
NO TURKISH DELIGHT: THE IMPASSE OF ISLAMIC PARTY POLITICS IN INDONESIA

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Invoking a long-held but no longer correct assumption, a recent book describes Turkey as “the only Muslim secular-democratic state” in the world.² Much earlier, Bernard Lewis had ventured to answer the question of why Turkey was the only existing democratic Muslim-majority country by pointing out that it has had “the longest and closest contact” with Western civilization.³ However, without such a history or similar geographical proximity to the West, Indonesia has emerged since the fall of the dictator Soeharto in 1998 as another strong exemplar of an overwhelmingly Muslim-majority country where secular democratic politics are prevalent, no matter how faulty and predatory in nature.⁴

As in Turkey, Islamic forces in Indonesia continue to be active within secular democratic politics, pursuing parliamentary as well as extra-parliamentary strategies. In both cases as well, shadowy organizations have employed violent methods in their efforts to establish an Islamic state. But it is particularly in the arena of parliamentary

¹ I thank Andi Rachman, Harun Ercan, Benny Setiawan, and Khelmy Kalam Pribadi for the assistance they provided during fieldwork that contributed material for this article, and also Nicole Andres at Murdoch University.

² Banu Eligur, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 1.

³ Bernard Lewis, “Why Turkey Is the Only Muslim Democracy,” *Middle East Quarterly* 1,1 (1994): 41–49.

⁴ It is generally accepted that Muslims make up about 98 percent of the Turkish population of 73 million, and about 88 percent of the Indonesian population of close to 240 million people. The case for including the likes of Bangladesh and Pakistan on this exclusive, two-nation list of democratic, Muslim-majority countries remains rather weak given that electoral politics there have less convincingly supplanted authoritarian practices.

democracy that a great contrast between Turkey and Indonesia has emerged: political parties that originated from Islamic-oriented social and political networks have been distinctly unsuccessful in post-authoritarian Indonesia when compared to their counterparts in Turkey. Nothing illustrates this distinction better than the fact that the Justice and Development Party (Turkish: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) has ruled Turkey since 2002, while the most prominent of Indonesia's Islamic political parties, Justice and Prosperity Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS), has so far managed to garner less than 8 percent of the vote in its best national electoral performance. PKS is highly unlikely to take over the reins of the Indonesian government any time soon, although its inroads in provincial and regional-level elections have offered some compensation.

Why have Indonesia's Islamic parties only found limited success in the arena of electoral politics? Of course, this is a question that continues to vex the Islamic parties concerned and one that can be answered with the obvious rejoinder that there are large numbers of merely "statistical" Muslims in Indonesia, and therefore individuals who don't necessarily vote for Islamic parties. However, the situation is not so dissimilar in Turkey. Secularism has run deep in Turkish society since the Kemalist revolution that was spurred by the Ottoman defeat in the First World War and thus such issues as lifting the ban on female students wearing headscarves in universities continue to have a deeply polarizing effect.⁵ Yet Islamic party politics has been resoundingly successful there for almost a decade. It is therefore suggested here that culture-based explanations—even those based on deep knowledge of local values and ideas emerging from different interpretations of religious doctrine—are unlikely to account sufficiently for how Islamic political parties might fare under democratic frameworks, or to address larger questions about the reasons for the presence or absence of democracy in Muslim countries.

The intention of this article, nevertheless, is to address the more restricted matter of the inability of Indonesia's Islamic parties to launch a serious challenge to state power through insights that may be obtained via a close comparison with the Turkish case. By juxtaposing the PKS and AKP, in particular, this article offers a political economy-oriented understanding of the hitherto relatively limited achievements of Islamic party politics in Indonesia. The understanding is achieved not so much through a dissection of the parties in question as by a broad-based analysis of Islamic party politics in Indonesia in the context of social-structural changes since the advent of the New Order in the 1960s and the development of Indonesian capitalism. In the course of the analysis, Islamic party politics in Turkey is necessarily examined, too, in relation to capitalist development in that country. It is argued here that, unlike the AKP, the PKS has not been able to promote itself as an effective vehicle that will uphold the diverse social interests that have emerged out of Indonesia's modernization processes. In contrast to Turkey's AKP, the PKS has been unable to establish a coalition with populist credibility while simultaneously appealing to "rational" and "modern" policies and methods of governance. As a consequence, the PKS remains predominantly identified with an educated, urban, middle-class constituency, rather

⁵ The Kemalist Revolution abolished the previously existing sultanate and caliphate and ushered in a modern Turkish Republic that was nationalist and radically secular in ideology.

than with an alliance of a cross-section of society waging their struggles under the banner of Islamic values or ideals.

There are ample grounds for a comparison with the Turkish case. The most obvious is that Turkey so far presents the most successful example of Islamic political forces being able to overcome secular rivals entrenched in the institutions of state power—outside of Iran, where the feat was, of course, achieved in 1979 through non-electoral means. Furthermore, although the Turkish experience lacks anything similar to the anti-communist bloodbath of the 1960s in Indonesia, Islamic forces in Turkey had likewise played a part in the suppression of Leftist political forces in the context of the Cold War, thereby greatly affecting the present social configuration of power and also greatly influencing the terrain on which Islamic politics operate. This inclination was seen most recently in the years following the military coup of 1980, when the Turkish military forged a temporary alliance with representatives of the Islamist stream of politics against a then-vibrant, if internally chaotic, Left.⁶ The Motherland Party-led government, which ruled for some time after the military returned power to civilian politicians in 1983, involved leaders of a distinctly Islamist hue, including members of *tarekat*, or religious orders, thereby providing an indication that the ascendancy of the AKP was not the result of some sudden development, but that underlying processes had been at work since decades earlier.

Comparisons with the Turkish case are also relevant because the PKS, so far the most successful of Islamic-oriented political parties in the post-Soeharto era, has quite consciously emulated the AKP in many respects since the Indonesian general election of 2004.⁷ In this connection, it is important that the AKP effectively represents a successful attempt to address the grievances of the swelling ranks of the urban poor and the ambitions of sometimes-frustrated young, upwardly mobile members of the educated middle class, as well as newly influential sections of the bourgeoisie against secular bureaucratic-military-business elites who have largely dominated the state since the inception of the modern Turkish Republic in 1923. By contrast, the ethnic composition of the Indonesian bourgeoisie presents the PKS with an almost intractable problem in bringing together powerful sections of big business, which is still dominated by Chinese-Indonesians as a legacy of the colonial division of labor, and elements of middle- and lower-class society. Another problem is that the populist arena in Indonesian politics has been long inhabited by established secular vehicles, as seen in the dominance of the state party, Golkar (Golongan Karya, Functional Groups), and its array of affiliates over a large part of organizational life during the New Order. This was seen as well in the late challenge posed by a resurgent, though rather muted, version of Soekarnoism onto which oppositional politics was focused—through the PDI-P (Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle)—for much of the final decade of Soeharto's rule. In other words, both government and opposition forces in the late

⁶ Interview with Faik Bulit, Leftist public intellectual, Istanbul, October 13, 2010. Also see Eligur, *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey*, pp. 88–93.

⁷ Anthony Bubalo, Greg Fealy, and Whit Mason, "Zealous Democrats: Islamism and Democracy in Egypt, Indonesia, and Turkey," The Lowy Institute for International Policy Working Paper no. 25 (2008), pp. 71–72, available at www.lowyinstitute.org/Publication.asp?pid=909 (accessed October 10, 2010). In this report, influential PKS secretary general Anis Matta is described specifically as expressing great interest in studying the success of the AKP, which he attributes to adeptness in combining Islam with political and economic competence or credibility.

Soeharto years were not based on Islamic networks, in spite of the co-optation of Muslim middle-class intellectuals into the regime through ICMI (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia, Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals), a once ambitious organization that has now virtually dissipated. In fact, it was quite evident that the leaders of Islamic organizations considered to be “hardline” or “radical” were nowhere to be seen during the anti-Soeharto uprisings in 1998 that followed the Asian Economic Crisis. In spite of the key part played by KAMMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, National Front of Indonesian Muslim Students) in student demonstrations, and the galvanizing role played by Muhammadiyah leader Amien Rais, the street protests of 1998 that helped to bring Soeharto down had very little to do overtly with the aspirations of Islamic politics.⁸

It is significant that the major vehicle of secular politics in Turkey, the CHP (Turkish: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Republican People’s Party) had already lost its monopoly over state power and societal organization as early as 1950, when it was defeated in a general election.⁹ Although the AKP must continually confront the secular, nationalist Kemalist bulwark (especially in the judiciary and military), Islamic forces have had room to maneuver and develop since the 1950s in a way that was not possible for their Indonesian counterparts. By contrast, Golkar never allowed itself to perform poorly in elections, even if it meant continually resorting to manipulation. Moreover, due to past stringent Kemalist policies that restricted organized religious activity, the AKP faces no entrenched mass organization that can make demands on the allegiance of large sections of the *ummah* (Muslim community) on the basis of habit, tradition, or family background. The PKS, on the other hand, confronts the still formidable and vast, but typically quietist, networks of the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, the country’s largest Islamic organization). Those groups may have formed to protect the interests of urban traders and rural elites in the late colonial social order, but since then they have acquired a broad base of support and, more importantly, continue to enjoy legitimacy at the grassroots level in the present democracy. In other words, the PKS confronts rivals within and outside of Islamic politics, and those located within and outside of the state, in ways that the AKP does not. This is in spite of constitutional restrictions imposed on Islamic-oriented politics in Turkey and the threat of Kemalist reaction that might have been expected to severely constrain Islamist political parties.

Electoral Democracy and Islam

Comparing the experiences of the PKS and the AKP is a particularly instructive exercise, because the majority of analyses of Indonesian Islamic politics have lacked a comparative dimension and, therefore, missed some of the insights that may be obtained from looking beyond the limits of the Indonesian case, in spite of notable exceptions.¹⁰ It is true that the development of both parties could be easily taken to

⁸ For a contrary assessment of the events of 1998 and the role of Islamic social forces, see John Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms, and Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

⁹ The Republican People’s Party was defeated by the Democratic Party, which was overthrown in 1960 by a military coup. The Democratic Party leader and prime minister, Adnan Menderes, who had been accommodating toward Islamic groups, was hanged by the military.

¹⁰ See, for example, Robert Hefner, ed., *Remaking Muslim Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,

substantiate the idea, cherished by those looking through rosy liberal lenses, that participation in electoral politics inherently exerts ideologically moderating influences on Islamic political parties. However, the two parties' combined experiences suggest a process more complex than one of attitudinal changes favoring democracy that result from rising general economic prosperity or growing affluence in certain sections of society.¹¹ One should not overlook the fact that transformations within the PKS and the AKP—two major parties in the world of Islamic politics that have abandoned overt struggles to form an Islamic state in favor of a broad, good-governance-oriented agenda—have been dictated by the practical exigencies of navigating through particular constellations of power and interest. We are thus forced to look beyond simple issues of Islamic versus secular values to understand their trajectories.

It is well known that the PKS and the AKP have roots in social groups and networks that advocated for some sort of transformation towards an Islamic state, and that neither party overtly places that aim at the forefront of their agendas today. Unlike its immediate precursor, the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan, PK), the PKS has opted to subordinate the struggle to establish a state based on *sharia* to enshrining good governance and political integrity, with the goal being to expand its base of support.¹² More recently, PKS has controversially declared itself to be an “open party”—that is, one that welcomes non-Muslims to the fold, though in practice one would be certainly hard-pressed to find non-Muslims holding important positions within the party.¹³ Similarly, some AKP activists prefer to refer to themselves as “conservative democrats,” rather than Islamists.¹⁴ On the other hand, members of the party have been cited describing it as an organization made up of “Muslim democrats.”¹⁵ Of course, AKP members are cognizant of the dangers of being tagged with the “Islamic party” label. Since opting to run in 2002 on a platform that relegated issues of the Islamic state to the background, the AKP has been fostering an image as a modern, forward-looking party, adeptly combining moral values, populist social policy, and economic neoliberalism. In doing so, it took full advantage of the general sentiment that mismanagement on the part of a decrepit previous government had been responsible for the economic crisis of 2001.

In a nutshell, the AKP offers a marriage between morality and the market. The regular use of the term “conservative” by the AKP to describe itself is significant; it is meant to signal adherence to governance based on morality—which in the Turkish context logically flows from Islam—as opposed to an overt commitment to Islamic law.

2005); and Robert Hefner, ed., *Making Modern Muslims: The Politics of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), among a relatively small number of works.

¹¹ Vali Nasr, *The Forces of Fortune: The Rise of the New Muslim Middle Class and What It Will Mean for Our World* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2009).

¹² Masdar Hilmy, *Islamism and Democracy in Indonesia: Piety and Pragmatism* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2010), p. 234.

¹³ There was already a precedent for non-Muslims' participation. See Bubalo et al., *Zealous Democrats*, p. 66: “... in areas with large non-Muslim populations, the PKS has nominated Christian candidates for legislative positions. In eastern Indonesia, for example, nine of the party's candidates at the 2004 elections were non-Muslim, one of whom was elected.”

¹⁴ Interview with members of the youth wing of the Istanbul branch of the AKP, October 13, 2010, in Istanbul.

¹⁵ Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2008), p. 54.

In a way that is not too dissimilar, PKS activists today suggest that the party still aims to ensure the running of the state according to ways that accord to the spirit of Islamic precepts without necessarily forcing *sharia* on the electorate.¹⁶ Although the PKS's apparent retreat on the issue has attracted the most attention, in fact the position of other Islamic parties is not so different.¹⁷

Several theses and books have already been written, including by Indonesian authors, about the role of Muslim campus groups in the initial history of what became the PKS.¹⁸ In fact, the PKS has certainly benefited from the narrative that it was established by idealistic yet learned young people, not out of place in modern institutions such as the university. It is well known that members of the so-called *tarbiyah* (education) movement, largely based on campus, were instrumental in the formation of what later evolved into the PK and then the PKS. It was no coincidence that the movement, organized into small cells in which "seniors" acted to discipline "juniors" through the inculcation of Islamic precepts,¹⁹ grew, almost in clandestine fashion, even while the New Order was repressing open student organizational life from the late 1970s. Moreover, the PKS has tried to establish a related image as a "clean" party, dissimilar fundamentally to others that are at home with Indonesia's infamously rampant corruption.

PKS was aided by the fact that many of its leaders emerged from a new generation of Islamic activists, hailing from the new urban middle class and in possession of high educational qualifications. Ostensibly, few have strong direct links with long-established Islamic organization vehicles, and, indeed, upon close examination, the political genealogies of the individuals who lead the PKS are actually quite varied. These range from links to the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah, to KISDI (Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam, Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World), and even the Masyumi, which was banned by Soekarno in 1960.²⁰ Many of these leaders had earlier embarked on careers as teachers, or young professionals and technocrats, and it is logical that some of these would have flirted with ICMI—the organization established in 1990 to smooth relations between Soeharto and the Islamic community.²¹ It is notable that ICMI was set up to help co-opt young members of the new Islamic urban middle class—a cohort that had been produced by sustained economic growth, and whose members' social ambitions were then already rising—by providing a conduit into the bureaucracy and to state power more generally. For

¹⁶ Interview with Rama Pratama, former student activist and current central leadership member of the PKS, July 14, 2010, in Jakarta.

¹⁷ See Bernhard Plattdasch, *Islamism in Indonesia: Politics in the Emerging Democracy* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2009), chapter 4. Also, my interview with Lukman Hakim Syaifuddin, member of parliament for PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, United Development Party), Jakarta, July 12, 2010. He stated that the PPP would only implement *sharia* if it is what the public wants.

¹⁸ Apart from Masdar Hilmy, *Islamism and Democracy: Piety and Pragmatism* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), see Imdadun Rahmat, *Ideologi Politik PKS: Dari Masjid Kampus ke Gedung Parlemen* (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2008); Ahmad Norma Permata, "Islamist Party and Democratic Participation: Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia, 1998–2006" (PhD dissertation, University of Münster, 2008); and Yon Machmudi, "Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of the Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)" (PhD dissertation, Australian National University, 2006).

¹⁹ Hilmy, *Islamism and Democracy: Piety and Pragmatism*, p. 208.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²¹ Interview with Imdadun Rahmat, deputy general secretary of the Nahdlatul Ulama, Jakarta, July 5, 2010.

example, Nur Mahmudi Ismail, a former president of the PKS, had been an employee of BPPT (Badan Penerapan dan Pengkajian Teknologi, Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology)—an institution then under the auspices of B. J. Habibie—and charged by Soeharto with leading ICMI from its inception. On the other hand, a guiding figure within the PK/PKS since its birth is Hilmy Aminuddin, who is credited with having been especially instrumental in disseminating the ideas of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in Indonesia, including those on organizational methods. He did so upon returning from studies in the Middle East and after a period in the 1980s during which he was detained by the military for his political activism. Interestingly, Hilmy Aminuddin is the son of Danu Muhammad Hasan, a noted Darul Islam leader, who was often accused of having been an operative of the infamous early New Order Machiavellian figure, General Ali Moertopo.²²

Similar to the PKS, the AKP likes to present itself as the party of choice for the educated youth, although it also rightly takes pride in its popularity with the most downtrodden in society, especially the urban poor.²³ In the case of the AKP, its embrace of democracy and market capitalism, and abandonment of the language of Islamic politics, has generated considerable support from Western governments, in spite of the Islamist background of many of its leaders, including current Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and President Abdullah Gul. Such a background might have been expected to generate the opposite response, given the mood that characterizes a world deeply affected by the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. It may be considered an irony, too, that the AKP has been spearheading Turkey's charge into the European Union, although its efforts have fallen short of acquiring EU membership. Notwithstanding these matters, the internal composition of the AKP is fairly complex, accommodating pious as well as more pragmatic tendencies, and characterized by loyalties that may shift depending on the issues at hand.²⁴

It is notable that the success of the AKP has encouraged the celebration of what is referred to as the "Turkish model" of Islamic accommodation with democracy.²⁵ But the way in which the lingering threat of authoritarian reaction from within the still-formidable institutions of the Kemalist social order—not least the military and judiciary—has affected the development of this "model" should not be underestimated. It could be reasonably suggested that it is this ever-present threat of authoritarian reaction, from what is referred to as a highly secretive "deep state," which has been the most crucial factor in the AKP's embrace of democracy and the free market, rather than an injection of particular kinds of values typically associated with market-oriented, liberal democracies. Quite plainly, the AKP leaders have found that Islamist pronouncements in the Turkish context inevitably invite repression by the

²² Al Chaidar, "Perpecahan dan Integrasi: Perkembangan Darul Islam di Indonesia dan Jaringannya di Asia Tenggara, 1962–2006" (unpublished paper, 2006), pp. 8, 29. Also see Machmudi, "Islamising Indonesia," pp. 93–94.

²³ See Jenny B. White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2002).

²⁴ "No Splits in Turkey's Governing AKP Parliamentary Party," 05ANKARA7215, US Embassy, Ankara, 12 August 2005, available at <http://wikileaks.derinden.net/belge/05ANKARA7215> (accessed December 12, 2010).

²⁵ Nasr, *The Forces of Fortune*, chapter 9.

military—the ultimate institutional guardians of the Kemalist social order. As AKP sympathizers note, its leaders learned the hard way from the experience of the Islamic-oriented Welfare Party, which briefly held government power in the mid-1990s before the so-called “post-modern” military coup of 1997.²⁶ Moreover, the AKP’s enthusiasm for global free markets provides it with an instrument to cultivate the support of the Anatolian bourgeoisie, most of whom self-identify as Islamic and many of whom had been shunned by Kemalists in favor of the so-called “Istanbul bourgeoisie”—big business groups that had been cultivated under protectionist and largely ISI-oriented (import substitution industries) policies.²⁷ For this Anatolian bourgeoisie, primarily based in export-oriented activities, free-market policies already provide a lucrative gateway into European and other markets. Importantly, for the AKP itself, the embrace of the market, notably through pro-European Union (EU) policies, also invites a level of international protection from its Kemalist foes. In sum, the AKP has moved away from the traditional mold of an Islamist party struggling to establish a state based on Islamic law not simply because of the internalization of democratic values related to the growing affluence of the Turkish middle class (as suggested by Nasr), but also because it is an effective response to the still considerable influence of its foes within the institutions of the state.

It should be recalled in this connection that the coup of 1997 was ostensibly launched because the Welfare Party government under the late then-Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, that most venerable icon of Turkish Islamist politics, was alleged to have contravened secular tenets of the Turkish Constitution. As prime minister, Erbakan rather recklessly invited danger by taking up Islamic themes and even promising to roll back the Kemalist revolution.²⁸ The stance taken by the AKP since its inception, therefore, has been about identifying an effective strategy of political survival and advancement, especially against the ever-present threat of political demise due to military repression. It should be noted additionally that the charismatic AKP leader Erdogan had built his early career as a protégé of Erbakan. In fact, he was a leading Welfare Party figure and mayor of Istanbul until the military coup. In its aftermath, he served time in prison and was temporarily banished from politics. Again, there is therefore no doubt that the AKP leadership knows all too well about the dangers of providing the military any reason to move against it. Indeed, Kemalist forces had attempted to ban the AKP as recently as 2008, on the pretext that it was undermining Turkish secularism and plotting change toward an Islamist system. This move was ostensibly triggered by the AKP’s support for lifting the ban on headscarves in universities.²⁹

²⁶ Interview with Ihsan Dagi, Middle East Technical Institute, Ankara, October 22, 2010. The widely used term “post-modern” coup is apparently a reference to the fact that the military ousted a government without dissolving parliament or suspending the constitution.

²⁷ Ayse Bugra, “Class, Culture, and State: An Analysis of Interest Representation by Two Turkish Business Associations,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30,4 (1998): 521–39.

²⁸ Nasr, *The Forces of Fortune*, p. 240.

²⁹ “Turkish Court Considers AKP Ban,” *Islam Online*, March 31, 2008, www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&cid=1203758585387&pagename=Zone-English-News/NWELayout (accessed July 5, 2010). In October 2010, senior military figures refused to attend a ceremony at which the headscarf-wearing wife of President Abdullah Gul was present.

The prominent role of the military in the political history of Indonesia and Turkey is thus another commonality shared by the two countries. As Mohammad Ayoob points out in a discussion of military politics in Indonesia and Turkey, the Indonesian armed forces have been likewise a ferocious guardian of state secularism, a function that has led to an often adversarial relationship with Islamic political forces.³⁰ For example, Islamist social and political networks famously suffered the brunt of military repression in Indonesia in the 1970s and 1980s, largely because their presence went against the logic of “floating mass” politics pursued by the New Order.³¹ Indeed, the military’s move against its erstwhile allies against communism had a strong basis. Following the destruction of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), only Islam had real grassroots support outside of the state, and, therefore, the gradual development by the New Order of a social and political system characterized by the demobilization of social forces in the name of economic development was bound to rile activists by disproportionately affecting Islamic groups. Thus the turn against Islam resulted in clashes between state forces and a mysterious group called Komando Jihad, as well as the well-publicized massacres of members of Islamic oppositional groupings in Telangari, Lampung, and in Tanjung Priok, Jakarta. These and other cases were followed by the persecution and imprisonment of Islamic leaders, usually with genealogical links to either the Darul Islam or the Masyumi. In the sphere of formal politics, the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, the Unity Development Party), then the “official” vehicle of Islam, was forced by new legislation to proclaim allegiance in the mid-1980s to the amorphous secular state ideology of *Pancasila*, thereby robbing it of an important tool to distinguish itself from other New Order-era electoral vehicles.

Nevertheless, there is no meaningful threat of a military clampdown on the PKS within Indonesia’s democracy. While PKS’s abandonment of overt support for an Islamic state—much derided as betrayal by those groups considered in the “hardline” camp³²—was related to efforts to broaden its potential voter base, the party does not face the possibility of being coercively eliminated from the political stage. It can, and has, simply made reference to both Islam and *Pancasila* in the party constitution, thereby suggesting some happy internal accommodation between Islam and the secular state. So, relative to the AKP, does the PKS represent a more clear-cut case of the inherently moderating effects of democracy on Islamist political agendas? Can we say that the PKS has been more successful than other Islamic-oriented parties in Indonesia because it has internalized values associated with the workings of liberal democracies? While it would be tempting to reply to these questions in the affirmative, other factors have been at work that account for the way the PKS steers its way through Indonesia’s post-Soeharto democracy—factors that should not be underestimated.

First of all, the PKS operates within a system of power where a particularly predatory form of democratic politics entails ad-hoc alliances with an assortment of interests at the national and local levels. These alliances are typically characterized by

³⁰ Mohammed Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2007), p. 107.

³¹ “Floating mass” refers to the New Order policy of making sure that societal groups in Indonesia were politically demobilized through strict government control of a range of grassroots organizations.

³² Interview with Irfan S. Awwas, chairman of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, Yogyakarta, July 21, 2010.

murky elite-level wheeling and dealing, and cemented by the deployment of money politics. Such alliances are always quite fluid because they are rarely about common policy agendas or ideological compatibility. Instead, they are about the establishment of coalitions of power embroiled in competition for control of public institutions and resources for the purpose of private capital accumulation.³³ It is partly for this reason that political Islam splintered quickly into different political parties after 1998, each of which has become the basis for attempts to build new patronage networks that compete for the spoils of state power. In spite of PKS's self-portrayal as being above and beyond such a rapacious system, the party seems to have been increasingly sucked into its defining logic. It is no wonder, therefore, that some associated with PKS have been tainted by the brush of corruption, thus undermining the claim that the party represents morality and integrity. Secondly, the PKS has been startlingly active in supporting the move to name Soeharto a "national hero,"³⁴ which has inevitably invited accusations that the Cendana family was campaigning and paying for the bestowment of such an accolade as part of an attempt at political rehabilitation. All of the above suggests that the ideological "softening" of the PKS has been due as much to the demands of operating in a corrupt system rife with money politics, for instance, by taking part in predatory alliances, as it has been the result of liberalizing values within the party.

None of the foregoing analysis contradicts the idea that Islamic political parties *can* thrive in democracies and that participation in electoral competition *may* force such parties to develop more socially inclusive positions.³⁵ What it does suggest is that the thesis directly linking market-led political democratization to Islamic moderation is too simple; the thesis is also clearly inadequate to explain the trajectories of the PKS in Indonesia and the AKP in Turkey.

Further comparison shows that the two parties have not been equally successful in their respective political arenas. While the PKS has clearly done better than other Indonesian Islamic-oriented parties, it has never been poised to take over government. At the national level, at best it has developed sufficient significance to participate in the coalition that sustains the government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). Furthermore, there are signs that the PKS will find it hard to progress much beyond what it has already achieved in electoral competition. As the PK, it won just 1.7 percent of the vote in the 1999 general elections and just seven of the 462 seats in the national parliament. In 2004, great strides were made when the party obtained 7.4 percent of the vote and, therefore, won significant representation in parliament, taking 45 seats out of a total of 550.³⁶ In spite of that success and heightened expectations, the PKS only

³³ Richard Robison and Vedi R. Hadiz, *Reorganising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets* (London: Routledge, 2004); and Vedi R. Hadiz, *Localising Power in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia: A Southeast Asia Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010).

³⁴ Caroline Damanik, "Nanti, PKS Usulkan Lagi," *kompas.com*, November 12, 2010, <http://nasional.kompas.com/read/2010/11/12/1529009/Nanti..PKS.Usulkan.Soeharto.Lagi> (accessed November 20, 2010).

³⁵ This is the case even if it remains uncertain whether, and to what degree, FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria would have been transformed if its electoral win had not been subverted by the military in the 1990s; or whether the broader context of the highly charged Palestinian-Israeli conflict hinders internal change within Hamas toward a meaningful accommodation with democratic practices.

³⁶ See Jusuf Wanandi, "The Indonesian General Elections 2004," *Asia-Pacific Review*, 11,2 (2004): 118.

managed 7.9 percent of the vote (and 57 out of 560 available seats) in 2009,³⁷ after having confidently projected that it would win as much as 20 percent of the votes.³⁸ In fact, the three biggest parties in Indonesia today are secular in outlook: the Democratic Party of incumbent President SBY; Golkar, the former state vehicle of the New Order; and the PDIP (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle) of Megawati Soekarnoputri. It is arguable that the PKS decision to accept non-Muslim members, thereby further distancing itself from its Islamic roots, was due to its poor showings in recent elections, a strategy taken despite the inevitable controversy it would cause among the party rank-and-file.³⁹

By comparison, the electoral track record of the AKP has been nothing short of astonishing. In the 2002 elections, the AKP won 34.3 percent of the votes and 363 out of 550 national parliamentary seats.⁴⁰ In the 2007 general election, the AKP won 46.6 percent of the votes and 341 of 550 parliamentary seats. It handily crushed its main competitors, the CHP (90 seats) and the ultra-nationalist and xenophobic MHP (Nationalist Movement Party, 70 seats)—as well as the Kurdish movement-based BDP (Peace and Democracy Party, represented in parliament as “independents”).⁴¹ The AKP’s rival within the Islamic camp, the Felicity Party, performed so poorly that it failed to reach the electoral threshold and is therefore not even represented in parliament in spite of the continuing presence of Erdogan, who not only founded Welfare but also led previous Islamic-oriented parties. In September 2010, the AKP handily won a referendum on constitutional amendments that, among other things, gives the government extra leverage against the military, and which tantalizingly opened up the possibility of a new constitution that could bear the AKP’s “cultural stamp.”⁴² In June 2011, the AKP easily won yet another election—garnering just under 50 percent of the popular vote, compared to the CHP’s 26 percent and the MHP’s 13 percent. However, due to extensive prior redistricting by the Supreme Electoral Board—seen to be hostile to the AKP—the party’s victory translated to only 326 seats in the 550-member parliament, a number insufficient to allow it to preside over the process of writing a new constitution without consulting its rivals.⁴³ Nevertheless, the result will no doubt encourage the AKP, already emboldened by its past victories, to

³⁷ KPU Media Center, “KPU Ubah Perolehan Kursi Parpol di DPR,” May 14, 2009, available at <http://mediacenter.kpu.go.id/berita/472-kpu-rubah-perolehan-kursi-parpol-di-dpr.html> (accessed June 14, 2010); and Pemilu Indonesia, “KPU Tetapkan Hasil Pemilu Legislatif 2009,” May 10, 2009, available at www.pemiluindonesia.com/pemilu-2009/kpu-tetapkan-hasil-pemilu-legislatif-2009.html (accessed June 14, 2010).

³⁸ “Semangat Populis Partai Dakwah,” *Tempo Online*, March 30, 2009, <http://majalah.tempointeraktif.com/id/arsip/2009/03/30/LU/mbm.20090330.LU129923.id.html> (accessed August 5, 2010).

³⁹ Interview with PKS grassroots activist in Depok, University of Indonesia, July 7, 2010.

⁴⁰ OSCE/ODIHR Assessment Report, “Republic of Turkey Parliamentary Elections 3 November 2002” (Warsaw, December 4, 2002), www.osce.org/odihr/elections/turkey/16346 (accessed June 14, 2010).

⁴¹ OSCE/ODIHR Election Assessment Mission Report, “Republic of Turkey Early Parliamentary Elections 22 July 2007” (Warsaw, November 27, 2007), www.osce.org/odihr/elections/turkey/29181 (accessed June 14, 2010).

⁴² Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, “Turkish Referendum: Divided We Stand,” *Today’s Zaman*, September 19, 2010, www.todayszaman.com/news-222065-turkish-referendum-divided-we-stand.html (accessed November 20, 2010).

⁴³ Mustafa Gürlek, “YSK Decision for Redistribution of Seats Found to be Controversial,” *Today’s Zaman*, June 15, 2011, www.todayszaman.com/mobile_detailn.action?newsId=247500 (accessed June 16, 2011).

move more assertively against foes within the state, as seen in the public scrutiny being placed lately on the often shadowy political role of the military.

There should be little doubt that progress made in electoral politics by both the AKP, and, in a more limited sense, the PKS, is significant given that they both operate within an established secular environment underpinned by powerful and organized social interests (particularly within the secular nationalist political parties and militaries of the two countries). Moreover, *Pancasila* was invoked in Indonesia in the 1980s to place institutional constraints on Islamic politics, although democratic change since 1998 has altered that situation. In Turkey, Islamic political parties remain even more restricted due to the radically secular nature of the Turkish Constitution. This suggests that the relative success of the AKP, as compared to that of the PKS, has had less to do with the legal-formal and institutional arrangement by which politics is governed than with the nature of the broader configuration of power and interest with which each has to contend, as discussed next.

The Genesis and Evolution of Islamic Politics

The Sarekat Islam (SI, Islamic Association) is widely regarded as the first mass organization in the history of modern Indonesia. More so than socially oriented organizations like Muhammadiyah, SI was at the forefront of the nascent nationalist movement in the Dutch East Indies, and even gave rise to the Indonesian Communist Party. Driven by the apprehensions of the traditional petty bourgeoisie about competition from ethnic-Chinese traders, but supported as well by a range of Javanese minor aristocrats, the SI was pivotal in the development of the “idea” of Indonesia.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the position of Islam in postcolonial Indonesia would be contested, as has been well documented.⁴⁵ For example, the early postcolonial period saw efforts to enshrine Islam in the constitution, as well as to promote state involvement in the advancement of *pribumi* businesses, though with little success.

In truth, similar to much of the Middle East and North Africa, anticolonial struggles in Indonesia, after the short golden age of SI, were ultimately driven mainly by secular elite cohorts of nationalist intellectuals and politicians drawn mainly from colonial-era bureaucratic families, small groups of professionals, and the military. This would partly account for the lack of success in “Islamizing” the outcomes of the Indonesian nationalist struggle. Indonesian developments were mirrored in other Muslim-majority societies—such as Algeria, Syria, Iraq, and, with variations, in Egypt—where anticolonial movements led by secular elites spawned parties influenced by statist and socialist ideas to varying degrees, and which adopted nationalist agendas calling for the protection of domestic industry in the immediate postcolonial period. Given the absence of a strong bourgeoisie, this necessitated a dominant role for state-owned corporations and a new strata of state managers.

Turkey was never colonized and therefore its case presents some divergence from the pattern described above. However, because of the absence of any colonial experience, it actually had a head start in moving onto an economic-development

⁴⁴ Robert E. Elson, *The Idea of Indonesia: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁴⁵ Bernhard J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971).

pathway that is not so significantly different from Indonesia's in important respects. The Republic of Turkey rose in the 1920s from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, where a regime based on loyalty and obedience to the sultan and the caliphate had little use for nationalism to ensure the legitimacy of the social order. The Turkish defeat in World War I provided the opportunity for General Mustafa Kemal (later Mustafa Kemal Ataturk) to fashion an almost entirely new polity (although the seeds of his reforms had already been planted by the later sultans and by the Young Turk movement). As is well known, Mustafa Kemal instituted radical steps to "Europeanize" Turkey and to eliminate Islam from matters of the state and from the public sphere. Ataturk went as far as to ban certain attire and headgear regarded as being culturally Muslim, in favor of Western clothes and hats. The point certainly was to suppress the power of religion because religion "was the legitimizing principle of the old Empire, as well as the vocabulary most commonly available to the opponents of the new legitimating principle" of state-defined Turkish nationalism.⁴⁶

At first there may have been little to indicate that top-down national state building would go hand in hand with statist developmentalism. Even as Christian Armenians, Greeks, and Jews—many of whom essentially constituted the commercial classes of the Ottoman era—were eliminated *en masse* soon after the First World War, a hotchpotch of Muslims from surrounding areas (the Balkans, Russia) came to be "Turkish."⁴⁷ This was the case even as the status of the Kurdish minority in the Turkish nation-state remained highly contested. Many of these newly "Turkish" citizens replaced those who had been forced to leave their positions in rural commercial agriculture and urban petty trade. The newcomers were then brought into the nationalist project and became obedient subjects of the modern nation-state-in-formation.⁴⁸ Because of their background, furthermore, they were neither economically nor politically assertive, and this condition made possible the emergence of state-led capitalism, which began to gain prominence in the 1930s as the Republican government moved to purchase or nationalize many foreign-owned enterprises, especially railways and public services. Thus was started the statism and protectionist policies that anticipated developments that would much later become a staple of modernization in Indonesia and other postcolonial countries.⁴⁹

In other words, while Islam contributed to imaginings about a postcolonial, modern Indonesia-to-come, it was, by contrast, anathema to the initial idea of a post-Ottoman Turkish state based on modern ideas of citizenship. The fact that the SI was, foremost, a reaction against colonial-era economic encroachment by ethnic Chinese and non-Muslim businesses represents an important historical legacy that finds no parallel in the Turkish case. In Indonesia, Islamic politics would henceforth be partly defined by a consciousness about the considerable merging of class and ethno-religious politics and the role of the state in presiding over that merger. It is well-known that there were widespread feelings among the traditional Muslim petty bourgeoisie that Chinese businesses were being favored by the Dutch for a host of cultural and political

⁴⁶ Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London: Verso, 1987), p. 89.

⁴⁷ On the Armenian genocide, see Taner Akcam, *From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2004).

⁴⁸ Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, pp. 80–83.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

reasons. Such sentiments have continually resurfaced in postcolonial times and were arguably heightened during the New Order when the corrupt and cronyistic relationship between state and business was exemplified by the cosy ties between the families of President Soeharto and top ethnic Chinese tycoon Liem Sioe Liong.

In Turkey, however, there would be a different dynamic: the interrelationship between state capitalism and private business gave rise to a select group of conglomerates that became pivots of the Kemalist social order. While giant conglomerates like Koc and Sabanci thrived under state protectionism, and dominated all industry, commerce, and finance, the military itself developed as a formidable corporate presence through Oyak, which ostensibly began as a military “solidarity fund.” In other words, the staunchest guardian of the social order built on secularist nationalism, the military, had developed a strong, vested economic interest in its maintenance.⁵⁰ But this was a social order that was insular, corrupt, and highly cronyistic, and which alienated large sections of society. It is in this sense that the rise of the AKP was the culmination of long-developing social resentments among disparate groups toward the way that power was organized within the secular social order. Ironically, these groups were the product of Turkish economic modernization itself. As mentioned, they include the peripheralized Anatolian bourgeoisie (traditionally subordinate to Istanbul-based big business), the newly educated urban middle class, and the poor, who inhabited increasingly vast urban slums. The genius of the AKP has been in developing strategies and a vernacular that would bind these otherwise disparate groups together—a forward-looking brand of Islam not afraid of globalization that tempers its social deprivations not just with moral injunctions, but with distinctively populist policies of providing social welfare, assistance, and services to the downtrodden.

From this point of view, the PKS remains well behind the AKP—PKS has yet to develop an unambiguous stand in support of markets and neoliberal globalization—in many ways it cannot do so given the ethnic composition of the Indonesian bourgeoisie and the unequal respective strengths of its *pribumi* and non-*pribumi* elements. Although the PKS has developed a notable presence in providing social services to the poor to go along with *dakwah*, again encouraged by the model offered by the AKP (and before it, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood), such activities remain more associated in the Muslim community in Indonesia with longer established organizations like the Muhammadiyah and NU. In other words the PKS is hindered from forming strong alliances with the bourgeoisie and with the poor in the Indonesian context.

It is nevertheless evident that processes of economic change under the New Order—initially taking place under an ISI framework supported by windfall oil revenue, before economic liberalization gathered steam in the 1980s—greatly affected Indonesia’s class structure. It unleashed a host of social transformations that made possible the emergence of the PKS in the first place. Such transformations not only gave rise to a powerful capital-owning class, largely represented in ethnic-Chinese-owned conglomerates, but also a new urban middle class,⁵¹ and a sizeable modern

⁵⁰ Ismet Akça, *Military Economic Structure in Turkey: Present Situation, Problems, and Solutions* (Istanbul: Tesev Publications, 2010).

⁵¹ A recent official Indonesian survey of consumption data would suggest that the urban middle class constitutes 26.5 percent of the population (being slightly less than two thirds of a total middle class that is

industrial proletariat, which co-exists with a burgeoning lumpenproletariat sprawled over Indonesia's growing urban formations. The visible emergence of huge and chaotic urban slums from the 1970s was indicative of how rural peasants continued to flock into the cities, seeking new ways to make a living or to pursue higher-level educational opportunities. Some of these, perhaps especially those whose rural social positions were relatively more privileged, gained entry to the urban middle class through the avenue of education—broadened during the New Order—even if only on its lower rungs. Much of the social base of the PKS can be found among such upwardly mobile sections of the urban population.

It is not surprising that the ostentatious development of alliances between Indonesian officialdom and the conglomerates came to be commonly associated in the public mind with the continuation of the colonial-era pattern of concentration of wealth in the hands of the ethnic-Chinese minority—and away from the majority Muslim population. As the New Order became more visibly corrupt and rapacious, hostility toward the state and Chinese businesses became almost inextricably related. It was in this context that incidents such as those in Lampung and Tanjung Priok, and the Komando Jihad affair, mentioned earlier, took place, all of which had to do with the alleged activities of groups aiming to establish a state based on Islamic law to replace the one based on the secular creed of *Pancasila*. That hostility toward the existing social order was expressed in some sections of society through the idioms of Islam was not entirely surprising. The suppression of communist and broadly Leftist ideologies after 1965 meant that these were no longer to be available at the start of structural transformations that would forever alter Indonesia's social landscape. Not surprisingly, too, the suppression of the Left spilled over into the next decade, in accordance with the pattern in much of the Middle East, to state-imposed constraints on middle class-based political liberalism.⁵²

But Islam could not have offered an appropriate ideological resource to express resentment unless political aspirations that drew on it were sustained in Indonesia—as they were in Turkey—through a host of social and political networks that often functioned in semi-clandestine fashion during periods of often intense repression. In Indonesia, the activists of the Masyumi Party that was banned by President Soekarno in 1960 had turned to such activities as proselytizing, as had those of the Darul Islam (which was militarily defeated in 1962), and made these the foundations for developing new social networks. The religious activities of students were alluded to earlier, and in campus-based groupings many young people, of whom a great number had been newly urbanized, experienced a formative period of political socialization. Masyumi figures were especially instrumental in the establishment of the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, a conservative body established by the revered Mohammad Natsir,⁵³ with whose support the *pesantren* at Ngruki, Central Java, was

said to account for 43 percent of the population). A large portion of that segment, however, would be classified as “lower middle class,” and its members are said to be vulnerable to slipping into poverty. See Asian Development Bank, “The Rise of Asia's Middle Class,” in *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2010* (Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank, 2010), p. 11, available at www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2010/pdf/Key-Indicators-2010.pdf (accessed February 12, 2011).

⁵² Sandra Halperin, “The Post-Cold War Political Topography of the Middle East: Prospects for Democracy,” *Third World Quarterly* 26,7 (2005): 1135–56.

⁵³ It was because of Natsir's international standing that the DDII (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia,

established in the early 1970s,⁵⁴ well before its founders, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, had forged real connections with the remnants of Darul Islam or had anything to do with the establishment of Jema'ah Islamiyah. By the 1980s and 1990s, similar initiatives had made significant inroads into places—now peri-urbanized—such as in Central Java, which were formerly communist and radical-nationalist strongholds.⁵⁵ It is an historical irony that some of these old strongholds are currently the very places where special units of the Indonesian security forces come to hunt down terrorists with an Islamist agenda.

In the Turkish case, Islamic self-identities and aspirations were preserved for decades in spite of the onslaught of the radical secularist project within numerous *tarekat* that were heavily influenced by strands of Sufism. In contrast to common assumptions, it was as early as the 1950s that their members were granted access to the public sphere, mainly due to overtures from the Democratic Party that had defeated the CHP in 1950, and which had tried, but dramatically failed, to gain further leverage against the former ruling party and the military by accommodating religious groups. In subsequent decades, however, and even under conditions of general repression, such Turkish Islamic groups were sometimes invited into state-led campaigns against the Left; and this happened predominantly in the 1980s, as already mentioned. Among the most influential of these was the Naksibendi sect, which gave rise to the leader of the even more important Nur movement, Said Nursi. It was the latter's teachings that were appropriated by today's wealthy and highly organized Gülen movement. Led by Fethullah Güllen, currently living in exile in the United States, the movement presides over educational institutions found all over Turkey, as well as a formidable business empire.⁵⁶ The movement or "community," whose members are found in important positions in Turkish public life, is widely believed to exercise considerable influence over the AKP, and over state institutions, such as the police force.

The point is that in both countries the traditional concerns of Islamic politics became grafted onto the aspirations, grievances, and anxieties of new social groups emerging from the modernization process. This was made possible because of the resilience of Islamic groups in the face of state repression, but also because these groups had served, in the Cold War context, useful roles in the fight against the Left in both Indonesia and Turkey. It should be pointed out, though, that what is ideologically on offer in the Indonesian case remains more varied than in Turkey's in an important respect. Members of the Indonesian urban underclass, for example, have been continually exposed to the secular nationalism of Soekarno as preserved in much milder forms by successor organizations to the old Soekarnoist PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian National Party), including today's PDIP. In the most populous island of Java, in particular, Soekarnoist secular nationalism has continued to maintain

Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation) later became a conduit for the entry of Middle Eastern funds into Indonesia, making possible broad-ranging proselytizing activities.

⁵⁴ Interview with Ustad Wahyudin, director of the Al Mukmin pesantren, Ngruki, July 16, 2007; and with Ustad Taufik Usman, head of the foundation that oversees the same pesantren, Ngruki, July 18, 2007.

⁵⁵ Interview with leaders of Forum Komunikasi Keluarga Darul, Tawangmangu, Karanganyar, Central Java, July 25, 2010.

⁵⁶ Berna Turam, *Between Islam and the State: The Politics of Engagement* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); and M. Hakan Yakuz and John L. Esposito, eds., *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

romantic ideas of the noble struggles of patriotic *wong cilik* (little people) against the depredations of the privileged—a narrative which remains as powerful as that which focuses on the deprived *ummah*. But this narrative did not fill the void left by the absence of Left politics, one that became even bigger as Indonesian society was transformed under the Soeharto regime, and which some social agents of Islamic politics have continually attempted to fill. Nothing expresses this better than the paramilitary organizations operating under the banner of Islam, and linked to a number of Islamic parties in many Indonesia cities, which often draw members from the unemployed or only precariously employed. Significantly, there is nothing that is similar to the Soekarnoist secular tradition in the Turkish case—the doctrine of Atatürk was always more unreservedly statist. This has made it easier for the AKP to dominate the populist ground, even as it reaches out to a wider range of social interests through its adoption of the vision of neoliberal progress.

Conclusion

The manifestations of the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis created the conditions that led to the demise of the Soeharto regime in 1998, and opened the way for Indonesian democratization. Indonesian Islamic political parties, however, have done relatively poorly within the framework of electoral democracy, including the much celebrated PKS. The AKP in Turkey, on the other hand, which was first voted into power in 2002 on the back of that country's own profound economic crisis, has had a much better record of taking advantage of the opportunities presented by electoral competitions. On the surface, the parties are similar in having situated issues of governance at the forefront of their struggles in place of avid pronouncements on matters overtly religious, but their social bases remain considerably different.

In explaining the dissimilar levels of success experienced by PKS and AKP, the article has put forward the idea that AKP has managed to present itself as the voice of not only a rising section of the Turkish bourgeoisie, but also of the most downtrodden in society. Furthermore, it is also favored by highly educated and newly ambitious members of the urban middle class—those individuals turned off by cronyistic relationships that, heretofore, have been the key to social and economic advancement. In other words, the article has argued that, in the Turkish case, a basically neoliberal governance agenda has been successfully wedded to populist concerns that have their origins in Islamic networks struggling to survive the onslaught of radical secularism, concerns that found new relevance in the transformations brought forth by modernization. By implication, this analysis has questioned why the PKS, which has followed the model presented by the AKP, has been unable to cement a similar sort of coalition of diverse social interests in Indonesia. It is suggested that this failure goes a long way in accounting for the limited progress achieved by PKS since 2004.

It has also been suggested that the answer to the question is not to be found primarily in the internal dynamics of the parties concerned. The answer is located, instead, in the way that the development of Islamic party politics more generally is intertwined with broad historical and social processes. It is clear that both the PKS and AKP have benefited from the legacies of Cold War-era conflicts that saw the demise of the Left. This is part of a much more general phenomenon in the Muslim world;

writing on the Maghreb, Alejandro Colas has observed how social-justice issues—once the purview of Leftists—have been taken over by Islamists.⁵⁷

But the PKS and the AKP are not just interested in social-justice issues, for the key is to develop a form of politics attractive to a constituency comprising a cross-section of classes. In the Indonesian case, however, the PKS is hamstrung by the nature of the Indonesian bourgeoisie, the overwhelmingly dominant Chinese element of which has no reason to challenge a social order in which they have benefited from cosy relationships with officialdom. Of course, the ethnic Chinese more generally are aware of their politically vulnerable situation and how these relationships, since colonial times, may be altered in a heartbeat. While the PKS has been successful in developing support from educated members of the new urban middle class, it has been much less credible than the AKP as an advocate for the poor ensconced in Indonesia's growing urban and peri-urban social formations. Overtures by the PKS to the urban poor have also been constrained by the deep influence of mass organizations like the Muhammadiyah and the NU, which operate a host of welfare and educational activities traditionally serving the underprivileged. Such organizations, especially the Muhammadiyah (because of a generally more urbanized following), have some reason to be apprehensive of any inroads the PKS makes in winning the allegiance of the *ummah*.

Finally, unlike the PKS, the AKP does not confront competition in the sphere of populist politics from well-established secular groupings. The PKS is also hampered by the presence of secular populist parties that stretch back to the days of Soekarno and which were preserved in the New Order, even if necessarily revised and sustained in muted forms. It is significant that the main vehicle of secular Kemalist politics, the CHP, had already lost its hegemony over state power and societal organization well before the New Order had even been invented in Indonesia.

In a nutshell, this article has offered a political economy-based understanding of the limitations of Islamic party politics in Indonesia, connecting these to Indonesian class development and social interests. It has done so by gathering insights from comparisons with the Turkish case, long considered the most prominent example of a successful democracy in the Muslim world. The contrasting experiences of the PKS and the AKP reveal some of the conditions influencing the success of electoral strategies based on displacing overt support for Islamic-oriented agendas in favor of those that advance notionally more inclusive ones. More generally, the Indonesian and Turkish cases suggest a more complex relationship between electoral politics and Islamic political parties than is recognized in approaches mainly concerned with democracy's purported ideologically "moderating" outcomes.

⁵⁷ Alejandro Colas, "The Re-Invention of Populism: Islamist Responses to Capitalist Development in the Contemporary Maghreb," *Historical Materialism* 12,4 (2004): 231–60.