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STATE–RELIGION RELATIONS IN INDONESIA: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

A Response to Anthony Reid

Mark Woodward

Anthony Reid has presented a rich and compelling cultural-historical analysis of the origins of religious tolerance and pluralism in Indonesia.[1] He attributes Indonesian pluralism to a combination of cultural and economic factors. Culturally there is a tendency toward a variety of syncretism in which new religions absorb and transform elements of previously existent and even dominant traditions. This syncretic tendency is fostered by economic concerns. Pre-modern Indonesian and other Southeast Asian, states were heavily reliant on the maritime trading system linking China with India and the Middle East. Among the consequences of this was the virtual necessity of tolerating the presence of minority religious communities, particularly in trading ports such as Jakarta and Surabaya. While predominantly Muslim, Indonesia has

[1] The analysis presented in this paper has benefited greatly from conversations with co-investigators on research projects concerning political risks associated with proselytization and conversion and religious political parties sponsored by the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict at Arizona State University. I would like to thank Linell Cady, Miriam Elman, Carolyn Forbes, Paul Holley, George Thomas, Sani Umar and Carolyn Warner for their insights. I alone am responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation.

significant and regionally concentrated Christian and Hindu minorities. Consequently preserving the unity and territorial integrity of the country depends on the maintenance of religious and ethnic harmony.

The Javanese adaptation and transformation of the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata in the wayang (shadow place) traditions and legends concerning the Javanese *wali* (saint) Sunan Kudus provide important examples of the ways in which the Javanese retained and reworked elements of their rich Indic heritage when they adopted Islam. The Muslim appropriation of the wayang tradition was at the same time elegant and remarkably simple. Hindu "gods" were redefined as heroic humans and fitted into dynastic genealogies in which they are described as being among the descendants of the Islamic Prophet Adam.[2] Sunan Kudus, the founder of the city that bears his name, is said to have adopted a gentle approach to the propagation of Islam and to have prohibited the slaughter of cattle to avoid offending Hindu Javanese. The religious diversity of trading centres in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial times speaks for the economic importance of religious tolerance.

In many respects Reid's discussion of the cultural foundations of and economic motivations for tolerance and pluralism closely resembles that of Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen's discussion of the similarly tolerant attitudes characteristics of South Asian civilizations for many centuries.[3] Both, however, note that there are important exceptions and that even within the pluralistic cultures there are social movements and forces advocating the establishment of religious uniformity and rigid orthodoxies.

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[2] See M. Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta*. Association for Asian Studies Monograph Series (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989).

[3] Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity* (New York: Picador, 2005).

His observation that in the west tolerance and pluralism were accepted only when it became clear that religious uniformity could not be maintained by force of arms is equally important. In Europe the initial move towards tolerance and pluralism, was the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, which brought the Wars of Religion that had raged for more than a century to a close. While the Westphalian peace brought interstate struggles to establish religious hegemony across national boundaries to a close it did nothing to establish tolerance and pluralism within the boundaries of European states. States retained the authority to establish one religion and to restrict or proscribe others.[4] Similarly, the rise of religious pluralism within states derives at least from political necessity as from cultural or religious commitment to the idea of pluralism. The United States is an important example. While the US now describes itself as being committed to the ideas of pluralism and the separation of church and state, this was not always the case. At the time of the framing of the US constitution with its "wall of separation", many of the individual states had established religions – all of which were variant forms of Christianity. Indeed, until the passage of the fourteenth amendment in 1866, states retained the right to establish religions within their respective boundaries.[5] It was, therefore not until it became politically necessary to establish other forms of liberty in the wake of the American Civil War that religious pluralism in something resembling its contemporary form became politically possible.

This paper presents a comparative account of relationships between the state and religions in contemporary Indonesia. Indonesia is a particularly interesting case for the reasons Reid mentions and because

[4] See D. Croxton and A. Tischer, *The Peace of Westphalia: A Historical Dictionary* (London: Greenwood Press, 2002).
[5] See M. Sandel "Religious Liberty: Freedom of Choice or Freedom of Conscience?" in *Secularism and Its Critics*, ed. R. Bhargava (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 73-93 and W. Miller, *The First Liberty: America's Foundation in Religious Freedom* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2003).

the concept of being neither a religious nor a secular state is a self-conscious element of political culture and national identity. Here it is argued that while the Indonesian government does not officially establish a particular religion, it mandates that its citizens adhere to one of the officially recognized religions. Moreover, many states seek to regulate and financially support tolerant variants of religions.

State-religion relationships vary enormously. They can be placed on a continuum. On one end of this continuum are totalitarian states, including Saudi Arabia, that establish a single variant of one religion and proscribe others and communist states that ban, or at least very severely restrict religion. Grouping states that demand religious orthodoxy with those seeking to eliminate religion may seem counter-intuitive. However, these two categories of states are similar in that they seek to subordinate religion to state control. On the other end one finds the United States, France and other secular industrial democracies where there is something approaching a religious "free market". In many instance a single category does not uniquely capture the complex forms of religion-state relationships found in many countries. All of these categories are what Max Weber termed "ideal types". Ideal types are abstractions of significant features of historical phenomena that aid in the explanation of less clearly defined, and variable social phenomena.[6]

The categories employed here are ideal types and not generalizations from social-political realities. Even the most repressive states are unable to enforce total compliance with the demands of religious or secular orthodoxy and even the most liberal states outlaw or discourage some modes of religious practice, if not belief. Saudi Arabia attempts to enforce Hanbalite orthodoxy on its own subjects but allows other Muslims to observe the rites of the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) in accordance with their own legal traditions and has proved unable

[6] For a sophisticated discussion of the Weberian concept of ideal types see J. Watson, "Ideal Types and Historical Explanation", *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 3.9 (1952): 22-43.

eliminate a substantial Shi'ah minority. Even the ravages of the Cultural Revolution did not eliminate the vestiges of religions in China, which have flourished in the post-Mao era.[7] Even the most liberal states outlaw religious practices deemed to be morally abhorrent such as suttee (the burning of widows) in India and polygamy in the United States. There are also exceptions to the general rule that democratic states are more inclined towards tolerance and pluralism than others. In Germany, for example, Scientology is outlawed, while in France Muslim schoolgirls are forbidden to wear *hijab* (headscarves) at school and there has been an effort to legally exclude religion from most arenas of public life.

There are many diverse cases located between the two ends of the continuum and in many instances powerful social forces attempting to move states and societies towards one or both of them. A survey of data included in the United States Department of State 2006 Report on International Religious Freedom reveals seven intermediate categories.[8]

States Approaching a Religious Free Market

These are states in which there is no "official" religion and minimal restrictions on religious organization and behaviour. One group of such countries includes United States, Canada and Australia as examples. There may, however, be deconfessionalized religious symbols and concepts included in what Robert Bellah terms the "civil religions" of these countries.[9] An example is the phrase "In God We Trust" that appears on United States coins and currency. Debates about abortion, gay marriage and stem cell research are examples of the ways in which religious convictions can shape the course of nominally secular political discourse. Promotion of religious freedom is also among the pillars of

[7] On the fate of religion in China during the Cultural Revolution see C. FitzGerald, "Religion and China's Cultural Revolution", *Pacific Affairs* 40.1/2 (1967): 124-129.
[8] Available at *www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2006/*
[9] On the concept of Civil Religion see R. Bellah and P. Hammond, Varieties of Civil Religion (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980).

American foreign policy. The US Department of State describes this policy as follows:

"The Office of International Religious Freedom has the mission of promoting religious freedom as a core objective of US foreign policy. Headed by Ambassador-at-Large John Hanford for International Religious Freedom, its office director and staff monitor religious persecution and discrimination worldwide, recommend and implement policies in respective regions or countries, and develop programmes to promote religious freedom.

Given the US commitment to religious freedom, and to the international covenants that guarantee it as the inalienable right of every human being, the United States seeks to:

- Promote freedom of religion and conscience throughout the world as a fundamental human right and as a source of stability for all countries;
- Assist newly formed democracies in implementing freedom of religion and conscience;
- Assist religious and human rights NGOs in promoting religious freedom;
- Identify and denounce regimes that are severe persecutors of their citizens or others on the basis of religious belief"[10]

Ironically the strongest supporters of the act have been conservative Evangelical Christians who understand the establishment of freedom of religion as a means to further their missionary activities. It is strongly opposed in some parts of the international community, particularly in Russia, Catholic strongholds in Latin American and throughout the Muslim world. The analysis presented here indicates that in many countries, including Indonesia, totally unrestricted or unregulated religious freedom is not necessarily a source for stability, and indeed,

[10] *www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/*

that some regulation of religion may be a necessary condition for stability.

In general there would seem to be a correlation between high levels of economic development and degree of secularization with low levels of state interference in or management of religious affairs. However, the religious "free market" is also common among the least developed countries, particularly those of Sub-Saharan Africa. This observation applies equally to Muslim majority and Christian majority countries. Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone are examples.

States with an Established Religion where Other Religions are not Restricted

European countries such and Britain and the Scandinavian countries are important examples. These countries are historically and officially Protestant but adherence to and practice of other religions, including alternative Protestant faiths, is not limited. In these countries with the exception of Norway, established churches are at least partly state supported. Most of the historically Roman Catholic countries of Western Europe formerly maintained concordats with the Vatican establishing the primacy of the Catholic Church. The constitutions of Spain, Italy, Poland and most other Catholic majority countries have been amended to extend official recognition and government support to other religious communities.

Thailand is a Buddhist example. Theravada Buddhism is the official religion and the constitution specifies that the king must be a member of this religious community.

Many Muslim majority countries have similar state-religion relationships. State patronage of Islam often takes different forms as Islam does not have the corporatist or denominationalist elements of Christianity. Among the most common modes of state support for Islam are providing funds for mosque construction, religious education and

funding and logistical support for the hajj. In many Muslim countries, cases regarding family law (marriage, divorce and inheritance) are heard in state sponsored *shari'ah* courts. In many Muslim countries, family law cases of non-Muslims are relegated to independent religious tribunals of the minority religious communities. Jordan and Lebanon are examples.

Some countries do not have official religions but provide legal recognition for a single community. Guinea, which is approximately 85% Muslim and 10% Christian, does not have a state religion but does have a ministry for Islamic affairs.

States Granting Official Recognition to Multiple Religions

These are states that do not have official religions but grant legal recognition to two or more religions. The treatment of non-recognized religions ranges from toleration to prohibition and oppression. Germany is an especially complex case. The state collects "religious taxes" for more than 180 religious communities and sponsors Protestant, Catholic and Jewish religious education in public schools. Because it lacks the denominational organization and hierarchies characteristic of Christianity, efforts to draw Islam into this system have proved difficult and only marginally successful. In some countries with federal constitutions, government – religion relations are defined at the state or provincial as well as national levels. India and Nigeria are examples. In some of the states of northern Nigeria, which are overwhelmingly Muslim, Islamic law is enforced. In some, but not all Indian states, state funds are used for the upkeep of Hindu temples while there are special provisions for Islam in the disputed (with Pakistan) Muslim majority state of Kashmir. With six officially recognized religions, Indonesia clearly falls within this category.

States Recognizing Multiple Religions but with Major Restrictions of Religious Groups and Practices Considered to be Socially Disruptive

A large number of countries place serious restrictions on certain religious organizations and behaviours. Many Muslim majority countries restrict or ban the Ahmadiyah sect because of the teaching, considered to be heretical by other Muslims, that Muhammad was not the last of the prophets. Similarly the Baha'i faith is restricted or outlawed because Muslims consider it to be a Shi'ah heresy. In many Sunni Muslim countries the activities of the Shi'ah are restricted. In Pakistan there have been attempts to have the Shi'ah legally declared non-Muslims.

The religious activities most often singled out for restriction are proselytization and conversion. These activities are outlawed in at least twenty eight countries and limited in others. These are: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Comoros, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Laos, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Yemen. Countries with official religions are more likely than others to restrict or prohibit these activities. They are severely restricted in others including Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Anti-proselytization laws or regulations can be found in countries with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim majorities. The religious communities most frequently outlawed are those who engage in active and aggressive proselytization. Christian groups include Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) Pentecostal and Evangelical Protestants. Muslim groups include Wahabis, who are often sponsored by co-religionists in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, and the Tabliqhi Jamaat, an extremely active, but entirely apolitical, Pakistan-based group with global reach.

Penalties for violating these laws and regulation vary greatly. In most of these countries foreign violators are most often fined and/or

deported. Citizens are generally subject to beatings, fines and imprisonment. In Malaysia Muslim converts to Christianity have been detained in mental institutions and drug rehabilitation facilities. In Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia Muslim apostates are subject to execution, though it is rarely enforced.

States Providing Unofficial Support for a Dominant Religion

These are most often states in which there is a substantial religious majority and in which religion plays a major role in the construction of ethnic and national identities. Russia for example recognizes "the special contribution of Orthodoxy to the history of Russia and to the establishment and development of Russia's spirituality and culture". In these countries the leading religious tradition is often subsidized to a greater extent than others and is generally that of leading government figures. Activities regarded as hostile to that tradition may be restricted or outlawed. Restrictions on other religions range from severe repression to benign neglect. Burma and Sri Lanka are examples of countries in which members of minority religions are severely repressed. Greece, Japan and Colombia are cases in which religious minorities are relatively free to exercise their beliefs. This arrangement is most common in countries where historically religion and politics were closely linked. These include predominantly Roman Catholic countries in Latin America, Orthodox countries of Russia and Eastern Europe and in Buddhist countries of South, East and Southeast Asia. To the extent that they do not have official religions these countries fit the contemporary pattern of religiously neutral, if not secular, states. In many cases, however, religion plays a larger role in public life than it does in secular societies with established religions, such as those of Western Europe.

States Attempting to Influence the Interpretation of Religious Teaching

States that sponsor religious education, and there are many, almost by definition attempt to influence the ways in which religion is interpreted. Curriculum design is perhaps the most subtle example of how states can shape the interpretation of basic aspects of religious doctrine. Indonesia, India and many of the Orthodox and Catholic Christian states provide examples of this tendency. Others, especially China, resort to more draconian tactics. The Chinese government tries to control and regulate religion to prevent the rise of groups that could constitute sources of authority outside of the control of the government and the Communist Party. Each of the five recognized religions (Buddhism, Islam, Taoism, Catholicism and Protestantism) is linked to a government sponsored "patriotic organization" that provides it with "help and guidance" implementing social and religious goals. Religious groups that refuse such affiliation are considered to be "cults" and subject to severe repression. Singapore lies between states that are minimally invasive and the Chinese extreme. In Singapore the government strongly encourages socially engaged but politically passive interpretations of Islam, Buddhism, Taoism and Christianity. It strongly discourages religious communities that engage in aggressive proselytization.

States that Cede Aspects of Authority to Religious Organizations

Modern secular states apply criminal and civil law uniformly to their entire populations. Some states, however, abrogate or have never attempted to regulate some aspects of civil law. By far the most common unregulated legal domain is family law. Many Muslim countries have separate courts staffed by *ulama* charged with the administration of family law codes, most of which are based on a combination of *shari'ah* and secular civil law. Oman and Saudi Arabia, for example, do not have codes of civil status. Israel and Lebanon have similar systems in which family law issues are delegated to the religious courts of the countries

numerous religious communities. In other majority Muslim countries including Pakistan and Indonesia, Islamic courts are found in some autonomous regions.

State-Religion Relations in Contemporary Indonesia

State-religion relations in Indonesia are extremely complex and derive from a fundamental compromise made in the earliest days of the republic. To understand these and the ways in which state-religion linkages are currently configured, it is essential to keep in mind three basic features of Indonesian society and culture. The first is that Indonesian society has not witnessed anything like the degree of secularization western societies have. The second is that the privatization of religion characteristic of western democracies, has not occurred. Religion remains one of the most important factors in politics and public life in a more general sense. The third is that religious diversity is not evenly distributed throughout the nation's ethnic and territorial divisions. Hence questions concerning the role of religion in national life have always been intertwined with those concerning regionalism and ethnicity. The difficulties of managing these potentially centrifugal forces have led Indonesia to devise complex strategies that have at various times combined elements of four of the ideal types described above (sections 2 through 5). There have been, and continue to be social groups and forces that would move the nation in the direction of sections 1 or 6.

Indonesia has long prided itself as being neither a secular nor a religious state but as one inspired by the ideology of *Pancasila* or Five Principles. These are:

1. *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* – The Great Unity of Deity
2. *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* – Universal humanity that is just and civilized
3. *Persatuan Indonesia* – The unity of Indonesia

4. *Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam permusyawaratan/perwakilan* – The sovereignty of the people led with wise policies in the context of mutual consultation and representation
5. *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* – Social justice for all of the people of Indonesia.

Nurcholish Madjid has shown that most of the vocabulary of *Pancasila* is Arabic and that it can be understood best as being a deconfessionalized variant of common Islamic social and political principles.[11] It was also the subject of intense negotiation at the time of the founding of the republic. The wording of the first principle was chosen to indicate clearly that the meaning is monotheism and not simply religiousness, and as Madjid observes the "unity of Indonesia" was chosen instead of nationalism because of the suspicion with which some observant Muslims view this concept. Some Muslim leaders advocated the inclusion of what came to be known as the Jakarta Charter, "with the obligation for Muslims to live in accordance with *shari'ah*" in the first principle, but relented when Christians, who are the majority in portions of Eastern Indonesia, threatened to establish their own state if Islam was accorded special treatment. Indonesian president Sukarno wanted "the unity of Indonesia" to be the first principle, which Muslim leaders could not accept. As a whole, what has come to be known as the "birth of *Pancasila*" required the notion of all three concepts: religion, ethnicity and territoriality. These continue be among the most important issues in Indonesian politics.

The development of Indonesian as the language of government, politics and education and an almost constant emphasis on religious and

[11] See N. Madjid, "In Search of the Islamic Roots for Modern Pluralism: The Indonesian Experiences", in *Toward a New Paradigm: Recent Developments in Indonesian Islamic Thought*, ed. M. Woodward (Tempe AZ: Arizona State University Program for Southeast Asian Studies Monograph Series, 1998), 89-116.

ethnic tolerance and pluralism are among the ways that Indonesia has sought to encourage its own survival. Indonesian language is not the mother tongue of most Indonesians. Its establishment as a genuinely national language and the establishment of mass literacy are among the nation's most important accomplishments and probably essential for its survival.

The management of religion has been equally important. For most of its history Indonesia recognized five religions: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism and Hinduism. One could "choose" from among these but not from other world religions such as Jainism and Sikhism or from any of the country's many indigenous or animistic traditions. To be a religion a tradition had to be monotheistic and have at least one prophet and a holy book. This definition had perhaps unintended consequences. It led Buddhism and Hinduism, neither of which is inherently monotheistic, to be defined if not understood in monotheistic ways. It also led some adherents of animistic traditions to simply define their religions as variants of Hinduism or Islam and still more to convert to Christianity. Conversion to Christianity became increasingly common after the abortive coup of 1965 because not to "have" a recognized religion was associated with being Communist – hundreds of thousands of alleged Communists were killed in the spasm of political violence following the coup attempt on September 30, 1965. Among many ethnic communities Christianity was a more popular choice than Islam largely because it did not require them to abandon eating pork, which is an essential part of many Indonesian and other Southeast Asian tribal diets.[12] This in turn has contributed to concerns about "Christianization" among some segments of the Muslim community.

The question that Indonesia faces in the 21st century is how to strike a balance between ethno-linguistic, political and religious dimensions of

[12] This observation applies to Chinese Indonesians with equal force.

collective identity. Peter Berger has argued that in traditional societies religion provides the "sacred canopy" that makes social and political cohesion possible.[13] Like many other sociologists writing in the 1960s he saw secularization as the handmaiden of modernity and an inevitable result of increasing rationalization. In a more recent work Berger has retreated from this position and has come to question the validity of the secularization thesis. In a more recent study he writes: "The assumption that we live in a secularized world is false."[14]

To those of us who have devoted our lives to some combination of the study and practice of politics and religion in Indonesia this frank admission that the entire body of social science theory linking modernization and secularization is simply wrong, should come as no surprise. In Indonesia, modernization has proceeded at a dizzying pace for more than fifty years. The fears of some Muslim and Christian activists notwithstanding, there are few, if any, apparent signs of secularization. Religion, in forms ranging from process theology to traditional healing and accusations of sorcery, is everywhere – form the corridors and power and office towers of Jakarta to the most remote villages. Religion in Indonesia successfully resisted the forces of what Thomas Luckmann terms "privatization".[15]

Indonesian religion, in all its forms, remains very public and plays a central role in social and political discourse. Religious diversity is simply a fact. The fact that Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim nation does not change the fact that it is and will remain characterized by religious diversity. Because it is diverse, powerful and public any Indonesian government must manage it in some way. Indonesia's first president Sukarno attempted this by seeking to balance

[13] P. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967). In a more recent work Berger has retreated from this position.
[14] P. Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999), 2.
[15] T. Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

strands of seemingly incompatible ideologies: secular nationalism, political Islam and communism.[16] This strategy failed, contributing to the blood bath with which Indonesia's New Order came to power under Suharto. The New Order strategy for managing religion was complex. It included suppression of all but the vestiges of political Islam, the promotion of pluralistic theologies and personal piety and the heavy handed manipulation of the national ideology. Some government policies were perceived as promoting secularism. The threat of force was ever-present.

In the 1970s and 1980s the government introduced a series of bills in the legislature that most observant Muslim found to be deeply offensive. One would have allowed secular marriage ceremonies. A second would have afforded official recognition to *aliran kebatinan* – Javanese mystical groups that most observant Muslims consider to be heretical because they reject the ritual programme mandated by *shari'ah* and teach the doctrine of the unity of God and the human soul. A third required that all social organizations adopt *Pancasila* as their *asas tunggal* (sole organizing principle).[17]All of the major Muslim organizations held the view that these bills promoted adultery and apostasy and were intended as a blow against Islamic organizations if not against Islam itself. The government ultimately compromised on the issues of secular marriage, which was not put into practice, and the *aliran kepercayaan*, supervision of which was assigned to the ministry of education and culture instead of the ministry of religion. It would not budge on the *Pancasila* question.[18]

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[16] On Sukarno's ideological machinations see D. Weatherbee, *Ideology in Indonesia: Sukarno's Indonesian Revolution* (Yale University Southeast Asian Studies Program, 1966).

[17] President Soeharto announced this policy initiative in a speech delivered August 16, 1982. For a critique by a leading conservative Muslim scholar see D. Noer, *Islam Pancasila dan Asas Tunggal* (Jakarta: Yayasan Perkhidmatan, 1983).

[18] See M. Woodward, "Textual Exegesis as Social Commentary: Religious, Social and Political Meanings of Indonesian Translations of Arabic Hadith

The Social Organizations Act allowed the government to disband any organization that did not "accept" *Pancasila*. The leaders of Indonesia's two largest organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah seriously considered active resistance but concluded that the cost in human life would be very high and that the probability of success would be minimal. Progressive, democracy-oriented intellectuals including Nurcholish Madjid did not support the government's policies, but did devise Islamic apologies for *Pancasila*.[19]

With the collapse of the New Order, the establishment of democratic governance and a greatly enhanced concern for freedom of speech and other human rights, Indonesia faces new challenges. Clearly the management of religious, ethnic and national sources of collective identity in the new open and democratic context is a particular challenge, especially in light of the fact that there are those who would use religion to incite communal violence or who seek to impose *shari'ah* based social norms by legislative means at local and national levels. Minister of Defence Juwono Sudarsono put it this way:

> *Being an Indonesian Muslim, therefore, necessitates a tolerant expression of one's sense of being an Indonesian citizen, with all its rich nuances arising from family, ethnic and racial heritage including "enrichment of Islam through understanding the beliefs and precepts of other faiths."*[20]

The fact that many Indonesians now question the usefulness of *Pancasila* as what Berger calls the "sacred canopy" of the nation makes these issues all the more crucial.[21]

Texts", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 52.3 (1993): 565-583 for further discussion of this controversy and for Indonesian language references and D. Weatherbee, "Indonesia in 1984: Pancasila, Politics and Power", *Asian Survey* 25 (1985): 190.

[19] For an English language example, based on a previously published Indonesian article see N. Madjid op. cit.

[20] *Jakarta Post*, June 20, 2006.

[21] As reported in the *Jakarta Post* (June 20, 2006) President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono reaffirmed Pancasila as "the fundamental basis of our national life"

Reformasi era governments have liberalized restrictions on traditional Chinese religion, according official recognition to Confucianism and permitting public celebrations of the Chinese New Year.[22] There is now public discussion of granting similar recognition to the animistic *agama suku* (ethnic religions). Enormous sums have been invested in the Islamic higher education system, which is the most important venue in which tolerant, pluralistic understandings of Islam are developed and disseminated. Numerous Indonesian graduate students are now studying in religion departments at North American and other western universities. The establishment of the PhD programme in Inter-Religious Studies by the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies in Yogyakarta is another step in this direction. The programme is deeply committed to "inter-religious dialogue and the promotion of peace in Indonesia and the world".[23]

These are all positive signs that Indonesia has both the courage and the creativity to meet the challenge of managing religion in the new democratic environment. Indonesia's democratic transition took place in the worst imaginable conditions, those of economic collapse and ethno-religious conflict. The fact that there have now been a series of free and fair elections bodes well for the future as does the fact that elections have not been dominated by religious political parties and other advocates of identity politics. But democracy is difficult. It places far more demands on its citizens than do authoritarian regimes. Among these is to accept the position that politics cannot be understood as a zero-sum game in which ballots can be used as tools to construct

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at ceremonies celebrating the 61st anniversary of its proclamation on June 1, 2006. Some elements of the Muslim community supported this position, while others have used decentralization and the devolution of authority to local governments as a vehicle for establishing *shari'ah* at the regional level. Some Indonesians, of all religious affiliations, feel that Pancasila has been tainted by the sins of the Suharto administration.

[22] *Reformasi* (reformation) is the term used to refer to the post New Order period in Indonesian history.

[23] Quotation from ICRS brochure, 2007.

hegemonic structures in a pluralistic environment.[24] Since no single religion can be used as the sole basis for the sacred canopy of the new Indonesia it is to be hoped that the trans-cultural and trans-religious pluralist values Anthony Reid describes and ICRS embodies, will provide an ongoing foundation for Indonesian strategies in dealing with diversity.

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[24] The vaguely worded anti-pornography law, which could have potentially been used to ban traditional Javanese and Balinese dance performances and sunbathing by foreign tourists, is an example. The bill was backed by Islamist political parties and organizations but faced strong opposition from moderate Muslim groups including Nahdlatul Ulama, secular political parties and religious and ethnic minorities. Opponents of the bill considered it to be an attempt to impose Islamist and/or Arab social norms on the nation as a whole. In the end, the bill was substantially revised to eliminate the most objectionable parts and then passed as a political concession to Muslim parties. Since then it has been largely ignored.

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