

Indonesian Democracy and the Transformation of Political Islam

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Abstract

We propose an analytical framework for understanding the relationship between democracy and political Islam in Indonesia. We argue that three rounds of democratic elections in Indonesia have produced two distinct but fundamentally related outcomes: the *normalization of Islamist party politics* alongside what we tentatively call *stealth Islamization*. This paper outlines our argument, distinguishes it from existing approaches to political Islam and democracy in contemporary Indonesia, and outlines the evidence that we will use to support it in what we envision to be a book-length project.

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I. Political Islam and Democracy

Democracy is a difficult political system because it leads to a fundamental paradox of participation. On one hand, democracy is a political system that empowers all of a country's citizens to participate in their own governance. At the very least, following the minimalist or procedural conception of democracy of Schumpeter (1947) and others, a democratic government is one in which citizens choose their leaders through competitive elections. On the other hand, this minimalist conception of democracy does not require that the groups or individuals who participate in democratic elections—either as voters or as candidates for office—intend to respect democratic principles. Citizens participating in democratic elections may elect a candidate who, once in office, dismantles democratic institutions. Confronted with this paradox of democratic participation, the solution of most democratic theorists is to say that such a political system has ceased to be a democracy. But the challenge of potentially anti-democratic groups participating in democratic elections is not just a theoretical possibility, it is a practical worry that occupies pro-democracy activists, practitioners, and policymakers the world over.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, communism was perceived as the greatest threat to democracy.¹ A large normative literature in the 1950s-1970s explored whether or not democracy could be defined in a way that allowed communist parties to participate. Lipset (1959:100), for example, argued that “Communist workers, their parties and trade unions, cannot possibly be accorded the right of access by a democratic society.” But in the contemporary

¹ Chile in 1973 illustrates this. Some observers feared that Salvador Allende, who was elected president through democratic means, would dismantle Chilean democracy. This became partial justification for a coup by Pinochet, who claimed to be protecting Chilean democracy from Allende's socialist threat but certainly did not actually do so.

Muslim world, the central worry is about the compatibility of political Islam with democracy.² Democratic elections in the Muslim world may empower groups who believe that democracy is fundamentally incompatible with their religious beliefs. This leads many proponents of democracy in the Muslim world, observers and participants alike, to fear the influence of Islamist parties and Islamist social movements in young Muslim-majority democracies. Some fear that if Islamist parties were to prevail in democratic elections, then once in office they would so fundamentally transform the political systems in their countries' political systems as to render them no longer democratic. Others fear that the laws that Islamist governments would enact would be so illiberal as to violate the basic norms that underlie democratic representation, participation, and citizenship (Zakaria 2004).

Scholars and policymakers alike, though, face a central problem in understanding political Islam and democracy. That problem is that there are few examples of Muslim-majority democracies where we can observe what happens when Islam and democracy interact. Some attribute the relative paucity of Muslim-majority democracies to some sort of incompatibility between Islam and democracy (see e.g. Fish 2002 for a discussion), but most authoritarian governments in Muslim-majority countries are actually not Islamist governments. Most contemporary democratic governments in the Muslim world that we can observe are either new and fragile (Bangladesh, Pakistan) or fail to meet one or more of the basic requirements for democracy (Algeria, Malaysia, Senegal, Turkey). There is one exception: Indonesia, which is both the world's most populous Muslim country and a consolidated democracy. If we are to learn about how political Islam and democratic government interact, contemporary Indonesia is where we must look.

² Here and elsewhere we are careful to distinguish, following Tibi (2008), between "Islam" and "political Islam" (or "Islamism"). The former is a religion. The latter is a political ideology that draws on Islam, and it—not Islam itself—is the subject of our study.

The basic facts in the Indonesian case are simple and clear. Since democratization in 1999, Islamist parties in Indonesia have not prevailed in democratic elections. At the same time, Islamists have met with some success in furthering what might be considered an Islamist political agenda. What this means, however, is a subject of debate.

Existing scholarship on political Islam and democracy—and here we concentrate primarily on Indonesia-focused research—adopts one of two general approaches. The first places analytical focus on the characteristics of Indonesian Islam itself. These arguments hold that Indonesian Muslims are inherently moderate, or syncretic, or pluralist, or heterogeneous, or some other quality that makes Indonesian Islam uniquely compatible with democracy.

Such arguments rest on two empirical claims. The first claim is that Indonesian Islam possesses a particular set of essential characteristics (moderation, syncretism, pluralism, etc.) that differs in some way from Islam as lived and practiced elsewhere. The second claim is that these characteristics have implications for political behavior, shaping Indonesian Muslims' political views in ways that make their religious beliefs compatible with democracy. That is, political Islam in Indonesia is different than political Islam elsewhere.

An implication of these claims is that if Indonesian Islam were to become—or if it were discovered to be—less moderate, less syncretic, less pluralist, or less heterogeneous than previously thought, then this would have negative consequences for the compatibility of political Islam and democracy in Indonesia. This leads to worries about the adoption of a more conspicuously religious identity by many Indonesian Muslims over the past forty years, and debates as to whether this process threatens the non-Islamic foundations of Indonesian democracy.

The most notable examples of this research include studies drawing on Geertz's (1971) characterization of *aliran* in Java. For these approaches, the blossoming of Islamic and Islamist political parties in Indonesia's first democratic period confirmed that there was no simple relationship between Islam and democracy, but rather that this relationship had to be understood in terms of conflict between different groups—traditionalists, modernists, and others—that comprise the Muslim body politic in Indonesia. The unspoken implication is that this conflict forecloses the possibility of any one vision of conservative or fundamentalist political Islam becoming politically dominant. Likewise, Benda (1965) suggested that whenever political Islam emerges as a force in Indonesian politics, it encounters a reaction from the country's nationalists—whose political aspirations channel Indonesia's Javanese, aristocratic, and pre-Islamic cultural substrata. But aside from such cultural arguments, there are other ways in which scholars have considered Indonesian Islam to be rather unique. Ramage (1995), for instance, argues that the wide acceptance of Indonesia's national ideology of Pancasila has shaped the ways in which Indonesian Muslim political leaders articulate democratic ideals. Whatever the explanation for the uniqueness of Indonesian Islam, for this line of research, the key question is “does the nature of Islam in Indonesia mitigate the tensions between political Islam and democracy?”

A second general approach shifts focus, from the particular characteristics of Islam as practiced in Indonesia and their consequences for political behavior, to the essential characteristics of Islam as a religion. Arguments made from this second approach challenge (either implicitly or explicitly) the supposition that political Islam and democracy are somehow incompatible. Rather, these analyses seek to demonstrate that pious Muslims can be committed members of a democratic polity, and reject the conclusion of some scholars of Islam (and some

Islamists themselves) that Islam requires its believers to reject democracy as inherently un-Islamic.

These arguments have a different evidentiary base than do arguments about Indonesian Islam's unique compatibility with democracy. Instead of studying the characteristics of Indonesian Islam and their behavioral consequences, the evidence marshaled under the second approach is largely textual in nature, drawn from Islamic political ethics and contemporary Indonesian political thought. Using religious texts and opinions by prominent Indonesian Muslim politicians, scholars attempt to uncover authoritative statements about what Islam "really" says about democracy. Since the evidence required to study the relationship between democracy and political Islam in Indonesia comes from ethical claims drawn from religious texts and those who interpret them, collective beliefs and behavior are actually not directly relevant to this body of research. That is, the existence of anti-democratic Islamic parties, for example, has no bearing on the "true" relationship between political Islam and democracy in Indonesia, or anywhere else for that matter. That said, the existence of conspicuously pious Muslim democrats, who are common in contemporary Indonesia, is often used to demonstrate that political Islam and democracy are indeed compatible.

Examples of this include the many studies of important Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia such as Abdurrahman Wahid, Nurcholish Madjid, and other figures. Writing just prior to the end of the New Order regime, Barton (1997) studied the thought of several "Islamic liberals" in Indonesia, arguing that they were developing a new "progressive" form of Islamic political thought that would subsequently become a basis for Indonesian democracy. For this line of research, the key question is, "are there tensions between Islam as a religion and democracy as a

form of government in Indonesia?” This is an Indonesian version of a global question, which Bassam Tibi (2008:44) articulates simply as “How democratic is Islamism?”

II. An Alternative Approach

We propose a new and different approach to political Islam and democracy in Indonesia. Before outlining it, we stress that our goal is *not* to provide a definitive answer to either of the two foundational questions outlined above—whether or not there are tensions between political Islam and democracy in Indonesia, or whether or not there is something unique about Indonesian Islam that mitigates any such tensions. We are not qualified to answer the former question, and the latter question is interesting but ultimately not relevant to our study. The evidence that we discuss below will call into question whether or not Indonesian Muslims *perceive* there to be a conflict between their faith and democracy, and we will show that substantial numbers of Indonesian Muslims hold beliefs that many would consider Islamist, but neither of these observations are definitive answers to these two questions and we do not intend them to be viewed as such.³

Instead, we place our analytical focus on democracy as a process, and study the evolving relationship between democracy and political Islam in contemporary Indonesia. Our central questions are “how has democracy affected political Islam in Indonesia?” and “how has political Islam affected Indonesian democracy?” We argue that Indonesia has witnessed a dual transformation of democracy and of political Islam, which we envision as having a dynamic and mutually-constitutive relationship with one another. The transformation of political Islam has been one of *normalization of Islamist party politics*, whereby single-issue Islamist parties have become ever more similar to Indonesia’s larger mass-based parties in terms of their broad

³ We also stress that these two questions are perfectly legitimate areas of research. Our goal is not to denigrate or dismiss them.

campaign messages and inclusive political strategies. At the same time, however, we observe the transformation of Indonesian democracy through what we term *stealth Islamization*,⁴ through which Islamists mobilize political support for individual Islamist policies on a case-by-case basis with the goal of influencing the substantive outcomes of the policymaking process. This is a strategy through which Islamists change the substantive policies enacted under Indonesia's democratic government so as to fulfill Islamists' political demands without requiring them to prevail in competitive elections.

These two transformations occurred in the context of Indonesia's democratization (which began in 1998) and the subsequent period of democratic consolidation, and followed a specific historical sequence. The immediate antecedent of these transformations was the collapse of the New Order regime with the resignation of Soeharto. The period immediately following his resignation saw mass mobilization by students, activists, and other groups who demanded fresh elections in order to bring the New Order to a close. At that historical moment, opposition groups from across the political spectrum implicitly accepted that elections would provide a legitimate means for bringing about a new political order—even though these groups had very different visions of what form this political order would take. Forced to compete for votes, Islamists formed political parties and experimented with a wide array of different platforms and campaign messages in order to win popular support. The 1999 elections saw relative success for Islamic parties such as PKB and PAN, but far less success for Islamist parties such as PK and PBB. Parties whose platforms and campaigns most closely adhered to an Islamist message fared the worst.

⁴ We have debated this term amongst ourselves and remain unsatisfied with it. "Stealth" connotes sneakiness or underhandedness, and this is not our intention. Other terms we have considered are "piecemeal Islamization" and, borrowing from Baran (2008), "creeping Islamization." For now, we retain the phrase "stealth Islamization" as a placeholder for a broader concept articulated above.

Indonesian Islamists concluded from these results that campaigning for votes based on single-issue messages based on political Islam was not an electorally viable strategy. Critically, Islamists concluded that Indonesian Muslims are pious, but that they also care about other political issues. These issues are familiar ones from any democratic emerging market economy: basic human needs such as physical security, food, employment, and health; broadly shared economic development, national security and the territorial integrity of the Indonesian state; and other similar concerns. Islamists concluded that as voters, Indonesians demand a multitude of things from their government. As a consequence, political parties and candidates must adopt broad and inclusive political messages to be electorally viable.

PK in particular (reconstituted as PKS) responded by abandoning its single-minded focus on political Islam. In the 2004 election, PKS was rewarded for doing so, substantially increasing its share of seats in the DPR and therefore its political clout. PKS and other Islamists interpreted these electoral outcomes as confirmation of their strategy's success and have continued to emphasize a broad campaign message designed to appeal to Islamists and non-Islamists alike. PPP, a holdover from the New Order, has adopted a similar strategy, allowing it to remain politically influential even though its electoral support has diminished over time. Other Islamists who were unwilling to broaden their message have seen their electoral support dwindle much faster (PBB in 2004 and 2009, PBR in 2009), or have forsaken the electoral process altogether in favor of non-electoral political mobilization (Hizbut Tahrir, MMI, and others).

The result is that the most successful Islamist parties in 2004 and 2009 are those that have abandoned single-issue Islamist politics in order to seek broader political support by offering broader and more inclusive political messages. In their broad scope and focus on governance and development, these messages are becoming ever more indistinguishable from those of Pancasila-

based parties such as Golkar, PD, and PDI-P. In 2009 PKS and PPP joined Islamic parties PAN and PKB to support the new Yudhoyono administration, marking the next step in the party's shift towards mainstream politicking.

This marks the first transformation, the normalization of Islamist party politics in Indonesia. But it does not mark the end of political Islam's influence on Indonesian politics, for Islamists have continued to press from within Indonesia's democratic political system for their preferred policies, many of which run counter to democratic principles as understood in Western or liberal terms. They do so through issue-based political mobilization, through which activists strike strategic alliances with non-Islamists to pass legislation that accords with an Islamist political agenda. Specific examples of this include local *syariah* ordinances, anti-pornography legislation, and proposed measures to restrict religious criticism, among many others. This is evidence, then, of a second transformation, this time of Indonesian democracy, in response to the continued participation of Islamists in Indonesia's democratic government.

To recap, the outcome of this process in Indonesia is a dual transformation. Through normalization of Islamist party politics, we see Islamist parties becoming more than just Islamist parties, and in the process becoming more like other Indonesian political parties. Through stealth Islamization we see policies and laws that are changing the substantive nature of Indonesian democracy. We view these two outcomes as conceptually distinct, but dynamically interrelated. Moreover, they reflect a fundamental tension that lies at the root of what we outlined earlier as democracy's paradox of participation, which is the distinction between democracy's procedures and its substantive outcomes. Islamist parties that have participated in elections have made a choice to accept democratic elections as the procedure through which Indonesians politics allocates political authority. That is, they have accepted as legitimate that democracy is a

procedure by which, in the words of Adam Przeworski (1991:10), “parties lose elections. There are parties: divisions of interest, values and opinions. There is competition, organized by rules. And there are periodic winners and losers.” Islamists in Indonesia have organized political parties that have lost elections yet that continue to participate in them. Yet at the same time Islamists have not accepted a liberal or Western definition of what makes laws and policies, which are the outcomes of democracy, substantively legitimate. Democratic theorists draw a distinction between procedural and substantive definitions of democracy (see e.g. Schmitter and Karl 1991), and today it is the substantive outcomes of democratic procedures rather than the procedural structure of democracy that political Islam in Indonesia is in the process of transforming.

Before we continue it is worth pausing to note several important features of this analytical framework, which is dynamic, political, historically contingent, and contextually sensitive. Our framework is *dynamic* because it shows how Islamist political parties and Islamist mass organizations respond to their political environments and to new information. There is no one Islamist political strategy; rather, political strategies change as party leaders adapt to their changing political circumstances. In much the same way, our framework is *political* because we focus on how actors seek political power under the twin constraints of scarce resources and the strategic behavior of other actors. While we certainly recognize the importance of ideology and political philosophy as key determinants of political behavior, we proceed under the maintained hypothesis that the search for power encourages actors to balance these considerations against other goal-seeking motivations (material interests, feasible choice sets, the probability of success, and others). In doing so, we abandon any presumption that Islamist politicians are uniquely constrained by their religion or political ideology. We stress that this is an assumption, not

something that we demonstrate or prove, but we believe that this assumption allows us to derive more accurate predictions of the behavior of Islamist politicians in Indonesia than does the alternative.

Our account is *historically contingent* because it recognizes that Indonesia's unique political history structures both the landscape of political competition and the identities of political actors in the current democratic period. There is, for example, nothing inevitable about the partisan landscape of political Islam in contemporary Indonesia. PPP exists because it is a holdover of a party created under the New Order, not for any other more fundamental reason, but the existence of PPP is consequential for the distribution of vote shares as Islamists compete for votes in post-New Order elections. Our approach to political Islam and democracy in Indonesia recognizes that historical events shape the choices facing contemporary actors, and that current developments cannot be understood absent their historical antecedents. And finally, our account is *contextually sensitive* because it takes seriously the diverse views of ordinary Indonesian voters. We paint a picture of political Islam in which mass public opinion shapes elite politics and party strategies, for in democratic Indonesia these strategies are responsive to the broader political context in which party politics takes place. We eschew an approach to Indonesian political Islam that focuses exclusively on elites or on texts, and instead bring these elites and texts into conversation with voters and elections.

This account, again, differs from analyses of democracy and political Islam in Indonesia that focus on the potentially unique features of Islam in Indonesia or on the compatibility of Islamism with democracy as a theological matter. We do not take a position on whether Islamism is “really” compatible with democracy, nor do we attribute anything unique to Indonesian Islam—the exception, of course, being the democratic political context in which Islamists

operate and the historical events that led to the contemporary democratic period. Rather, we acknowledge that there do exist anti-democratic Islamists in Indonesia, and that some Islamists in Indonesia and elsewhere believe that their faith requires them to oppose liberal or Western understandings of democracy, without weighing in on the normative accuracy of such beliefs.

III. OUR THEORY

Our analytical framework for studying the interaction of democracy and political Islam in Indonesia contains within it a theory of the transformation of single-issue parties in democratic political systems. The act of participating in democratic politics constrains single-issue parties by forcing them to confront a choice between broadening their electoral support and retaining their focus on a single issue. Under some precise conditions (which we make explicit in the following paragraph), if single-issue parties are to solicit broader political support they must forge broad electoral coalitions, and doing so entails either transforming their single-issue political message or abandoning it. In doing so, single-issue parties become like other parties, balancing multiple issues in order to expand the electoral support that they receive. In other words, choosing to work *within* the system makes these parties *part* of the system.

It is not always the case that single-issue parties will undergo the sort of transformation that has occurred with parties such as PKS and PPP in Indonesia. As elsewhere, the normalization of Islamist party politics in Indonesia is driven by three background conditions that shape how political parties compete in Indonesia. The first condition is that parties seek votes, which we view as the central consequence of Islamists having accepted procedural democracy as the mechanism that allocates political authority in Indonesia. The second condition is that Islamist parties believe that voters are responsive to parties' platforms. This is a critical point, but a non-obvious one. If Islamists believed that voters would not respond to their

campaigns or their policy platforms, then this would render irrelevant any effort on their part to identify political messages that might increase their electoral support. As we will argue below, Indonesia's Islamist political parties clearly believe that campaigns, platforms, and other political messages matter. The third condition that drives the normalization of Islamist party politics is that voters have a diversity of preferences, such that no more than half of Indonesian voters care exclusively about one issue (either religion or something else). What this means is simply that parties cannot construct winning electoral platforms by appealing exclusively to one issue.

It is important to emphasize that it is the *interaction* of these three conditions that has caused the normalization of Islamist party politics. Individually, the conditions are neither necessary nor sufficient for the normalization of Islamist party politics, but together they are jointly sufficient to produce this outcome. If parties are not vote-seekers, for example, there is no strategic incentive for them to adapt to their political environments to garner more political support. Likewise, if voters are not responsive to parties' platforms or campaigns, then parties face no strategic incentive to change their platforms or campaigns. And finally, if voters do not have a diversity of preferences, then parties have an incentive *not* to seek broader coalitions or to broaden their platforms to encompass multiple issues. Rather, they have an incentive to find the single issue that resonates with voters and to follow that one issue single-mindedly. Remove any of these conditions and the prediction that democracy forces single-issue parties to transform no longer holds. Below, when we turn to preview our empirical strategy, we outline the evidence that we will use to demonstrate that these conditions do in fact obtain in contemporary Indonesia.

So far, we have focused exclusively on procedural democracy and the effects of political competition on single-issue parties—this is the first of the two transformations that we identify in democracy and political Islam in contemporary Indonesia. But our account also addresses the

substantive outcomes that democratic procedures produce. To understand this second transformation our theory turns to the outcomes of the legislative and policymaking processes once single-issue parties have normalized. Procedural democracy generates expanded policy platforms, but this does not itself constrain the outcomes of the policy process. Former single-issue parties working within democratic systems may still pursue their narrow agendas; in the case of Islamists in Indonesia, they may continue to pursue an Islamist political agenda as a component of their larger policy agenda. In doing so, the substantive outputs of democratic procedures will reflect the political agendas of former single-issue parties.

As before, it is not always the case that substantive policy outputs will reflect the political agendas of single-issue parties such as Islamist parties in Indonesia. For this to be the case, two additional conditions must hold. The first is that it is possible to mobilize political support on particular issues. In practice this means that there are groups of voters (when parties mobilize voters) or supporters (when social movements mobilize activists) that genuinely do support portions of the party's political agenda even if they do have a diversity of other interests.⁵ The second is that other parties—those parties with whom single-issue parties compete—find it politically expedient to log-roll (or to acquiesce) on these issues.

Again, the interaction of these two additional conditions is jointly sufficient to allow former single-issue parties to affect substantive policy outputs, but the absence of either one overturns this prediction. If there is no support at all for the party's positions, then no party has an incentive to campaign on their issues. Parties that do so, moreover, will not succeed.

⁵ There is an important distinction here. These supporters have many preferences: in the context of Indonesian political Islam, this means that these supporters have both Islamist policy preferences and other policy preferences (good governance, economic development, etc.). This condition says that whatever their *relative* concern for Islamist versus other policy concerns, there is a group of voters that places some positive value on Islamist policies. In this way it is different from the earlier condition that we identified, which said that there *does not* exist a group of voters comprising at least fifty percent of the electorate that *exclusively* values Islamist policies.

Likewise, if other parties are unwilling to log-roll on these issues, then there will be insufficient political support for the single-issue party to affect lawmaking. In practice, of course, we think it unlikely that one of these two conditions will exist without the other. In democratic Indonesia, for example, the fact that there is some support for an Islamist agenda is what incentivizes non-Islamist parties to strike agreements with Islamists on an issue-by-issue basis. That said, not all parties in Indonesia have proven so responsive; PDI-P and PDS, for example, have calculated that their goals are best served by opposing Islamist political parties' substantive agendas. This highlights the importance of the joint presence of support for an Islamists agenda and non-Islamist parties willing to cooperate with the Islamists.

Here we note that our preceding discussion has focused on party politics, but that our second transformation—of Indonesian democracy, in response to political Islam—is shaped by non-electoral forces as well. There is a social movement component to this second transformation, through which activists (both within parties and from non-party political entities) operate outside of formal channels of politics to agitate for their preferred policies through demonstrations, activism, and other channels. This means that even though there are Islamist political organizations that do not accept procedural democracy, they still play a role in shaping substantive policy outcomes. Likewise, even though some Islamist political parties have chosen to forgo broader electoral influence by retaining a singular focus on their Islamist agenda, they too can shape policymaking. And even individuals who are not party members or regular voters may mobilize to support particular items of an Islamist agenda.

We have deliberately framed our theory in choice-theoretic terms. Parties and party leaders evaluate the expected benefits for adopting various strategies, and then choose the

strategies that best achieve their goals. A summary of our argument as it applies to the Indonesian case appears in Figure 1.

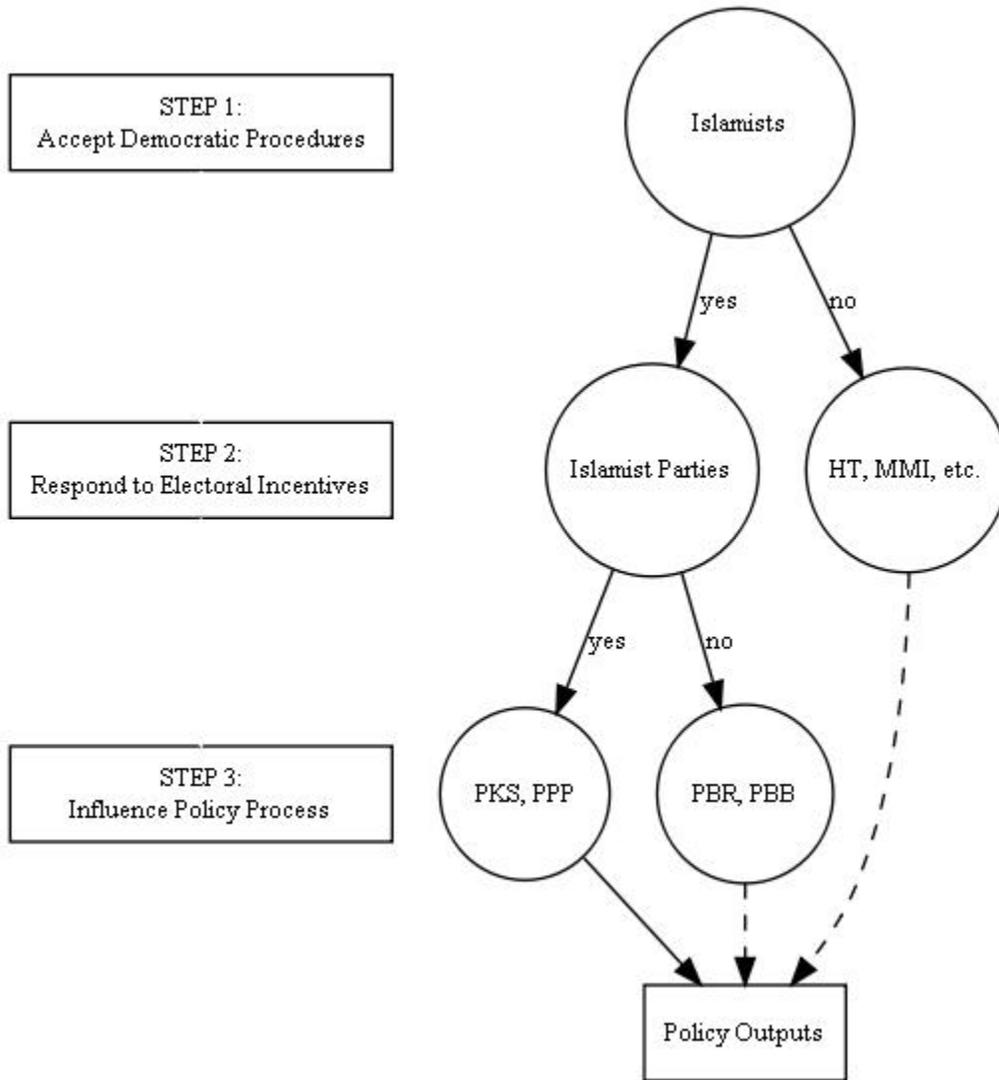


Figure 1: The Argument in Schematic Form

In Step 1, Indonesian Islamists choose whether to accept democratic procedures as the legitimate mechanism for allocating political authority. Those that do form political parties, and those that do not pursue alternative, non-electoral political strategies. In Step 2, Islamist parties choose whether or not respond to electoral incentives by broadening their campaign messages and party

platforms, seeking strategic alliances with non-Islamist political parties, and other similar tactics. Those that do—such as PKS and PPP—can expand their political support to a level that gives them sufficient electoral weight to participate in formal governing coalitions and to affect the policymaking process directly. While choosing to respond to electoral incentives is a necessary condition for electoral success, it is of course not a sufficient one. PKS and PPP have also been able to marshal financial resources to aid their electoral prospects, and PKS in particular relies on a cadre system. But parties that refuse to moderate their messages or to broaden their electoral appeal face marginalization in formal electoral politics. Steps 1 and 2, then, encompass the process through which democracy has transformed political Islam in Indonesia.

From there, the second transformation begins at Step 3, at which successful Islamist political parties choose whether or not to attempt to influence the policymaking process. Conceivably, these Islamists who have met with some electoral success may choose not to do so, a choice which we do not show because it does not occur in the cases of which we are aware. In Figure 1 we draw a solid line from the node with PKS and PPP to the node containing policy outputs, and dashed lines from the nodes with PBR/PBB and non-party political organizations. The different lines represent different modes of political influence. PKS and PPP have the political clout to affect policymaking through formal political channels. The others cannot affect policy change in this way, but can still affect policymaking through mass mobilization and other means.

The temporal ordering of the three steps in our theory is not accidental. That is, stealth Islamization follows the normalization of Islamist party politics, not the other way around. Writing in spring 2010, we in fact believe that Indonesia's second transformation is ongoing rather than complete, and we still see it as possible that current trends in stealth Islamization will

stall or even be reversed. Still, the extent to which stealth Islamization eventually succeeds is irrelevant for our theory of the process through which actors attempt to further the Islamist political agenda within the confines of a procedurally democratic Indonesian political system. That process of issue-based mobilization and strategic alliance formation is indeed occurring, and is the consequence of the prior choices by some Islamists to accept the procedural legitimacy of Indonesian democracy.

It should by now be clear that ours is not a purely structural argument, but rather one in which political agency plays an important analytical role. There is a point at which the leaders and members of various Islamist political organizations can choose between participating in democratic politics as parties and not doing so. Choosing to participate in elections means acknowledging that political power will be gained through winning elections, but this choice is not structurally determined. Nor, as we have taken pains to emphasize, does this choice foreclose other avenues of political organization to further an Islamist political agenda. Adhering to democratic procedures—even when doing so results in the transformation of Islamist party politics—does not entail abandoning an Islamist political agenda. But the choice to accept procedural democracy does result in new constraints upon Islamist political parties.

As political scientists, we believe that this theoretical framework is relevant for understanding political Islam and democracy across the Muslim world, although we recognize that the absence of other consolidated democracies in the Muslim world prevents us from exploring our ideas in other Muslim-majority democracies. In Turkey, for example, Islamists cannot legally participate in electoral politics as Islamists, but rather must refrain from adopting openly Islamist rhetoric and campaign tactics in order to avoid being disbanded by the country's Kemalist political establishment. But Islamist political parties in Indonesia are far from unique in

facing such constraints, and the theory that we have proposed in this section is one of single-issue parties rather than of Islamist parties per se. In fact, the dual transformation of political Islam and of democracy in Indonesia parallels two other dual transformations of single-issue parties in western Europe, of Christian Democratic parties in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and of Communist parties in the mid-20th century. We do not wish to make too much of these parallels, or to obscure fundamental differences among the three sets of cases.⁶ Still, there are tantalizing similarities that we think are instructive.

In the Christian Democratic cases, we see the Catholic church making a hard choice between agitating for political influence from outside of the political arena and creating “confessional parties” that would compete in elections in alliance with conservative forces against liberal forces. Kalyvas (1998) shows that the Catholic church would have preferred the former strategy (to avoid diluting its political influence), but eventually adopted the latter strategy because it proved surprisingly effective. These confessional parties, once in power, were able to use their resources to further Catholic interests in the policymaking process, but could only do so as part of broader “center-right” coalitions. These confessional parties mobilized Catholics, but no longer were merely tools of the Catholic church. They became like other parties.

In the Communist cases, we see single-issue parties (which is what Communist parties were) as well that chose to participate in electoral politics despite in many cases being based on a revolutionary strategy that rejected the very legitimacy of democratic elections. Przeworski and Sprague (1986) show how the expansion of democracy in Europe led these parties to moderate

⁶ One fundamental difference is the role of national Catholic churches in Europe, which have no parallel in the (Sunni) Muslim world. So the players are different. Another fundamental difference is the nature of political conflict, over socio-economic concerns in the Communist cases versus religious concerns in the Muslim world. So the interests are different.

their demands as part of a broader strategy to win elections and direct policy. There was of course a split as well between those revolutionary parties that agreed to participate (and which in some countries adopted the moniker “socialist”) and those that chose to reject the formal political arena and remained more radical. From the 1950s through the 1980s there were periodic worries about the extent to which the radical anti-system left was allied with its moderate socialist counterparts, but already by the 1960s, Dahl (1966) could observe that Communist parties had abandoned their revolutionary strategies. Once in power, Communist parties did influence policies. However, as Przeworski (1985) and Przeworski and Sprague (1986) argue, the constraints of elections and mass public opinion forced them to abandon their more radical demands and to accede to other moderate policy platforms.

Both the Christian Democratic cases and the Communist cases share with Islamism a concern with democracy’s paradox of participation. Religious parties in the late 19th century and Communist parties in the early 20th centuries participated in democratic politics even though they opposed democracy. Both also share dual transformations: subsequent to entering democratic politics, these parties became part of the system in which they chose to participate, adopted broader platforms and electoral strategies, and affected policy from within the formal political arena while periodically mobilizing support from outside of it. Finally, the temporal ordering of our account—accept democratic procedures, respond to electoral incentives, influence the policy processes—choose appears to be similar across the three sets of cases. We view this as suggestive evidence that the dual transformations of political Islam and democracy may continue in much the same path as did the transformations of confessional and socialist parties in Europe.

IV. THE EVIDENCE

We do not have the space here to marshal all of the empirical evidence we will require to support our arguments convincingly. Instead, we outline here our strategy for doing so, with the understanding that a full account will require a book-length treatment.

Our proposed empirical strategy is an eclectic, mixed-method approach that combines quantitative approaches (using electoral data and original survey data) alongside qualitative data drawn from our own field interviews and from Indonesia's 20th century political history. Our first task is to trace the origins of contemporary Indonesian political Islam from the pre-revolutionary period until just before the collapse of the New Order. Doing so will allow us to characterize the nature of political conflict—among Islamists as well as between Islamists and other Indonesian political groups—at the onset of the contemporary democratic period. It will show the historical evolution of those groups that have accepted procedural democracy and those that have not.

From there, we will turn to three conditions that have driven the normalization of Islamic party politics. We need evidence that (1) parties seek votes, (2) parties believe that voters are responsive to their campaign messages, and (3) Indonesian policy preferences are diverse. Our field research, including interviews with party leaders, provides us the evidence necessary to support points (1) and (2). Our extensive survey data drawn from repeated national public opinion surveys conducted from 1999 until 2010 will confirm point (3). We also will make reference to our other work (Liddle and Mujani 2007; Pepinsky et al. 2010) that compares religion with other issues as determinants of individual voting behavior in Indonesia. In presenting these data, we will demonstrate the extent to which these three conditions interact to shape Islamist party strategies in the first three elections.

From there, we will turn to evidence of the ongoing process of stealth Islamization. We will again turn to our field interviews and our reading of contemporary Indonesian political

developments to show how Islamists forge strategic coalitions with their non-Islamist partners in order to shape legislation and policy. We focus on several policy areas: recent anti-pornography legislation, the Ahmadiyah issue, Islamic banking, local *syariah* regulations, illegal marriages (*nikah siri*), blasphemy (*penistaan agama*), and proposed amendments to Article 29 of the Indonesian constitution. We will draw on both Hamayotsu's (2009) work on PKS' mobilizational strategy and to Mujani and Liddle's (2009) characterization of what they call PKS' "two-track strategy." To demonstrate that our causal story holds, we also need evidence that (4) there is some support for an Islamist political agenda, and (5) that non-Islamists are willing to accede to this agenda or to log-roll on key components of it. Our survey data will show support for (4), and our field research will allow us to demonstrate (5).

Looking forward, we see two important conclusions from our work. The first is that by focusing on democracy as a process that helps to shape and is in turn shaped by the groups that participate in it, we generate new insights into the relationship between democracy and political Islam. As noted above, this relationship is a dynamic and mutually constitutive one, something that analyses of political Islam's compatibility with democracy miss. The second conclusion is that the dual transformations that we identify in political Islam and democracy bear striking resemblance to dual transformations that occurred earlier in Europe. This suggests how the tools developed to study democracy and party development elsewhere in the world might be fruitfully applied to the study of political Islam in Indonesia.

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