DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND RADICALIZATION OF ISLAMIST GROUPS
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Abstract

This paper focuses on Indonesia and Malaysia highlighting developmental policies of Soeharto and Mahatir and their consequences on the level of radicalization of muslim groups in these two countries. Comparing Soeharto's de politicization of Islamic of Institute groups on marginalization and radicalization of Islamist groups in both countries. The emergence of muslim middle class in both countries as a result of both regimes modernization.

I. Introduction

The revival of radical Islam in Southeast Asia which involve in political violence, from sectarian conflict to terrorism, struck many observers at home and broad, simply because it happened in Southeast Asia, the largest home of Muslim population which has been associated with a “peaceful and tolerant Islam.” Some explanations emerged as to trace the root of this radicalization. Some writers focus on international factors such as Middle East Islamist network that supported the dissemination of neo-revivalist ideas, Iranian revolution that inspire revolutionary ideology and movement in Indonesia (Eliraz, 2004), and the return of the Afghan-Jihadist alumni to Philippine, Indonesia, and Malaysia (Jones, 2005).

However, some argue that international factors are insignificant in the absence of local factors, as they have more direct causal root to the radicalization. Nevertheless, many explanations at this level

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focused on political and economic instability of post-economic crisis in 1997 that swept away Southeast Asian countries (Sukma, 2003; Baswedan, 2004; Hasan, 2005; Zada, 2002). Although this contributes to the understanding of political and economic contexts of the proliferation, these studies only hit the tip of the iceberg. Long before the crises, there has been the process of radicalization. Therefore, some trace the historical root up to colonial and post-colonial periods in which there had been radicalization out of ideological conflicts and disagreements about the foundation of the new independent states (Jamhari, 2003; Rahim, 2003; Mehdien, 2005). However, these studies do not put these radicalization processes into wider social and political conflicts.

I argue that although radicalization of Islamic group has its roots in post-colonial period, further radicalization began to take place in the 1970’s when the government of Southeast Asian countries directed their attention to economic growth of their respective countries. Modernization and political decisions implemented by the regimes contributed to relative deprivation and alienation of some Muslim groups which then escalated the cycle of previous radicalization and produced new breed of radical Islam.

However, radicalization process differs from one country to another. To observe these differences and similarities, comparative study is needed. In this paper, I will focus on Indonesia and Malaysia, highlighting development policies of Mahatir and Suharto and their consequences on the level of radicalization of Muslim groups in each country. Both countries share similar strategy of development and within Southeast Asia, Muslims are the majority in both countries. There has been degree of radicalization of Muslim groups within these countries out of both regimes’ development policies. This was particularly striking in the beginning of 1970s and 1980s when Suharto and Mahatir embarked upon Western model of development which put modernization and economic growth into their political priorities.

Toward this end, first, I will define what is development policy and radicalization, focusing on the link between both concepts. Second, I will apply this conceptual framework to discuss
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radicalization of Islamist groups in the context of both Suharto and Mahatir’s development strategies (1970s-1990s). I will divide this discussion into two parts. First, I will compare Suharto’s de politicization of Islamist groups and Mahatir’s Islamication policy and their impact on marginalization and radicalization of Islamist groups in Malaysia and Indonesia. Second, I will analyze the emergence of Muslim middle class in both countries as a result of both regimes’ modernization project in the late 1970s and their radicalization into dakwah groups in the late 1980s. Amid this analysis, I will address the issue of how both regimes’ development policies produce a different degree of radicalization in their respective countries.

II. Development Policies And Radicalization Of Islamic Groups

Development is defined as processes which are intended to increase the quality of life for people (Fry and Martin, 1991, p. 98). However, there has been no single answer as to what constitute “good life” and how to achieve a higher quality of life. In its earlier conceptualization, the notion of development meant an acceleration of economic growth and advancement of modern values. It has its root in the formative thinking of modernization theory and assumed a prominent position especially in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s when rapid economic growth and modernization, and thus, development could indeed be achieved. Although the modernization theory has been revised, particularly since 1970s and 1980s onwards, many of the basic ideas are still influential, mainly the understanding that economic growth is the key to development.

In this paper, some basic assumptions of modernization theory will be used to account for development policies adopted by Mahatir and Suharto regimes and their consequences on radicalization of Muslim groups in both countries. As it was clear in 1960s and 1970s, both regimes as well as most developing countries emulated Western model of development which focuses on the accumulation of capital and, hence, economic progress. To reach this level, societies are required to leave their traditional values and begin to adopt modern values, particularly secular and rational norms.
These modern values are reflected in the legitimacy of the state, in which religion, as one of main traditional values considered as 'ideological block' to development, is privatized as a matter of personal faith or ethics (Malhi, 2003, p. 243-244).

As some argue, it was in this context that the advent of development project in Muslim worlds which emulated a Western path of modernization radicalized certain groups within Muslim society (Akbarzadeh and Saeed, 2003). This model of development excludes some basic indigenous traditions and large portion of Muslims' lives, while at the same time Western cultural values made inroad into Muslim societies. Furthermore, economic deprivation and political alienation as a consequence of development policies pursued by the state radicalized some segments of Muslim society (Gadhibian, 2000; Turner, 2003). Modernization project which swept Muslim countries in the post-colonial era has brought about social dislocation (Sidahmed and Ehteshami, 1996). The accompanying economic development, rapid urbanization, the break-up of traditional institutions, expansion of education, and social mobility had resulted in deep social tensions and discontents (Almond, Appleby and Sivan, 2003, p. 124-130).2

However, the level of alienation and hence radicalization is different from one state to another due to differences in the execution of these development policies and their socio-political context. Therefore, it is quite an exaggeration to say that the mounting opposition of radical Islam is a result of the Muslim's 'state failure' to deliver development and welfare (Akbarzadeh and Saeed, 2003, p.5). This, in turn, requires a comparative analysis of how different strategies of development produce different level of radicalization in different countries.

Radicalization refers to the process through which politically passive people become radical or militant. The term radical suggests thorough and complete political or social change. With regard to Islamic groups, this term is attached to 'Islamists' who proposes complete break-up from secular mode of government.3 Islamists (whom also might be called radical Islam or political Islam) refer to Muslims who view Islam as political ideology, i.e. they refer to Islam not only as a guiding principle in their private
lives, but also as a blue print for the whole society and governance (Ayubi, 1991). This value preference assumes the inseparability of Islam and politics which implies that the legitimacy of the state is contingent upon the extent to which Islam is used as the basis of the state and the power is exercised according to the Divine law.

The degree of radicalization of Islamist groups requires the understanding the process that leads to the emergence of radical groups. There are some studies that have illuminated radicalization of groups in various socio-political contexts (Sprinzak, 1991; Butiko, 2004). Sprinzak fits well in this paper due to its exposition of legitimacy of the state vis-à-vis oppositional groups. He argues that there are three stages of radicalization which involves ‘delegitimization’ of the state: crisis of confidence, conflict of legitimacy, and crisis of legitimacy (Sprinzak, 1991).

Applying Sprinzak’s framework is not as simple as it might appear. The boundaries between these stages are not necessary tangible. Nevertheless, David Wright-Neville’s conceptual framework helps to address this problem. He employs this framework to explain the degree of alienation of radical Islamic groups which consists of what he calls ‘activists’ (crisis of confidence), ‘militants’ (conflict of legitimacy), and ‘terrorist’ (crisis of legitimacy) (Wright-Neville, 2004). The problem is when he identifies militants with ‘conflict of legitimacy’. While he defines militant as those who tend to break ‘legal forms of political agitation’, not all groups who reach conflict of legitimacy (disagree with the system of the state) are inclined to use illegal means. Thus, although the level of radicalization of this group can be categorized as conflict of legitimacy, they cannot be classified as militant. I would prefer to call those who challenge the structure of the state without breaking the existing law as ‘radical activist’ and those who are prone to use unconventional means as ‘militants’.

III. Suharto’s And Mahatir’s Development Policies And Radicalization Of Islamist Groups

Radicalization of Islamic groups which was triggered by Suharto and Mahatir’s development projects is one episode out of
previous episodes of history of Islam that has been present for at least eleven centuries in Southeast Asia. The seed of radicalization in both countries can be traced back as early as 1940s and 1950s when there was debate about the ideology of the these new independent states. In Indonesia, the nationalists, led by Sukarno, won the debate over Islamists as Pancasila became the basis of the state. Amidst a crisis of confidence in the nationalist leadership in the 1940s and the failure of Islamic political parties (particularly Masyumi) to incorporate shari’ah law and therefore establish Islam as the basis of the state of Indonesia, some Islamic groups were radicalized and took armed opposition in Darul Islam movement (McVey, 1983, p. 213-214). Although this ‘militant’ movement had been suppressed, its organization began to splinter and its ideas still resonate among radical Islam in Indonesia (Mehden, 2005, p.7; Jones, 2005, p. 6-7).

Unlike in Indonesia, the debate over the basis of the new state in Malaysia resulted in the adoption of constitution with provision that ‘Islam is the religion of the federation’. Although it was intended for ceremonial purposes, this provision contributed to the legitimacy of the state because of the perception among Malay-Muslims that the state is responsible for Islam (Bakar, 2003, p. 130). The only Islamic group who was not happy with this constitution was Parti Islam se-Malaysia (PAS) whose founders were ex-members of UMNO’s religious bureau and some were members of Hizbul Muslimin, a previous Islamic organization with left nationalist links (Barton, 2002). PAS accepted that Islam as religion of the federation but demanded more as to establish Islamic state. Until recently, PAS remains influential oppositional party by which Islamist ‘activists’ struggle for the creation of Islamic state in Malaysia.

Thus, in spite of PAS opposition, the constitution had significant consequence on political legitimacy through which the state in Malaysia was associated with higher level of Islamic legitimacy than that of the state in Indonesia. This, in part, explains why the opposition group in Malaysia (activists) is less radical than Islamic opposition in Indonesia (militant). The pattern of this opposition continued and became more radicalized, although in different
scale and in different form of organization, as Suharto and Mahatir stepped into the throne.

A. Suharto’s Depolitization of Political Islam and Mahatir’s Islamisation Policy (1960s-1980s)

As it was clear in 1960s and 1970s, both Suharto and Mahatir regimes emulated Western model of development which focuses on the accumulation of capital and, hence, economic progress. To reach this capitalist take-off, both regimes realized the significance of modern values underpinning development project: secular and rational norms which foster the acceleration of economic growth. This implied that Indonesian and Malay societies were required to leave their traditional values and embraced secularism which in turn raised the crucial issue of the place of religion in public domain or state in both countries where Islam is a religion of the majority of the population.

Although the legitimacy of both regimes relied heavily on the promise of capital accumulation, and, finally, wealth and prosperity for all, they had different answer as to what role that religion should play in public sphere.¹ This difference, in turn, affected the degree of Muslim political alienation and hence radicalization of Islamic groups in both countries.

Suharto’s modernization project took in the form of outright ‘depolitization’ of religion by, first of all, applying floating mass policy.² Focusing on economic growth as its priority of development, Suharto regime took initiatives which he deemed necessary to foster the growth, including repressive measures such as elimination of previous multi-party system.³ In this context, Suharto military regime was anxious toward political Islam aspirations. This anxiety was based on the assumption that if Islam was politically strong, it would impede the New Order’s modernization project (Effendi, 1999, p. 273). As a result, political Islam or any Islamic political idealism or activism suffered from political marginalization which was indicated by shrinking access to corridors of power and declining stature of political Muslims. The regime banned
the reconstruction of one of the most influential political Islam parties, Masyumi. Although some of key leaders of this party were forced to coalesce with other Islamic parties in Parmusi, they were controlled by the regime and finally they were forced to merge with tightly controlled Islamic party called ‘United Development Party’ (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or PPP).

Suharto’s ‘repressive developmentalist’ style of leadership had further detrimental effect on marginalizing Islamists group when in 1982 and 1985 the regime imposed Pancasila as the sole philosophical foundation (asas tunggal) to all mass-based organizations, including Islamic based political and social organizations (Ramage, 1995). Muslims political and mass organizations gave up Islam as their ideological basis. The only Islamic party at that time, PPP, removed Islam as its ideological basis and accepted Pancasila. Muslim Student’s Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or HMI) divided over the issue, and those who maintained Islam as their ideology formed HMI Majelis Penyelamet Organisasi or MPO (Rescue Board for Organization) and went underground. Muslims Pupils or Pelajar Islam Indonesia (PPI), student association associated with Masyumi, likewise went into clandestine movement (Ismail, 1996, p. 17; 50-52). Thus, by mid-1980s, the Islamist activists were marginalized and stigmatized. As such, a former Masyumi leader said that Muslims were treated like ‘cats with ringworm’ (kutjing kurap) (McVey, p. 199).

Unlike in Indonesia, political Islam in Malaysia has enjoyed a relatively higher degree of political freedom. Prior to Mahatir reign, both Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Razak did not suppress political Islam as represented by PAS. Indeed, after the introduction of National Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971, Tun Razak successfully lured PAS into government’s coalition, Barisan Nasional (“The National Front”). Tun Razak as well as his successor Mahatir, who took office in July 1981, realized the significance of Islam in the public sphere of Malay-Muslims. The homogenous character of Malay-Muslims as the majority of Malaysia’s population and their inclination toward orthodoxy (Barton, 2002) made Suharto’s outright
secularization inappropriate for Mahatir’s modernization project. Furthermore, the recognition of Islam as the religion of federation made it easier for him to adopt ‘Islamisation policy’ as his modernization path.\(^1\)

Mahatir’s ‘Islamisation’ program was aimed at Malay-Muslims’ attitudinal changes so that their beliefs and minds are in line with the modern values. Projecting his role as modernizer and Islamist at the same time, Mahatir focused on modern interpretation of Islam as to inculcate Islamic values with economic modernization, promote pro-capitalist Islamic teaching, showing that Islam supports ‘progress’ and appropriate for ‘modern’ society (Malhi, p. 245; Bakar, p. 134). However, this policy was adopted by Mahatir as to co-opt and ‘out-Islamize’ whom he considers as ‘traditional’ and ‘retrogressive’ Islamist groups. In the end, Mahatir engaged in what many observers call ‘Islamicity race’ with Islamists parties and organizations, such as PAS and Darul Arqam. Like Suharto, in this engagement Mahatir applied repressive measures such as media control, detention of Islamist activists of PAS under Internal Security Act (ISA) and the dissolution of Darul Arqam in 1994 (Barton, 2002, p. 104-105; Camroux, p. 863).

Thus, both Suharto’s marginalization of political Islam and Mahatir’s Islamisation policy ended up with the repression of Islamists groups in both countries, although in different degrees. In effect, the oppression created political alienation of political Islam which contributed to radicalization of Islamist groups within these countries. This was particularly true in Indonesia where ‘depoliticization’ of Islamist groups who had been radicalized since Sukarno regime resulted in higher degree of political alienation. This political alienation encouraged them to form extra-parliamentary organizations and clandestine movement with radical visions. Ex-Masyumi key leaders, led by Muhammad Natsir, established a network of Islamic propagation, Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia or DDII (The council of Islamic propagation in Indonesia).
Given its spiritual nature and less political tone, *da’wah* sites and network were the best strategy that political Muslims had as an outlet of their political voices. The militant wing of political Islam, *Darul Islam*, who had been militant, reemerged and radicalized into a terrorist movement called *Komando Jihad* (Jihad Command). At this stage, Islamist groups had experienced crisis of legitimacy in which some incidences of violence occurred.

In Malaysia, although some Islamist activists involved in violent acts, they only experienced conflict of legitimacy. As Sprinzak (1991) notes that this level of radicalization applies when a previous group who engage in an anti-status quo protest start to question the very legitimacy of the state. This is marked by great disappointment of the group who frustrated with government’s hostile response to their critique and their own failure to achieve success (ibid.). Mahatir’s hostile and repressive response to Islamist groups and PAS own failure to establish Islamic state in the face of UMNO’s dominance produced militant wing of PAS. Led by *Ustaz* Ibrahim Libya, an active member of PAS at the district and state levels, most militant members of PAS frustrated with PAS ‘concessionary efforts’ to turn Malaysia into an Islamic state (Abdullah, p. 263). They reiterated that PAS political approach through parliament had been ineffective and hence the only alternative to correct the system was through unconventional means: *jihad* (violent struggle) against the government (ibid.). Thus, militant activists and supporters of PAS engaged in an armed opposition to the government.

Although these militant Islamist activists had been cracked down and disappeared in the face of repressive regimes, these militant groups successfully formed cycle of radicalization, particularly in Indonesia. The crackdown of *Darul Islam* and *Komando Jihad* resulted in surreptitious recruitment and expansion of network. This, in turn, provided the basis for the emergence of *Jama'ah Islamiyah*, Islamist terrorist group that emerged after reformasi (ICG, 2002; Jones, 2005).
B. Economic Boom, the Rise of Muslim Middle Class, and the Revival of Dakwah Groups

In addition to political alienation, the revival of radical Islamic groups in both countries has its roots in the newly rising Muslim middle class who had been politically excluded and began to harness economic deprivation for mobilization of mass. The emergence of young middle class Muslims in Malaysian and Indonesia had became the feature of the rise of young intellectuals in secular campuses. The rise of this middle class, in part, was facilitated by the regime's support for educational development as a result of economic growth. Manuell Castell observes that after Muslim's countries achieved their independence between the 1960's and 1970's, accompanied by educational development project in the 1960's, the first generation raised under secular nationalist government was born and was better educated than their parents (quoted from Jamhari, 2004, p. 173). During Soeharto and Mahatir regime, along with economic boom in 1970s, educational development took place. During decades of 1971 to 1985, the proportion of educational level of Indonesians increased dramatically. On the basis of affirmative action policies for bumiputera under the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971, more attention was directed toward improving Malays' access to higher education (Hooker, 2003, p. 19; Rahim, 2003, p. 212).

Educational development in turn produced young Muslim middle class who experienced crisis of confidence in the government's development policies and demanded more economic equality. Inability of the regime to provide employment to the fresh graduates, especially in Indonesia, exacerbated the feeling of alienation and hence produced economic deprivation. Since Suharto's modernization project, although the level of employment significantly increased, the rate of urban unemployment rose from 4.8% in 1971 to 6.4% in 1976 ('World Bank Country Study', 1980, p. 13-15). The pattern of unemployment rate in 1980 confirms that
unemployment rate rise regularly with educational level, and rates were high for those with academic education. These rates were getting higher among the urban, the young, and the fresh graduates who were first-time jobseekers (Daroesman, 1985, p. 172-174).

The criticism of this young middle class against the government took in the form of protests and demonstrations. Since the beginning of the 1970's, there had been an increase in the number of the student's protest in Indonesia that culminated in the incidence of the 15th January, 1974, known as 'Great 15 January Disaster' (Malapetaka lima belas Jaunari or Malari). After the incidence, the military regime instructed the dissolution of student activism (Bhakti, 1998, p. 171). Similarly, in Malaysia, the growth of student political activism in 1970s, as students staged demonstration against the government on behalf of the rural poor, resulted in the issuance of a Bill in 1975 which banned students from involving in politics (Hooker, 2003, p. 20).

As a result of the banning of student's political activities in both countries, students' learning circles and discussion groups mushroomed within or outside the campuses in which mobilizations were beyond the governments' control. Furthermore, Suharto's and Mahatir's uncompromising treatments toward political Islam and rapid urbanization altered their role as 'idealists' (Vatikiosis, 1998, p. 129) with inclination toward 'more literal application of Islam' (Fealy, 2005, p. 159). Muzaffar (1993) argues that these new young middle class acquired their secondary education in public and secular schools. Consequently, given their lack of religious education and social alienation in the face of rapid urbanization, they searched their own religious and spiritual compass through group discussion and religious learning circles called 'dakwah'.

As Roy (2004) and Kepel (2002) show that proselytizing (da'wah) movements led by this new class of intellectuals educated in secular universities were the core of the Islamist
movement that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. This was marked by the transmission of ‘neo-revivalist’ thought such as Muslim Brotherhood (ikhwan al-Muslimin) in Egypt and Jama’at-i Islami in Pakistan into both Indonesia and Malaysia (Eliraz, 2004; Fealy, 2005). Furthermore, this transmission occurred in the period when political Islam became internationally influential as a result of Arab-Israeli conflict, the increase in oil price in Arabic countries, the revolution in Iran, and Afghanistan resistance against the former Soviet Union (Sidhamend and Ehteshami, 1996; Turner, 2003; Eliraz, 2004). The rising consciousness of this Muslim middle class was then expressed through the creation of learning circles in the form of independent ‘cells’ which were branded as Usrah or halaqah.

It was through this network of usrah or halaqah that many Islamist movements proliferated with different spectrum of political thought and different level of radicalization. In Malaysia, the most prominent dakwah group was ABIM (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia). This pattern of movement was then emulated by Islamic student activists in Indonesia by establishing Gerakan Salman (Salman Movement) and Lembaga Dakwah Kampus or LDK (Campus-Linked Islamic Propagation). In spite of their different manifestations, these dakwah groups shared the same ideology, i.e. Islam as the only alternative to secular ideologies such as capitalism, socialism, and materialism (Djamas, 1989).

It was at this junction where young Muslim middle class though dakwah network radicalized from crisis of confidence to conflict of legitimacy. However, these dakwah groups’ opposition took in the form of ‘radical activism’ not ‘militant’ movement. By this ‘neo-revivalist’ ideology they began to question the very legitimacy of Suharto and Mahatir’s governments which was based on capitalist ideology. It was in this context that ex-Masyumi leaders in DDII, led by Muhammad Natsir, established ideological network with these students’ dakwah groups through the publication of monthly magazine, Media Dakwah, which propagated Islamic
radical visions. One of frequently quoted statements in this publication was that Western Capitalism is a new short of Western Imperialism. This argument, which mostly resonated with the dependence theory of modernization that is shared by Marxist/socialist groups, was articulated by Indonesian and Malaysian young Islamist activists through protest and demonstration against their respective governments, showing that capitalism only widen the gap between the rich and the poor. This was particularly true to ABIM, which at that time took the position of PAS that coalesced with UMNO (Bakar, 2003).

Mahatir who anticipated this growing opposition from the very beginning of his rule, started to co-opt Islamist groups by wooing Anwar Ibrahim, ABIM leader, to UMNO (Barton, 2002; Bakar, 2003; Rahim, 2003). This strategy was a part of his ‘Islamisation policy’ to reinforce UMNO’s Islamic credentials. Not until the beginning of 1990s, Suharto also adopted the same strategy. Amid his mounting tension with military after the end of oil boom in the late 1980s, Suharto began to seek new form of legitimacy through Islamic groups. In this strategy, Suharto made several concessions to Muslims such as the introduction of the Islamic Court Bill, the establishment of Islamic banks, and the sponsorship of Islamic propagation activities (dakwah) (Effendi, 1999). Most importantly, he created channel for co-opting upwardly mobile Muslim middle class through the establishment of ICM (Ikatan Cendikiawan Muslim Indonesia) (Hefner, 2000). However both regimes remained suspicious toward radical Islamist groups. Suharto and Mahatir only offered concession to Muslims who gave their loyalty to the government.

It was partly because the Mahatir and Suharto administration had been enthusiastic to use Islam as a legitimizing development force that such broad opportunity has been created to employ Islam as a source of identity and opposition (Bertrand, 2004; Barton, 2002, p. 95) and thus further radicalization, particularly after economic crisis in 1997. The downfall of Suharto followed by fragile democratic transition in Indonesia created conditions for the mushrooming of Islamist movements that
have been operated underground since Suharto’s repressive regime.\textsuperscript{1} The unpopularity of parties with religious affiliation among the constituents, because of the fact that most voters voted for secular parties such as Indonesia Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) and Golkar (Azra, 2000, p. 312; Effendi, 2003, p. 202), radicalized some elements of Islamist groups into a level of crisis of legitimacy. In turn, they created extraparliamentary movements with radical visions and some of them occasionally resorted to violence, involved in local ethnic conflicts, and even terrorism.\textsuperscript{2}

In Malaysia, radicalization of Muslim groups vacillated between crisis of confidence and conflict of legitimacy. So far, almost no previous militant Islamic and dakwah groups reached crisis of legitimacy.\textsuperscript{3} The only dakwah group that turned out to be militant is Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia or KMM (Malaysian Mujahidin Group). This cell-operated group involved in criminal activities such as Bank robberies in Petaling Jaya and has not reached terrorism or crisis of legitimacy (Abdullah, 2004, p. 268). Although some Malaysians, such as Noordin M. Top and Dr Azhari, have involved in Terrorist organization, they operate in Indonesia, not in Malaysia.

IV. Conclusion

Radicalization of Islamist groups swept away in both countries, although in different degrees. The forces that contributed to this radicalization are not solely from development policies produced by both Suharto and Mahatir. Long before they stepped into the throne, there has been radicalization of Islamist groups who had bitter negotiation to establish Islamic state with the previous regimes. In this case, Islamist groups in Indonesia had become more radical (militant) than those in Malaysia (activists).

However, this radicalization had intensified as Suharto and Mahatir commenced with their development policies which caused political alienation of Islamist groups. The previous ‘militant’ Islamist groups who had experienced conflict of legitimacy against
Sukarno’s regime, radicalized into next stage: ‘crisis of legitimacy’ as Suharto military regime marginalized Islamist groups from mainstream politics. This was indicated by formation of terrorist groups, Komando Jihad, out of previous militant movement, Darul Islam. In Malaysia, Mahatir’s Islamisation policy also created breeding ground for radicalization, although in lesser degree. Mahatir’s repressive measures against and stigmatization of Islamist groups, and the failure of Islamist political party, increased the level of radicalization from ‘crisis of confidence’ to ‘conflict of legitimacy’. This was indicated by the formation of militant wing of PAS activists who previously had experienced crisis of confidence in the previous government out of disagreement about the basis of the state.

The real impact of Suharto’s and Mahatir’s development policies upon radicalization of Islamic groups was attached to the second generation of Islamist groups, the so-called the newly rising young Muslim middle class. The banning of student political activism, rapid modernization, and different degree of economic deprivation had created conditions for radicalization of this young middle class. Influenced by Islamist neo-revivalist ideology, this young middle class participated in dakwah activities and created ideological network with previous Islamist groups which produced spectrum of Islamist political thought. In Indonesia, some dakwah groups radicalized into both violent (terrorism) and non-violent extra-parliamentary movements and challenged the legitimacy of the secular state of Indonesia (crisis of legitimacy). In Malaysia, although some dakwah groups turned to be militant, the level of Islamist militancy does not reach the level of crisis of legitimacy.

Thus, although there are many factors contribute to the radicalization of Islamic groups in Indonesian and Malaysia, the development policies pursued by both Suharto and Mahatir indeed created conditions favorable to further radicalization of previous Islamist groups as well as the emergence of new breed of radical Islam in both countries where the degree of radicalization of Islamic group in Indonesia is higher than that of Malaysia.
Endnotes:

1. The particular question that will be answered in this essay is that: Did development policies under Suharto produce a greater degree of radicalization of Islamic groups than development policies under Mahathir? How and Why?

2. This challenge has radicalized some segments of Muslims who view their beliefs and cultural values are at risk and put blame on state leaders for imitation to West. To alter what they considered unjust and illegitimate state, they returned to scriptural Islam as a solution (Akbarzadeh and Saeed, 2003). Thus, the radical interpretation of Islam in modern times is in part a response of Islamic groups to a model of development that excludes indigenous traditions and large portion of Muslims’ lives in their society.

3. The combination of these factors provided fertile ground for the growth of Islamic activism such as Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Sudan, and Jordan, and other Islamic movements in Algeria and Tunisia (Sidalmed and Ehteshami, 1996).

4. Islamists have challenged secular modes of government and legitimacy of its rule. This challenge has its roots in the beginning of the twentieth century when the wave of secularism in the Muslim worlds disrupted the dialectical relationship between Islam and the state. The new emerging leaders and state in Muslim politics, such as Ataturk in Turkey and Reza Shah in Iran, no longer utilized Islam as a source of authority. Rather they sought a secular mode of government such as nationalism and socialism as alternatives to Islam. However, the all-encompassing nature of Islam put these leaders in difficult situation to remove Islam and its symbols from the state. These leaders’ initiatives to decouple Islam and politics, in turn, created a crisis of authority in the Muslim worlds (Ayubi, 1991; Akbarzadeh and Saeed, 2003).

5. The first stage, ‘crisis of confidence’, is achieved by group who lost its confidence with the existing regime, which involves a conflict with certain rulers or policies, but not with the structure or the foundations of the established political system. At this stage the challenger group criticizes the incumbent regime from the very ideological point of view upon which the regime itself is founded. This criticism comes out of what they consider as the ruler’s own misleading behavior and inappropriate policies and not because the fault in the system. The next stage, ‘conflict of legitimacy’, is a continuation of the previous stage in which an oppositional group who engage in anti-status quo critique begins to question the whole system upon which the regime is structured. In this level of radicalization, the group demands the transformation of the whole system and occasionally involves in small scale violent acts. This stage is signaled by the emergence of an alternative ideological and cultural system that ‘delegitimizes’ the prevailing regime and its underlying norms or values. The highest degree of radicalization is ‘crisis of legitimacy’, that is, when the group does not only ‘delegitimize’ the system but also every individual associated with it (Sprinzak, 1991, p. 56). This involves depersonalization and dehumanization which makes radicals involve in violent acts, terrorism and atrocities.
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6 In Indonesia, for instance, there has been a radical group, *Hizbut Tahrir*, struggled for the establishment of caliphate system (*khilafah*) and application of *shari'ah* law. Although the demand of this group is radical, the way they convey their massage is not contradictory with existing legal system in Indonesia. They only use conventional means such as propaganda by *dakwah* (Islamic propagation), demonstration, and hearings with political elites.

7 Unlike in Malaysia, the state representation of Islam in Indonesia was limited to ritual and bureaucratic aspects of religion in institutions and education at large. This involve large Islamic mass organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU (Stauth, 2002, p. 50).

8 These differences stem from both countries' historical legacy of Islam and its ethnic, cultural, and geographical expression. In Indonesia, Islam had bitter experience with the state. As mentioned earlier, previous Islamist groups that struggled for the establishment of Islamic state failed to achieve their goals. Parliamentary debates and radical Islamist uprisings resulted in uneasy relationship between Islam and state. This, in turn, created a common perception among nationalist groups (particularly military forces) that religion and ideological rivalry had contributed to previous political instability and economic malaise. Furthermore, the heterogeneous nature of Islamic expressions of Muslims' political voices in Indonesia as reflected in electoral gains of Islamic political parties that had never emerged victorious in political landscape of Indonesia reinforced the perception of nationalists that indeed Muslims in Indonesia did not provide single answer to the place of religion in the state. These perceptions legitimized Suharto's military regime to privatize religion as a matter of personal belief to remove any disruptions that might impede his development policies.

9 A principal ideologue and policy-maker of the New Order regime, Ali Murtopo, believed that the failure of the pre-1965 regime to attain stability and thus economic stability was caused by party politics and ideological rivalry. The military leaders believed that political parties were concerned more with their narrow interests than with the interests of the nation. Therefore, the military regime saw the need to simplify (*menyederhanakan*) the party system, and to proscribe political parties to have branches at the sub-district level while encouraging people to express their political voices free of ethnic and religious passions (Sukma, 2003).

10 At the time all political parties were forced to merge into two created parties, the United Development Parties (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or PPP) and the Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia or PDI). Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII), Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Parmusi), and Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (PERTI) merged into PPP. While PDI comprised the secular-nationalist Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI), Murba, Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia (IPKI), together with the Christian Partai Kristen Indonesia (Parkindo), and Partai Katolik (Catholic party) (Cribb and Brown, 1995, p. 120-128).

11 To facilitate this program, Mahatir regime established several Islamist think-tanks and research centers which included the Malaysian Institute of Islamic...
Research (IKIM), and the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) (Noor, p 200). IKIM is Mahatir’s channel to propagate the regime’s version of modern Islam. This institute has assisted the regime to secure the consent of the Malay-Muslims to ‘work harder, accumulate wealth, and rally behind the BN’s strong government’ (Malhi, p. 248). Later on, Suharto also adopted this policy with different strategies. However, Mahatir anticipated it earlier, for reasons that will be discussed later.

12 This is what some observers call “politics of predication” (Hefner, 2000, p. 106) or “political da’wah” (Collins, 2003).

13 Jones notes that this is a critical stage in which politically active Muslims participated as Mujahidin fighters against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. The fighters were ex-Darul Islam members who joined da’wah activities called Komando Jihad organized by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir (the founders of Jama’ah Islamiya) (Jones, 2005, p. 7).

14 Komando Jihad and the movement for an Indonesian Islamic state (Negara Islam Indonesia or NII) were Islamic movements targeted by New Order regime in the end of 1980s, approximately a month after Tanjung Priok incidence. The military regimes claimed that these groups were responsible for terrorist bombings on the 4th of October 1984 when three bombs exploded at two BCA (Bank Central Asia) branches at Glodok, and 21st of January 1985, when nine explosions rocked the ancient temple of Borobudur. There were rumors that the groups were ‘exploited’ or manipulated by the military to fight communism and to legitimize the New Order’s repression of Islamic movements. (Vatiliotis, 1998, p. 128)

15 In order to demobilize militant Islamist activists, both Suharto and Mahatir did not hesitate to resort to violence which occasionally claimed many lives. In a notorious event called Merauke incident, in November 1985, Mahatir government took decisive action against PAS militant wing which claimed lives of fourteen villagers and four policemen (Abdullah, 2004). In Indonesia, the government’s repression was more vicious. The worst exemplar occurred on 12 September 1984 when Muslim activists and protestors were massacred in a mosque in Tanjung Priok, an area in the port of Jakarta. Around 200 people were gunned down by the military as the activists protested against military personnel who tore down posters advocating that women should wear the Muslim head-covering (jilbab) (Tamara, 1986, pp. 20-22; Effendi, 2003, p. 52). In 1989, a network of Islamic study groups known as “usroh” associated with Pondok Pesantren Ngruki also could not escape from the strong arm of the government. The military forces waged a war against an usroh community in Lampung Province, Sumatera. Long before this incident, the name of usroh had been given to radical associations since the hijacking of a Garuda Woyla flight to Thailand, on the 28th of March 1981, by Imran Muhammad Zein who was a member of usroh of Jihad Command (Komando Jihad) and in turn sentenced to death (McGylan, 2005).

16 Between 1965 and 1990 the proportion of literate Indonesians increased dramatically from 40% to 90% of the total population (Jones and Manning, 1992, p. 363-410). In the wake of his policy which obliged all citizens to have basic
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education (*program wajib belajar 9 tahun*), the percentage of people completing senior high school also jumped from 4% in 1970 to more than 30% in 1998 (Hull and Jones, 1994, p. 123-78). This was followed by the increasing number of student who accomplished the study at tertiary level, i.e. from 271.388 in 1971 to 938.574 in 1985. Although some noticed that the enforcement of religious education also took shape in those years (Hefner, 1999, p. 42) the percentage of those who studied in public and secular schools was higher than those in religious or Islamic schools (Anwar, 1995, p. 117-118).

17 The rise of this young middle class was accompanied by the urbanization. During the New Order regime, Indonesia’s urban population increased from under 20% of the total population to 35% (Hefner, 2002, p. 762). In Malaysia, thousand of young men and women from the rural areas moved to urban areas and became employees in industrial enterprises (Hooker, 2003, p. 20). Driven by the government liberal economic reform program, social and economic fabric of urban areas was altering, noticeably in the 1980’s. In this context, urban wealth and an infusion of Western and East Asian consumer styles into elite and middle class circles were expanded rapidly (Fealy, p. 159; Vatikiosis, 1998). This was indicated by the proliferation of night clubs, alcohol became widely available, high sky-scrappers, and youth affected permissive lifestyles (Vatikiosis, 1998). The arrival of migrants and university students from traditional and religious based rural and their exposure to this urban settings had created social alienation

18 However, another group of young Muslim middle class, out of uneasy relationship between Islam and state, take less ideological and political stance by focusing on educational and social development and cultural Islam (Mujani, 1993; Fealy, 2005). As some scholars argue, New Islamic intellectualism and new santri middle class had emerged out of this intellectual transformation (Effendi, 2003; Anwar, 1995). Furthermore, Fealy (2005) argues that out of this intellectualism, Islamisation which was adopted by the New Order regime in the late 1980s produced pluralistic and liberal manifestation of Islam. Nevertheless, we have to admit that not every Muslims on the same path of intellectualism. There were those who conserved an organic view of Islam-state relationship, particularly those who joined a dakwah groups who later established Islamist movements such as PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Prosperous and Justice Party), Hizbut Tahrir (The Party of liberation), and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (Board of Indonesian Muslim Fighters).

19 The transmission, among others, took place through students who returned from their studies in the Middle East, mainly from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan (Eliraz, 2004).

20 This organization was pioneered by Ir. Imaduddin Abdul Rahim (known as bang Imad) who was a lecturer in one of Malaysia’s university in the early 1970’s. He was influenced by ABIM (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia), an Islamic Malaysia based student movement founded by Anwar Ibrahim in 1971. Upon his return to Indonesia, he assumed the head of the da’wah wing of the Muslim student association called HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam) in Salman mosque, Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). In 1974 he broke with HMI and
organized training for da'wah called Lathian Mujahid Dakwah (LMD) based on tactics and strategies developed by ABIM. LMD then developed ideas and Islamic teachings through learning circles known as usrah (nuclear family). It also organized training programs for the study of Islam such as Mentoring Islam (Islamic courses) and Studi Islam Terpadu (Integrated Study of Islam). Together with DDII activists published a monthly magazine called Risalah Islam. This movement was considered to be a form of jihad or holy struggle waged against "Western" way of life—Capitalism, secularism, liberalism, communism, and materialism. This Islamist movement was also projected to counter movement against the idea of secularization and themes around Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam (Renewal of Islamic Thought) led by Nurchloris Madjid in the early 1970's. Under the charismatic leadership of Imaduddin, Salaman mosque became the model for da'wah on campuses in other cities which then inspired the establishment of Lembaga Dakwah Kampus. See (Djamas, 1989, p. 217-218).

21 DDII (Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia) was established in 1967 by Muhammad Natsir and his colleagues whom were associated with Masyumi (Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia), the Islamic political party of modernist Muslims, which was previously banned by Sukarno in 1960 out of its alleged involvement with the regional rebellion of DI/TII. When Natsir and other Masyumi leaders were released from prison by the New Order regime, they were banned from reestablishing Masyumi or joining the party that have been revived under the name of Parmusi. Faced with New Order repression, Natsir and his associates put party politics aside in favor of the establishment of DDII. Natsir viewed that this da'wah program not as a purely spiritual matter but as political struggle in a new form.

DDII committed to Islamize Indonesian society through bottom-up da'wah strategy. It called for strict observance of Islamic law and outward expression of Islamic commitment such Islamic dress and separation of sexes. DDII published a monthly journal, Media Dakwah, and distributed it to campus mosques. In this journal the writers reiterated the threat of "Christianization" and were suspicious toward Zionist conspiracy. It also criticized Nurchloris Madjid and Renewal movement as the "Trojan Horse" of Islamic liberalism. DDII's cultural or da'wah strategy took shape in campuses. DDII activities targeted students in the secular state universities and these da'wah activities were mostly performed in campus mosques. The campus became new channel of Islamic activism.

To exert an influence on campuses, DDII sponsored projects called 'Bina Masjid Kampus' for constructing mosques and Islamic centers in twelve different universities: the University of Indonesia in Jakarta, the Andalas University in Padang, the Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, the Eleventh March State University in Solo and the Diponegoro University in Semarang. In these Islamic centers the DDII cadres provided training programs to university students and exposed them to the ideas of major Islamist ideologies (Hakim and Linrung, no year).

22 In the face of Suharto's and Mahatir's suspicion toward political Islam, at this stage many Islamist movements operated underground or camouflaged themselves with dakwah activities in cells called halagah or usrah. In Indonesia, the movements that emerged in the post-Suharto regime originated from these
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dakwah activities are Hizbut Tahrir, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, and PKS (Prosperous and Justice Party). In Malaysia, the radical wing of these dakwah activities, apart from ABIM, is Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia or KMM (Malaysian Mujahidin Group). This movement originated in 1986 under the name Halaqah Parkindo, a dakwah cell which was founded under the aegis of PAS (Abdullah, 2004, p. 266).

23 In the aftermath of collapse of Soeharto regime (May 21, 1998), there are at least two types of such Islamist movements. First, the (re)birth of Islamic political parties. Out of 181 political parties between May 1998 to April 1999, 42 parties can be categorized as Islamic. Second, the emergence of this confessional politics at the formal level was accompanied by a wave of Islamic radical activism at informal level e.g. Laskar Jihad (Jihad Troops), the Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Defense Front), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, Indonesian Mujahidin Council), Forum Komunikasi Ahl-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah (FKAWI, Ahl-Sunnah wa Al-Jama’ah forum) and Hizb al-Tahrir (the Party of Liberation). See (Hasan, 2005) (Jamhari, 2003).

24 This tendency is particularly apparent in case of Laskar Jihad (until its dissolution in October 2002), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), and Islamic Defenders Front (FPI). These organizations claim themselves as non-political in nature. Their aspirations and voices often expressed in militant ways like destroying cafes and bars, to sentence one of their members to death as punishment of adultery, involve in violent religious conflict in Maluku and sweeping of foreign visitors. Jama’ah Islamiya, a transnational terrorist groups involved in Bali I-II, J.W. Marriot, Australian Embassy bombings, and many others. For profile of and map of each group see for instance (Jamhari, 2003, p. 3-25). And its relationship with Indonesian transition to democracy see; (Hasan, 2005; Sukma, 2003).

25 However, fealy (2005) argues that Malaysian public sphere is inclined toward Islamism and legalism. This is in part as a result of ‘Islamicity race’ between UMNO and PAS, and the character of Malaysian Muslims who are more homogenous and more inclined toward orthodoxy and conservatism than their Indonesian counterparts (Barton, 2002). This, in part, explains why the degree of Islamist political alienation in Malaysia is lesser than the degree of political alienation of Islamist in Indonesia, given the wide expression of Islamist ideas in Malaysia’s public domain.

V. Daftar Pustaka


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