for cadrerization were infused with the instruction about protecting and defending Islam against the threat and influences of the West. A main objective of such a cadre training was to develop awareness among the cadres about historical clashes between Islam and the West and the latter’s desire and plan for the conquest of Muslim lands and civilization. The *ghazwul fikr* materials depicted “an eternal conflict between truth [*haq*] and falsehood [*bathil*]”. Referring to the Quran of al-Baqarah 120, Zionism is portrayed as a group which everlastingly wages war against Islam and Muslims. The purpose of *ghazwul fikr* doctrine is for cadres “to know that the enemy of Islam engages in a global conspiracy”, “to know the Zionist strategy against Islam”, “to recognize Israel as a Zionist state” and “to know how Islam and Muslims could prevail and respond the issues”.\(^\text{427}\)

The *ghazwul fikr* doctrine also depicts the plan to destroy Islam as intrinsic to Western power. Recognizing that military forces only give little damage to the Islamic spirit, the Western leaders came up with a new weapon, which aims at destroying the Islamic identity by separating Muslim from their religion through ideological warfare.\(^\text{428}\) In this new type of war, the West utilized economic or political power to instill their lifestyle, culture, ideology or institution into the Muslim world. To counter this “intellectual assault”, the cadrerization materials were designed accordingly. The party’s cadre training taught material on “*ghazwul fikr*”, “international Zionism”, and

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\(^{426}\) See Prayitno, *Kepribadian Muslim*.


“movements and institutions that oppose Islam”\textsuperscript{429} The training materials taught that the West has failed in their effort to destroy Islam through military might, accordingly they launch new attack on Islam using culture, education, and economy. The assault is very gentle, but lethal\textsuperscript{430} that the victim did not realize about the damage it causes to the umma. Liberal Muslims that are exposed and adhered to the Western ideas which are alien to Islam, are described as being the victims of this new warfare against Islam. Therefore, the main issue in ghazwul fikr doctrine is to build up awareness and vigilance against Muslims allying with the enemy of Islam. The fact that Muslim land is now free from the occupation does not negate the reality that up till today it still becomes an object of new form of colonialism. The party elites point to the Western influence in culture, economy, politics, education, fashion, and lifestyle as a proof that the West continued their colonization upon the Muslim world.\textsuperscript{431} This new colonialism aims at distancing the Muslims from their faith; using new technique of propaganda, the success of this new invasion is not to conquest the Muslim lands but to make its inhabitants away from their faith and make them follow the Western systems and institutions.

The excerpt from the party magazine written by the previous head of Sharia Council of the party, who are now the president of the PKS, illustrates well the party’s thinking about the impact of Western cultural and intellectual invasion upon the Sharia implementation in the country.

“Chances to make Sharia effective in Indonesia are extremely good because Muslims are the majority. The law that fits them best is the law based on Sharia, not the law inherited from the Dutch colonialists, which has already been modified in several ways and proven unfit to overcome the problems of our nation. Many provinces already have adopted Sharia before independence. This is an historical fact, which this nation has to acknowledge ... But it is very saddening that the enemies of Islam try to stigmatize Sharia Islam as something scary. Because of this, a great deal of society has antipathy toward Sharia Islam even before it has become effective... Many people especially in the West

\textsuperscript{429} Tim Departemen Kaderisasi PK-Sejahtera (compilers), \textit{Manajemen tarbiyah anggota pemula}, pp. 151-61.

\textsuperscript{430} Ibid., 155-56

\textsuperscript{431} See for instance, “Ghazwul Fikr dan Dakwah Kita”, in dprapks.blogspot.com. See also “PKS Bengkulu Tengah. Perang Pemikiran (Ghazwul Fikr)”, in tuntebenteng.blogspot.com.
subscribed to the ideas that Sharia is cruel or that Muslims are extremists. All of this is a propaganda waged by the Israeli Zionists.  

Similar points of argument about the stigma surrounding Sharia are made by Anis Matta, the previous president of PKS. He was convinced that the concern about the adverse impact of Sharia implementation on the national diversity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika) resulted from the conspiracy against Sharia waged by the enemy of Islam. To those who worried about the disintegration of the nation due to the application of Sharia in Indonesia, he posed a rhetorical question: “Is there a correlation between the implementation of Sharia with the disintegration of the nation?” He further pointed to the fact that the case of Timor-Leste separation did not have any linkage with the aspiration of Sharia implementation. In his observation, the cause for disintegration is not Sharia implementation but the absence of justice; as long as justice is not delivered, the nation is at risk of disintegration, even before Sharia is implemented yet. Anis went to cite al-Mawardi, a political thinker of classical Islam, saying in his book that “the era of a nation is determined by the deliverance of justice. As long as justice exists, the unity of a nation will remain. When the injustice prevails, disintegration is approaching.” Since the Sharia is nothing but the implementation of justice, the myth of Sharia as causing national disintegration is considered as a conspiracy against Islam.

An instruction about ghazwul fikr tells us about the perpetrators behind the jahiliyah system. In a guideline written specifically for preachers and leaders of Islamic study circles (murobbi), Irwan Prayitno, one of party ideologues, mentions the Christians and Jews as the “people of the book” who have estranged from their original faiths. He plainly said that:

The infidels [pihak kafir] look for a different way to destroy the Muslim community [menghancurkan umat Islam]. They will never give in [rela] and never cease to attack until Muslims follow their religious community [millah]. The strategy used to destroy Islam is ghazwul al-fikr ... which issystematically

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undertaken ... The objective of *ghazwul fikris* to destroy morals and thought, dissolve *melarutkan* Muslims’ personality and to separate them from their religion. The perpetrators of *ghazwul fikr*, in general, consist of Jews, Christians, Parsees [*Majusi*], polytheists [*Musyrikin*], hypocrites [*Munafikin*], atheists and infidels [*Kafir*]... Returning the beliefs of Muslims to Islam is difficult except through propagation [*da’wa*] and individual endeavor [*jihad*], put into effect by a movement [*harakah*] and the tradition of the Islamic community [*jama’ah Islamiyah*].

The *ghazwul fikr* doctrine is meant to be an internal discourse. It is used as a frame of mind intended to strengthen inner resilience without abandoning moderate behavior. Far from being a tool for physical confrontation and attack, the instruction on *ghazwul fikr* doctrine is intended for self-restraint that is non-violent. However, this combative doctrine could still inspire hostile attitude toward the “enemy of Islam” which is extended to the liberal Muslims held responsible for alienating the Muslim community from Islam. The great risk of this combative doctrine is an occurrence of conflict with any individuals, groups or community of Muslims suspected as the “enemy of Islam” or “infidel collaborators”. Even though the aim of the doctrine is to instill wariness and self-protection against the perceived assault against Islam, a deliberate attempt of the PKS leadership to keep the doctrine away from public knowledge and its absence from official statements and public addresses indicate the party’s awareness of its controversial aspects. Confrontational messages of the doctrine also defeat the party’s ideals as a national unifier and a binding element among societal groups.

C. Gradualist Approach on Sharia

The party laments that Western intrusion has brought down the rule of Sharia. Colonialism has left its legacy on the legal and political system which is inherently secular. After the end of colonialism, the present-day Muslim countries, including Indonesia, operate in political and legal systems of European origin. According to the party elites, the Western colonial intrusion has made the role of Islamic legal systems and institutions ineffective and dormant. Shariathus became the lost heritage of the

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Indonesian Muslim community. By calling for the implementation of Sharia, the party struggles to rectify the rights of the majority of Muslim populations to establish the rule of Sharia in their homeland. The demand to introduce and implement Sharia as a replacement of the Western laws then became one of the long-term agendas of the party.\footnote{Memperjuangkan Masyarakat Madani, Jakarta: Majelis Pertimbangan Pusat Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, 2008, p. 63-64}

The fact that the Islamic law had been in practice in the archipelago before the advent of European rule, in their understanding of history, have convinced them that Sharia was more appropriate for Indonesia than secular Western-derived civil law, hence closer to the way of life of the Indonesian Muslims than civil law.\footnote{Greg Fealy and Bernhard Platzdasch, “The Masyumi Legacy: Between Islamist Idealism and Political Exigency”, Studia Islamika, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2005, p. 90.} In the party’s perspective, the Western legal system and institutions have been forcefully imposed into the legal life of indigenous Muslim population. This imperialist coercion was invasive and therefore was considered an anomaly. The party believes that had it is not for the colonial intervention, Islam and Sharia as the religious identity of the Indonesian Muslims would have prospered in the archipelago; the interruption of colonialism has halt the natural progress of Islam and Sharia. According to the party, the forced adoption of Western law has caused the separation of law from its philosophical and sociological underpinnings, therefore the statutes of the party call to end this situation by returning to the original character of Indonesian law.\footnote{“Agenda Nasional Partai Keadilan”, in Sekilas Partai Keadilan, Jakarta: Sekretariat DPP Partai Keadilan, 1998, p. 96.} It is the main objective of the party legal agenda to gradually replace Western derived law with Sharia codes as the major legal source.

While the goal is set, the remaining question would be to find the right time to make Islam the philosophical principle for national law. In this regard, the party acted on the principle of gradualism informing that there is no swift means to accomplish the Islamization of society or to diminish Western influences. The party elites are cognizant of the fact that the majority of the people are not subscribed to Islamist
agenda of Islamizing state and constitution. Thus, from the outset, the party were dismissive of the political maneuver of giving Sharia a constitutional status. Rather than making the state responsible to carry out the Sharia, the party chose to prepare the people for the implementation of the Sharia through *da’wa bil-hal* or *da’wa* by exemplary actions. It is a common belief among the party leaders that the application of Islamic values into the public domain should be conducted through the process of objectification, meaning that the ideas should be able to convince the public that it would meet the principle of benefit. So, the legal products inspired from Sharia norms should also be put to the test and pass the principle of benefit before it becomes a positive law of the state.

The party gives more emphasis on transforming the legislation and infusing it with Sharia values rather than reinserting Sharia into the Constitution that would give it a constitutional status. Socialization and introduction of Islamic laws in the law-making process in the parliament was considered much more viable, whereas imposing constitutional changes could trigger resentment from the parliament. The party was also confident that, under the current circumstances, any endeavor to directly write Islam and Sharia into the Constitution would end in failure. An unprepared and reluctant population will render such an effort counterproductive; it would erode the government and heighten people’s opposition. The party is also concerned that should the public lack knowledge and awareness of Islam and Sharia, they will develop resistance toward Sharia and any issues associated with Sharia, such as Islamic bank or Islamic economy.

Considering that engaging the state in the comprehensive implementation of Sharia would be untimely, the party instead turned the focus on redirecting the society toward excellent morality and religiosities as a preparation for the full realization of Sharia by the state. This strategy is in line with the principle of *da’wa* known as *tadarruj* (*pentahapan*, gradualism). Striving for the incorporation of Sharia into the Constitution required a set of preparatory steps. The first step is to establish an Islamic personality in each individual (*gerakan individual* or also known as *takwin al-sykhshiyah* *al-Islamiyyah*). The next step is *da’wa* on an individual basis (*da’wa fardhiyyah*), as a preparatory step for *da’wa* in family structure (*takwin al-bayt al-
Muslim) which is followed by guiding and Islamizing society (irsyadul-mujtama’ wa ishlahuhu). The following step is to Islamize the government (ishlah al-hukumah) which takes a form of legislative movement and constitutional struggle; while the first refers to the parliamentary struggle in the process of legislating Islamic laws, the latter refers to the inclusion of Sharia terms into the Constitution. Restoring Islamic caliphate (i’adatu kayan al-khilafah al-islamiyyah) and becoming the exemplar of human civilization (ustadziyyat al-‘alam) comprise the final two steps of PKS da’wa strategy.438

The importance of proselytizing on an individual basis is summarized by one of great leaders (murshid al-‘am) of Ikhwan al-Muslimin, Syaikh Hasan al-Hudaybi, in his famous saying: “kun dawlatan fi nafsika takun fi baladika” (establish Islamic state in yourself, you will see it in your land).439 Implicit in this statement is the large impact of individuals upon the state building, since the state is built on individuals. It also indicates that a structural state approach will be futile without prior understanding of Islam among Individual Muslims. Thus, the Islamization strategy has to start from below, and it will automatically have an impact upwards.

In line with the concept of gradualism, the da’wa approach take into account the political reality of the country. As a political party, the PKS is subjected to the same institutional rules of the political game. By joining the electoral politics, the PKS has transformed from a movement into a political party. Participating in democratic system demands ideological adaptation to the political imperatives; the party will involve in coalition building, political bargaining or compromises with other political parties of different interest. Indeed, democratic political system allows different ideas and interest to compete for public recognition; it is the system designed to protect diversity and liberty of the people regardless their religious or political affiliation. Everybody has the same rights to cherish and enjoy democracy. Democracy, however, comes at a price, because even the extreme and radical ideas are given a room to flourish.

According to Anis Matta, democracy is concerned more with the matter of legality than with the truth; something wrong and bad can be made legal. Consequently, the pivotal task of da’wa is to build a public awareness and to convince them about the benefit of Islam so they can synchronize between the truth and the legality. The success of da’wa in a current situation is to win a public discourse before winning the legislative process, and to make something wrong in the view of religion as something illegal in the positive law, or to render the good as something legal. 440 Evidently, democracy promises greater prospect for the success of da’wa and should be utilized optimally, because it provides unrestricted possibilities for the propagation of the truth of Islam. Within a democratic system, the PKS cadres as soldiers of da’wa could freely deliver Islamic norms and values and convince the public about the beauty of Sharia. So, the success of da’wa in political term is “to win the public mind so that they will side with us.”441 Matta elaborated how da’wa works in the era of democracy:

For example, we want to banish pornography from our country. This is the way how we do it: we should build a structure of suggestions [struktur gagasan] to educate the public about the destructive nature of pornography for our life. Upon winning the discourse, we can issue the bill to eradicate all forms of pornography. Following this step is our task to supervise whether or not the government carries it out well; we can sue the government if they don’t. This is how da’wa should work in a democratic era. Surely, there is freedom we can enjoy together, but there is also a specific way to fight evil deed[kemungkaran] and to penetrate into legislative power. Let’s consider this an art that should be mastered by every soldier of da’wa.442

It is safe to say that according to the party, democracy is a proper medium for Muslims to be involved in the contemporary political arena. The emphasis on individual freedom allows Muslims to practice their faith, disseminate Islamic teachings and values, and bring justice and prosperity. In other words, democracy provides Muslims ample opportunity to offer the best solution for the people’s problems. In the party’s perspective, democracy is a better sphere for da’wa activists

442 Ibid.
to do their task of convincing people about the truth of Islam, compared to an authoritarian or totalitarian regime which is hostile to da’wa. In other words, to the party leaders, democracy is a medium to achieve their Islamic ideals.

It is important to recognize, while enjoying the opportunities afforded by democracy, the party is actually deeply ambivalent towards democracy; it does not entirely acknowledge democracy as understood and applied by Westerners. The party does not consider the majority voice as something absolute, because in principle the majority does not always follow the truth. The will of the majority cannot become a yardstick for the truth, because it could be potentially based on the particular interests which contradict the God’s law. According to the party, secular Western democracy values the will of the majority of a people over God’s will. But Muslims are merely obligated to implement and carry out the revealed will of God. The party statutes gave evidence of the prevalence of this ideal:

Allah as the holder of all power wishes mankind to be His vicegerent [khalifah] on earth. Therefore, mankind may assert his power as long as it is used only to fulfill His will. Thus, according to Islam, the government in a state should be organized on the principle of people sovereignty to realize God sovereignty.

To sum up, despite its flaws, for PKS, democracy was still the best solution in the current circumstances. Until the establishment of Islamic political system comes into existence, the party leaders consider democracy as the best political system in a Muslim society still beset by ignorance about Sharia values. The party believes that secular democracy could lead to injustice because it could potentially bring secular parties to power which in turn issue undesirable by-products which violated Islamic Sharia. Without a purpose of fulfilling God’s sovereignty, democracy as an end in itself is nothing more than a dictatorship based on injustice. Freedom and justice can only be delivered under Islamic Sharia as an epitome of justice.

In the promotion of universal moral ideal such as “justice”, for instance, it is a common conviction among the party leaders that the only way to bring about justice ultimately was through Sharia rule. The party leaders understand this universal

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443 Sekilas Partai Keadilan, p. 34.
principle of “justice” in the framework of the perceived advantages of Sharia. In this sense, the party epitomized the Islamist claim that Islamic law has an intimate connection with the theme of justice. Since justice is a fundamental principle enshrined in the Quran, the implementation of hudud, for instance, is necessary so long as it brings justice for the people. In a just world, the party leaders believe, the state carried out strict hudud directives as a deterrent to criminals, to achieve its goal of an orderly society. When asked if the full implementation of Sharia also includes the cutting off the hands of thieves, Hidayat Nur Wahid replied that “there is nothing to fear in Islamic law. The fear that hands will be cut off is a conscious attempt by interests who are afraid that such a law will be introduced.” In other words, the cutting off hands would not worry anyone but the thieves and criminals, and the PKS will not hesitant to implement it.444

Yet it was central to the party that da’wa succeeds in convincing people about the benefits of Islamic ruling for their life, so that they will vote for a party promoting Sharia rule. Highlighting the party’s democratic commitment, the PKS leaders observed that elections are reliable tools to measure and evaluate the aspiration of the people and their predilection toward the party’s program and agenda. Obviously, since more people have voted for secular parties like PDIP and Golkar, rather than the Islamist parties, it is considered untimely to be pushing now for constitutional recognition for Sharia. In the current situation, the party acknowledges the gulf between the general umma and the Sharia-oriented Muslims who desire the rule of Sharia law. It becomes a duty for the da’wa activists to re-accustom Muslims to an Islamic life-style as fundamentals for the comprehensive implementation of Sharia in the country.

D. Struggle Toward the Middle

PKS’s participation in democratic system has inevitably had a moderating effect on the party’s political agenda. Several recent studies have pointed to the party’s

behavioral moderation in national politics,\textsuperscript{445} sharing the same conclusion that the party has showed “clear signs of moderation effectuated by the party’s inclusion into democratic procedures such as elections, parliamentary negotiations and lobbying.”\textsuperscript{446} The party’s inclusion into electoral politics proved to force the party to put aside some of its political agenda unsubscribed by the majority of the people. Some political measures by the party in its effort to appeal to median voters include the removal of Islamism label, coalition building with other parties of different faith and interest, endorsement of Pancasila as a state ideology, and commitment to religious plurality. Besides, the party also revised its initial position regarding the women leadership and formally expanded the party’s organizational membership to allow Muslims from non-
tarbiyah backgrounds to become official members of the party.\textsuperscript{447} The last but not least, the party not only grant membership for non-Muslim, but also lent them support for candidacy in legislative and executive elections. In short, inclusion into the system pushed the party into the median spectrum of the politics and into the political openness.

PKS’s increasingly moderate attitude is also evident in its policy towards application of Sharia. Initially, the party’s political agenda was formulated around the idea of an Islamic state based on Sharia.\textsuperscript{448} As discussed earlier, in its early days, the party national leadership considered the Sharia implementation an important agenda of the party. The changing attitude toward Sharia become apparent after the party became embedded into the national politics, especially after the first electoral success in 2004, in which Sharia was pushed well into the background to the point of


\textsuperscript{447} Ibid., pp. 11–21.

\textsuperscript{448} Anthony Bubalo, Greg Fealy and W. Mason, Zealous Democrats: Islamism and Democracy in Egypt, Indonesia and Turkey. Double Bay: Lowy Institute, 2008, p. 68.
invisibility. The case of Sharia-inspire by-law pointed to party’s policy of non-commitment attitude toward Sharia.

Despite the existence of Law 32/2004 on Regional Government which gives local executive heads an independent authority to drafting and implementing local regulations, the majority of local PKS leaders did not adopt Sharia regulations. A look at localities in which the PKS exerted political influence over the executive government is important to substantiate this claim. Between 2005 and 2008, the PKS was a part of a winning coalition in 7 out of 33 gubernatorial elections and 121 out of 487 municipal elections. In these localities, the overall trend is that the PKS local leaders refrained from issuing or supporting Sharia regulations. In seven districts and municipalities that adopted Sharia regulations, none of the district heads or mayors of these localities are of PKS background. Of these numerous local government, only Mahmudi Ismail was recorded of issuing two Sharia regulations concerning the illegality of prostitution in 2006 and the ban of Ahmadiyah in 2011.449

Unlike its predecessor, the PKS is promoting an inclusive image which proved successful in garnering the median votes. Centrist rhetoric and partnership with parties from different political spectrum have gained a wider currency within the party leadership. The shift to the middle resulted in electoral gain. The party witnessed an increase in vote, from 1.52 per cent to 7.34 per cent, at the expense of other Islamist parties whose votes were in decline.450 The electoral achievement of the party was attributed to the adjustment of the party’s political rhetoric and agenda; the PKS focused its campaign on a clean and caring government, employed religiously neutral language, and highlighted popular issues such as fighting corruption and promoting socio-economic equality.451 The party’s alliance with secular and nationalist parties


continued until 2013 local election. In 9 out of 15 provincial elections the party became a winning coalition in which 3 governors were of PKS cadres (Ahmad Heryawan, Gatot Pujo Nugroho, and Abdul Ghani Kasuba). In the same period, 8 party cadres were also successful in gaining prestigious positions in regencies and municipalities.

Previously in 2008, the party made a breakthrough in declaring itself an open party and inviting non-Muslims to join the party. This “open party” strategy was a calculated maneuver to combat the general perception of the party as being deeply exclusive. As a part of “open party” strategy, the party also changes its political behavior during elections. The party leaders realize that, if they wish to gain a measure of support from the median voters, they must avoid appearing exclusive. To appeal to as many segments of the voters as possible, the party emphasizes universalist themes and downplays Sharia-based agendas in the election campaigns.

The party leadership believes that ideologically driven themes do not net votes. The lesson from its predecessor, the PK, was instructive, in which the party garnered only a scanty share of vote due to its emphasis on ideology. The same is true with the fate of other Islamist party, PBB, during 2004 and 2009 elections, in which the party campaigned an explicitly pro-Sharia platform. In both cases, the “ideological” strategy failed to increase votes.

In line with the political pragmatism, in the run-up to 2009 general election, the party launched ad campaigns to court as much median voters as possible, in which Soeharto was portrayed as one of the nation’s greatest founding fathers. This particular ad was surely intended to reach a new segment of society. But due to historical trauma

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452 In a coalition with other parties, PKS won gubernatorial elections in West Java, East Java, North Sumatra, East Kalimantan, East Nusa Tenggara, Papua, Maluku and North Maluku.

453 Irwan Prayitno of the PKS was elected governor of West Sumatra for period of 2010-2015. So far, since the local election in 2007, there were 4 PKS cadres who won the provincial election.

454 For the period of 2013-2018, the PKS managed to put its cadres as a mayor of Padang, deputy mayor of Bandung and Sukabumi, a regent of Seruyan Baru, and deputy regents of Garut, Karanganyar, Hulu Sungai Selatan and Luwu.


of many Islamists about the Suharto’s repressive policy, this ad evoked the concern of the purists among the rank and file members of the party and of the pro-reformist activists as well. Other ad that specifically evoked the concern of the purist members of Tarbiyah movement was that of “Partai Kita Semua” (Party for Everyone), which alienated purist cadre and supporters because it portrayed women without headscarves. This particular ad indicated not only an obvious departure from the shared norms of the importance of Sharia symbol of scarf, but also a blatant violation to their established conviction about the image of pious Muslim women the party is supposed to advocate.

It has become a common perception among the party cadres that these ads were a haphazard strategy of constituency-building in the 2009 elections, where party strategists were attempting to make inroads with various segments of society to obtain the 20 percent of the vote sufficient to run a presidential candidate, without considering how it might affect their base. Effectively, the strategies that may have appealed to small segments of new voters had the effect of alienating core voters. Unsurprisingly, the pragmatists and purists interpreted the 2009 election results differently. The pragmatists saw the results as a vindication of the openness strategy. According to this view, apart from the PKS, all Islamic oriented parties were in decline in 2009. Thus, although they did not reach the target of 20 percent of the vote, they had prevented party’s votes from declining. The purists counter that the 2009 election results indicated the failure of pragmatists’ strategies because votes for the party were in stagnancy. In fact, the total number of votes actually decreased by 119,065 vis-a`-vis 2004, with the highest drop of 343,476 and 330,990 votes in its traditional base of West Java and Jakarta respectively.

One key reason for the party’s adoption of the non-Islamist theme campaign in the run-up to the 2009 election is that issues of morality and religion were not appealing to the majority of Indonesian voters. Intensive surveys from 2005, 2006 and 2007

457 This ad had an adverse effect on the party’s vote gain in Jakarta and other big cities. The electorates in urban areas happened to choose the party in the previous election based on the party image as pro-reformist. Intended to pursue a bigger constituency from the median voters, this particular ad has tarnished the party image instead, and eventually it cost the party its electorates.
found diminishing support for Sharia-inspired policies including the prohibition of female president and bank interest, and the enactment of Islamic criminal law (*hudud*), such as hand cut-off for theft and stoning for adultery.\(^{458}\) Thus, it is necessary for the PKS to emphasize socio-economic themes to win voter support. Given its extensive da`wa activities, it is perhaps not surprising that the PKS was widely classified by Indonesians as the most Islamic party in both internal PKS surveys and in independent surveys conducted by the LSI.\(^{459}\) In an internal PKS post-election survey, 95 percent of respondents cited “Islamic” as their major perception regarding PKS.\(^{460}\) Thus, the party has been effective in communicating the religious aspects of its image, but it has been less successful in addressing voters’ concerns over economic issues and convincing centrist voters that the party is an effective channel for their aspirations.

The party strategy of “dual constituency” campaign by maintaining the core and traditional voters and reaching out new segments in a wider populace is closely connected to its dual nature as both movement and party. Like many Islamist parties in the Arab world, which have formal organizational ties to socio-religious movements like the Muslim Brotherhood, the PKS has direct institutional linkages to an Islamist religious movement: *Tarbiyah*; in which it has its origins and under which it is constrained by a broader movement infrastructure and goals. The Islamist movement on which the PKS is based is far more conservative in its views on Islam and the role for Islam within the Indonesian political system, when compared to those of the majority of Indonesians. That the Tarbiyah movement was dominated by purist and conservative figures was acknowledged by the PKS leaders. Zulkieflimansyah, previous deputy chairman of PKS faction at the House of Representative, wrote for Jakarta Post about this fact:

> “That there are conservative, even hard-line voices within the PKS cannot be denied. Many of the first generation PKS leaders were *ulama* [Muslim scholars]


\(^{460}\) *Riset Perilaku Pemilih PKS*, Powerpoint presentation on results of PKS internal survey conducted between August 30 and September 6, 2009.
who led underground cells during the embittered Soeharto years when Islamic political forces were marginalized. These ulama were trained in the Middle East and for many years believed it their duty to lead the struggle for Islam. … second generation of leaders marks a break with the more conservative first generation ulama. Most, such as myself, are from secular universities, but more importantly have had far greater political/democratic experience when political liberalization in the early 1990s enabled us to compete for positions in the student senates of the major universities. Our educational backgrounds and experiences made for somewhat different views vis-à-vis the more conservative ulama within the party.\footnote{Zulkieflimansyah, “Understanding PKS as living entity within Indonesia’s democratic space”, in The Jakarta Post, Friday, August 10, 2007.}

Evidently this generational divide has created a degree of dualism within the party. The Tarbiyah movement is inherently ideologically purist, but the party elites are more concerned widening the party’s base of support to achieve greater influence, to win elections, and eventually to govern the country. Accordingly, while the party elites have had a moderating influence on the movement, the conservatism of the movement restrains the party from moving to the political center.\footnote{Greg Fealy, Anthony Bubalo and Whit Mason, Zealous Democrats: Islamism and Democracy in Egypt, Indonesia and Turkey. Lowy Paper #25 Double Bay: NSW: Longueville Books, 2008, p. 64} While creating access to power is a critical part of the party to advance its political strategy, the gradual Islamization of Indonesian society from below through moral reform, education, social service and exemplary behavior was the raison d’être of the movement. Although both the movement and the party share the grand agenda of Islamizing Indonesian society, short-term political goals often necessitate compromises and behavioral moderation such as open-party strategy and being casual on Sharia.

The party leadership’s decision to de-emphasize Islamist political commitment by casting the political messages in a religiously neutral language, does not necessarily imply that the party had abandoned its ultimate goal of full realization of Sharia. The “postponement” would be the most adequate term for describing the attitude of the party toward Sharia. It is a matter of common conviction among the party leaders that it is untimely to focus on Sharia issues, since most constituents still lack of knowledge about Sharia, let alone the awareness to implement it. Advocating Sharia in a current
social and political situation will risk the party its image as moderate and reformist. As a result of this “postponement” stratagem, the party had to be moderate and pluralist enough to gain wider constituency, support and legitimacy not only from median voters, but also from centrist Islamic parties and nationalist parties.

As mentioned earlier, the extent of the party’s political moderation was challenged by the religious conservatism of the movement whose central goal is conveying da’wa to teach Muslims about Islam and improve the piety of individuals, families and society. However, from the outset, the party leadership have incrementally exerted a moderating influence over the movement, and successfully marginalized the purists to the point of eroding their influence on the party central board. The eroding of the authority of the purists, that were actually the core element of the Tarbiyah movement which gave birth to the party, was an inevitable consequence of the party’s entry into a democratic political game. Nevertheless, despite the dynamism within the party leadership, the party ideology remains unchanged; it remains an Islamist party of the Muslim Brotherhood evolutionary style, which aspires for the establishment of Islamic governmental system from below. Democratic system is a rule of game that regulates party’s political behavior and allows the leadership to act politically rational and pragmatic. While the PKS keeps its ideology intact, the actual conduct of the party was heavily influenced by the rules of democratic system, the institutionalization of which resulted in political pragmatism. Thus, the party’s pragmatic attitude should not be understood as the abandonment of its ideology.

From the perspective of North’s new institutionalism, ideology as an informal institution, and democracy as a formal institution have an inverse relation. During the first years of the party’s establishment, democracy was not yet consolidating; this led the party to behave ideologically. However, when the democratic system stabilized, albeit procedurally, political stability emerged, and the party tended to behave in a rational and pragmatic fashion. Thus, it is safe to say that pragmatism of the party will continue as long as the democracy remains stable, but the

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party will predictably resort to its religious conservatism should democracy begin to falter.

The central and dominant role of party leadership in steering the course of the party politics is made possible by the hierarchical structure of the PKS as a cadre party. The PKS has several bodies, the first and most important of which is Majelis Syuro. Under the control of national party leaders, Majelis Syuro as the party’s deliberation assembly functions as the ultimate decision-making body for party strategy. It also drafts and implements the party’s policy programs and amends the party statutes. Previously, under the PK (1999-2003), this assembly was the second highest body after the National Congress (Musyawarah Nasional, Munas). By repositioning Majelis Syuro into the top body of the party, the PKS has introduced an oligarchy system in which, for the sake of organizational effectiveness, “the party hands over authority to a few leaders in expense of the rights and aspirations of its members”.

The party leadership also claims religious authority over all of its members through the Sharia Council (Dewan Syari’ah) whose members have the authority to issue religious edicts (fatwa) that are binding for all party cadres. During the party’s formative period, the Sharia Council values the aspiration of the party members, that it called the cadres and supporters of the PK to avoid the bustle of voter seeking activities. In an official decree in the run-up to 1999 election, the council suggested its activists and members:

“(a) to purify themselves by repenting to God upon their wrongdoings, (b) to intensify religious activities such as prayers and reciting the Qur’an to bring them closer to God, (c) to intensify social activities and welfare activities through party organizations, (d) to be prepared for any difficulties and challenges and be patient with them, (e) to seek to find the positive in people,

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466 *Ibid.*, 2010, p. 29
and persuade them accordingly to support the party’s mission, (f) to remember paying alms because material capability is fundamental for da’wa.  

With this edict, the council assured the party cadres that the PK was not founded to pursue power, but rather to spread Islamic teaching and to show the public what the Islamic party and politics looks like. Therefore, the yardstick for the party success lies in the improvement of piety of individual, family and society at large, not in the number of votes. However, in the next election of 2004, the council released a statement supporting the party leadership’s political agenda. It suggested that mobilizing people to vote for the party is necessary in the context of da’wa movement. The statement reads:

“Our society has heterogeneous cultures, and as a party which represents the state, it would be unethical for us to refuse people’s participation only because they do not match our standard. The party needs to function like the state, to protect and to accommodate the plural inspirations of its members and sympathizers, although we have regulations to select and to filter people’s participation in line with our principles. But the principle is: vote first and later on we can propagate them.”

Furthermore, the party leadership also utilized various mechanisms to ensure the loyalty of the party members. For instance, six-level party memberships were designed to promote only the “right” candidates from among the rank and file members of the party; only upon the approval of the party leadership that the cadres could move to the next higher category of membership. Loyalty of the cadres to the party leaderships and their obedience to the party edicts on political and religious issues are stipulated in the party statutes. And last but not least, Dewan Pimpinan Pusat as the central party board is granted a power to propose the party candidates, to approve party leadership at the provincial level and to evaluate party programs in local politics. This hierarchical structure makes the PKS the most centralistic party in Indonesia. Conformity to the party’s statutes and compliancy with leadership structures is not only

467 Ibid., 2010, p. 40.
468 Ibid.
a matter of organizational discipline or political loyalty, but also a moral commitment.\(^{469}\)

Greg Fealy’s observation about the decision-making process within the PKS during the party’s national congress in June 2010 clearly illustrates the national leadership’s control over the party’s vertical structures. Writing in *Inside Indonesia* Fealy observed that:

“... all of the key party policy and leadership decisions had been taken at closed-door Majelis Syuro meetings in Jakarta over months leading up to the [congress]. ... Some [congress] delegates later informed me that the internal sessions at the [congress] were dominated by briefings and motivational speeches by party leaders, rather than discussion of or debate about party policy and strategy. One cadre said: “This was all about socializing decisions from the party leadership. We were told what the Majelis Syuro had decided and how best to implement the decisions. This [congress] is not about deliberation”. Another told me: “Dissent or differing opinions are frowned upon at these occasions. We are expected to just accept the Majelis Syuro decisions.”\(^{470}\)

In sum, the political moderation and pragmatism of the PKS was arguably the result of the party leadership capacity in managing and controlling dissent within rank and file members. Especially in a multi-level government system, the power to impose behavioral changes upon the party apparatus highly contributes to the moderation process. The PKS’ experience discussed in the last section of the chapter shows that behavioral moderation of an Islamist party necessitates a party consensus, which results from strong and hierarchical organizational structure. On the contrary, the lack of integrated internal power structures will potentially make the party fragmented, hence failure in achieving the consensus to moderation.\(^{471}\) Fragmented party structure will make the consensus very difficult to achieve, because figures of prominence within the party who might have different political agenda would undermine any decision to moderation. The party with an undemocratic organizational structure, and


\(^{470}\) Greg Fealy, “Front stage with the PKS”, in *Inside Indonesia* (Jul–Sep), 2010, p. 6.

strong leadership capacity to controlling dissent within the party membership, would have a bigger chance of achieving consensus to moderation compared to the party with fragmented internal structure, albeit democratic leadership and the availability of the “right” institutional incentives.  

It is in this sense of strong leadership and loyalty of the members that the party is subscribed to the oligarchy system. However, it is not to say that the party is supporting or preserving the ancien régime that used to dominate the country’s political landscape. In post-New Order politics, the interest of the old bureaucratic powers is challenged by the state elites which are now more receptive to the pressure from local societal groups, especially in the situation where the latter could provide the former resources necessary to gain and maintain power. In this changing relation between state and society, clientelistic network become crucial. The local societal group or party that provides networks for the state elites to win the election will have influence in the local politics. In order to be relevant in this changing relation between state and society, PKS has demonstrated its flexibility in pushing for Shariatization. In provinces with strong Islamist network, for instance, the party becomes the staunch supporter of the state elites in promoting the Sharia inspired legislations. That the party is cooptated by the state elites or absorbed by it is a secondary importance for the party. As a party with strong Islamist ideology, PKS does not miss any opportunity to exert its influence for Sharia policymaking. The dependency of the state elites on the support of the localities has left PKS an opportunity to lend the former the support they need for electoral gain. In this sense, the party elites act as a local power broker whose network has now acquired new importance as the competition between the state elites increased. Responsive to the popular demand of a certain localities, the party leadership is quick to push for Sharia bylaws by taking advantage of the state elite competition


473 The ancien régime could include a small group of wealthy and influential individuals or groups, from military, businessmen, or intellectuals, rooted in the New Order Regime that continue to define the country’s contemporary politics.
for power. While the adoption of Sharia is not of any interest to the state elites, it is simply an ultimate goal of PKS. However, an important note should be added here that the Sharia policymaking of the party is determined by the societal demand and preparedness. Therefore, one observes that in many circumstances the party relaxes its Islamist ideals and plays down Sharia, but in different places and situations the party becomes true to its Islamist ideology by being unhesitantly supportive to the Sharia policymaking.

**Conclusion**

A central theme of this chapter is PKS’ conviction that Islam provides Indonesian Muslims with a cultural and legal framework, and that the Western colonialism has disrupted a natural development of Islam and Muslim in the archipelago. The party is convinced that returning to Islam as vital element of Indonesian Muslim culture and society is a prerequisite for becoming a great nation. Thus, the party’s motive for re-introduction of Sharia originates in a sense of identity loss. The party is stick to the conviction that the submission to Sharia defines a Muslim.

For the party, participating in politics should lead to capturing the government, which is considered as a constitutional way to shift the power away from both secular and non-Muslim groups which are perceived as having enjoyed a privilege of economic and political power of the post-colonial era. The party also perceived themselves and their faith as under threat from global conspiracy led by the US and Zionist Israel aiming at subjugating Muslim-majority countries. This western power is a continuation of Dutch colonialism that hinders Indonesian Muslim from gaining economic and political power.

This chapter also points to existence of a clear gulf between the party’s desire and struggle for Sharia and its cognizance of the lack of support from the majority of Muslim population. The electoral share of Islamist parties in 1955 (44%), 1999 (16%) and 2014 (32%) is indicative of the fact that the majority of Indonesian Muslims do not share Islamist agenda, most importantly the aim to Islamize the state and the Constitution. Efforts by Islamist parties to give Sharia constitutional status came to no avail due to heavy resistance of nationalist secular and religiously-neutral parties. Two
biggest Islamic organizations—Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah—also rejected the proposal by the Islamist parties and criticized their understanding and application of Sharia.

Given this social and political reality, the PKS leaders reconsidered the electoral appeal of Sharia issues, and eventually downplayed their Sharia agenda by promoting issues which are appealing to a broader constituency, such as strengthening parliamentary powers, restoring economic growth, battling corruption and ending the army’s political role. Thus, instead of propagating ideologically oriented programs, the party felt compelled to promote “secular” programs for plural societies. It is very interesting to see that while moving into the center of the political spectrum, the PKS did not abandon or revise its ideology. The party’s behavioral moderation did not alter its conservative ideology. In this sense, the PKS has clearly separated the external from the internal discourse; the party managed to make a calculated separation of ideology and behavior. Ideologically speaking, the party develops the notion of ghazwul fikr and makes it an obligatory material for instruction among party cadres; politically speaking, it shows pragmatic attitudes, and willingly cooperates with parties from all political spectrums.

The notion of gradual da’wa is central to understanding the party’s stance on democracy. Aiming at guiding the society back toward the submission to Sharia, da’wa should take into account the current situation and condition of the society, and start from individuals. Thus, individual piety precedes the recapture of state and government. The party’s approach to da’wa shows that while sustaining the vision of a post-democratic order, the party adjusted its agenda to the socio-political circumstances. Despite its many flaws, democracy is considered to be the best system in current situation that should be utilized to achieve the ultimate goal of da’wa. In this sense, the party has repackaged Islamist ideology for a democracy.

In line with the slogan “al-jama’ah huwa al-hizb wa al-hizb huwa al-jama’ah” (the movement is the party, and the party is the movement), the PKS is movement and party at the same time; both share a common goal of gradual Islamization of the society. Originated from a da’wa movement, the PKS is a political
wing of the movement. Thus, for the party, politics is the art of da’wa, and inseparable from the religion. The interplay between the politics and religion is evident in the internal dispute between the pragmatists and purists within the party regarding the best strategy to realize the goal of da’wa. While the party elites tend to pragmatism, the movement insists in conservatism. The tension between these two camps will continue until both camps manage to set up the middle path that could reconcile the party’s political commitment and movement’s ideological underpinning.
CONCLUSION

The financial crisis of 1997 and the ensuing reform movement, known as Reformasi, that led to the overthrow of Suharto’s New Order regime marked a watershed for Islamist activism. A host of Islamist parties, including the Justice Party (PK), competed at the polls in 1999, representing a conservative segment of Muslim society - effectively the far right of the ideological spectrum. After achieving a disappointingly low 1.4 per cent of the national vote in 1999 election PK joined forces with a host of even smaller Islamist parties in 2002 and was rebranded as the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). It knew that it had to do this if it was to be certain of clearly the 2.0 per cent threshold required to enter parliament imposed on all parties in the 2004 election.

Initially known as a staunchly Islamist party which demands the enforcement of Sharia and the establishment of an Islamic state, PKS is now presenting itself as a moderate party. However, with a strong background of Islamist cadres, the party is not abandoning the desire of incorporating Sharia into the legal system of the country. On the contrary, it remains supportive of the gradual implementation of Sharia, as clearly observed from its position in parliament to amend and propose legislation that upholds the Islamic values, such as the bills of Pornography and Pornographic Acts and of Anti-Alcoholic Beverage.

Born out of a da’wa movement of the 1980’s, the party describes itself as being unswervingly faithful to the call for the establishment of an umma governed by Sharia in every aspect of life. The disappointing electoral results in the April 2014 parliamentary elections lead the party leaders to find solace in the mantra that da’wa, not party-politics and electoral success, is the true raison d’etre of PKS primary means by which it seeks to realize its ultimate goal. As a da’wa party, the accumulation of power is not the focus of the party. Rather, the party leaders argue that politics simply one further medium for da’wa aimed at improving the quality of life and morals of the society. To achieve this goal, the leaders say, the party needs to begin with enhancing the practice of Sharia norms in individual level, as a preparation for the Islamization of the state.
Given that the very reason PKS’ existence is explained as conducting da’wa, politics presents but one avenue for da’wa. In the party’s view, the political involvement of the da’wa party must be informed by the general aim of “delivering goodness for the benefit of all people” regardless of background or religion. The task of delivering Sharia norms, which is concerned ultimately with “universal goodness”, is not, the leaders argue, a monopoly of the party. Accordingly, the party is open to cooperation or coalition with other parties of diverse political spectrums. What matters most to the party is not the quantity of posts in the national parliaments or the number of local administrations captured by the PKS cadres, but rather the widespread implementation of the universal ideals of the party.

Even though no plain statements from PKS have been made on the issue of formalizing Sharia, it does not necessarily mean that the party has given up its desire to introduce Sharia into the state legal system. This seemingly indecisive attitude is partly due to the fact that the party needs to balance perceptions of their agenda between Islamist constituents and the public at large. Thus, the party needs to strike a balance in steering its way through politics. In order to survive or win mass support, the party needs to reconcile the party’s principles with public demand. In the face of this socio-political challenge, the party employs the language of ‘universal goodness’ to camouflage and secularize Sharia. Examples of this strategy include: making no direct reference to Sharia, using neutral language, referring to universal goodness, anchoring the Sharia norms in the language and substance of general legislation in a non-threatening, positive, fashion, and broadening the room for maneuver by capitalizing on broadly accepted and understood cultural norms.

In its struggle to realize Sharia, the party is fully aware that the majority of Indonesian Muslims do not support the Islamist agenda, especially the ideals to implement Sharia and to Islamize the state and the constitution. Therefore, the party downplays its Sharia agenda by promoting issues which are appealing to a broader constituency. Thus, instead of pursuing its ideologically oriented programs, the party is compelled to promote “secular” program, such as strengthening parliamentary powers, restoring economic growth, and battling corruption.
The integration into political system helped the party to repackage its Islamist demeanor for democracy. The behavioral moderation of the party is in line with the principle of gradualist da’wa that informs the party to act in accordance with the social and political context. At the practical level, the spirit of da’wa informs the PKS to develop an approach of compromise and cooperation with other groups, as well as focusing on practical matters and avoiding violent means in realizing its political agenda. The party’s rejection of the restatement of the Jakarta Charter in the Constitution is the main example of such a ‘moderate attitude’. In so doing, the PKS successfully avoided ideological dispute and focused more on achieving common goals and enhancing individual piety and social morality.

Since 2004, Perda Sharia - Sharia-derived by-laws - have been implemented in a number of provinces, including Aceh, South Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, West Java and West Sumatra. Although this is sometimes described creeping Shariatization, in fact the parties at the forefront of Perda-Sharia are not the Islamist parties, but rather secular-nationalist parties, such as Golkar or Partai Democrat. The adoption of Sharia-inspired by-laws by these parties was not driven by their support for Sharia implementation, but rather by political calculations. However, the absence of PKS’ disavowal or rejection against the implementation of Sharia in provincial level indicates that the party agrees with it.

The party’s reluctance to reinstate the Jakarta Charter into the Constitution – the preamble that would make it ‘obligatory for the Muslims to implement Sharia’, was not necessarily an abandonment of the party’s struggle for Sharia. Instead, the party continued advocating the need for Muslim community to be organized by the principles of Sharia. For this purpose, the party proposed the Medina Charter which gives reference to the Prophet’s example of running the government during the early Medinan period when different tribes and religious community of Medina city lived in harmony while retaining their own culture, custom and religion. When this was rejected, the party found legal openings for the introduction of Sharia at the provincial level through the laws on Regional Government framed in 22/1999 and 32/2004. While the struggle for the application of Sharia at the national level were repeatedly defeated due to stiff resistance in the parliament for fear of national disintegration and legal
discrimination against substantial minorities, there is a great chance for success in the struggle for Sharia implementation in regions that have socially conservative and overwhelming Muslim populations. To gain legitimacy and at the same time evading the public concern of allegedly disintegrative and discriminatory effect of such regulations, the Sharia-derived by-laws were issued under the pretext of preserving local wisdom or social order and security. Other strategies used to facilitate the enactment of such regulations include avoiding direct reference to Sharia and using neutral terms as a camouflaje.

While taking an overtly casual stance towards the application of Sharia, the party has, in fact been quietly supportive, and been careful to counter efforts to hamper Shariatization at the local level. As long as such regulations have passed the law-making process in the legislative body and a prior socialization has been made, the PKS leaders explain that the party will be supportive to the implementation of such regulations. Just as the party supported the Anti-Pornography Bill enacted by the central government, the same is true with the Sharia implementation in local government. However, the underlying principle of PKS policy in supporting the Sharia legislation is that Sharia implementation, while it is necessary for personal and communal piety, must nevertheless be an incremental process, originating from a religious conscience of the society, and not an imposition by the state.

Since its inception, the party’s image in broader society was colored by two opposing groups; those who welcomed the party’s initiatives with high expectations of its well-educated and dedicated pious young Muslims, and those who perceived it as an embodiment of new Islamic conservatism. However, by observing the actual political behavior of the party, one finds that instead of focusing on introducing Islamist political programs, the PKS was absorbed by the mainstream of Indonesian politics. In order to survive the electoral threshold and gain access to the central power, the party adapted its political agenda to meet the interest of median voters. To the dismay of the purists within the movement, the party leadership showed a readiness to compromise aspects of their political agenda in order to enhance the party’s appeal.
True to its Islamist ideology, the PKS leaders consistently said that the party’s political agenda focused on issues of social welfare, anti-corruption, and good governance, with Sharia as an underlying principle for the pursuance of these objectives. It has become a common knowledge among the party leaders that people often reduce Sharia into draconian laws of cutting off hands, flogging and stoning. Far from this simplification, the party leaders are convinced that Sharia is very broad, universal in nature, and covering all aspects of life. Accordingly, any effort within the corridor of *amr ma'ruf nahy munkar*, such as pursuing welfare and eradicating corruption, is considered but the PKS leaders to be part and parcel of carrying out Sharia.

The party’s attitude toward Sharia implementation is closely connected to its concept of bottom-up Islamization of society through education and good governance. For that very reason, the party leadership declared that the implementation of Sharia should be preceded by the process of educating the public about its merits. So, the pursuit of Sharia is conceptualized by a gradual process of socialization and internalization. A closer look at the party’s doctrinal documents will make it clear that the comprehensive Islamization of state and society constitutes a long-term goal of the party.

Given the moderate and gradual mode of da’wa, the PKS leaders explain that Sharia should not be implemented hastily; it should be first internalized in the heart of every individual Muslim. It also means that implementation of Sharia in the state level requires the readiness of every Muslim. It is, the leaders argue, a very long process, one that requires serious efforts before it can be realized. The party leadership is convinced that there is no point in establishing an Islamic state if the people are not ready to uphold and support such a system. Thus, the process for the ultimate establishment of an Islamic state is related to the strengthening process of understanding about Islam at the grass-root level which is achievable through da’wa.

Many assumed that PKS had an ambivalent attitude toward Sharia implementation, and hence a certain indecisiveness toward Sharia. This study reveals that through the regular *halaqah* the party has done a remarkably effective job in
synchronizing and standardizing the cadres’ understanding of Sharia, and that the apparent inconsistency toward the struggle for Sharia in fact arises from a deliberate strategy of flexibility of da’wa. The party’s work on Islamizing society from below, necessitates flexibility in its approaches to da’wa, from which we can understand the apparent ambivalence of the party in regard to the implementation of the Sharia.

The party’s struggle to tread the path of da’wa is not without challenges from the traditional social networks of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. The PKS da’wa machineries have primarily penetrated major cities and its satellites, but have not reached yet the rural areas. However, in the recent years, the party started to focus its da’wa mission in some rural provinces of East and Central Java which inevitably found resistance from traditional networks, many of which also employ similar welfare services. The party’s da’wa penetration into these areas of Muhammadiyah and NU’s traditional constituencies has not only triggered serious tension, but also led to allegations that PKS is hijacking religious, social and educational institutions of these established mass organizations. In the areas where these institutions provide comprehensive socioeconomic and cultural services to the surrounding communities and serve as political brokers at the grassroots level, the PKS’s da’wa penetration is relatively weak. The party can only gain popular support in the areas where the influence of Muhammadiyah and NU are in decline, such as in 2009 general election where the party increased its total legislative seats from 41 to 93 at all East Java provincial level.

The country’s multiparty system also creates a challenge for the PKS. Within this system, there are parties at every point in the politico-religious spectrum, from secular-nationalist parties like PDI-P, Golkar and Democrat, and religious-nationalist parties like the PKB and PAN, which are rooted in the Islamic mass organizations of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah respectively, to multiple Islamist parties, such as PPP and PBB, which take Islam as their foundation and seek the eventual implementation of Sharia. This multiparty system does not offer strong incentive to move to the center and thus discourage Islamist parties from moving too far to the center, as they would lose their distinctiveness vis-à-vis the others. Since the party
fragmentation has put a premium on the party distinctiveness, it is problematic for the Islamist parties to move to the center. The Islamist parties would risk losing their distinctiveness, as there are already multiple existing parties, i.e. PAN, PKB, Golkar, and Demokrat, clustered near the religious-political center.

Cognizant of the reality that majority of the Indonesians have never given their votes for Islamist parties in a large number, the PKS has sought to position itself as a populist and anti-corruption party. Since other parties, both Islamist and secular, were perceived as corrupt and elitist, the party’s message was appealing to many median Muslim voters, especially among young educated urban lower-middle-class residing especially in Jakarta and its surrounding satellite cities such as Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi. Efforts to win the Muslim median votes are also undertaken by nationalist parties which are also competing to define the “Islamic mainstream”. To show their Islamic credentials and friendliness, Democrat Party and Golkar supported Sharia-inspired legislation at the national and local levels, and established Islamic wings within their parties. This cooptation policy managed to court some voters away from Islamist parties. The decrease of PKS votes in its base of Jakarta is also closely connected to the criticism over its campaign ads and a corruption scandal involving its top leader. The popularity of Yudhoyono and his party, and his populist schemes were also responsible for the vote share decline of the party in major city, such as Jakarta, in the 2009 election.

The populist agenda and image of President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and his party during the run-up of 2014 presidential and legislative election also presented a tough challenge to the party campaign in gaining and maintaining the already decreasing votes in major cities, notably Jakarta. However, with the new leadership, PKS is now determined that the party is no longer pursuing the electoral gain, but more focused on the core project of the party, namely ensuring the implementation of Sharia norms in all aspects of life. This new strategy of the party is indicative of the awareness of the new leadership that the party should keep on its track as a da’wa party, where the work of Islamizing the country is not limited only by the electoral success, but most importantly by the wider public acceptance of the party’s ideals, such as transparency,
good governance, social service and justice. With this in mind, the party is content to be outside of the Joko Widodo’s administration, and continues its Tarbiyah and da’wa movement to Islamize the society.
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