

MANAGING POLITICS AND ISLAM IN INDONESIA

Donald J. Porter

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Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia

Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia examines the politics of Islam and the state in Indonesia over recent decades, during which time there has been a notable resurgence of Islamic political movements. It argues that after the state had consistently worked to restrict and exclude political Islam from power, in the late 1980s and 1990s, there was a change whereby Suharto courted the support of, and began to incorporate, Muslim interests within the political system.

One unintended consequence of this was to raise Muslims' political expectations and to mobilise Muslim political interests in the context of broadening 'pro-democracy' opposition which contributed to the downfall of Suharto's regime. Based on extensive original research, including interviews with participants, this book charts the shifts in relations between Islam and the Indonesian state over time, assessing the impact on other groups, and on the overall cohesion of Indonesia.

Donald J. Porter completed his PhD at the Australian National University and is currently engaged at the Southeast Asia and Pacific branch of the Australian Department of Defence.

Foreword

Indonesia is the world's largest predominantly Muslim country but its government has never been in the hands of leaders determined to identify the state with Islam. On the contrary, the state ideology of *Pancasila* (Five Principles) embodies a vision of a pluralist state in which no particular religion is endowed with special privileges. Although 87 per cent of the population is Muslim, popular support for the demand that some form of an Islamic state be established and *shar'iah* law implemented has never been widespread. Nevertheless part of the Muslim community has been mobilised from time to time behind Islamic issues. Although radical Muslims have never been near to toppling the government, they have considerable capacity to 'cause problems' by mobilising their supporters. Under the governments of President Sukarno and, especially, President Suharto, political Islam was therefore usually seen as a threat. Today, in the democratic conditions following the fall of Suharto's New Order regime, vigorous Muslim parties have re-emerged calling for expanded Muslim influence in the government and the introduction of *shar'iah* law but these parties have failed to win extensive electoral support.

In this study, Don Porter examines the way in which the government, especially during the three decades of authoritarian military-backed rule under President Suharto, dealt with Islamic political challenges. Suharto relied in part on straightforward repression and many radical Muslims spent years in jail. But Suharto used carrot as well as stick. In a regime that was as corrupt as any in the world, the president tied the competing segments of the national and regional elites to his regime by distributing material benefits that rewarded loyalists, attracted former opponents and punished those who 'betrayed' him. Suharto's pyramid of patronage worked in part through corporatist political institutions that provided representation for the elites of various sectors of society.

Porter shows how corporatist strategies can be used by authoritarian regimes to tame potential opposition, in this case from the Islamic camp. For several decades Suharto successfully tied favoured Islamic interests to his regime while excluding others. Muslim students and other radicals could occasionally demonstrate in the streets but the regime was able to maintain its hold over key sections of the Islamic elite. Through incorporation they were able to ensure that

their voice was at least heard and obtain a few crumbs from the ruler's table. While many authors have used a corporatist framework to explain how governments have kept a balance between economic groups, Porter's contribution is to apply this framework to understanding how an authoritarian government has used corporatist methods to keep political Islam under control.

Porter's book, however, is not limited to examining how an authoritarian regime maintained itself in power but also looks at the way its power was undermined and how it finally collapsed. In other words, corporatism does not always work for rulers. In this case, Suharto opted to move from exclusionary to inclusionary corporatism by allowing his favourite minister, Professor B. J. Habibie, to establish in 1990 a new Islamic organisation to attract not only Muslims who had previously been unenthusiastic about the regime but also those who had been vociferous dissidents. Some allowed themselves to be convinced that the leopard really had changed its spots while others, more realistically, grasped what they saw as an opportunity to entrench Islamic influence in preparation for the inevitable succession—as Suharto passed his seventieth year. Porter, of course, does not focus on Islamic politics alone but shows how Suharto played 'the Islamic card' by inserting a new Muslim organisation into an already complex balance of incorporated interests involving the military, business, the regions and others. According to Porter, Suharto hoped to 'maintain a shifting disequilibrium of forces' in which political Islam would play an enhanced role. But, the foundation of the Islamic organisation, ICMI, in fact failed to incorporate smoothly the new element into the political elite. On the contrary, it stimulated sharper rivalries with other segments.

This political struggle, of course, was played out against a background of a transformed society created by three decades of steady—to some extent, oil-financed—economic growth. Indonesia in 1998 was very different to the Indonesia of 1968 when Suharto finally achieved the 'full' presidency after serving in an acting capacity for a year and holding effective power since 1966. The Indonesian economy had become increasingly integrated into the world economy and a still small, but growing, middle class had appeared, among whom Muslims were much more prominent than they had been in the past. The Indonesian political elite, however, was still sharply divided when disaster, in the form of the Asian Monetary Crisis, struck in 1997. No longer backed by a cohesive political elite, Suharto had few political resources left at his disposal when massive rioting broke out and forced him to resign in May 1998.

In the conclusion to his study, Porter asks whether Suharto made a fatal political error when he decided to incorporate the Islamic forces that had previously opposed his regime. Did corporatism contain the seeds of its own destruction or was it just an error of judgement on the president's part? Porter's answer is that Suharto's turn to inclusionary corporatism in 1990 contributed to his fall eight years later but does not provide the full explanation. In any case the corporatist structures that Suharto had built soon unravelled, ironically under President Habibie, the man appointed by Suharto to head ICMI, the organisation that contributed much to the elite disunity that proceeded the

Foreword

regime's fall. Coming to office with a divided elite, Habibie's presidency was short and he was succeeded by Indonesia's first democratically (more or less) elected president, Abdurrahman Wahid, who had occasionally allowed himself to be dragged into the corporatist framework but never became fully entrapped. Abdurrahman's tenure, too, was short, but that is a different story.

This book makes an important contribution to the literature on corporatism by applying the concept to a government's strategies to control a potential political challenge—in this case a political challenge emanating from a religious community. It also shows in considerable detail how different sections of Indonesia's Islamic community responded to that effort. And it shows that the corporatist strategy ultimately failed. Porter's study has focused on an important aspect of authoritarianism in Indonesia and provides significant insights applicable to other countries with similar forms of government. I recommend it not only to readers with a special interest in Indonesian politics or a special interest in Islamic politics but also to those seeking to understand authoritarian government in general.

Harold Crouch

October 2001

Director, Indonesia Project, International Crisis Group, Jakarta

Preface

The book is the product of detailed study in fulfilment of my doctorate, which included two years of fieldwork of various Islamic organisations in their interactions with other key elements of state and society, carried out in the years 1994, 1996, and 1997. I interviewed a wide spectrum of Muslim political and organisational leaders, scholars, intellectuals and national political leaders (both Muslim and non-Muslim). My interests in this line of inquiry began with an attempt to understand the possible connection between the political, ideological and intellectual posturing of Indonesian Muslim leaders and the institutional and power structures of the Suharto regime. In the first year of my research, I interviewed these people regarding current and past political events, as well as documented people's political and religious stances and attitudes on the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia. I became particularly interested in how a Muslim leader's location as a member of an independent organisation, or as someone more closely aligned to the state, might have affected their stance on certain issues.

Political developments in Indonesia began to unfold so rapidly in the second year of my research that it caused a shift in the focus of my inquiry. By this stage of the research, I became keenly interested in the role of the Suharto regime in organising Muslim interests. However, the mounting challenges to Suharto's rule led me also to consider the role of the state in organising Muslim interests against anti-regime forces. Subsequent political developments leading to Suharto's resignation in May 1998 reinforced my desire to understand the relationship between the state, political Islam, and other social interests during Suharto's last years.

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I would like to acknowledge several people in Australia and Indonesia for the contribution they made to the book. First, and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Harold Crouch, for his considerable assistance at important moments of the book. I would also like to thank my advisers, Prof. Anthony Milner and Prof. Jim Fox for their specific contributions. Special acknowledgment must go to Dr Greg Fealy, who advised on chapter six concerning the Islamic traditionalist organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama. Prof. Anthony Johns offered good advice at early stages of my research on the literary history of Islam, as well as took a personal interest in my progress. Prof. Ben Kerkvliet, Dr Ron May, Dr Edward Aspinall, and Dr Sinclair Dinnen also gave helpful input into the final writing of the book. There are many other academic colleagues and Ph.D. candidates who helped provide a stimulating intellectual environment during my time at the Department of Political and Social Change within the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. Special thanks must also go to the Faculty of Asian Studies for kindly providing me with an office for the final manuscript preparation.

The Indonesian President, KH Abdurrahman Wahid, when he was still chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, was of great assistance to me in 1993–1994 and 1996–1997. He provided me with accommodation both in his household and in other locations and gave me access to, as well as advice on, his organisation and its leaders. I would like to thank the many government officials, politicians, and community leaders cited in the book for permitting me to interview them. I would also like to acknowledge for their assistance the following organisations: the Department of Religion, the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI), the Centre for Information and Development Studies (CIDES), the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI), the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia, the Jakarta campus of the State Islamic Tertiary Institute (IAIN), the journal *Studia Islamika*, the Paramadina Foundation and the Association for Pesantren and Community Development (P3M). Finally, I would like to thank Mayasari and her family for their immense moral and material support, which they gave during much of my research.

Abbreviations

<i>abangan</i>	Nominal Muslims
ABRI	<i>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</i> (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia)
AJI	Alliance of Independent Journalists
Akrab	<i>Aksi Rakyat Bersatu</i> (Unified People's Action)
<i>aliran kepercayaan</i>	mystical belief systems
AMPI	<i>Angkatan Muda Pembangunan Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Development Generation of Youth)
<i>azas tunggal</i>	sole ideological foundation or unifying principle
BAIS	<i>Badan Inteljin Strategis</i> (Strategic Intelligence Agency)
BAKIN	<i>Badan Kordinasi Intelijen Negara</i> (State Intelligence Coordinating Agency)
BAKOMUBIN	<i>Badan Koordinasi Mubaligh se-Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Co-ordinating Body of Muslim Preachers)
Bakorstanas	<i>Badan Kordinasi Pemantapan Stabilitas Nasional</i> (Coordinating Agency for the Maintenance of National Stability)
Banser	paramilitary wing of GP Ansor
Bapilu	<i>Badan Pengendalian Pemilu</i> (General Election Controlling Body)
Bappenas	<i>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional</i> (National Development Planning Agency)
Bernas	<i>Barisan Nasional</i> (National Front)
BIA	<i>Badan Inteljin ABRI</i> (ABRI Intelligence Agency)
BKPRMI	<i>Badan Komunikasi Pemuda Remaja Masjid Indonesia</i> (Communication Board of Indonesian Mosque Youth)

their voice was at least heard and obtain a few crumbs from the ruler's table. While many authors have used a corporatist framework to explain how governments have kept a balance between economic groups, Porter's contribution is to apply this framework to understanding how an authoritarian government has used corporatist methods to keep political Islam under control.

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Abbreviations

FKLD	<i>Forum Komunikasi Lembaga Dakwah</i> (Communication Forum for Dakwah Institutes)
FKOI-KK	<i>Forum Komunikasi Ormas Islam</i> (Islamic Communication Forum for Mass Organisations)
FKPPI	<i>Forum Komunikasi Putra-Putri Purnawirawan</i> <i>Indonesia</i> (Communication Forum for Sons and Daughters of ABRI Veterans)
FKSMJ	<i>Forum Komunikasi Senat Mahasiswa Jakarta</i> (Jakarta Communication Forum of Student Senates)
Forum Kota	City Forum
FUNGS	<i>Forum Ummat Islam Pendukung Konstitusi</i> (Forum of Muslim Supporters of the Constitution)
Furkon	<i>Forum Ummat Islam untuk Keadilan dan</i> <i>Konstitusi</i> (Forum for Upholding the Constitution and Justice)
GBHN	<i>Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara</i> (Broad Outlines of State Policy)
GMKI	<i>Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Christian University Student Movement)
GMNI	<i>Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Nationalist University Student Movement, the students' wing of the former Indonesian Nationalist Party, PNI)
Golkar	<i>Golongan Karya</i> (Government party)
GP Ansor	<i>Gerakan Pemuda Ansor</i> (NU's Ansor Youth Movement)
GPII	<i>Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia</i> (Movement of Indonesian Islamic Youth)
GPK	<i>Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan</i> (Security Disturbance Movement)
GUPPI	<i>Gabungan Usaha Perbaikan Pendidikan Islam</i> (Union of Efforts to Improve Islamic Education)
<i>halal</i>	permitted
Hankam	<i>Pertahanan Keamanan</i> (Defence and Security—Dwifungsi's first function)
Hansip	<i>Pertahanan Sipil</i> (Civil Defence)
<i>haram</i>	prohibited
HIP	<i>Hubungan Industri Pancasila</i> (Pancasila Industrial Relations)

Abbreviations

BKSP	<i>Badan Kerja Sama Pondok Pesantren</i> (Pondok Pesantren Co-operation Body)
BMI	<i>Bank Muallimat Islam</i>
BMOIWI	<i>Badan Musyawarah Organisasi Islam Wanita Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Islamic Women's Consultation Body)
BPPMI	<i>Badan Pembina Perpustakaan Masjid Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Agency for the Promotion of Mosque Libraries)
BPPT	<i>Badan Penkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi</i> (Agency of Applied Technology Research)
Bulog	<i>Badan Urusan Logistik</i> (Logistic Affairs Agency)
CIDES	Centre for Information and Development Studies
CPDS	Centre for Policy Development Studies
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
<i>dakwah</i>	Islamic propagation
DDII	<i>Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Islamic Dakwah Council)
DEMA	<i>Dewan Mahasiswa</i> (University Student Councils)
Depdagri	<i>Departemen Dalam Negeri</i> (Department of Home Affairs)
Dephankam	<i>Departemen Pertahanan Keamanan</i> (Department of Defence and Security)
<i>Dewan Pembina Dharma Wanita</i>	Supervisor's Council Women's Service/Duty—an official association of wives of civil servants
DI/TII	<i>Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia</i> (Darul Islam/Indonesian Islamic Army)
DMI	<i>Dewan Mesjid Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Mosque Council)
DPA	<i>Dewan Pertimbangan Agung</i> (Supreme Advisory Council)
DPKSH	<i>Dewan Penegakan Keamanan dan Sistem Hukum</i> (Security and Law Council)
DPR	<i>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat</i> (Parliament)
<i>Dwi-fungsi</i>	Dual Function—ABRI doctrine stipulating a dual role of defence and politics
F-ABRI	<i>Fraksi ABRI</i> (ABRI fraction in the parliament)
Famred	<i>Front Aksi Mahasiswa untuk Reformasi dan Demokrasi</i> (Student Action Front for Reform and Democracy)
Fatayat	Younger women's wing of NU
<i>fatwa</i>	Pronouncement or ruling by Islamic authority
FBSI	<i>Federasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia</i> (All-Indonesian Labour Federation)

Abbreviations

KISDI	<i>Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam</i> (Indonesian Committee for Solidarity of the Islamic World)
KND	<i>Koalisi Nasional untuk Demokrasi</i> (National Coalition for Democracy)
KNPI	<i>Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia</i> (National Committee of Indonesian Youth)
Kokar	<i>Korps Karyawan</i> (Corps of Functionaries)
Kokarmendagri	<i>Korps Karyawan Menteri Dalam Negeri</i> (Corps of Functionaries for the Ministry of Internal Affairs)
<i>Komando Jihad</i>	Islamic Holy War Command
Komnas HAM	<i>Komisi Nasional untuk Hak Asasi Manusia</i> (National Human Rights Commission)
Komrad	<i>Komite Mahasiswa dan Rakyat untuk Demokrasi</i> (Student and People Committee for Democracy)
Kopassus	Komando Pasukan Khusus (Special Forces Command)
Kopkamtib	<i>Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban</i> (Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order)
Korpri	<i>Korps Pegawai Republik Indonesia</i> (Corps of Civil Servants of the Republic of Indonesia)
Kosgoro	<i>Koperasi Serba Gotong Royong</i> (Total Self-help Cooperative)
Kostrad	<i>Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat</i> (Army Strategic Reserve Command)
KOWANI	<i>Kongres Wanita Nasional Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Women's National Congress)
KPRP	<i>Komite Perjuangan Rakyat untuk Perubahan</i> (People's Struggle Committee for Change, a front organisation for PRD)
KUD <i>kyai</i>	<i>Koperasi Unit Desa</i> (Village Cooperative Unit) (religious scholars who run a system of traditional Islam boarding schools mainly in rural Java—also written KH as the designated title)
LDII	<i>Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Institute of Islamic Propagation)
LDK	<i>Lembaga Dakwah Kampus</i> (Campus Dakwah Institutes)
Lemhanas	<i>Lembaga Ketahanan Nasional</i> (National Resilience (or Defence) Institute)

Abbreviations

LIPI	<i>Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Institute of Sciences)
LMMY	<i>Liga Mahasiswa Muslim Yogyakarta</i> (Yogyakarta League of Muslim University Students)
LP3ES	<i>Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan, dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial</i> (Social and Economic Research, Education, and Information Institute)
LPPTKA	<i>Lembaga Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Taman Kanak-Kanak Al-Qur'an Indonesia</i> (<i>Al-Qur'an Kindergarten Guidance and Development Institute</i>)
LSM	<i>Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat</i> (Self-reliant Community Institution)
Malari	<i>Malapetaka 15 Januari</i> (15 January (1974) Affair)
MARI	<i>Majelis Rakyat Indonesia</i> (The Council of Indonesian People)
Masyumi	<i>Majelis Syuro Muslim Indonesia</i> (Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims)
MAWI	<i>Majelis Agung Wali-Gereja Indonesia</i> (Indonesian (Catholic) Council of Bishops)
MDI	<i>Majelis Dakwah Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Dakwah Council)
<i>Mimbar Bebas</i>	Free Speech Forums
MKGR	<i>Musyawaharah Kekeluargaan Gotong Royong</i> (Self-help Family Association, a founding organisation of Golkar)
MPR	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat</i> (People's Consultative Assembly)
<i>Mubaliq/dai</i>	Islamic preacher
Muhammdiaayah	organisation representing the modernist wing of Indonesian Islam
MUI	<i>Majelis Ulama Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Council of Ulama)
Munas	<i>Musyawaharah Nasional</i> (National (Consultative) Congress)
Muslimat	Elder women's wing of NU
NKK	<i>Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus</i> (Normalisation of Campus Life)
NU	<i>Nahdlatul Ulama</i> (Revival of the Religious Scholars—Indonesia's largest Islamic 'traditionalist' organisation)
Opsus	<i>Operasi Khusus</i> (Special Operations)

Abbreviations

OTB	<i>Organisasi Tanpa Bentuk</i> (Formless Organisation)
P3M	<i>Perkumpulan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat</i> (Association for Pesantren and Community Development)
P4	<i>Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila</i> (Guidelines for the Comprehension and Implementation of Pancasila)
Pam Swakarsa	<i>Pengamanan Swakarsa</i> (Civilian Security Militia)
PAN	<i>Partai Amanat Nasional</i> (National Mandate Party)
Pancasila	the five (<i>panca</i>) guiding principles (<i>sila</i>) of the Republic of Indonesia
Parkindo	<i>Partai Kristen Indonesia</i> (the Indonesian Christian Party)
Parmusi	<i>Partai Muslimin Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Muslim Party)
PBB	<i>Partai Bulan Bintang</i> (Crescent Moon and Star Party)
PCPP	<i>Persatuan Cendekiawan Pembangunan Pancasila</i> (Association of Pancasila Development Intellectuals)
PDI	<i>Partai Demokrasi Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Democracy Party)
PDI-P	<i>Partai Demokrasi Indonesia—Perjuangan</i> (Indonesian Democracy Party of Struggle)
PDR	<i>Partai Daulat Rakyat</i> (People's Sovereignty Party)
<i>pembangunan</i>	development
<i>pembinaan</i>	guidance, supervision
Persis	<i>Persatuan Islam</i> (Unity of Islam)
Perti	<i>Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam</i> (Association of Islamic Education)
<i>pesantren</i>	school of Koranic studies for Muslim students, mostly boarders
<i>Petisi 50</i>	Petition of 50 Group—an opposition group consisting of fifty members of retired officers and civilians
PGI	<i>Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia</i> (Communion of Indonesian Churches)
PGRI	<i>Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia</i> (Teachers' Union of the Republic of Indonesia)
PII	<i>Pelajar Islam Indonesia</i> (Organisation of Indonesian Islamic Secondary School Students)

Abbreviations

PK	<i>Partai Keadilan</i> (Justice Party)
PKB	<i>Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa</i> (National Awakening Party)
PKI	<i>Partai Komunis Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Communist Party)
PKK	<i>Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga</i> (Association for Promoting Family Welfare)
PKP	<i>Partai Keadilan dan Persatuan</i> (Justice and Unity Party)
PKU	<i>Partai Kebangkitan Umat</i> (Community Awakening Party)
PMII	<i>Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Muslim University Students Movement—NU's university students associations)
PMKRI	<i>Persatuan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia</i> (Catholic University Students Association of the Republic of Indonesia)
PMP	<i>Pendidikan Moral Pancasila</i> (Pancasila Moral Education)
PNI	<i>Partai Nasional Indonesia</i> (Indonesian National Party)
PNU	<i>Partai Nahdlatul Ulama</i> (Nahdlatul Ulama Party)
PPBI	<i>Pusat Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Centre for Labour Struggle)
PPP	<i>Partai Persatuan Pembangunan</i> (United Development Party)
PRD	<i>Partai Rakyat Demokrasi</i> (People's Democratic Party)
PSII	<i>Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia</i> (Islamic Union Party)
PUDI	<i>Partai Uni Demokrasi Indonesia</i> (Union of Indonesian Democracy Party)
PUI	<i>Partai Umat Islam</i> (Muslim Community Party)
<i>Rais Aam</i>	Chairman of the Central Syuriah; effectively president-general of NU
<i>Rapat Akbar</i>	mass meeting
Ratih	<i>Rakyat Terlatih</i> (Trained People—civilian militia established by ABRI)
Repelita	<i>Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun</i> (Five Year Development Plan)
RMI	<i>Rabithalul Mai'ahidil Islamiyah</i> (NU's <i>pesantren</i> organisation)