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From Lynchings to Communal Violence

Pogroms, 1998–2001

With the ascension of B. J. Habibie to the presidency in late May 1998 came the much anticipated elevation of Islam to the seat of national state power in Indonesia. Habibie, after all, had long served as the chairman of ICMI, the All-Indonesia Association of Islamic Intellectuals, and more generally as the patron and promoter of a broad variety of modernist Muslim activists and organizations seeking patronage and protection from the state. Although many individual Muslims had reservations about Habibie's own piety, honesty, and effectiveness as a leader, his ascension to the presidency represented a major triumph for a wide range of groups organizing under the banner of Islam.[1] His cabinet included prominent members of ICMI, and other politicians affiliated with a number of modernist Islamic organizations assumed formal and informal positions of power and influence in his administration. Never before had forces favoring the so-called Islamization of Indonesian state and society enjoyed such proximity to power. Small wonder that Amien Rais, chairman of Muhammadiyah and champion of the university campus–based campaign for *Reformasi* and Suharto's resignation, helped to wind down student protests in late May and early June 1998 with pronouncements that the new Habibie administration deserved a six-month trial period.

At the same time, however, the position of Habibie—and of Islam more broadly—remained fragile within the Indonesian state; the powers of the new president and his allies were circumscribed and challenged from both within and without. The retention of General Wiranto, former Suharto adjutant, as minister of defense and armed forces commander in chief, for example, signaled the limits of Habibie's influence within the powerful

military establishment, even as the realities of the Asian economic crisis dictated further subordination of Habibie's famously "nationalist" pet projects to the austerity and discipline of an IMF restabilization program. Also in Golkar, the long-dominant party in parliament (and in the People's Consultative Assembly tasked with selecting the president and vice-president), Habibie's position soon appeared precarious. Within weeks of his elevation to the presidency, a bitter fight for the Golkar party leadership surfaced, in which Akbar Tanjung, a Habibie ally and former head of the modernist Islamic student association HMI, only narrowly defeated General Edy Sudrajat, a former defense minister and longtime subordinate of the powerful Catholic military and intelligence czar of the 1980s, General Benny Murdani. The position of Islam within the Indonesian state, it was clear, was far from hegemonic, and the possibilities for promoting substantive Islamization remained highly circumscribed.

The Habibie Interlude

It was in this context of evident insecurity and uncertainty that President Habibie initiated a process of liberalization. The summer of 1998 witnessed the loosening of restrictions on press freedoms and the release of scores of political prisoners, even as greater freedom of association encouraged the formation of literally dozens of new political parties. Before the end of the year, moreover, plans for a general election in mid-1999 had already been announced, with many of the restrictions of the long Suharto era lifted to allow for much freer competition. This move in the direction of democratization was soon accompanied by shifts toward decentralization: the passage of two important pieces of legislation on regional autonomy in 1999 devolved considerable administrative and fiscal powers to regencies (*kabupaten*), cities (*kotamadya*), and, to a lesser extent, provinces (*propinsi*), while allowing local assemblies (DPRD) to elect regents (*bupati*), mayors (*walikota*), and governors (*gubernur*), hitherto essentially appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Jakarta.

Given the overwhelming majority of statistical Muslims in Indonesia as well as the Islamizing trends in the country noted by countless observers since the 1980s, many figures within the Habibie administration understandably hoped that the political space opened up by these moves would be occupied in large measure by forces rallying behind the banner of Islam. After nearly a decade of claiming to represent not just Islam but millions of Indonesian Muslims, this segment of the national political class projected considerable self-confidence in this regard. What constraints continued to

circumscribe and threaten the new regime could be ascribed to powerful enemies within the Indonesian state (e.g., residual secular and Christian influence in the military) and the international arena (i.e., Christian and Jewish conspiracies to contain Islam and oppress Muslims throughout the world). Against these essentially external, hostile, and parasitic forces stood the Habibie administration as the organic representative of Indonesian society, a society of Muslims. Dissent from within this society—continuing student demonstrations and other protests against the regime—was demonized as the work of Communist agitators and their dupes, said to be secretly backed by Christian generals, businessmen, and politicians, if not the CIA and Mossad.[2]

Yet with the movement toward political liberalization, democratization, and decentralization initiated by Habibie, the claims to represent Islam in Indonesia fell under increasing strain and strife, for the fixity and boundaries of all sorts of identities in the country were undermined and in some cases overwhelmed by a multiplicity of competing interpellations. Within ICMI and its satellite organizations, after all, a broad diversity of modernist Muslims had long coexisted, ranging from nondevout seekers of patronage to pious but highly Westernized Muslim liberals to committed Islamists of decidedly puritan hue. More important, perhaps, the authority of ICMI and the various Islamic activists and organizations that sought protection and patronage under Habibie's wings had always rested on its embeddedness within the central state apparatus of a closed authoritarian regime, and on its access to the perquisites, privileges, and prestige of state power. This narrowly modernist Muslim stream within the political class lay like a small oil slick upon the vast ocean of Indonesian Islam, with its rich diversity of Muslim institutions of education, association, and worship historically independent from state control and its huge population across the sprawling archipelago of avowed believers much poorer, more rural, and much more modestly educated than those who, from the pulpits of state power in Jakarta, claimed to speak on their behalf.

Hopes that Habibie and his allies could win the elections of mid-1999 were destined to be dashed. The administration party Golkar suffered a precipitious decline to 22 percent of the vote; a welter of modernist Muslim-led parties (PPP, PAN, PBB, and PK) totaled only another 21 percent. By contrast, the decidedly ecumenical Partai Demokrasi Indonesia—Perjuangan (PDIP), or Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, led by Megawati Soekarnoputri—the daughter of Indonesia's national hero and first president—placed first with nearly 34 percent of the vote. The Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB), or National Awakening Party, led by Abdurrahman Wahid—longtime head of the "traditionalist" Muslim association Nahdlatul Ulama—came in third after Golkar with 12.7 percent.

With this election result, the possibility of cobbling together a winning coalition of Golkar and allied Islamic parties to (re)elect Habibie in the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) was foreclosed, and the threat of a Megawati presidency loomed large. Thus in the October 1999 MPR session, the main Islamic parties—PPP, PBB, PAN, and PK—formed a "Central Axis" (*Poros Tengah*) in support of the liberal traditionalist Wahid as president, forcing the "secular nationalist" Megawati to settle for the vice presidency instead. With this outcome, and as Wahid refused to reward his erstwhile Central Axis supporters with cabinet seats or other concessions, by the end of 1999 Islam had experienced a rapid decline and reversal of fortunes from its apogee in the preceding year. After a transitional administration dominated by modernist Muslims and protective of Islamist groups, Indonesia was now ruled by a president identified with traditionalist Islam, liberalism, and accommodation with Christians, and a vice president whose party included large numbers of non-Muslims (more than one-third of its parliamentary slate) and few prominent members with any history of Islamic schooling or association. By mid-1999 the notion of Islam as a universalist faith and force in Indonesia, so seemingly ascendant in the years leading up to 1998, had fallen prey to the divisive and particularistic dynamics of competitive elections.

The Eclipse of the Religious Riot

The pattern of dramatic change—and abiding uncertainty regarding the position of Islam in the Indonesian public sphere prefigured three decisive shifts in the pattern of religious violence from mid-1998 through 1999. First, after several years of disturbances targeting Chinese business establishments and non-Muslim houses of worship in provincial towns and cities around the archipelago, and in the wake of the May 1998 riot in Jakarta (and several other cities), the familiar repertoire of anti-Chinese riots and church burnings disappeared from the stage of Indonesian public life. Although in the first weeks and early months after the rioting in Jakarta there were numerous reports of harassment and intimidation suffered by Indonesians of Chinese ancestry around the archipelago,[3] the phenomenon of religious rioting described in chapter 4 soon petered out and vanished from view.

To be sure, the first year following Suharto's resignation did witness a

handful of riots in some ways reminiscent of the disturbances of 1995–97. In late June 1998, for example, several hundred students from *pesantren* in the Central Javanese town of Purworejo congregated in the town center after Friday midday prayers to demand the closing of local gambling outlets. The crowd then proceeded to attack and burn several gambling venues plus a handful of nightclubs, karaoke bars, discotheques, and a movie theater. The crowd also set upon four churches—three Protestant, one Catholic—and the house of a Protestant minister, leaving a trail of broken windows and pews in its wake before dispersing for evening prayers at the local mosque and a police escort back to various *pesantren*.[4] Christian groups listed more than a dozen cases of attacks on churches in various other parts of Indonesia in the first six months following Suharto's resignation and Habibie's ascension to the presidency.[5] September 1998 witnessed assaults on Chinese shops in the Central Javanese town of Kebumen and the East Sumatran city of Medan,[6] and in early January 1999 an attack by a crowd of rickshaw drivers on a police station in the West Javanese town of Karawang spilled over into the looting of some Chinese shops and minor vandalism in a handful of non-Muslim houses of worship.[7] Similar but smaller-scale disturbances were also reported in various parts of the archipelago in the second half of 1998 and into 1999.

But none of these incidents unfolded in response to perceived insults or slights to Islam, its local representatives, or local institutions of Islamic worship and education, and little of the violence appears to have been directed at the specifically religious targets—churches and temples—so prominent in the riots of previous years. Instead, the attacks on Chinese businesses—supermarkets, rice mills, shrimp farms, stores—in 1998–99 fit well within a broader pattern of strikingly secular mobilization in localities around the archipelago. Popular claims to property—land occupations, lootings—grew ever bolder with the worsening economic crisis, the widening of freedom to organize, and the uncertainty regarding previously fixed guarantees of state protection.[8]

Insofar as religious violence was concerned, the fading of attacks on Chinese property, non-Muslim houses of worship, and government buildings by crowds mobilized under the banner of Islam during this period represents an important change worthy of examination. For contrary to suppositions of deep-rooted "ethnic hatred" or "economic resentment," the rising tide of unemployment, inflation, and hardship for ordinary Indonesians across the country and the easing of authoritarian restrictions on popular mobilization did not combine in 1998–99 to spell a return to anti-Chinese riots, much less an escalation in the frequency or violence of such disturbances. Instead, with the assumption of power in Jakarta by

forces closely identified with the promotion of Islam, it was the shift in the constellation of religious authority in Indonesian state and society that prefigured the disappearance of religious rioting of a certain kind. If in 1995–97, after all, the *upward* push for the recognition of Islam in Indonesian society had pitted the defenders of the faith against the stubborn residues of Christian and Chinese power in the hierarchies of state and market, with Habibie's ascension to the presidency in mid-1998 the push for recognition was no longer *upward* but rather *downward* and *outward*. For with the effective capture of state power in Jakarta, the greatest expectations and anxieties as to the position of Islam in Indonesia no longer centered on a fixed hierarchy located within a centralized state but were redirected and diffused within the broader, murkier realm of Indonesian society.

The Emergence of Islamic Vigilante Groups

A second shift in religious violence in the latter half of 1998 was the emergence, especially in Jakarta, of state-sanctioned—and subcontracted—vigilante groups mobilized under the banner of Islam. The final years of the Suharto era had already witnessed the occasional mobilization of rowdy, small-scale protests against perceived nodes of Christian influence and antiregime activity (e.g., the Catholic-run think tank CSIS, the Catholic-owned newspaper *Kompas*, the Christian/secular nationalist PDI) in Jakarta, as well as attacks on student demonstrations, which were caricatured as the work of Communist remnants and Christian conspirators in Indonesia. These incidents had seen the mobilization of dozens, if not hundreds, of militant activists affiliated with such Islamic groups as Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia DDII or (Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council) and KISDI (Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World) and recruited through a network of allied mosques and Islamic schools. The lumpen quality of many such recruits was perhaps best exemplified by the participation of many residents from Tanjung Priok, the tough port area of Jakarta where survivors and families of victims of the security forces' atrocities in 1984 (see chapter 3) were said to harbor bitter resentment against the foes of Islam. Such incidents had been understood to enjoy the blessings of powerful elements in the regime, such as Lieutenant General Prabowo Subianto, who were working hand in glove with the leaders of DDII and KISDI.

With the ascension of Habibie to the presidency in May 1998, this embryonic and sporadic pattern of Islamic vigilante activity began to crystallize into a more hardened and consistent form. Just hours after Suharto's

resignation on May 21, such groups—reportedly in coordination with senior military officers such as Prabowo—began preparing an assault on the grounds of the national parliament to disperse student protesters and defend the fledgling Habibie administration. Months later, in preparation for a special session of MPR (the supraparliamentary body then tasked with choosing the president and vice-president and ratifying constitutional amendments), a more sustained and serious campaign along these lines was mounted against student protests and elite maneuverings to force out Habibie in favor of a presidium of opposition leaders and civic figures. With the apparent support of Defense Minister and Armed Forces Commander in Chief Wiranto and his lieutenants, a number of Islamic groups were tapped to provide recruits to the Pasukan Keamanan (Pam) Swakarsa, or Voluntary Security Units, which joined police and military troops in providing "security" for the MPR in its November 1998 special session. As the Habibie administration worked to insulate MPR members from rising pressures to take steps against Suharto and his family, to pass legislation reducing the military's role in politics, and to expedite and expand the process of holding general elections, more than 100,000 Pam Swakarsa members were recruited and armed with bamboo sticks, sharpened spears, and other makeshift weapons. Recruited in large part through KISDI, DDII, and newly minted groups such as Forum Umat Islam untuk Keadilan dan Konstitusi (Furkon), or Forum of Muslim Believers for Justice and the Constitution, and Front Pembela Islam (FPI), or Front for the Defenders of Islam, Pam Swakarsa members were drawn from poor neighborhoods scattered around the greater Jakarta area, and from towns and villages elsewhere on Java and Madura, and were allowed to use the Istiqlal and Al Banna mosques in Central Jakarta as their temporary quarters.[9] Wearing green and white caps and headbands bearing the basic Muslim confession of faith—"There is no God but God"—in Arabic script, these Pam Swakarsa members represented themselves as defending not only the MPR and the Habibie administration but Islam as well. The provision of official blessings by the government's Council of Islamic Scholars (MUI), training and weapons by the security forces, and funds to pay "volunteers" by top-ranking military officers, Islamic activist leaders, and, allegedly, the Suharto family, bolstered the efforts of the Pam Swakarsa forces to guarantee the success of the MPR's special session.[10]

In the event, this success was achieved only at the expense of widespread incidents of violence. With the massing of both unarmed student protesters and stick- and spear-wielding Pam Swakarsa members on the streets of Jakarta in November 1998, the city witnessed scattered skirmishes and attacks in the streets and back alleys during the weeks leading up to and

through the MPR's special session.[11] Dozens of student protesters suffered beatings at the hands of the Pam Swakarsa, and a handful were shot dead by the security forces, while a number of Pam Swakarsa members fell wounded—in a few cases, fatally—at the hands of angry crowds of Jakarta residents. Even as senior government officials, both civilian and military, adopted a stance of distance and disavowal in the wake of these events, Islamic activists remained publicly proud of their violent defense of the regime. Just as some Pam Swakarsa members had told reporters before the special session that they were "ready to wage jihad" against Communist students supported by non-Muslim forces such as CSIS, Benny Murdani, and (the "Chinese" Catholic businessman) Sofyan Wanandi, so did Furkon activists later describe the fatalities of November 1998 as "risks of struggle" worth shouldering in light of the "success" of the MPR special session.[12]

But even as Pam Swakarsa units were disbanded in late November 1998, more enduring forms of state-backed vigilante violence under the banner of Islam endured. In August 1998, activists had founded the FPI with the evident blessing—and rumored active support—of Major General Djadja Suparman, new commander of the Greater Jakarta Regional Army Command and a close ally of Defense Minister and Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Wiranto. The FPI not only participated in securing the MPR session in November of that year but also developed a more sustained presence and repertoire of activities in the Jakarta area and a few other cities. Led by Indonesians of Hadhrami Arab extraction, clad in body-length white tunics and headdresses in a distinctly and self-consciously Middle Eastern style, hundreds of FPI members would reappear on subsequent occasions in 1999 and 2000, wielding sabers and machetes and claiming to speak in the name of Islam. On a number of occasions, armed FPI members numbering in the hundreds surfaced to attack student demonstrations against the Indonesian armed forces (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, or TNI). During Ramadan in those years, moreover, the FPI led a number of well-publicized raids on bars, nightclubs, discotheques, brothels, and gambling outlets, violently attacking the premises of these establishments and quickly dispersing their clients with saber- and machete-wielding antics.[13] For several years after 1998, such FPI "sweepings" were said to allow the group—and its backers in the security forces—to extort protection payments from the owners of numerous recreational, gambling, and entertainment establishments in Jakarta and a few other cities.[14]

After years in which violence under the banner of Islam—attacks on government buildings, Chinese property, and non-Muslim houses of worship—reaffirmed a push to make claims on the public sphere and the state by a

mobilized *Ummat*, by late 1998 this new form of violence—crudely armed Islamic militia attacks on student protesters and on seamy business establishments—in the name of the faith had emerged as a subcontracted, supplementary form of state power. From Islam as a banner of sometimes violent, often disruptive, popular mobilization *from below*, "Islam" now reappeared as a rubric for regime consolidation and legitimation *from above*, with violence and disruption in the name of the faith represented as an *excess* variously deployed and disavowed by those in civilian and military seats of state power according to the ebb and flow of the political tides.

"Horizontal" Violence: Gang Warfare, Mob Lynchings, and Communal Conflict

Meanwhile, a third and broader shift in the nature and direction of religious violence became evident in the months following Habibie's ascension to the presidency: the emergence of seemingly "horizontal" conflict of a popular and highly murderous nature. As could be expected, the effects of the first change of president in three decades in Jakarta were soon to trickle down to the cities, towns, and villages of the archipelago in terms of access to state power and patronage. With the removal of the certainty and the centralization of state power in the Suharto era, and their replacement by a transitional form of government moving toward competitive elections and the deconcentration and decentralization of state power, the fixity of the very hierarchy connecting localities to the center was undermined, as were the boundaries of the jurisdictions governed by those asserting authority within this hierarchy.

Under Suharto's New Order, the circuitries of power connecting villages to towns to provincial cities to Jakarta had been centrally wired in the national capital and coursed through the military, the civil service, Golkar, pseudoparliaments, and schools and universities. Competition for power and patronage within the political class was thus confined and channeled—vertically, as it were—within the state's coercive and ideological apparatuses, as rival networks defined by educational and religious affiliations and identities fought for coveted appointed positions (e.g., military commands, governorships, seats in the various pseudoparliamentary bodies) and associated privileges (e.g., construction contracts and criminal franchises). Against this backdrop, the demise of the New Order and the promise of competitive elections carried significant implications. Instead of individuated competition channeled vertically and confined laterally within the state, various streams or *aliran* within the political class now found themselves competing—collectively and horizontally, as it were—not (only) in and for the state, but (also) in and for society. Thus the boundaries of identities and interests in Indonesian society, long determined by a fixed, hierarchical source of recognition firmly anchored in the state and centered in Jakarta, were left in flux.[15]

The implications of this loosening and shifting of boundaries were evident in a variety of violent new conflicts. In some cases, these were boundaries over property and territory, as seen in countless seizures of land and fights over control of mines, forests, and shorelines. In numerous other cases the boundaries concerned were those of local criminal rackets, with rival gangs in Jakarta and other cities initiating *antar-kampung* (inter-neighborhood) skirmishes to determine the extent of their turf claims under conditions of indeterminate or fluctuating franchise. More broadly, with the deconcentration of power in Jakarta and the move toward decentralization in the provinces, the very boundaries of administrative units came into question, with local politicians vying for the subdivision (*pemekaran*) of countless villages, regencies, and provinces in the months and years after Suharto's fall from the presidency.

In many cases, contestation involved boundaries of collective identities—whether those of community, clan, ethnicity, or religious faith—whose fixity was no longer assured. Thus the months after Suharto's fall saw the proliferation of cases of *main hakim sendiri*, mob lynchings of suspected thieves by members of village and neighborhood communities, especially on Java.[16] Meanwhile, in November 1998 a violent skirmish took place on the island of Sumba between hundreds of members of two rival clans—one affiliated with the local *bupati*, the other with the head of the local assembly—armed with spears and knives, which left a reported 100 casualties in its wake.[17] Coordinated attacks on Madurese immigrant communities, already witnessed in early 1997 in parts of West Kalimantan, subsequently recurred in the province and spread to areas of Central Kalimantan, with armed gangs—claiming to represent the proudly "indigenous" Dayak and later Malay ethnic groups—effecting the "cleansing" of tens of thousands of "outsiders" from these localities.[18]

It is hardly surprising, then, that much of the horizontal violence that began to unfold in 1998–99 assumed the form of specifically *religious* pogroms. For reasons already amply suggested, religious faith had long served in Indonesia as the primary marker of public identities insisted upon—and enforced by—the state, and as a key determinant of point of entry into the political class. Not only was the ascension to the presidency of a politician closely identified with Islam thus experienced beyond Jakarta

in terms of religiously coded local repercussions for the distribution of state offices and patronage, but the turn toward open politics and competitive elections laid open the question of the very basis of claims to religious authority and state power. If, under a centralized, closed authoritarian regime, claims of representation had been imposed and enforced from above, now under conditions of political opennness and competition the boundaries of religious authority had to be affirmed from without and from below. Thus the first few years after Suharto's fall saw, for example, groups identified with rival Protestant sects clashing in violent skirmishes in the tiny island of Nias off the northwestern coast of Sumatra,[19] and the burning and destruction of dozens of homes identified with members of a "Medi" cult by their Muslim neighbors in a village in the West Javanese town of Tasikmalaya.[20] Beyond such highly localized conflicts, moreover, came larger-scale episodes of violence under the sign of Islam and religious faith, as seen first in the case of the antiwitchcraft campaign on Java, and then in the Muslim-Christian pogroms in Maluku and Central Sulawesi.

Java: Antiwitchcraft Campaigns

The first new form of large-scale collective violence to emerge in the months following the resignation of Suharto and the ascension to the presidency of Habibie assumed the form of an antiwitchcraft campaign centered in and around the East Javanese regency of Banyuwangi. Unlike the 1995–97 provincial riots in which crowds targeted Chinese business establishments, churches and temples, and government buildings in regency towns and cities in Java and beyond, this campaign saw groups of residents of rural villages and hamlets lynching accused practitioners of malign magic (*dukun santet*) in mob killings often involving defenestration, decapitation, and other mutilations of their victims' corpses. The killings grew in frequency over the course of July and August in Banyuwangi and neighboring regencies such as Jember and then peaked in September and October 1998 before subsiding, only to recur in similar spates in nearby southern Malang and West Javanese towns such as Ciamis and Sukabumi in 1999 and 2000. By some estimates, more than 160 accused sorcerers had been killed in Banyuwangi and other towns of East Java by October 1998,[21] and dozens more lost their lives in the subsequent episodes of antiwitchcraft campaigns in southern Malang and the Ciamis area in 1999–2000.[22]

These killings unfolded against the backdrop of a long history of alleged sorcery and in the context of a broad spectrum of religious beliefs and practices in rural Java. As the anthropologist Clifford Geertz famously described in his 1960 classic *The Religion of Java*, the networks of traditionalist and modernist Islamic schools scattered across Java coexisted with mystical sects, shrine-based cults, and local *dukun* (healers and practitioners of magic). Geertz reported no reported instances of collective violence against the *dukun santet* in the 1950s, when he conducted his fieldwork: "Any attempt to organize public opinion against an accused sorcerer," he claimed, "would be almost certain to fail."[23] Yet by the early mid-1980s, given the rising tensions and changes in the position of Islam in national politics in general, and in the position of the traditionalist Islamic association Nahdlatul Ulama in rural Java in particular, a wave of violent, often deadly, attacks on *dukun santet* in hamlets and villages in various parts of Java was reported in the press.[24] In late 1997 and early 1998, moreover, as economic crisis and internal regime tensions deepened in Indonesia, mob lynchings of accused sorcerers in the East Javanese towns of Banyuwangi, Bondowoso, Jember, and Situbondo once again attracted media attention,[25] leading to public discussion of possible antiwitchcraft legislation to be drafted by the national parliament.[26]

The early killings occurred during a period of heightened tension and uncertainty as to the position in Indonesian society of Nahdlatul Ulama in particular and of Islam more broadly. The emergence of ICMI as a nexus of Islamic influence and patronage in the early to middle 1990s had caused growing concern among the leaders of NU, who viewed ICMI as a vehicle for the promotion—and imposition—of modernist Islam at the expense of the more traditionalist and syncretic form of religious worship and schooling embodied in NU's network of mostly rural Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and in the Sufi brotherhoods (*tarekat*), which overlapped with and extended the influence of NU's traditional Islamic scholars, the *ulama* or *kyai*. With the elections of 1997 and the approach of the March 1998 session of the People's Consultative Assembly, which saw the election of ICMI chairman B. J. Habibie as Suharto's vice president, moreover, the trend of modernist ascendancy within the Indonesian state and inroads in Indonesian society appeared only to accelerate, much to the dismay and distress of NU leaders.

This palpable sense of threat was already evident in the aftermath of the riots in Situbondo and Tasikmalaya in late 1996, as I discovered in many discussions with NU activists over the course of an eight-month stint in East Java in 1997–98. At the time, conspiracy theories circulating in NU circles attributed the disturbances to efforts by ICMI leaders and their allies in the armed forces to discredit Nahdlatul Ulama and its chairman, K. H. Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), as weak and ineffectual in the face of ordinary Muslims' rising intolerance and impatience with slow progress in the

promotion of Islam. In the first weeks of 1998, as Habibie manuevered to win the vice presidency, and as a series of reportedly instigated food riots unfolded in towns around Java, violent clashes between groups of NU youths and the police over the protection of gambling and prostitution during the fasting month of Ramadan were reported in rural areas along the borders of the East Javanese towns of Bondowoso and Jember.[27]

With Habibie's assumption of the presidency in May 1998, uncertainty and anxiety surrounding Nahdlatul Ulama's position in Indonesian society only deepened, especially in the NU heartland—the so-called *pesantren* belt—of rural East Java. In no small measure, this anxiety stemmed from threats "without" and "above," as modernist Muslims' entrenchment in the seats of state power in Jakarta spelled increasing encroachment within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, patronage and influence in mosques and schools around the country, and the possibility of legislation promoting the standardization of Islamic practices and teachings and the imposition of other regulations in the name of a distinctly modernist Islam.[28]

Yet in equal measure, this anxiety arose from "within" and "below," as the immediate moves toward greater openness and liberalization in politics and the impending shift to a system of competitive elections raised questions as to NU's claims to represent—in both senses of the term—the broad mass of Muslims in rural Java. Even in areas of Java well known as NU strongholds, the organization's strength was hardly uniform across the rural landscape, instead radiating out of the most established *pesantren* and gradually fading away in their hinterlands. Intermarriage among the children of prominent *kyai,* the founding of new *pesantren* by inspired former *santri,* and the networks of various Sufi *tarekat* served as spokes of these interlinked local wheels of the NU machine, producing and reproducing webs of traditionalist Islamic worship and schooling across the Javanese countryside and supporting an overlay of official NU organizations—youth, women's, students', martial arts—and small pockets of NU influence within the local agencies of the state. Yet inside and beyond these webs of NU authority—even at their most densely interwoven—were to be found alternative, competing forms of religious practice and association, including mystical sects, shrine-based cults, and practitioners of healing and magic, as well as apathy and indifference with regard to matters of spirituality and faith.[29] Thus the anxiety accompanying the dramatic political shifts of mid-1998 concerned the broader constellation of religious authority among Muslims—devout, and "statistical," "modernist," and "traditionalist"—in Indonesian society, and the position of Nahdlatul Ulama therein.

This kind of anxiety was perhaps most pronounced in localities along the

fringes of the *pesantren* belt, where NU's authority coexisted uneasily—and competed quietly—with other sites and sources of spiritual authority. Banyuwangi, where the killings of alleged sorcerers were concentrated, stood out as a particularly rich arena of religious diversity and contestation. Banyuwangi, after all, was notable not only for its geographical location at the easternmost point of Java, its proximity to the neighboring Hindu island of Bali, and its own distinctive regional dialect (Bahasa Osing) but also for its distinctive religious history and complexion. The Banyuwangi regency of the late 1990s lay at the center of what had once been the principality of Blambangan, known first as a refuge for residual elements of the pre-Islamic kingdom of Majapahit when the conquering Muslim coastal empire of Mataram consolidated its hold over much of the Javanese countryside in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and later as the last Hindu-Buddhist realm on Java to fall to the Dutch East India Company and its client sultans in the late eighteenth century.

Eager to promote the integration of Banyuwangi (the new name for the regency and the town constructed north of the ruins of Blambangan) and concerned about the influence of nearby independent Bali, the Dutch actively encouraged—indeed, essentially imposed—a process of Islamization on the area. The formal acceptance and adoption of Islam in the local society was clearly matched by subterfuge and resistance, especially in the more remote, upland areas, and by the continuing strength of other forms of religious devotion.[30] In the twentieth century, moreover, as plantation agriculture in Banyuwangi began to attract large numbers of Madurese (as well as Javanese and Balinese) to this remote economic, cultural, and religious frontier,[31] the regency's immigrants came to constitute nearly 50 percent of the local population by 1930, the highest percentage anywhere on Java.[32] Even in the 1990s, census figures suggested continuing diversity in Banyuwangi, with only 67 percent of the population self-identifying as Javanese at the turn of the century.[33]

The combination of imposed Islamization and immigration from without produced an especially diverse religious landscape in Banyuwangi, in which traditionalist Muslims affiliated with NU lived cheek by jowl with neighbors oriented toward very different sources of spiritual power. Accompanying this diversity was a high level of religious tension. As described by Andrew Beatty, an anthropologist who conducted fieldwork in the early 1990s in a village in the regency,

> in rural Banyuwangi . . . typically we find pantheistic mysticism, spirit cults, and normative piety coexisting in great intimacy within a single social framework. . . . In rural Banyuwangi, difference is constructed within

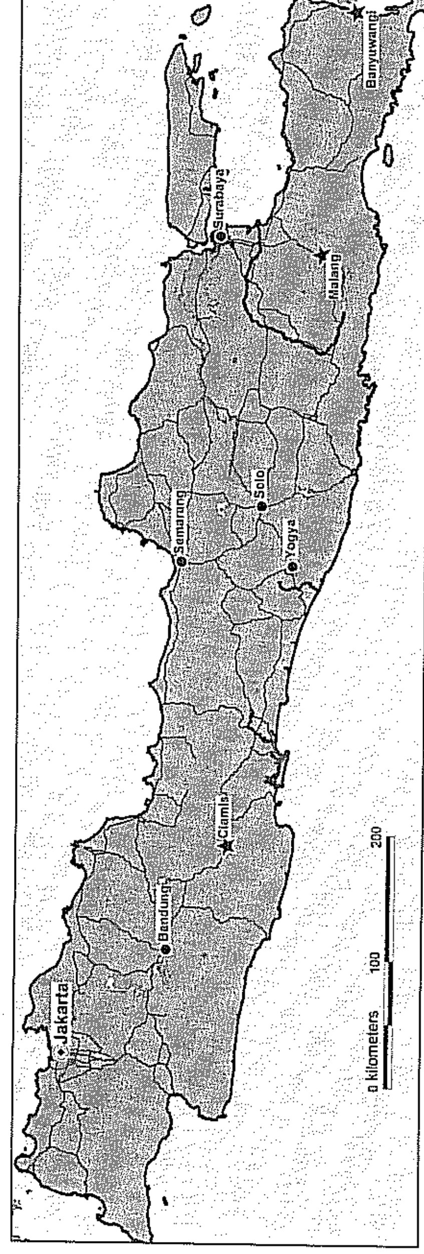
> the same space, and thus with greater intensity. The pious Muslim, when he rolls out his prayer mat in public view, is all too aware of his next-door neighbour who sits on the front doorstep pointedly ignoring the call-to-prayer. The group of mystics who gather in the evenings to expatiate in loud voices on the meaning of this or that do so in allusions which seem designed to trouble, but not quite offend, more orthodox auditors on the other side of the bamboo wall. And the visitor to the local shrine during the fasting month takes a devious route with her basket of offerings, equally anxious about the blessing she seeks and the criticism she must avoid.[34]

These tensions had a very real basis in recent historical experience. Indeed, the linkage between the boundaries of religious identity, on the one hand, and the wielding of power and violence, on the other, was well established in the Banyuwangi of the late 1990s. The anti-Communist pogroms of 1965–66 hit rural East Javanese regencies such as Banyuwangi especially hard and involved many local members of NU-affiliated youth and martial arts groups in the atrocities.[35] In their wake came mass "conversions" to the official religions formally acknowledged by the Indonesian state—mostly to Islam, of course, but also in smaller numbers to Hinduism and Christianity—by residents anxious to avoid the charge of atheism associated with the outlawed PKI.

Yet these conversions failed to produce uniformity of Islamic practice or belief in rural Banyuwangi, or to eliminate sources of religious tension and conflict. As Beatty related in the early 1990s:

> in Banyuwangi, there is a popular association (rarely, of course, attested in fact) between magical powers, even sorcery, and expertise in Arabic. Two modins [muezzin] of the past generation in Bayu were reputed to be sorcerers and were blamed for causing numerous deaths. Modin S was eventually killed by a mob; modin P fled and turned into a weretiger who haunts Alas Purwo, the eastern forest. Several descendants of these "sorcerers" were forbidden to learn Koranic recitations by their parents as it would later open them to accusations of sorcery.[36]

A history of religious diversity and tension was also found in many other key localities on Java, where large numbers of *dukun santet* killings took place in 1998–99. Southern Malang, for example, was located along the borders between the Oosthoek zone of NU-led traditionalist Islamic worship and heavy Madurese settlement, on the one hand, and the supposedly more syncretic Hindu-Buddhist or Javanist practices associated with the dynastic realms of Central Java, on the other.[37] Ciamis was likewise a pe-



Antiwitchcraft campaigns on fringes of upland Java: Banyuwangi, Ciamis, Malang (Peter Loud)

ripheral locality in the predominantly Sundanese region of West Java known as the Priangan, which had remained largely free of Central Javanese influence in the eras of Majapahit and Mataram and within which small nodes of NU influence coexisted uneasily with a diversity of religious practices ranging from more modernist Islamic orthodoxy to local healers, cults, and sects.[38] As Ben White noted: "The hilly southern region of West Java, stretching from Pandeglang and Lebak to the West to Tasikmalaya in the East is the least irrigated, the least densely populated and the relatively least accessible part of West Java. . . . [I]t has had until the 1990s much of the character of a pioneer settlement region."[39]

Overall, the topography of *dukun santet* killings in 1998–99 was characterized by the concentration of violence on the fringes of the upland regions of Java, where, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, the universalistic scripturalist religions largely failed to climb. As the anthropologist Robert Hefner wrote with regard to upland Pasuruan, for example, "The highlands remained predominantly Javanese, and their religious traditions strongly Javanist (*kejawen*), with few orthodox Muslim influences. Mountain religion emphasized festivals at guardian-spirit shrines rather than mosque services or daily *solat* prayer."[40] In the mountainous areas of Banyuwangi, southern Malang, and Ciamis, the traditionalist Islamic religious practices and webs of political affiliation associated with Nahdlatul Ulama ran up against more localized spiritual practices on the one hand, and more secular nationalist political affiliations (PNI and PKI in the 1960s; PDIP and Golkar in 1998–99), on the other. Overall, the attacks on alleged sorcerers in Java in 1998–99, though seemingly scattered widely across the landscape of East and West Java, were in fact concentrated in upland frontier zones along the fringes of NU's political and religious authority.

It was thus amid of the broad tensions and uncertainties surrounding the position of Islam in Indonesia in 1998–99, and in local settings characterized by considerable diversity and contestation in religious practice and association, that the process of collective violence against supposed witchcraft unfolded. At first, these killings remained highly local and particularistic. In one village in Jember, for example, the alleged sorcerer was a certain Pak Sufi, a farmer who had recently moved to the village and attempted to assume the position of prayer leader at the local Islamic prayer house (*langgar* or *musholla*), an elected post also contested by a certain Imron, who enjoyed considerable local respect among the faithful. According to the account provided by local residents to members of an NU fact-finding team,

> two days after Pak Imron's election as prayer leader, responsible for daily instruction in studying the Qur'an, he suddenly began to suffer from a stomach ache. He was examined by a doctor at the local clinic, but the ailment could not be treated. Finally, he was brought to a *kyai* who was said to be able to cure mysterious diseases. This *kyai* said that it was Pak Sufi who had caused the ailment. The *kyai* also advised Pak Imron not to seek revenge. Pak Imron also approached Pak Sufi, and asked him not to use the "black magic" in his possession. On this occasion, Pak Sufi admitted his guilt and begged Pak Imron's forgiveness.[41]

Pak Imron apparently recovered, in due course, but Pak Sufi developed a local reputation as a practitioner of black magic who could cause illness in those who came into conflict with him. One night in late October 1998, Pak Sufi went missing. His body was discovered in a nearby river two days later, the skull crushed by a heavy blunt object of some kind. Members of his family were said not to have shed a single tear for his passing; they reportedly told the police that Pak Sufi had in fact been a *dukun santet* and thus that an autopsy and investigation of his murder would be unnecessary—or, rather, unwanted.[42]

In Rogojampi, a subdistrict of Banyuwangi where nearly two dozen killings took place, the fate of a certain Pak Ruslan was similar. "Every person who had a problem with him always ended up dead by unnatural causes," a neighbor subsequently told investigators. "There were some who went blind before they died; there were also some whose bellies swelled up before they died. . . . If he hadn't had magical powers, he wouldn't have dared to mess around with other men's wives so openly. He also wouldn't have managed to divert other farmers' irrigation to his rice fields with such success."[43] Given these allegations, news of attacks on sorcerers elsewhere in Banyuwangi in the autumn of 1998 provided the occasion for local residents to go after Pak Ruslan. Late one night a group of local youths approached Ruslan's residence, which he had left abandoned, perhaps forewarned of their impending arrival. The youths cut the electric supply, stoned the windows, and looted and demolished the empty house. Early the next morning the same group found Pak Ruslan in a neighboring village, brought him back to his home, and hacked him to death. His body was left for hours in the open air before a neighbor rallied local residents to organize a hasty burial. Pak Ruslan's family did not even insist on the customary Islamic ceremony of *tahlilan* before his burial, apparently fearing the reaction of other residents.[44]

Many other killings, as reported in the media and as described by vil-

lagers interviewed by researchers, followed along these highly localized lines: local figures with local reputations for local witchcraft were killed by groups of local residents, often after long periods of suspicion and a series of warnings. The killings were clearly premeditated, perpetrated as they were by attackers who gathered by night and left grotesquely disfigured corpses in their wake. Rather than being disavowed, these killings were explained—and excused—by local residents in terms of revenge for individual acts of black magic carried out by the victims.[45]

Yet over the course of October 1998 the accumulation of dozens of cases of individual killings began to create a broader climate in which supralocal understandings of the violence came into view. Already in February 1998, in the wake of a series of attacks on local sorcerers, the *bupati* of Banyuwangi had ordered the subdistrict heads (*camat*) to compile lists of suspected *dukun santet*, which prompted subsequent meetings with village headmen (*kepala desa*) around the regency. This process, and follow-up instructions issued by the regent in September of that year, evidently heightened awareness of a climate in which suspected *dukun santet* were under threat, and generated diverse conspiracy theories as to the involvement of local officials in the killings.[46]

By July 1998, moreover, newspaper reports had begun to include accounts of killings carried out by outside intruders dressed as ninjas in black costumes and masks, as seen in foreign action films. According to one study of the news coverage,

> the term *ninja* first appeared in the mass media on July 20th, 1998. At that time, a certain Paiman, 40 years old, and his wife Jamirah, 45 years old, were killed. They were both residents of Kutorejo hamlet, Kendalrejo village, Tegaldlimo subdistrict. These two victims were attacked by a crowd of roughly one hundred people. They were tied up and dragged out of their house, then dragged and beaten along the road for about a kilometer until they were dead.
>
> The term *ninja* then reappeared on August 3rd, 1998, when in Babakan hamlet, Kedayunan village, Kabat subdistrict, an old farmer, Zainuddin, 60 years old, was killed in front of his wife and children. The police arrested eight suspects charged in connection with these two murders, while 175 other local residents who were deemed only to have played supporting roles were not detained. The evidence seized consisted of a 3 meter-long bamboo stick, four stones, and four meters of elastic cord.
>
> It remained unclear how these two events were linked with the mention of *ninjas*. There was no specific image—for example, that the killers wore masks, or wore black costumes, or various other plausible trademarks of *ninja* as seen in films. Some believe that the term *ninja* first emerged in the mass media. In other words, it was the mass media that sparked the use of the term *ninja*—without any indication as to what the journalists were referring to.[47]

These reports of ninjas leading attacks on villagers in various towns in Java recalled the supposed use of ninja costumes by Special Forces units of the Indonesian Armed Forces in the occupied territory of East Timor.[48] Such associations reinforced fears and rumors in NU circles of conspiracies launched by modernist Muslim elements of the Habibie regime and the military establishment,[49] or by recalcitrant elements of the ousted New Order regime, whether the former president Suharto himself or his son-in-law Prabowo, the former *KOPASSUS* commander and close ally of hard-line modernist Muslim groups such as KISDI and DDII.[50] Prabowo had been dismissed from the armed forces in the summer of 1998 in connection with revelations of his role in the abductions of student leaders and other opposition figures in the final months of Suharto's rule, but fear of Prabowo—and of his remaining network of supporters in the military—remained strong. Whether pro-Habibie elements trying to intimidate their enemies or Prabowo seeking revenge and reasserting his power as a "spoiler," sinister forces in Jakarta were suspected of using their assets in the security forces to harass and intimidate NU in its strongholds.[51] The rumors generated by the accounts of ninjas were accompanied by stories of death threats issued in unsigned letters and anonymous phone calls, with low-level members of the security forces and local criminal elements undoubtedly exploiting the opportunity to extort money from residents fearing accusations of black magic and attacks in the night.[52] Sporadic rumors and media reports of mentally deranged men allegedly armed, paid, and "dropped" in villages in East Java with instructions to commit murder likewise contributed to the widespread climate of fear in many villages in rural Java.[53]

Over the months of late 1998, as the individual killings of suspected village sorcerers began to assume the features of a broader antiwitchcraft campaign, the local anxieties and tensions in remote areas of upland rural Java were thus increasingly accompanied by supralocal apprehensions of impending attacks on *kyai* and on Nahdlatul Ulama as a whole. Even in the bustling city of Surabaya, the capital of East Java, fear of such attacks in late 1998 was reportedly widespread in NU circles:

> The *santri* (*pesantren* pupils) became acutely sensitive. When rumors circulated that K.H. Soleh bin Zeid Al Yamani, the caretaker of the Majelis Taklim As Salafi in Kampung Nyamplungan, Surabaya, had been slaughtered by *ninja*, for example, more than a thousand *santri* laid waste to a

> local police station where the killer *ninja* were reportedly being held. In fact, the *kyai* was alive and well, and remains so to this day.[54]

Such rumors allowed the networks of *kyai* and other organizations associated with Nahdlatul Ulama to appropriate for themselves the local fears and tensions so evidently pronounced in the killings of *dukun santet* in rural Java in 1998. Recast in this light, the focus and target of the violence was NU itself, and those responsible for the violence were not local villagers mobilized from below and within zones of NU influence but rather outside elements infiltrating from above and without.

This tendency to explain—and to appropriate—the *dukun santet* killings as an external attack on NU was accompanied by efforts to reassert the authority of the *kyai* and of the organization of Nahdlatul Ulama as a whole in rural Java, most notably in those fringe areas where the episodes of violence were concentrated. These efforts assumed two forms. First of all, local *kyai* began to administer *sumpah pocong*, special oaths (often including key phrases in Arabic), to be publicly sworn by accused *dukun santet* before local residents in order to determine their innocence or guilt. One well-known *kyai* in rural Jember reportedly administered dozens of such oaths. For example:

> Pak Di and Syahlan were asked to bathe and then wrapped up in white sheets like corpses and laid down in the mosque. Some villagers came to witness the ceremony. Beforehand, Kyai Luthfi gave a brief introduction about the *sumpah pocong* oath and about the sanctions of Allah on those who betrayed the oath. Then Kyai Lutfhi initiated the oath-taking. Both Pak Di and Syahlan followed Kyai Luthfi in swearing "before Allah, I am not a *dukun santet*. May the wrath of Allah rain down on me and my family if I am not telling the truth."[55]

Another suspect who was granted mercy through *sumpah pocong* administered by Kyai Luthfi was Nur, aged sixty, a resident of the same area of Jember:

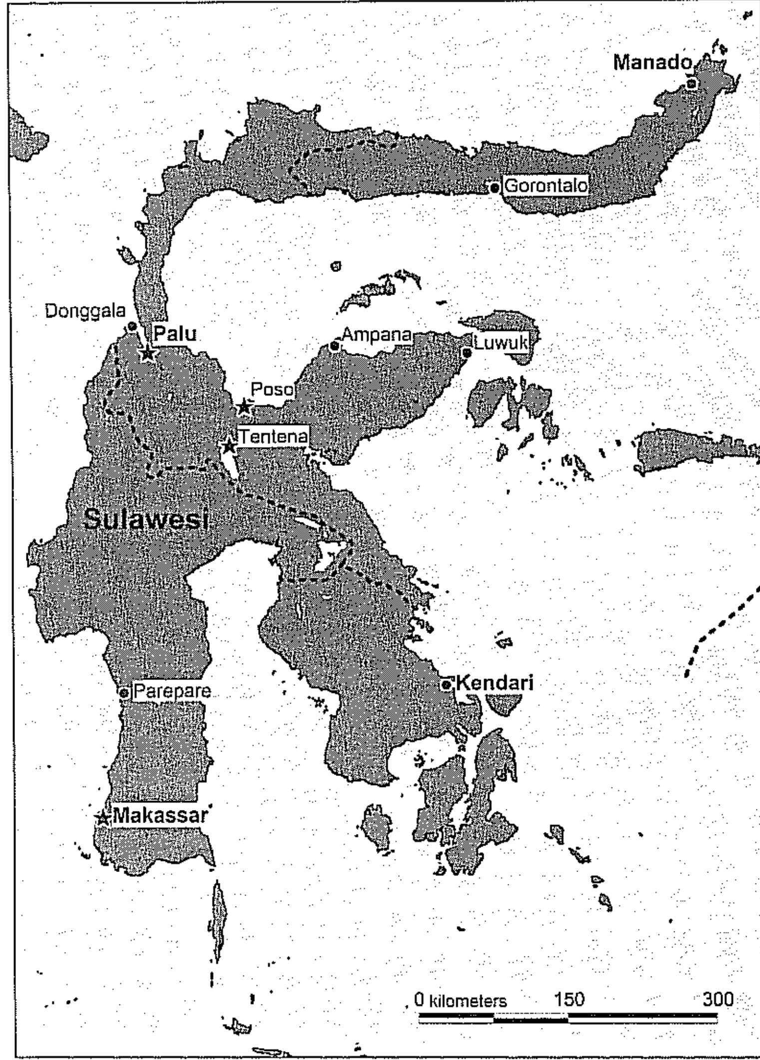
> For nearly a decade, he had been shunned by other villagers because he was believed to be a *dukun santet*. If Nur offered someone something to eat, they wouldn't touch it. Likewise when Nur went out into the village, people always treated him very cautiously, so that he wouldn't spread his black magic. So when news of the killings of *dukun santet* began to spread, Nur also became very cautious, fearing that he would be lynched by a mob. After some time, he approached Kyai Luthfi and asked him for protection and help in convincing people [that he was not a sorcerer]. Kyai Luthfi offered to administer a *sumpah pocong*, and Nur agreed to take the oath. Local residents were invited to attend the oath-taking ceremony. Nur was made up like a corpse—and asked to sign a document drawn up by Kyai Luthfi. Just as with Syahlan and Djunaidi, people who had previously treated Nur with suspicion now lined up to ask for his forgiveness. Eventually, many people even came to visit him in his home.[56]

Second, accompanying the reassertion of the authority of the *kyai* through the *sumpah pocong* was the reinforcement of Nahdlatul Ulama's organizational powers in terms of its claims to represent and to police its constituent members. In parts of Java such as the Banyuwangi-Jember area, the NU youth group Ansor and militia Banser began to project their authority in the final months of 1998 through the organization of local security measures: strengthening neighborhood watches (*ronda*) and otherwise heightening surveillance against "outsiders" of various kinds.[57] The subsequent wave of killings in southern Malang and the Ciamis area in 1999 provoked a similar reaction.[58] In response to the perceived threat of further *dukun santet* killings and ninja incursions, these NU groups—which had played a crucial role in the anti-Communist pogroms of 1965–66 in East Java—thus mobilized violence under the banner of Nahdlatul Ulama to restore peace and order to to the troubled border zones of NU's authority in rural Java.

Regency-Wide Interreligious Pogroms: Poso, Central Sulawesi

Just as 1995–97 saw the pattern of religious rioting begin in Java and then spread to the Outer Island cities of Banjarmasin and Makassar, so too did 1999–2001 witness a replay of Java's 1998–99 murderous attacks on sorcerers. These interreligious pogroms in the Central Sulawesi regency of Poso and the Eastern Indonesian island province known as Maluku—like the *dukun santet* killings in Banyuwangi, Malang, Ciamis, and elsewhere in Java—targeted religious "others" and "outsiders" (including immigrants) and worked to (re)establish religious authority structures and boundaries during a period of great uncertainty and anxiety.

Unlike the attacks on individual sorcerers in the villages and hamlets of rural Java, however, the violence in Poso and Maluku from late 1998 through 2001 was notably collective as to both its perpetrators and its victims: armed groups attacked entire neighborhoods and villages with murderous intent and effect.



Sulawesi (Peter Loud)

This new pattern *pogroms* was made possible by at least three features of the settings in which it unfolded. First of all, in contrast with the anti-witchcraft campaigns along the fringes of Nadhlatul Ulama's strongholds on Java, with their overwhelming Muslim majorities, these interreligious pogroms occurred along the boundaries between the officially recognized faiths of Islam and Christianity, with Protestant churches claiming sizable congregations in these localities and constituting important alternative structures of authority and access to state power to those provided by their Islamic counterparts. Second, compared with the more economically developed and diversified setting of Java, with its clearer division between (predominantly Chinese) business and government, poorer and more peripheral Central Sulawesi and Maluku were local economies in which access to the agencies of the Indonesian state loomed even larger for the accumulation of capital, status, and wealth, and in which local business and politics were more fully overlapping. Third, these local constellations of religious authority and political economy combined with the approaching elections of 1999, decentralization, and the redrawing of administrative boundaries (*pemekaran*) to create tremendous uncertainty and anxiety along the local borders—and within the local hierarchies—of religious faith, not only among Islamic and Christian ecclesiastical establishments but also among rival Muslim and Protestant networks of local politicians, businessmen, gangsters, civil servants, and (active and retired) military and police officers.

These commonalities set the stage for similar patterns of interreligious violence in Poso and Maluku in 1998–2001. Both localities witnessed collective violence across the religious divide: armed groups identifying themselves as Christians and Muslims engaged in violent pogromlike attacks on entire neighborhoods and villages populated by residents identified as believers in the opposing religious faith. Both localities, moreover, saw hundreds, indeed a few thousands, of people killed in the process, the violence leaving a trail of destruction (burnt-out homes, houses of worship, schools, and shops) and displacement (tens or even hundreds of thousands of refugees) in its wake. Further, the two localities experienced similar shifts and transformative effects in the modalities of violence, as local patterns of segregation, policing, and militarization along religious lines crystallized and hardened during the course of 1999, 2000, and 2001. Yet for all these similarities between Poso and Maluku, their differences are also worthy of consideration, in particular with regard to the scope and scale of violence. I examine first the regency-wide pogroms in Poso before turning to the province-wide pogroms in Maluku.

In Poso, the violence began with small-scale fighting between rival youth

gangs in the eponymous capital town of the regency in late December 1998; it recurred and escalated into a sustained wave of murderous attacks on entire neighborhoods and villages by crudely armed groups in April–June 2000 and June–July 2001, then shifted to a spate of coordinated paramilitary attacks on individual neighborhoods and villages in October–December 2001 before subsiding into more sporadic shootings, bombings, and nighttime raids from 2002 onward.

These shifts in the *forms* of violence in Poso reflected the kinds of *locations, protagonists,* and mobilizational *processes* in and through which they unfolded. As a location for interreligious violence in 1998–2001, the regency of Poso was notable for its role as a major Outer Island hub of Protestant population, proselytization, and political power, and a center of Christian ecclesiastical activity and authority. The consolidation of Dutch control over this part of Central Sulawesi in the first two decades of the twentieth century had been accompanied, assisted, and in no small measure achieved by the activities of Protestant missionaries from the Dutch Reformed Church (and by organizations such as the Salvation Army elsewhere in the province). Although Islam was well established among the residents of the coastal areas of Central Sulawesi, it had largely failed to climb inland and upland, leaving the animist highlands of the province available for conversion to Christianity. Protestant missionary schools operating under the Ethical Policy of the colonial regime drew highlanders into their orbit with increasing success in the final decades of colonial rule, forging the crucial linkages between literacy, Protestant education, and entry into the state bureaucracy. These schools combined with the codification of customary law (*adat*) and the promotion of indigenous ethnic To Pamona identity to produce among highlanders kinds of supralocal connections and conceptions of collective identity very different from those emerging among the lowland, coastal Muslim population through *pesantren* networks, Sufi *tarekat,* the Hajj, and, increasingly, modern forms of Islamic education and association, most notably under the rubric of the Al-Khaira'at organization based in nearby Palu.[59]

This division persisted and deepened with Indonesian independence, under the rubric of the Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah (GKST), or Central Sulawesi Protestant Church, established in 1947 and headquartered in the town of Tentena in the southern highlands of Poso regency. Still funded by the Dutch Reformed Church and assisted by foreign missionaries, the GKST evolved over the first half-century of independence into a complex organization boasting more than three hundred congregations and an array of schools, hospitals, clinics, development projects, and so on by the turn of the twenty-first century. As in the late Dutch colonial era, writes the

anthropologist Lorraine Aragon, the Suharto regime appreciated Protestant assistance in "creating nuclear family households, defining individual economic responsibilities, increasing ties to the national and global economies, introducing biomedicine, and expanding school attendance," and in promoting "the acceptance of national regulations, the use of money, government rhetoric concerning the benefits of progress, and regional record keeping."[60] The GKST therefore served as a major channel for access to the state, through its network (*jaringan*) of school graduates entering the police, the military, the civil service, and Golkar. Indeed, as detailed by anthropologists who studied the church's history, the GKST itself evolved into a somewhat statelike set of local authority structures. Its congregations were divided into evangelization groups, composed of closely related families, which met weekly for ceremonial feasts and sermons by the church elders, who were chosen by the governing body of the congregation. The elders thus came to serve as lay preachers, as authority figures within extended family circles, and—given their privileged access to the diverse resources, services, and networks of the GKST—as major local power brokers among a predominantly poor rural population.[61]

Against this backdrop, the holding of genuinely competitive elections, the process of devolution of fiscal and administrative powers to the regency (*kabupaten*) level, and the shift from the central government's appointment of regents (*bupati*) to selection by local assemblies (DPRD) all combined to create considerable expectation and anxiety with regard to the structure of religious authority and power in Poso in 1998–2001. The final years of the Suharto era—and the brief Habibie interlude—had witnessed increasing success on the part of Muslim political-cum-business networks in the regency in extending their presence and influence into realms previously dominated by Protestants. This success in Poso reflected both the national political conjuncture and the local culmination of several decades of increasing Muslim integration into the market (e.g., in copra-producing coastal areas), into state educational institutions (including new local universities), and into the ranks of the local bureaucracy. By the 1990s this trend was apparent both within the local corridors of the state, as ICMI- and HMI-affiliated civil servants and politicians claimed positions and patronage powers once held by Protestants, and along the local circuitries of the market, as Muslim migrants (most notably Bugis from South Sulawesi)[62] established new moneylending and marketing networks and bought up land in the hills of the regency in the midst of a worldwide cocoa boom.[63] Researchers noted a pattern of land sales by families seeking cash to fund their children's university education and to pay the bribes necessary to obtain positions in the local bureaucracy.[64] Overall, these trends

reproduced within the Muslim population of Poso similar patterns of exploitation and inequality, and parallel structures of power and authority, to those found among Christians in the regency. As for the impact of these trends on Protestant highlanders in Poso, Aragon concludes:

> Family-based farming of cash crops also generated new wealth, but again mostly for ambitious Muslim migrants and urban merchants, including Chinese ones. Although Pamona and other highland Protestants did grow some cash crops such as cloves, coffee, and cacao, highlanders remained primarily subsistence rice farmers. Few became involved in market activities beyond the sale of small crop surpluses in exchange for basic supplies or cash needs. While Muslim Bugis or Makasar migrants became middleman traders or worked for private businesses through their patron-client networks, Protestant highlanders traditionally had no capitalist business experience and much more localized exchange networks. Many ran up high-interest debts to immigrant salespeople, whose kiosks offered credit, and so found their next season's produce already owed before harvest.
>
> Highlanders traditionally left their ancestral villages only for higher education, church employment, or civil service jobs, if they could obtain them. As non-Pamona bought up or were allotted lands through transmigration programs, many Pamona youths found themselves landless as well as jobless by the end of the Suharto regime. Opportunities for social mobility depended upon personal connections to members of the regional bureaucracy. Indigenous groups' access to positions remained available mainly to descendants of the precolonial nobility, and Protestants' ties to recognized aristocracies were fewer than those of Muslims. Although a small percentage of Protestant Pamona leaders did increase their economic standing dramatically during the New Order, the mass of Pamona and other highland Protestant farmers did not.[65]

Meanwhile, Protestant church leaders, politicians, businessmen, and gangsters in Poso in the 1990s had found an increasingly attractive alternative to Golkar in the PDI, the Indonesian Democratic Party. The PDI had deep roots in Poso, having incorporated the Soekarno-era Protestant party Parkindo (which polled 26 percent and won second place in Poso in the 1955 elections),[66] and held its annual national congress in the regency in 1997.[67] Thus the processes of democratization and decentralization in Poso came with the opportunity—for some, the imperative—of mobilizing Protestant voters to halt (and reverse) the apparent religious trends of the preceding several years, if not through Golkar then via the PDIP, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, headed by the popular Megawati Soekarnoputri. Likewise, for members of local Muslim political-cum-business networks in Poso, the possibility of a fragmented Muslim vote, divided among Golkar, PPP, the new Islamic parties, and even PDIP, threatened a loss in control over the local assembly (DPRD) and, with decentralization, key local executive posts as well.[68] Legislation creating a new regency of Morowali out of eastern Poso in September 1999 further narrowed the margin between the numbers of Christians and Muslims registered as residents and as voters, thus heightening the uncertainty—and the urgency—of political mobilization along religious lines.[69]

The opportunity or imperative of mobilizing voters in Poso along religious lines in 1998–2001, however, came at a time when the established structures of local religious authority and identity appeared to be in danger of losing their certainty, their coherence, their distinctiveness, and their power. By the 1990s, migration patterns had made the town of Poso increasingly diverse, in ethnicity, language, and religion,[70] as Lorraine Aragon noted:

> Protestants besides Pamona included Minahasans, Balinese, and Chinese as well as Mori, Napu, and Bada' people from within the regency. Muslims included Arabs, Javanese, Bugis, Makasar, Mandar, Buton, and Kaili people as well as Tojo, Togian (Togean), and Bungku people from the regency. The small Catholic minority was comprised of Minahasans and Chinese, as well as migrants from former Portuguese colonies such as Flores. Balinese were the only Hindus.[71]

Thus the GKST, though still dominant among the To Pamona people of the Poso highlands, could no longer claim to speak on behalf of all Christians in the regency. Likewise, the established mosque and school network associated with the Al-Khaira'at organization, with its headquarters and university in nearby Palu, now competed with local branches of such national organizations as Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam, Sufi *tarekat* such as the South Sulawesi–based Khalwatiyya,[72] and other streams of Islamic devotion and affiliation for worshipers and pupils among Muslims of Javanese, Bugis, Makassarese, and other origins in Poso.[73]

Alongside the diversifying and destabilizing effects of immigration on religious affiliations and authority structures in Poso came more subtle—and in some ways more subversive or homogenizing local trends accompanying capitalist development, the expansion of modern education and communications, and the imposition of national state religious policies. For much as the local cliques of Muslim businessmen, bureaucrats, politicians, and gangsters within and beyond Poso in the 1990s resembled those of their

Protestant rivals, so too did the local marketing and moneylending networks of (Muslim) Bugis entrepreneurs begin to mirror those of their (Christian) Chinese counterparts and competitors.[74] In the organization of religious life, moreover, further parallels emerged, as Christian and Muslim associations and schools alike worked to mediate between the needs of their respective flocks (*jemaah*), on the one hand, and the opportunities and pressures of state and market, on the other. Thus, for example, the Al-Khaira'at school system had modernized over the years, culminating in the formally recognized Universitas AlKhairaat in Palu, which offered secular degrees in agriculture, aquaculture, and medicine alongside its selection of religious studies. More broadly, Aragon observed a "process of supra-ethnic convergence of local Christianity and Islam" during the course of fieldwork in Central Sulawesi (mostly in neighboring Palu) in the 1980s:

> The longer I lived in Central Sulawesi, the more convinced I became that Christian and Muslim practices in Palu were conforming to each other. Christmas became, like the Muslim holiday in Lebaran, a weeklong visiting holiday where Christian and Muslim employees alike were invited to visit and eat at their superiors' homes. Christians who were invited to their Muslim coworkers' homes on Lebaran returned the invitations at Christmas, and vice versa. Common gifts such as jars of cookies, Western-style frosted layer cakes, or cases of imported soft drinks were exchanged both within and across religions at the major holidays.
>
> As any visitor to Muslim regions of Indonesia knows, mosques of the past decades have used the miracle of electronic amplification to broadcast their five-times-daily calls to prayer throughout the surrounding community. In urban areas, these amplified chants in classical Arabic reverberate loudly in a manner that only the most hearing impaired could ignore. In the late 1980s, Christian churches similarly began to adopt the use of loudspeakers for their services. They then broadcast the ministers' words not only to their in-church congregations, but, like the mosques, also beyond the church walls to all those thinking they might sleep through the words of God.
>
> Muslim services in Palu also began to include sermons comparable in format and length to those given in the Christian churches. One Protestant missionary wife claimed that local Muslim leaders were imitating her husband's sermon topics and delivery style. Even within Muslims' and Christians' minor discourses of rivalry, there was religious convergence. Christians disparaged goats as unclean Muslim animals, just as Muslims decried pigs as unclean Christian livestock. . . . Christian and Muslim institutions similarly contended to pull villagers away from their ancestral and family orientations towards compliance with a more remote state and God wielding more awesome powers. These common goals of modernization, at least in Central Sulawesi, made Christianity and Islam companions and peers as well as erstwhile adversaries.[75]

Thus the location and timing of religious violence in Poso were associated with a local conjuncture that threatened to undermine the foundations of religious authority in the regency. This local conjuncture was one in which the dominant structures of religious authority faced unprecedented uncertainty as to their strength, their solidity, and their claims on the local population, in the face not only of unsettling sociological trends but also of sudden political change. Under the Suharto regime, Protestant and Muslim hierarchies of authority had been subordinated to, and partially submerged within, a highly centralized authoritarian state, beneath which they found shelter, stability, and patronage. With competitive elections now determining the composition of the local assembly, and thus the selection of the new regent and the distribution of patronage and power in Poso, the period 1998–2001 broadened the field, the forms, and the fruits of contestation between these hierarchies, underlining the imperative of voter mobilization for gaining access to state power on the one hand, and for making claims to religious constituencies on the other.

The significance of this local conjuncture for determining the location and timing of violence in Poso was confirmed by the spatial and temporal pattern of the pogroms that unfolded in the regency beginning in late December 1998 and recurring in major episodes in 2000 and 2001. The violence first occurred near the turn of the year 1999, against the backdrop of the approaching national elections amid mounting uncertainty, excitement, and anxiety about the impending selection of new local officials, most notably the new *bupati,* for Poso. Violence began on the occasion of a major religious holiday with fighting between thuggish groups of young men at a major node of economic and criminal activity—and contestation—in the center of town and along the borders between a Protestant and a Muslim neighborhood. This first episode fell on December 24, 1998, as Protestants celebrated Christmas Eve and Muslims observed the fasting month of Ramadan, with youths from the adjoining neighborhoods of (Protestant) Lombogia and (Muslim) Kayamanya engaged in fisticuffs and knife fights around Poso's central bus terminal. On the following day, Christmas, the fighting resumed and spread, with Muslim youths stoning a store blamed for sheltering Christian gang members and selling alcohol during Ramadan, and then attacking other Christian shops, restaurants, and beer halls as well to enforce a ban on the sale of liquor during the holidays—a ban agreed upon by the authorities as well as some local religious leaders.

As Protestant youths fought back, the violence continued and spread, fueled by rumors of church and mosque burnings and the like. From Lombogia, the home of influential Protestant civil servants and retired military officers, the news reached other Christian neighborhoods in Poso town and Protestant villages south of the town and the GKST headquarters in Tentena. From neighboring Kayamanya, the home of many Muslims affiliated with Al-Khaira'at, word likewise traveled to other urban and rural areas by means of local Muslims' familial, associational, and market circuitries. Consequently, the days following Christmas Eve witnessed the arrival of truckloads of machete-wielding men, both Protestant and Muslim, from various areas of Poso and the spread of crudely armed attacks by these rival mobs on homes, shops, and other buildings within urban Poso and in villages along the major roads into town. By the end of December, as the security forces restored order, hundreds of people had been wounded, mostly Protestants and Catholics, and hundreds of (again, mostly Christian) homes destroyed.[76]

Beyond the personal injuries suffered and property destroyed, the rioting also worked to heighten suspicions across the religious divide, to strengthen the boundaries and lines of authority within each religious community, and to sharpen the organization and instruments of violence on both sides. The displacement of hundreds of families whose homes were destroyed and the flight of hundreds more in the face of continuing intimidation and fear of further attacks created hundreds of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), mostly within Poso regency, and hardened both the pattern of segregation and the resolve for retribution among the local population.

In the aftermath of the events of late December 1998, moreover, the role of networks of local Protestant and Muslim politicians, businessmen, and gangsters in inciting and organizing the violence had come into view. For example, a prominent Protestant member of the Poso regional assembly (DPRD) who was a vocal supporter of the candidacy of the incumbent regional secretary (*sekwilda*), a fellow Protestant, for the *bupati*ship, was identified as a major organizer of the convoy bringing truckloads of crudely armed men into Poso town during the rioting. He was subsequently arrested, tried, convicted, and sentenced to fourteen years in prison for his role in the violence but died of apparently natural causes in mid-2000. The younger brother of the incumbent *bupati*, a Muslim, was likewise charged with inciting anti-Christian violence through a campaign of flyers, banners, and graffiti in December 1998; he was eventually convicted and sentenced to two years in jail.[77]

These same local networks were evident in egging on and orchestrating the second major episode of violence in April 2000. This second episode came in the wake of the election in October 1999 of a (Muslim) Golkar figure as the new Poso *bupati*, beating rival Protestant and Muslim candidates backed by local PDIP and PPP branches, respectively. It also unfolded in the midst of a losing campaign to elevate the defeated PPP candidate to the position of Poso *sekwilda*, the second most powerful position in the regency. Indeed, the violence began just one day after a local paper published a story based on an interview with a PPP assemblyman in Poso who issued the warning, as the mid-April headline proclaimed, "Poso Likely to Face Riots Again."[78]

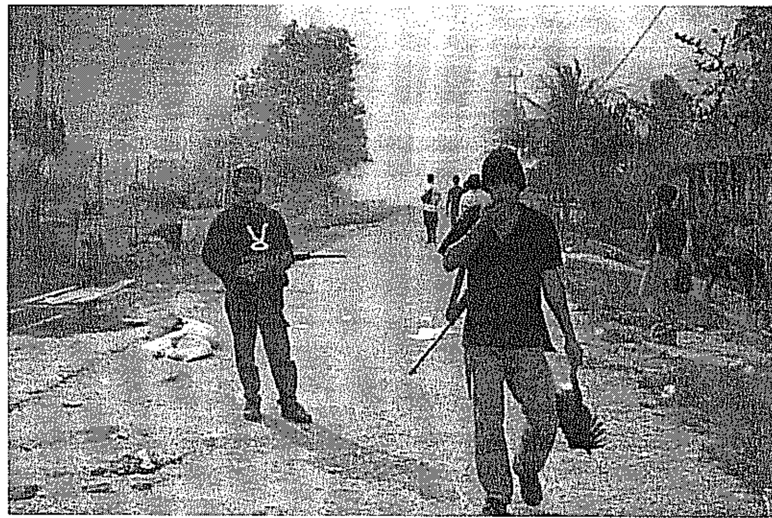
Like the first episode, the second began with a fight between rival Protestant and Muslim youth gangs at Poso's central bus terminal. This fighting spilled into the Protestant neighborhood of Lombogia and beyond, with the burning and looting of houses and churches and the flight of hundreds of Protestants (and Catholics) over the next few days. When riot police called in to disperse the crowds shot and killed three Muslims, a group of local Muslim businessmen and politicians met with the *bupati* and the provincial governor to demand the transfer of the police chief (a Javanese officer at odds with the group), the dropping of charges against the former *bupati*'s brother for incitement of the December 1998 violence, and the awarding of the *sekwilda* post to the losing PPP candidate for the *bupati*ship. But when none of these demands were met, the attacks on Protestant neighborhoods resumed, with Muslim residents of Poso town reportedly reinforced by groups of crudely armed coreligionists from nearby coastal villages. A new level of coordination and organization was apparent in the use of cell phones and walkie-talkies, the wearing of white headbands by armed Muslim groups (likewise red headbands by armed Christian groups), and the conduct of "sweeping" operations in Muslim neighborhoods which led to the hacking to death of several Protestants. By the end of April the violence had wound down, but at least seven Protestants and three Muslims were reported killed; dozens more were seriously wounded; and with hundreds of homes, shops, churches, and other buildings destroyed, the extent of the damage and displacement far exceeded the more limited violence of December 1998.[79]

In addition, the preponderance of casualties, damage, and suffering inflicted on Poso's Christian population in this second episode helped to prefigure a third wave of violence and vengeance just a few weeks later, from late May 2000 through July of that year. Like the previous two episodes, this one began in a key area of Poso town but on this occasion with a nighttime attack on the Muslim neighborhood of Kayamanya by a small but well-armed gang of Christian thugs. This group had reportedly participated in the paramilitary training of hundreds of men in a village outside the town

with the sponsorship of local Protestant politicians, businessmen, civil servants, and retired police and army officers; it was led by a notorious *preman* (gangster), a Catholic from Flores who had migrated to Poso in the 1970s.[80] On arrival in Kayamanya, members of this group began attacking local residents, killing several before fleeing the area and hiding in a nearby Catholic church, which was subsequently burned down by a Muslim crowd after the group made its escape. The fighting spread, with "red" and "white" squads of armed men clashing and launching attacks on neighborhoods and villages in and around urban Poso, and hundreds—indeed, thousands—of Muslim residents fleeing as large numbers of armed Christian groups began to stream into the town. On May 28, led by the aforementioned Catholic gangster from Flores, the gang attacked a village of Javanese transmigrants outside Poso town, killing dozens (at least seventy) men in a local *pesantren* and holding dozens more women and children hostage (and sexually assaulting the women) for several days.[81] Other Muslim areas in and around urban Poso, and as far south as the predominantly Protestant town of Tentena, were also set upon by armed "red" squads, and hundreds of Muslim homes and shops were laid waste.

Such attacks, and Muslim counterattacks, persisted sporadically into June and July 2000, as security forces gradually reduced the violence. Eventually they made dozens of arrests, including that of the by now notorious Catholic gangster from Flores; he was subsequently tried, convicted, and in due course sentenced to death along with two of his compatriots. But not until August 2000, with hundreds of riot police and army troops now posted in Poso, and representatives of both Protestant and Muslim communities in the regency participating in a "peace accord" attended by then President Wahid as well as provincial governors from around Sulawesi, did the violence largely subside—for almost a year.[82]

Punctuated by occasional small-scale skirmishes and other incidents, this uneasy peace was interrupted by the recurrence of large-scale violence in mid-2001, against the backdrop of rising tensions between local (Muslim) Golkar, PPP, and (Protestant) PDIP politicians over the selection of a Muslim as the new *sekwilda* for the regency.[83] By late June 2001, reports suggested a pattern of escalating attacks by armed groups on villages in Poso and in the new neighboring regency of Morowali, leaving in their wake a growing trail of casualties, burned-down homes and houses of worship, and refugees. In one particularly brutal and well-publicized incident, more than a dozen Muslim villagers—mostly women and children—were killed by an armed Christian group in early July 2001.[84] Although the infusion of new police and army forces into Poso helped to bring a temporary halt to the violence in mid-July, the final months of 2001 saw a new wave of



Local fighters armed with makeshift rifles move on after torching homes during the final phase of interreligious violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi, before the signing of the Malino accords in December 2001 (AP)

armed attacks, now characterized by the use of automatic weapons and full-scale military operations across the religious divide. The mobilization of armed groups numbering in the hundreds resulted in the razing of dozens of villages, leaving scores of casualties and displacing hundreds or thousands of residents: a human rights group based in Palu reportedly estimated that more than 140 people had been killed and nearly 2,500 homes destroyed by the end of 2001.

This intense militarization of the conflict came after the arrival in Poso of paramilitary forces affiliated with Laskar Jihad (see Chapter 7) and other Islamic groups working to assist Muslim forces in the regency. Non-Muslim areas—including, for the first time, Hindu Balinese transmigrant settlements—appear to have borne the brunt of the violence, as seen in the reported preponderance of their residents among the casualties and fleeing refugees.[85]

Yet the arrival of the first Laskar Jihad forces in Poso in July 2001 coincided with the elevation of PDIP leader Megawati Soekarnoputri to the presidency, a development which in due course spelled stronger support and protection for non-Muslims in Central Sulawesi. In fact, October–December 2001 saw army units squaring off against Laskar Jihad and other

Muslim forces in Poso and reportedly engaging in atrocities such as summary executions, abductions, and torture on a number of occasions. By the end of the year, more than 3,000 police and army troops had been stationed in Poso, with senior armed forces officers in Jakarta promising major training exercises and, if need be, the rapid deployment of additional troops to Central Sulawesi in the months ahead. Late December 2001, however, saw the signing of the so-called Malino accords by a broad range of local figures from Poso after talks organized by Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare Yusuf Kalla, a prominent Golkar official and Bugis businessman from South Sulawesi. Thus, the violence of 1998–2001, which had led to the killings of hundreds of men, women, and children, the destruction of dozens of houses of worship and more than 16,000 homes, and the displacement of tens of thousands of people, was followed in 2002 by a precipitous decline in collective violence in Poso.[86]

Overall, in contrast with 1998–2001, the period beginning in January 2002 saw a marked shift from waves of sustained warfare between armed groups numbering well into the hundreds to more sporadic, individuated, and clandestine forms of violence across the local religious divide. As the prominent human rights activist Arianto Sangaji, based in Central Sulawesi, has noted, since the end of 2001, conflicts in Poso and neighboring Morowali have assumed three forms: (1) shootings, (2) bombings and bomb threats, and (3) clandestine attacks on villages or neighborhoods, typically undertaken under the cover of night, with the perpetrators often taking special care to disguise their identities.[87] The first year following the Malino peace accords, a significant number of such incidents began with the bombing of four churches on New Year's Eve, 2001–2002, and peaked in a string of bombings and shootings in July and August 2002.[88] The next year, by contrast, was by and large more peaceful; local observers recorded only 19 bombings, 19 shootings, and 3 fatalities in all of 2003, with most of the incidents occurring in the regency capital town of Poso Kota, neighboring coastal Poso Pesisir, and the adjacent new regency of Morowali.[89]

With a second redistricting of Poso regency in December 2003[90] and the approach of the 2004 elections, however, incidents of violence in Poso and Morowali began to increase in frequency and intensity, starting with a series of violent attacks on villages in the two regencies in October 2003.[91] The parliamentary elections of April 2004, which saw an apparent victory in (now Christian-majority) Poso for a coalition of PDIP and the new Protestant evangelicals' Partai Damai Sejahtera (PDS), or Prosperous Peace Party, were likewise followed by a string of killings, as the election of a new *bupati* in 2005 loomed on the horizon.[92] Yet even this recrudescence of violence consisted of isolated attacks and assassinations, rather than a relapse

into the large-scale, collective mobilization and warfare of 1999, 2000, and 2001, suggesting that a measure of reequilibration had been reached in Poso over the subsequent years.

Such reequilibration, of course, had been achieved at considerable cost and through the violent redrawing of religious boundaries and reconstitution of hierarchies of authority on both sides of the religious divide. More than a thousand people are estimated to have been killed in Poso during the peak years of violence in 1999–2001, with many more sustaining injuries and enduring untold suffering, and with thousands of homes and dozens of churches, mosques, and other buildings damaged or destroyed in the process. In addition, the violence forced tens of thousands of IDPs to flee their homes, neighborhoods, and villages and seek refuge among their coreligionists elsewhere within Poso, in neighboring regencies in Central Sulawesi, or beyond the province itself.[93]

That the pogroms proved effective in sharpening—and simplifying—the boundaries of religious identity and authority in Poso, could be seen in the obstacles impeding the repatriation of IDPs and in the gerrymandering of a mostly Protestant rump regency—with less than one-half of the original Poso population—by hiving off the two new, mostly Muslim, regencies of, first, Morowali and then Tojo Una-Una. The pogroms also proved instrumental for the reconstitution of local religious authority structures in Poso and its two new neighboring regencies. Both Protestant and Muslim networks of politicians, businessmen, civil servants, policemen, military officers, and gangsters came to enjoy greater coercive powers within their respective religious communities, thanks to the evolution of policing and surveillance structures and the elaboration of arms smuggling and other illegal activities—all ostensibly defensive in nature and responsive to self-evident threats from without.[94]

Yet even as the violence in Poso generated waves of IDPs well beyond the regency's borders and attracted flows of financial support, fighters, and weapons from Christian and Muslim networks elsewhere in Sulawesi and beyond, its contagious effects did not create serious, sustained interreligious conflict of a province- or regionwide scale.[95] Beyond the original regency of Poso, after all, the rest of Central Sulawesi was more solidly Muslim: 78 percent of the population province-wide and ranging from 68 percent in the Banggai Islands to 93 percent in Buol.[96] With regard to interparty conflict, moreover, the stabilizing effects of this strong Muslim majority at the provincial level were evident in Golkar's 54.5 percent showing in Central Sulawesi in the 1999 elections and virtually identical performance in all its regencies, with the PDIP claiming only 14 percent of the vote, PPP less than 11 percent, and no single other party more than 2.5 per-

cent overall. Given such demographic clarity and electoral stability, neither the threat nor the promise of electoral mobilization along religious lines—within Golkar and beyond—were sufficiently demographically compelling to encourage violent mobilization beyond Poso, where redistricting had left local Muslim and non-Muslim populations (and their respective political networks) approaching virtual parity and facing considerable uncertainty and anxiety in the face of the political changes of 1998–2001.

Province-Wide Interreligious Pogroms: Maluku and Maluku Utara

In these same years a set of parallel pogroms unfolded across the religious divide in Ambon, the provincial capital of Maluku, and spread to other localities in this vast archipelagic province. As in Poso, the violence in Maluku began with a knife fight in a bus terminal in the capital, grew into attacks by crudely armed groups on urban neighborhoods, and radiated out into the hinterlands with similar assaults in various towns and villages on various islands scattered around the province. As in Poso, with the ensuing militarization and segregation along religious lines, such large-scale collective mobilization had largely subsided in Maluku by 2001, giving way to more individuated forms of violence such as bombings, drive-by shootings, and nighttime attacks. This pattern reflected features of Maluku similar to Poso's as a *location* for religious violence and a similar *conjuncture* as a backdrop for its initiation, as well as a similar set of local *protagonists* and *mobilizational processes* which were crucial for its unfolding. Compared with Poso, however, the interreligious pogroms of Maluku were distinguished by the greater scale and scope of the violence, which spanned from the provincial capital of Ambon to towns and villages throughout the vast Moluccan archipelago, leaving thousands of casualties, and hundreds of thousands of people driven from their homes and communities on islands scattered around Maluku.

As in Poso, the linkages between localities and larger centers of power in Maluku and beyond had long been mediated by religious identity. Islam in the Moluccas was first propagated under the auspices of the Ternate (an island and town in North Maluku) sultanate, whose influence extended through much of eastern Indonesia and as far afield as the Philippine archipelago in the years prior to European contact.[97] Roman Catholicism was imported in the sixteenth century by the Portuguese, who established a network of forts and small settlements in the Moluccas during the heyday of the spice trade.[98] The Dutch East India Company, which replaced the Portuguese as the sole purchaser of Moluccan spices in the seventeenth century, brought Protestant missionaries first to the island of Ambon and the fort town of the same name and later to other islands of the Moluccan archipelago. Dutch missionary schools provided not only religious instruction but also practical education to Protestants for the purposes of preparing low-level civil servants for the colonial regime. As the Dutch colonial state extended its hold over the Netherlands East Indies in the late nineteenth century and in the "Forward Movement" of the early twentieth century, and as the colonial bureaucracy expanded its functions and personnel under the Ethical Policy declared in 1902, so did the numbers of Protestant civil servants, teachers, missionaries, and soldiers leaving the Moluccas for other islands of the archipelago correspondingly increase.[99]

Protestants from the island of Ambon were thus disproportionately well represented among the ranks of civil servants, professionals, and missionaries throughout the Dutch East Indies, and particularly in the Dutch colonial army, the Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger (KNIL), or Royal Netherlands-Indies Army. The number of Ambonese Protestant recruits into the KNIL grew enormously in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the pattern of recruitment, organization, and quartering of soldiers "served to create a degree of competitiveness and a strong identification with the ethnic group and the status accorded to it by the authorities," according to Richard Chauvel.[100] By the 1930s an estimated 16 percent of the Protestant population of Ambon was living outside the Moluccas, and as clerks, professionals, and soldiers under the Dutch, they and their families enjoyed a higher level of material welfare and a closer degree of identification with the colonial regime than did the Muslim residents of the island.[101]

It was thus a group of Ambonese Protestants who had served in the KNIL who led successive local efforts to establish the Negara Indonesia Timur (State of East Indonesia), the Republik Indonesia Timur (Republic of East Indonesia), and finally the Republik Maluku Selatan (RMS), or Republic of South Maluku, during the transition to Indonesian independence in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Yet despite their initial ambivalence about inclusion in the Republic of Indonesia, the head start enjoyed by such educated Ambonese Protestants was evident well into the Suharto era in their predominance locally (and, in relative terms, nationally) within the security forces, the civil service, the university belt, and the professional classes. This head start was, inter alia, a linguistic one. Since the early nineteenth century a creolized Ambonese Malay had replaced local languages among the Protestant population in the South Moluccas, reinforced by

"schools, sermons, [and] company directives," thus facilitating the adoption of the Malay-based national language, Bahasa Indonesia, in the twentieth century.[102]

Meanwhile, however, the termination of the Dutch clove monopoly, the collapse of the spice trade, and the relegation of the Moluccas to the status of an economic backwater combined to help establish a different and more limited pattern of extralocal linkages for Muslims in Maluku. The phasing out of the clove monopoly in the 1860s and improved interisland transportation in the late nineteenth century facilitated closer contact with Muslims elsewhere in the Netherlands East Indies, and small but growing numbers of Muslims began to leave the Moluccas as sailors, traders, and pilgrims. This pattern of slowly increasing circulation and interaction with Muslims from elsewhere in the archipelago began to draw the distinction between Muslim and Protestant elites in Maluku more sharply in the early twentieth century, as the former increasingly identified themselves in Islamic, and Indonesian, terms, whereas the latter tended to view their identities and interests as closely linked to the continuation of Dutch colonial rule.[103] Yet the limits of such patterns of supralocal circulation and sense of connectedness among the Muslims of the Moluccas were evident in the persistence of local dialects in Muslim villages, in sharp contrast with the rise of the Ambonese Malay lingua franca in Protestant areas of the islands.[104]

With independence, however, the defeat of the Ambonese Protestant–led Republik Maluku Selatan in the early 1950s, and the termination of Ambonese Protestants' colonial-era advantages within the bureaucracy and the armed forces in particular, Muslims in Maluku began to experience gradual upward social mobility along the pathways paved by their Protestant counterparts, through increasing access to education and employment opportunities within the Indonesian state.[105] The ascendancy of educated Muslims in Maluku into the political class accelerated in the Suharto era, as economic development, state expansion, and urbanization eroded the Protestants' hegemonic position, most notably in the provincial capital city of Ambon. By the 1990s, Protestants there and elsewhere in Maluku faced rising competition from Muslims in schools and in the armed forces, the bureaucracy, Golkar, and the DPRD, and in business (both legal and illegal). Suharto's shift toward state promotion of Islamicization at the national level coincided with local demographic trends: rising numbers of Butonese (and, to a lesser extent, Bugis and Makassarese) immigrants from Sulawesi and high birth rates among local Muslims began to tip the population balance in favor of Muslims (59 percent province-wide in 1997) and, even in the Protestant stronghold of Ambon city, 42 percent.[106]

Thus, as in Poso, local political-cum-business networks in the Maluku of the late Suharto era were incorporated into the national political class through a pattern of linkages defined—and divided—by religion. Indeed, just as Maluku's Protestant civil servants, army officers, and members of Golkar engaged in intermarriage and nepotistic practices with their coreligionists in the universities, the professions, business, and the criminal underworld, so too did the province's Muslim political networks operate as channels for patronage and protection linking Muslim towns and villages around the province with Ambon City and Jakarta. As the political scientist Jacques Bertrand, who conducted extensive fieldwork in Ambon, noted:

> The state sector became divided into sections controlled by each group. A particularly interesting example was the University of Pattimura (UNPATTI). The powerful Education Faculty (FKIP), one of the largest faculties in the university, was almost exclusively staffed with Christians well into the 1990s, while other departments included more Muslims. Within the regional and municipal bureaucracies, such tendencies were common. Christians resented the growing presence of Muslims in areas they previously controlled, while Muslims saw their advancement as a just redress since they have been previously marginalized in the region.[107]

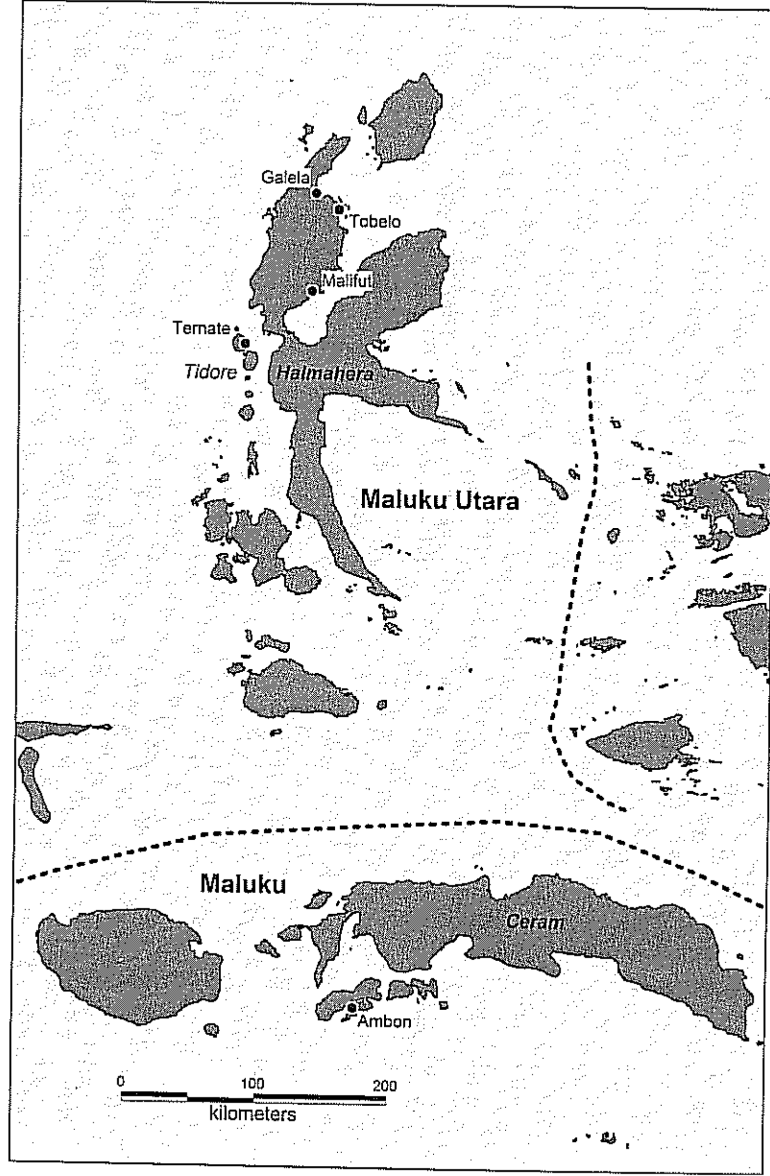
Against this backdrop, the resignation of Suharto and inauguration of B. J. Habibie in May 1998 carried particular significance for Maluku. Habibie, after all, had served throughout the 1990s as the head of ICMI, the Association of Indonesian Islamic Intellectuals, and under this national umbrella, well-connected Muslims in Maluku could be expected to enjoy considerably enhanced local advantages in getting appointments to civil service posts, army commands, seats in parliamentary bodies, university lectureships, and preferential treatment within various business and criminal ventures.[108] Indeed, as in Poso, the last five years of the Suharto era had already witnessed marked trends along these lines, as a Muslim governor in Maluku began to fill the top positions in the local bureaucracy with fellow Muslim allies, cronies, and clients.[109]

Yet beyond the immediate implications for local Muslim and Protestant patronage networks of Habibie's rise to the presidency in mid-1998, the approach of competitive elections in mid-1999 and the devolution of considerable powers to elected local assemblies legislated later that year represented a major challenge to existing religious identities, boundaries, and structures of authority in Ambon and elsewhere in Maluku. In obvious ways, local shifts in the distribution of state patronage and in the discretionary use of state regulatory power raised tensions along and across the

borders between Muslims and Protestants, as did the impending shift to a system in which freely elected local officials would wield much more power over their constituencies. After all, the boundaries between Muslims and Protestants in Maluku appeared to be sharply defined and securely fixed in spatial terms, in a pattern of segmentation into local units of official religious homogeneity.[110] Religious boundaries thus tended to conform to village boundaries, and even in those rare localities where religious diversity was found, segregated settlement patterns divided not only Muslims and Christians but even Protestants and Catholics.[111]

This pattern, observable both in villages scattered throughout Maluku and in urban neighborhoods (*kampung*) in Ambon city,[112] was reinforced by government policies prohibiting interfaith marriages, expanding religious instruction in schools, and promoting a pattern of recruitment into the bureaucracy through networks based on religious affiliation. In this context, competition for state offices, public works contracts, and legal and illegal business franchises was understood according to the zero-sum logic of a highly divided society. Given the considerable ambiguities about land titles and village boundaries in rural Maluku, gang turf in urban Ambon and administrative units throughout the province, the uncertainties attending the regime change, the approaching elections, *pemekaran* (redistricting), and decentralization all made for heightened tensions along religious lines in the months following the fall of Suharto. The impending division of the province into predominantly Muslim (85 percent) Maluku Utara and a rump Maluku with virtual parity between Muslims and non-Muslims (49–50 percent) in September 1999 only exacerbated the problem.

Yet in perhaps somewhat less obvious ways, the shift to an open, competitive, and decentralized system of organizing power in Indonesia was also accompanied by heightened uncertainty and anxiety as to religious identities and structures of authority *within* the Muslim and Christian communities. Anthropological writings on the villages of Ambon, after all, stressed the persistence well into the Suharto era of religious beliefs and practices that transcended the Muslim-Protestant divide, patterns of enduring alliance (*pela*) and mutual assistance between villages of different official faiths, and understandings of local property and authority relations based on suprareligious customary law (*adat*) and aristocratic lineage.[113] Ethnographic work on other parts of Maluku likewise revealed a broad spectrum of diversity and change in the religious beliefs and practices of those registered as Muslims and Christians in the province, with "conversion" a recent and ongoing process for many official believers, even well into the 1990s.[114] Patterns of migration to and within Maluku—especially



Maluku and Maluku Utara (Peter Loud)

by (Muslim) Butonese from Sulawesi—were cited by observers in the same period as increasing the diversity of religious practices and heightening the "ethnicizing" tensions between both Christian and Muslim "natives," on the one hand, and immigrant "outsiders," on the other, over economic resources, property relations, village elections, and other issues.[115]

Against this backdrop, the dominant structures of power associated with Protestantism and Islam in Maluku, much like their counterparts in Poso, were haunted by rising doubts and fears as to their authority, identity, and coherence. On the Protestant side, the Gereja Protestan Maluku (GPM), or Maluku Protestant Church, greatly resembled the GKST in Central Sulawesi in its internal authority structure and discipline, and its well-established links to state power. As Gerry van Klinken has noted, the GPM

> is by far the largest non-government organization in the province. Its structure exactly parallels that of local government. Its youth wing, Angkatan Muda Gereja Protestan Maluku (AM-GPM) has thousands of affiliated branches. All Protestant young people are socialized in the elements of an extremely formal religion through a constant round of activities that takes the dedicated believer away from home most nights of the week. Most prominent Protestant Ambonese are therefore also prominent church leaders.[116]

The establishment of the GPM in 1935, its ensuing institutional detachment from the Dutch Reformed Church, and the end of Dutch rule in the 1940s had favored localizing trends and accommodation with non-Christian practices.[117] Yet expanding access to modern education and contact with the outside world combined with the increasing encroachment of other Christian denominations and the promotion of Islamic reformism in Maluku in subsequent decades to promote rising concern with the everyday religious beliefs and practices of those claimed as belonging to the church. As one anthropologist, Dieter Bartels, noted: "After World War II some young Christian ministers were given the opportunity to study at prestigious theological schools in Europe and the United States. As these ministers gained leadership positions within the church, they were striving to achieve universally accepted standards of Protestantism and thus determined to 'purify' Moluccan Christianity by ridding it of ancestor veneration and any customs contrary to Christian beliefs."[118]

Meanwhile, the Seventh Day Adventist church had already established a small congregation in Ambon in the 1920s, and in the postwar, postindependence period the GPM "saw a number of other Protestant denominations, mostly of evangelical and Pentecostal character, growing much faster.

In psychological and institutional aspects the GPM was not yet fully on its way to abandoning the character of a dominant religion."[119] Over the years the sizable Catholic population in Southeastern Maluku had expanded as well, as had the numbers of Catholic migrants to Ambon city. Missionary activities in Maluku provided by Protestant churches from elsewhere in Indonesia and beyond likewise increasingly encroached on the GPM's established turf.[120]

At the same time, the poverty and isolation of sparsely populated, archipelagic Maluku was combining with the associational diversity and limited state institutionalization of Islam in the Netherlands Indies, and early postindependence Indonesia more generally, to limit the possibilities for promoting universalistic understandings of the faith among the scattered and still mostly poorly schooled Muslims of the Moluccan Islands. Bartels claimed: "The degree of indigenization of Islam varied widely from village to village, but in one region it was carried so far that people ultimately came to believe that Islam was brought to the Moluccas by the Prophet himself. On the island of Haruku, the pilgrimage [to] Mecca came to be viewed as unnecessary, but was performed at a special sacred site in the mountains behind the villages."[121]

Over the three decades of the Suharto era the expanding circuitries of the market, the state bureaucracy, and the school system began to draw more and more Muslims in Maluku into the orbit of more modern understandings of Islam, as promoted by both the state's official policies on religion (*agama*) and the diverse outreach (*dakwah*) activities of various Islamic associations such as Muhammadiyah and Al Khaira'at. Thus, as Richard Chauvel had already observed in the early 1980s: "A situation has therefore developed, in which, within both religious communities there has been pressure for reform. Under attack have been those elements of common *adat* heritage which Christians and Moslems share."[122] These pressures, as Bartels further noted, went well beyond the strictly "religious" realm:

> The people battling in the political arena are often identical or allied with religious purists and fanatics within the religious structures of Islam and Christianity. These people are outward directed. That is, they tie in with other organizations on the national level and beyond. They perceive Islam or Christianity as universal truths and thus as mutually incompatible. Extremists among them demand the "purification" of religion from beliefs which are not in line with pan-Islamic or pan-Protestant beliefs. Thus they have launched attacks on beliefs that God is one and the same for Christians and Moslems, and they have demanded the discontinuance of ancestor veneration and most of *adat*—all of which would lead to a further weakening of interfaith ties.[123]

Against this shared and enduring concern about *adat,* the persistence of local aristocratic influence, religious syncretism, and rising ethnic diversification in Maluku, the hierarchies of Protestant and Muslim power in the province were nevertheless notable for their increasing *similarities,* rather than differences. After all, in contrast with the final decades of Dutch rule in the archipelago, the half-century since Indonesian independence had witnessed the evolution of Muslim networks of power in Maluku strikingly similar to those established by their Protestant counterparts: through the modern school system into the civil service and local legislative and executive offices, the police and military, the universities, the media, the professions, and the world of business and criminality. The same decades had likewise seen commensurate linguistic shifts in the direction of homogenization: Ambonese Malay now served—as it had for almost two centuries for Protestants—as a lingua franca among Muslim speakers of whatever Moluccan language or dialect, and Bahasa Indonesia was increasingly used by Muslims and Protestants alike.[124] By the late 1990s, direct personal memories of the violent events of the transition to independence, when the mostly Christian forces backing the Republik Maluku Selatan had fought bitterly against the mostly Muslim supporters of integration into Indonesia, were increasingly distant and dying with the aging men and women who had participated in these events.[125]

By the end of the twentieth century, moreover, more and more privileged Muslims in Maluku than ever before were attending the same state schools and universities, viewing the same television programs and movies, speaking the same linguae francae, and jockeying for advantage within the same state and market circuitries as Protestants. By the mid-1990s, in the provincial capital city of Ambon, the newly built Ambon Plaza shopping complex combined Chinese, Bugis, and Butonese storefronts and drew Christian and Muslim consumers and flaneurs alike.[126] Thus the attractive powers of the national state and the global market threatened if not to dissolve, then to diminish the differences between the most privileged local representatives of the two religious faiths.

It was thus against the locally increasing ambiguity, uncertainty, and anxiety with regard to the structures and boundaries of religious identity and authority in Maluku that interreligious pogroms in this province unfolded in 1999–2001. These began, moreover, in a national context of dramatic political movement and change, with the ascendancy of Habibie to the presidency in mid-1998 and the holding of competitive elections in mid-1999. As the fledgling Habibie administration forged a working alliance with a number of militant Islamic groups in Jakarta, civilian and military elements in the regime worked with some of these groups (e.g., Front Pembela Islam) as well as local gangsters (*preman*) to recruit and mobilize pro-government auxiliary forces in the streets to counter student demonstrations in Jakarta in November 1998 during the special session of the MPR. By November the impact of this new pattern of mobilization and linkages between elements in the military, pro-Habibie Islamic groups and Jakarta gangs and protection rackets had begun to erode the long-standing advantages of Christian groups in the criminal underworld of the national capital. This trend percolated down into rivalries between well-connected Christian and Muslim Ambonese gangs operating in the protection rackets of the Jakarta underworld.[127]

On the night of November 22, 1998, a major street fight outside a gambling casino in the area of Ketapang in Central Jakarta—involving Christian and Muslim Ambonese gangs, local residents, and members of militant Islamic groups—resulted in several deaths and the burning of seven churches.[128] Rumors that the riot had been deliberately instigated as part of a larger conspiracy spread rapidly in Jakarta, in Ambon, and elsewhere in Maluku, especially after the violent attack on a Muslim neighborhood in Kupang, West Timor, a week later, during a march organized by a Christian youth congress to protest the church burnings.[129]

The fallout from events in Jakarta soon trickled down to Ambon city and Maluku more generally. The process was no doubt accelerated by the return (by some accounts, the expulsion) of dozens of Ambonese *preman* to their home province in time for Christmas and Ramadan, and rising anticipation of the recently announced and rapidly approaching June 1999 elections. Thus violent competition over the fluctuating boundaries of power shifted downward, as it were, to local protection rackets in Ambon precisely as electoral mobilization was getting under way in a province where tight demographic margins between Muslims and Christians combined with the sociological and religious trends sketched above to produce considerable uncertainty and anxiety. If rival Christian and Muslim gangs in Jakarta and Ambon city had previously been part of competing networks of active and retired military officers, bureaucrats, businessmen, and politicians associated with Golkar, the possibility of a strong showing by the secular nationalist PDIP in the upcoming elections foreshadowed not only mass defections by Christians (and potentially by Muslims) but also a broadening of the arena and the weapons of contestation.[130]

Thus, as in Poso, interreligious pogroms in Maluku began to unfold around the turn of the new year at a key local node of economic and criminal activity in Ambon city: a bus terminal.[131] On January 19, 1999, on the Muslim holiday of Idul Fitri, a dispute apparently broke out there between a (Protestant) minibus driver and two (Muslim) Bugis youths demanding

A resident of Ambon walks past gutted shops and homes on a street demolished during the first phase of interreligious violence in the city in January 1999 (AP)

(in the Protestant version of events) protection money or (in the Muslim version) rent payment to the owner of the minibus, then escalated into fighting between residents of two adjacent *kampung* in the city of Ambon, one Protestant, the other Muslim. News of the violence began to circulate, and groups of hundreds of crudely armed Christian and Muslim young men, carrying knives, lead pipes, and various incendiary devices, attacked neighborhoods across the religious divide in Ambon city and villages elsewhere on Ambon island, hacking to death dozens of victims and burning to the ground hundreds of houses and other buildings.[132] This kind of violence continued sporadically into February, spreading to the nearby Central Maluku islands of Haruku, Seram, and Saparua and leaving dozens dead, hundreds wounded, and thousands of homes, shops, churches, mosques, and other buildings burned or otherwise destroyed.[133] By early March, as this first phase of violence began to subside, more than 100 casualties were reported, and as many as 70,000 refugees were said to have fled Ambon.[134]

The trouble in Ambon created a self-reinforcing climate of mounting mutual suspicion, fear, resentment, and vengefulness. In many neighborhoods and villages in Maluku, Protestant and Muslim *posko* (communications or command posts) sprang up, as did elaborate local security arrangements for issuing advanced warning, arming residents, and launching preemptive strikes against outsiders. Churches and mosques soon emerged as major nodes in these formations of violence, serving as major sites of paramilitary mobilization, planning, communication, coordination, and rearmament. This trend not only hardened the divisions between Christian and Muslim communities but further spurred the reconstitution of neighborhood and village gangs as crudely armed local militias, sporting variously red (Christian) or white (Muslim) bandanas and other clothing to distinguish themselves as defenders of their respective religious communities and faiths.[135] In Ambon, local observers noted at this juncture, "everyday social life is segregated: red market, white market, red and white speedboat quays, red and white pedicabs (*becak*), red and white minibuses, red and white banks, and so forth."[136]

This pattern of hardening segregation and militarization along the religious divide crystallized around the structures of the intertwined political, business, and ecclesiastical networks established by Protestants and Muslims within and beyond Ambon province. By February 1999, security forces had begun to intervene directly in the conflict, occasionally firing on crowds during disturbances and in several instances leaving casualties in their wake. Local Christian and Muslim leaders were soon trading accusations that various police and military units, whether based in Ambon or drawn from elsewhere in the archipelago, were guilty of bias and collusion in their handling of the conflict.[137] Given the prominence of retired military and police officers in the rival Protestant and Muslim networks of politicians, clerics, businessmen, and gangsters in Ambon and elsewhere in Maluku, partisan involvement in the fighting by "organic" members of the security forces in the province was something of a foregone conclusion.[138] Meanwhile, back in Jakarta, Islamic organizations and political parties tried to rally Muslims to protect their coreligionists in Ambon and spread accounts blaming the violence on the Ambonese Christian community, on the virtually extinct movement for an independent Republik Maluku Selatan, and on a broader anti-Islamic conspiracy of national and international dimensions.[139] Drawing on their considerable connections in Jakarta (especially in the military establishment, the business community, and the PDIP), as well as church networks in North America and Europe, Christians in Maluku likewise organized support networks in the name of self-defense.

In this context, as in Poso, the shift to competitive elections was played

out in Maluku through violent mass mobilization along severely divided religious lines. In the June 1999 elections, Protestants scored a victory with a slim majority in Ambon and a clear plurality in the province for the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, whose local representatives in the DPRD were overwhelmingly Protestants and whose national chairman, Megawati Soekarnoputri, won the vice presidency and considerable influence in Jakarta. Although Muslim voters in Maluku were split among Golkar, PPP, and other Islamic parties, their avowed patrons and protectors in Jakarta succeeded in scotching Megawati's presidential bid and in maintaining a toehold in the newly installed Wahid administration.[140] More important, these Jakarta-based champions of Indonesian Islam had begun to develop an interest in supporting jihad in Maluku, not only to help their beleaguered coreligionists but also to protect and promote a stronger sense of religious boundaries in the national arena, where political parties and figures commanding multifaith constituencies, such as the PDIP's Megawati, were winning millions of votes—and dozens of parliamentary seats—at their expense.

Even more than in Poso, this pattern of hardening sectarian division and mobilization—of arms, money, and (mis)information—combined with continuing uncertainties and anxieties over local boundaries to guarantee the continuation and spread of violent interreligious conflict in the vast archipelagic province. As elsewhere in Indonesia, Maluku had seen the proliferation of fictive villages during the New Order as a local strategy for the acquisition of government subsidies, and the extent of village-owned communal lands and the widening of competition in elections for village headmen (*pilkades*) guaranteed that this patchwork of claims on local resources would be hotly contested between neighboring communities divided by religious affiliation.[141] Meanwhile, the passage of new legislation promising "regional autonomy" had begun to devolve considerable powers to the level of the regency (*kabupaten*), where local demographic and electoral constellations often amplified the sectarian implications of the June 1999 provincial and national election results. At the same time, moves to create—or gerrymander—new administrative districts and regencies, and the formation of the new province of Maluku Utara in September 1999,[142] spurred mobilization and maneuvering over the windfall of new state offices, resources, and regulatory powers. With such rising concern over shifting boundaries and sites of authority, it is unsurprising that a society already locally segregated and translocally segmented along lines of religious identity and association would see a vicious cycle of rumors, conspiracy theories, and self-fulfilling prophecies of interreligious violence in subsequent months and years.[143] The flow of tens

of thousands of refugees from Ambon and other sites of earlier violence—"carrying with them," noted Philip Winn, an anthropologist working in the Banda Islands in 1999, "stories, fears and rumors"[144]—only strengthened these dynamics.[145]

Indeed, the months immediately following upon the June 1999 elections witnessed the resumption and spread of the pogroms in the Moluccan archipelago.[146] In August 1999, for example, fighting broke out in North Maluku, just a month before its official reconstitution as a new province and on the occasion of the formal inauguration of the new district of Malifut in the regency of North Halmahera.[147] This new district was to consist of some sixteen villages populated by transmigrants resettled from the nearby island of Makian in 1975, and eleven additional villages identified with the more established local Kao and Jailolo ethnolinguistic groups. For years, the transmigrants' settlement and cultivation of land in the area had run up against the resentment and resistance of the "indigenous" Kao and Jailolo, whose representatives' claims to *adat* land rights grew only more vociferous with an Australian mining company's discovery in the 1990s of gold in Malifut. This dispute acquired a strongly religious complexion, since the Makianese transmigrants were Muslim, the Kao and Jailolo predominantly Protestant. Malifut, moreover, had come to serve as a Muslim bottleneck choking off the southward spread of Christianity from predominantly Protestant North Halmahera by the *Gereja Masehi Injili Halmahera* (GMIH), or Evangelical Church of Halmahera, and the largely American-staffed New Tribes Mission based in the northeastern district of Tobelo.[148] The Kao and Jailolo thus won backing for their claims from Protestant politicians and the Sultan of Ternate (who counted on Christian backing for his ambition to assume the governorship of the new province), while the Makianese enjoyed the support of Muslim politicians in Maluku and Jakarta.[149]

Against this backdrop, a pattern of "cascading" and escalating violence unfolded in North Maluku in the second half of 1999.[150] First, the scheduled inauguration of the new district of Malifut in August 1999 was marked by the outbreak of fighting between crudely armed groups from Kao/Jailolo and Makianese villages. The fighting persisted for several days, leaving a handful of casualties but dozens of homeless or displaced families in its wake. Violence recurred and escalated in October 1999 with a wholesale Kao and Jailolo attack that razed all sixteen Makianese villages, left dozens of Makianese casualties, and forced some 16,000 Makianese residents to flee to Ternate and Tidore. Then, the presence of these Makianese IDPs and the circulation of a forged letter from the head of the GPM in Ambon to the head of the GMIH in Tobelo, calling for the Chris-

tianization of North Maluku and the "cleansing" of Muslims from the province, combined to provoke attacks on Protestants in Tidore and then Ternate in November 1999.[151]

The violence in Tidore and Ternate, in turn, prompted mobilization by armed followers of the Sultan of Ternate and by forces loyal to his rivals for the governorship (including the Sultan of Tidore and a PPP politician who assumed the *bupati*ship of Central Halmahera), and also resulted in the flight of Protestants from the two towns to safe havens in North Halmahera and North Sulawesi. In yet another twist, late December 1999 saw groups of armed men from among these IDPs from Ternate and Tidore, and from local Protestant villages, launch attacks on Muslim villages in the predominantly Protestant North Halmahera district of Tobelo, where the headquarters of the evangelical GMIH was located. These assaults, which began on the day after Christmas and lasted into the first week of the new year, left hundreds of Muslim villagers in Tobelo and neighboring Galela dead (including more than 200 slaughtered in a local mosque) and forced the flight of thousands more.[152] By the end of January 2000, official sources estimated that more than 1,600 people had been killed in Maluku Utara since August 1999 and tens of thousands displaced by the violence.[153]

The massacre in Tobelo combined with a wave of attacks by Protestants on Muslims in other parts of Maluku to spur new forms of violent mobilization in avowed defense of Islam elsewhere in Indonesia. Fighting in Ambon city had broken out on Christmas Day 1999 and led to the burning of one of the GPM's most prominent churches in the capital by an armed Muslim crowd, followed by the burning of two mosques later the same day by a similar Protestant mob.[154] Widely circulated media reports of these events, which fell on a major Christian holiday and in the midst of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, had helped to precipitate the massacre in Tobelo, where tensions were reportedly already running high with the arrival of Protestant refugees from Ternate and Tidore the previous month. A similar dynamic was evident in the Central Maluku town of Masohi, where attacks by armed Protestant groups on Muslim villages in late December and early January left dozens of casualties and hundreds more homeless, violated, wounded, and otherwise traumatized. The alleged participation of Protestant police and military personnel (and the reported acquiescence of the Protestant *bupati*) in the violence in Masohi combined with the killing of 27 Muslims in Ambon on Christmas Day, the massacre of hundreds of Muslim villagers in Tobelo, and the flight of tens of thousands of Muslim IDPs from Maluku and Maluku Utara to draw increasingly vociferous condemnations of Christian atrocities and expressions of concern for Muslim welfare in Maluku from Islamic organizations and political parties in Jakarta.[155] For example, Amien Rais—chairman of the MPR, leader of the National Mandate Party (PAN), and longtime head of Muhammadiyah—joined other leading politicians at a rally in early January in Jakarta, attended by an estimated 100,000 militants, in calling for jihad to save Muslims in Maluku.

The wave of Protestant violence against Muslims in Maluku also spurred both old and new forms of religious violence elsewhere in Indonesia. On January 17, 2000, for example, prominent Islamic leaders, including a dean from the local university, the heads of local Islamic associations and schools, the leaders of a local Islamic militia, and the Jakarta-based Islamic labor leader and ICMI member Eggi Sudjana,[156] held a *tabligh akbar* (major public gathering) in a field in the city of Mataram, the largest urban center on the predominantly Muslim island of Lombok ("island of a thousand mosques") and the capital of the province of West Nusa Tenggara. The *tabligh akbar* was announced as a venue for raising funds for Muslim victims of the violence in Maluku and for expressing solidarity and concern among the faithful. But the event was preceded by the dissemination of a letter by some of the organizers demanding that Christians in Lombok come forward to issue public condemnations of the atrocities committed by Protestants in Maluku in the preceding weeks and threatening dire consequences in the event of continuing Christian silence on the issue. An estimated 2,000 Islamic activists attended the gathering, many of them sporting white bandanas with the inscription *Allahu Akbar* (God is Great) written in Arabic on their foreheads. Afterward, some of these activists began to attack buildings identified as belonging to the small Christian minority in Mataram; they burned Protestant and Catholic churches, schools, shops, and homes over the next two days and drove some 3,000 Christians to seek refuge in local police and military installations or in non-Muslim sanctuaries beyond Lombok, such as Bali, Manado, and Papua.[157]

Meanwhile, as in Poso in June–July 2001, the wave of violence in late December 1999 and early January 2000 which gave rise to calls for jihad in Maluku resonated among many Muslims elsewhere in Indonesia and spurred the mobilization and deployment of Laskar Jihad units to the Moluccan archipelago in the spring of 2000. Indeed, it was this wave of anti-Muslim violence in Maluku that occasioned the very creation of Laskar Jihad (see chapter 7), whose paramilitary and other operations in Ambon, North Maluku, and elsewhere in the Moluccas preceded and foreshadowed their arrival and activities in Poso more than one year later. Already in late January 2000, then, in the aftermath of the huge rally in Jakarta, dozens of Muslim volunteers were arriving in Ambon and other parts of Maluku to provide medical, logistical, and paramilitary support to

their beleaguered coreligionists. In April 2000, moreover, a well-organized paramilitary group also called Laskar Jihad was formed on Java.

By May 2000, an estimated 3,000 Laskar Jihad recruits—and hundreds of similar Muslim paramilitary troops—had reportedly arrived in Maluku, setting in motion a new phase of interreligious violence, one characterized by a high level of militarization. As in Poso, Laskar Jihad forces brought with them military training, heavy automatic weapons, sophisticated forms of radio communications, and close links with elements in the armed forces. Thus June and July 2000 witnessed a fresh wave of aggressive paramilitary attacks on vulnerable Protestant areas, including an assault on a Protestant village in Galela district abutting the GMIH stronghold in the Tobelo district of North Maluku, and the razing of Waai, a Christian village sandwiched between two Muslim villages on the east coast of Ambon island. These assaults claimed dozens of Protestant casualties and proved highly effective in "cleansing" thousands more Protestant residents from these border zones.[158] Even with the declaration of a civil emergency in Maluku by President Abdurrahman Wahid in late June 2000, Laskar Jihad–led attacks on Protestant areas persisted, allegedly aided and abetted by elements of the armed forces.[159] By early 2001, eight Protestant villages and towns in Ambon had been occupied by Muslim forces, and hundreds or even a few thousand Protestants on small islands elsewhere in Central Maluku were reportedly forced to convert to Islam to ensure their survival.[160]

Yet as in Poso in late 2001, these paramilitary operations of Laskar Jihad from mid-2000 through mid-2001 heralded a pattern of effectively stalemated and thus subsiding interreligious violence in Maluku and Maluku Utara. By 2001 the violence in the Moluccan archipelago had effected a pattern of enduring religious segregation and simplification, with the Laskar Jihad–led assaults serving to eliminate some of the remaining anomalies of Protestant pockets inside—and impeding the connection of—Muslim zones.[161] By 2001, moreover, Protestant and Muslim villages and towns throughout the two provinces had come to feature "red" and "white" armed groups ready for mobilization and plugged into their respective interlocking directorates of local politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen, criminal networks, and retired and active police and military personnel. Local election results—PDIP's outright victory in Ambon city and strong plurality in (predominantly Christian) Southeastern Maluku, and its weaker showing against Golkar and PPP in (predominantly Muslim) Central Maluku—also worked to clarify the new distribution of civilian-controlled state patronage along religious lines.

Meanwhile, the security forces' efforts to control the violence in Maluku had been led since mid-2000 by a "Yon Gab" (Combined Battalion), drawn from various crack units of the armed forces and comprising people of mixed faiths from locations outside Maluku—commanded by a (Hindu) Balinese general. This Yon Gab, increasingly pitted against Laskar Jihad and other Muslim forces and involved in defending local Christian communities against Muslim offensives, was widely perceived and resented among Muslims as biased in favor of Christians. In mid-2001 it undertook a serious offensive culminating in an attack on a Laskar Jihad contingent in the provincial capital of Ambon in June 2001 which led to the deaths of more than a dozen armed Islamic militants.[162]

With the rise to the presidency of Megawati Soekarnoputri in Jakarta in mid-2001, moreover, came the violent removal of Laskar Jihad elements from Maluku and Maluku Utara and the strengthening of protection for Christians in the two provinces, many of whom were affiliated with the now ruling PDIP. The latter half of 2001 saw a diminution of Laskar Jihad strength and activism in the two provinces and, more generally, a pattern in which incidents of violence across the religious divide were kept to a minimum. Complaints against the Yon Gab by Muslim leaders in Maluku and their counterparts in Jakarta led to the withdrawal of that battalion and its replacement by a large contingent of KOPASSUS troops in November 2001, but the basic pattern continued. It was in this context that in mid-February 2002 the leaders of the Christian and Muslim communities in Maluku signed an agreement to resolve the conflict in the province. The terms of the agreement included promises to facilitate the removal and prosecution of "outside" parties, to surrender the huge numbers of loose firearms accumulated by armed groups on both sides, and to form an independent commission to investigate the roots of the conflict and the various crimes committed since its inception.[163]

Signs of improving conditions in Maluku were reported by a variety of sources in subsequent months of 2002. In Ambon city, for example, observers noted the removal of barricades between some neighborhoods of different faiths and the opening of marketplaces and other shopping areas in which Christians and Muslims freely mixed.[164] Reports of conditions elsewhere in Maluku were likewise cautiously optimistic, noting evidence of reduced interreligious tensions and small trickles of returning refugees. In the predominantly Muslim new province of North Maluku (Maluku Utara), security conditions were said to have reached a point where civil emergency status was no longer warranted.[165]

Clearly, the sheer size and strong stance of the security forces contributed to the downturn in the violence. The leader of Laskar Jihad was arrested in May 2002 and put on trial for inciting violence in Maluku, and the group came to face continuing, if not increasing, restrictions on its presence and

operations in Maluku in the months leading up to its formal disbandment in October of the same year.[166] More generally, hundreds, if not thousands, of weapons were surrendered around Maluku in the weeks before the armed forces' imposed deadline of June 30, 2002, and the regional army commander initiated sweeps for remaining loose firearms in subsequent weeks.[167]

That said, incidents of violence nevertheless continued to mar the uneasy calm setttling in around the provinces of Maluku and Maluku Utara. Most tragic was an attack on a Christian village in Ambon in late April 2001 which claimed twelve lives and was blamed on Laskar Jihad and allied local Muslim forces.[168] Also quite revealing was a subsequent armed encounter between KOPASSUS troops and elements of the local Riot Police Brigade (Brimob), which drew renewed attention to the involvement in the conflict of active and retired members of the security forces in the conflict and to the predatory aspects of "peace-keeping."[169]

Yet overall, as in Poso, by 2001 interreligious violence had peaked in Maluku and Maluku Utara and had begun to subside. In subsequent years, incidents of armed combat across the religious divide in Maluku were very infrequent and limited in their scope, leading to the lifting of civil emergency status in the province in late 2003. Ambon and other localities were occasionally troubled by drive-by shootings and other assassinations, as well as bombings and the discovery of explosive materials clearly intended for imminent use.[170] The upsurge of religious tensions and mobilization accompanying the April 2004 parliamentary elections, however, and the annual anniversary of the founding of the RMS later that month, led to a much more dramatic recrudescence of violence in Maluku than in Poso. A Protestant procession in Ambon city celebrating the occasion on April 25 was assaulted by crudely armed groups of Muslim youths, who went on to lead attacks on Protestant neighborhoods in the city over the following week, claiming the lives of more than a dozen residents and leaving homes, churches, and a Christian university building burned to the ground. More than twenty Muslim residents of Ambon were also killed in the clashes, mostly shot dead by the security forces. Yet even this episode, which knowledgeable observers suggested owed much to the machinations of rival police and army units in Ambon, did not lead to a resumption of violence elsewhere in Maluku or Maluku Utara.[171] Overall, as in Poso, even with tens of thousands of IDPs still encamped in and around Ambon and scattered elsewhere around the islands of the Moluccan archipelago, and with the thorny questions of repatriation, compensation, and reconciliation left essentially unresolved, large-scale collective violence of a pogromlike nature appears to have largely disappeared from the two provinces since the end of 2001.

Conclusion: Pogroms, 1998–2001

The antiwitchcraft campaigns on Java in 1998–99 and the interreligious pogroms in Poso and Maluku in 1999–2001 all represented a decisive shift in the pattern of religious violence in Indonesia from the preceding phase of riots in 1995–97. This shift was evident in the very *forms* that violence assumed, with murderous attacks on individuals (in Java) and entire neighborhoods and villages (in Poso and Maluku) replacing, as it were, the earlier exclusive focus on the burning of buildings and property. The shift was also quite evident in the new *locations, protagonists,* and *mobilizational processes* in and through which the violence unfolded in parts of rural Java in 1998–99 and in Poso and Maluku in 1999–2001. The very ways in which this violence was *religious* were also markedly different from those of the riots of the previous years.

As suggested by the virtual disappearance of the kind of religious riots seen in 1995–97, the emergence, spread, transformation, and fading of religious pogroms in 1998–2001 reflected a national *conjuncture* that shaped the nature and direction of violence at that time. Most obviously, this conjuncture was one in which the forces associated with the promotion of Islam in Indonesian public life were first launched into the seats of state power in Jakarta, soon embattled from without and within, and eventually eclipsed and ousted from power. The effects on the national political stage of this precipitous rise and fall of Islam in 1998–2001 rapidly trickled down through the distribution of power and patronage in provinces, regencies, towns, and villages around the Indonesian archipelago. The local effects were especially destabilizing in localities where the *jaringan* connecting local networks of politicians, civil servants, (retired and active) military and police officers, businessmen, and gangsters to Jakarta were defined and divided along religious lines, and where local boundaries of authority—and balances of power—were redrawn through *pemekaran,* the formation of new districts, regencies, and provinces (most obviously in Maluku Utara).

Such palpable tremors of political realignments rippling across the archipelago at this conjuncture, moreover, were accompanied by deeper, perhaps somewhat less discernible, tectonic shifts in the very structures of religious identity, authority, and power in Indonesia. The anthropologist

James Siegel has argued that the loosening of the centralized authoritarian state's surveillance and control during the political liberalization initiated by Habibie in the latter half of 1998 called into question not only the established hierarchies of power and patronage in Indonesia but also the very source and structure of recognition and identity for Indonesians around the archipelago.[172] This state of uncertainty was profoundly destabilizing for religious institutions—whether Nahdlatul Ulama, Al-Khaira'at, Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah, or Gereja Protestan Maluku—which in one way or another had secured niches beneath and within the New Order state and thus kept at bay persistent questions about the boundaries of their authority and identity.

That this state of uncertainty was also profoundly destabilizing for many people is perhaps best exemplified by a villager in Banyuwangi, described by Siegel, who found himself wondering—and asking others—whether he might, in fact, be a *dukun santet*. "This man could not tell from his own interrogation of himself whether he was a sorcerer. He asks how he is seen by others, and he thinks that they may know something about him that he does not know himself." The villager's self-doubts provide something of an extreme limit case of the implications of the breakdown of recognition and sociality for the onset of violence. "The feeling of being possessed—if not the posing of the question 'Am I a witch?'"—Siegel argues, was a precondition for the outbreak of the antiwitchcraft campaign on Java in 1998–99:

> It indicates that, at a certain moment, there was not merely uncertainty about identity, which means that one doubts who one is, as though one had a range of known possible identities. To be a witch, at least in Java, is to be invested with a power heterogeneous to all social identity. Thus there is also the possibility that one could be someone completely different from anything or anyone one knows. The impossibility of relying on social opinion opens up infinite possibilities within the person. But these possibilities are not the ones imagination presents.
>
> Accused of witchcraft, I can find no reflection of myself. I therefore ask, "Am I a witch?," but I do so futilely. To ask this question is to say that I cannot put myself in the place that others once placed me. I can no longer see myself as they saw me at an earlier time in my everyday identity. Earlier I would be able to say, "I am not a witch," because I would not be able to find in myself the confirmation that the accusations of my neighbors were true. But under conditions that prevailed during the witch hunt, self-image disappeared as multiple possibilities of identity thrust themselves forward. "Witch," under that condition, is a name for the incapacity to figure oneself.
>
> The difference between witch and murderer of witch collapses when both are thought to be inhabited by death and feel it urgent to kill to save themselves. They are governed by the feeling that death is already present in them and in those near to them. The capacity to die replaces social identity. To rid themselves of it they must kill. They have the attributes of the witch. They hope that murder will restore normality.[173]

As Siegel suggests, this radical uncertainty—and the ensuing violence—recalled another conjuncture in modern Indonesian history, the period of anti-Communist pogroms in 1965–66, not just in rural East Java but elsewhere in the archipelago as well. Those years, after all, had witnessed sudden, rapid regime change; the breakdown of established structures of power and patronage, recognition and identity; and a climate of widespread fear (and not just among those Indonesians affiliated with the Partai Komunis Indonesia): fear of being killed by the Communists, as well as fear of being accused of—and killed for—being a Communist oneself.[174] As the state-led anti-Communist pogroms proceeded, with hundreds of thousands killed and an equal or greater number imprisoned for their affiliation with the PKI, many Indonesians sought refuge in religion—if not spiritually, then for protective identity. For in the face of the fatal association of atheism—or lack of official religion (*agama*)—with Communism and the pressing imperative of identification (in all senses of the word), millions of Indonesians sought to obtain national identity cards—*Kartu Tanda Pengenalan* (KTP)—which required a declaration for one of the five supposedly monotheistic faiths officially acknowledged by the state: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Thus in the years stretching from the massacres and mass jailings of 1965–66 to the Suharto regime's first experiment with elections in 1971, millions of Indonesians converted to an official *agama* so as to avoid the stigma of "not yet having a religion" (*belum beragama*) and thus suspicion of Communist identity.[175] This process of linking citizenship to religion continued for years, as seen in the wave of conversion sweeping the remote Southeastern Maluku island of Aru in the mid-1970s in advance of the 1977 elections, as recounted by the anthropologist Patricia Spyer.[176] More than the regional rebellions of the 1950s in Maluku and Sulawesi, the fall of Suharto in mid-1998 thus recalled the violence of 1965–66 and the subsequent consolidation of new—official, "statistical"—religious identities and religious authority structures that it had issued.

Such recollections were thus doubly troubling, both as omens of the uncertainty and violence accompanying regime change, and as reminders

of underlying doubts about religious identities, boundaries, and hierarchies, doubts that owed so much to the violence of this earlier era. As Spyer has argued, these religious identities, boundaries, and hierarchies had long rested on the logic of seriality, on "numbers, statistics, and the range of enumerative practices with which they [were] associated."[177] In this context, the competitive elections and decentralization already looming on the horizon in 1998 and replacing centralized authoritarian rule in 1999 heightened worries about the numbers of the faithful—numbers of converts, numbers of voters—who could be claimed for each flock (*jemaah*).

It is thus against the temporal backdrop of this distinctive national conjuncture of 1998–2001 that the geographical distribution and spread of the pogroms in specific *locations* around the Indonesian archipelago during this period must be situated. Indeed, following the logic of seriality stressed by Spyer, it is striking that all the major episodes of communal violence during this period unfolded in provinces where the statistical distribution of religious faith was least concentrated, all of which were found in the cluster of eight provinces with between 30 percent and 85 percent Muslim populations—and electorates. According to the 2000 census, Maluku was only 49 percent Muslim after the creation of Maluku Utara (85 percent Muslim); Poso was only 56 percent Muslim, in 78 percent Muslim Central Sulawesi.[178] Thus the PDI had long established roots in all these localities, and the possibility of a destabilizing shift—of votes, DPR and DPRD seats, and eventually *bupati*ships and governorships—from Golkar to PDIP loomed large on the horizon. Meanwhile, the statistically solid Muslim regency of Banyuwangi stood out as the site of the tightest electoral margin—45.5 percent to 43.9 percent—in East Java between the most popular Islamic parties, PKB (41.9 percent) and PPP (3.5 percent), on the one hand, and the major ecumenical parties, PDIP (32.7 percent) and Golkar (11.1 percent), on the other.[179] All the sites of large-scale religious violence in 1998–2001, in other words, were localities in which high levels of electoral uncertainty prevailed.

In such settings, increasing apprehensions about the numerical and electoral strength of statistical religious others thus combined with abiding anxieties about the weakness and fragmentation internal to religious communities themselves. The tensions observed by anthropologists along the upland fringes of Nahdlatul Ulama's strongholds in East Java in the late 1990s, for example, owed as much to the challenges from below represented by rival local sources of spiritual authority—healers, Javanist groups, shrine-based cults—as they did to conspiracies from above among modernist Muslims entrenched in the state in Jakarta. Likewise, the established positions of GKST and Al-Khaira'at in Poso were increasingly threatened over the years, not only by competition across the official religious divide but by rising ethnic, associational, and denominational diversity and fragmentation within their respective realms of pastoral care. Similarly, the ecclesiastical authority of their counterparts in Maluku ran up against the enduring influence of *adat* and aristocratic lineage, the proselytizing efforts of outside missionaries (evangelical Protestant, Catholic, and Muslim), and the destabilizing effects of immigration.

Meanwhile, by the turn of the twenty-first century, the attractive powers of modern secular education, the national state, and the market had drawn increasing numbers of Christians and Muslims into their orbit, encouraging discernible trends toward cultural, linguistic, organizational, and social homogenization across the religious divide. These trends were perhaps most visible in everyday life in Maluku's provincial capital city of Ambon, where Protestant and Muslim neighborhoods and houses of worship were often found in close proximity (as reports of the violence of early 1999 make clear), and where more and more Ambonese and migrants of different faiths mingled in the streets, the schools, the shops, and the offices of government with every passing year. If in the 1955 elections the vast majority of voters in Poso and Maluku had backed sectarian political parties clearly identified with one or another religious faith—Masjumi for Muslims, Parkindo for Protestants—by the time of the elections of 1999 the avowedly ecumenical orientation of the two most popular parties (PDIP and Golkar) signaled the possibility of overriding, if not erasing, religious differences in the political realm.

In such settings, moreover, the local ecclesiastical establishments had come to assume quasi-statal and para-statal forms, their religious identities intimately bound up with associational, educational, economic, and political hierarchies. This pattern was perhaps less clearly or completely articulated in the East and West Javanese rural strongholds of Nahdlatul Ulama, which was well known for its rather decentralized, familial, and personalistic organizational structures, its relative distance from the modern state school system and other secular state institutions, and its disavowal of pretensions to represent all Muslims under the banner of Islam. In the more peripheral, less developed Outer Island localities such as Poso and Maluku, by contrast, this pattern was much more fully articulated—in part thanks to the relatively more modernized, rationalized, and capitalized structures of local Protestant churches; in part because of the greater importance of the offices and resources of the state. As the anthropologist P. M. Laksono wrote of the remote island town of Tual in Southeast Maluku district:

> Civil servants are the backbone of urban society. By the end of the 1980s nearly all the rupiah flowing into the district came from civil service salaries. Almost no rupiah came in outside the government budget. Agriculture is just subsistence. There is practically no export—just a little copra and marine products. The big fishing trawlers that frequent Tual harbor are Taiwanese and pay their money to Jakarta. The whole of society depends on the state—even if only as a labourer at a school building site.[180]

In such localities, moreover, religious institutions and identities had from their inception been political in the sense of close identification with religiously segmented networks connected to the state. Lorraine Aragon observed of the Protestant-Muslim conflict in Poso, "This fight is not about religious doctrines or practices, but about the political economy of being Protestant (or Catholic) and Muslim."[181] Likewise, in Ambon and in other parts of Maluku, the political scientist Gerry van Klinken concluded,

> joining the Protestant or the Muslim community means being part of a network that not only worships God in a certain way but does practical things for its members—provides access to friends in powerful places, for example, or protection when things get tough. These networks extend up the social ladder to influential circles in Jakarta. And they extend downward to street level, where gangs of young men provide the protective muscle that an inefficient police force cannot provide.[182]

These distinctive features of the *timing* and *location* of the antiwitchcraft campaigns and interreligious pogroms of 1998–2001 help to explain both the *protagonists,* the *targets,* and the very *processes of mobilization* through which the violence unfolded. In contrast with the unarmed urban crowds that emerged and dispersed virtually overnight in response to incidents involving institutions of religious learning and worship in the provincial town riots of 1995–97, these later pogroms were marked by distinctly different forms of agency and, it is worth noting, religiosity. Thus in the killings of accused *dukun santet* in the villages of rural East and West Java in 1998–99, for example, crudely armed groups of local youths launched coordinated attacks, but, as James Siegel has pointed out, even after several months of such killings, the victims remained *local* individuals, and the perpetrators continued to act not in the name of Islam, or of Nahdlatul Ulama, or even of "the village" but instead as purely *local* murderous mobs (*massa*):

> In a village, some took action against a witch. Each group that did so acted separately and one by one. . . . The witch hunts were the actions of clusters of unselfconscious young men who not only did not, but in my opinion could not, act "in the name of." They lacked the ability to see themselves in assumed identities such as "Christian" or "Muslim" at the moment of the attacks.[183]

By contrast, in Poso, Ambon, and various parts of Maluku and Maluku Utara, the perpetrators of violence had the discursive means of identifying themselves and their victims—collectively—along clear official religious lines. Yet what is so striking in the characters and events at the outset of the pogroms in those localities is the prominence of seemingly "secular" disputes between "secular" groups in "secular" settings—turf wars between urban youth gangs around bus terminals, competition between politicians over state offices, the inauguration of a new district or province—and the apparent absence of churches, mosques, and religious schools from the original violence. Rather than students from religious schools, neighborhood and village youth gangs—defined and divided along religious lines and connected to the religiously segmented local networks of politicians, civil servants, retired and active military and police officers, and businessmen—quickly emerged as the foot soldiers in the interreligious policing and warfare that these networks increasingly organized and equipped along paramilitary lines in the towns and villages of Poso, Maluku, and Maluku Utara.

Early on in these pogroms, churches and mosques came to function as command and communications posts, and as the source of networks for the accumulation and dissemination of (dis)information, weapons, and explosives, as is suggested by the range of accusations against clerics affiliated with Al-Khaira'at, GKST, GMIH, and GPM during this period. This devaluation of the specifically spiritual content of religion was also evident in the early reversion to red and white headbands and other items of clothing to distinguish the opposing sides, and the tendency to use "color war" terms of reference—and other equally profane lingo—instead of a more religiously coded idiom. The very need for such markers in Poso and Maluku further highlighted the anxieties about religious identity, as did the reported prominence of recent converts, refugees, and other outsiders in the violence—perhaps best exemplified by the leading role of the Flores-born Catholic gangster in the massacre of Muslim villagers in Poso in late May 2000.[184]

In all these settings, the unfolding of religious violence produced similar local effects and followed similar patterns of internal transformation. In

Banyuwangi, southern Malang, and other areas of rural Java, for example, the local killings of suspected local *dukun santet* in 1998–99 were in due course appropriated by the leaders of Nahdlatul Ulama as a campaign against the organization and gradually brought to a halt with the reassertion of NU's authority. Suspected *dukun santet* were administered *sumpah pocong* by local *kyai*, and neighborhood watch groups (*ronda*) were strengthened with the deployment of NU youth and martial arts militia (Ansor and Banser) to various towns and villages. In Poso, Ambon, and other parts of Maluku and Maluku Utara, moreover, the pogroms of 1999–2001 effected the spatial segregation and simplification of Christian-Muslim communities seen in other sites of interreligious violence elsewhere around the world, producing what Allen Feldman described as an "interlocking binary spatial grid and inside/outside polarities," with the "proliferation of interfaces, the barricading, and the influx of refugee populations" reorganizing towns and villages into a highly militarized and religiously coded topography.[185]

Such processes were accompanied—and expedited—by the reconstitution of the two opposing religious communities into militarized hierarchies organized and equipped for interfaith warfare. In a pattern reminiscent of shifts observed in sites of sectarian violence elsewhere in the world, the years 1999–2001 in Poso, Maluku, and Maluku Utara thus saw a shift from more spontaneous rampages by crudely armed crowds to more carefully coordinated, large-scale attacks by heavily armed paramilitary groups, and then a reversion to sporadic bombings, drive-by shootings, and quick raids and arson attacks across the well-established and tightly guarded religious divide.[186]

Thus by the end of 2001, the large-scale collective violence between Protestants and Muslims of the preceding few years had run its course and subsided into small-scale disturbances to the formal and informal settlements that had crystallized in these religiously divided localities. In large measure, the fading of pogroms followed from the internal transformation of the violence itself: the successes of "cleansing" worked to (re)establish religious boundaries and hierarchies and thus greatly reduce the uncertainties and anxieties so evident in 1998–99. In no small measure, moreover, the disappearance of pogroms from Poso, Maluku, and Maluku Utara by late 2001 reflected the imposition of local constraints on interreligious violence from without and above, as seen in the the deployment of thousands of police and army troops to these localities, the signing of formal peace accords, and the religiously coded gerrymandering of new districts and provinces. By late 2001, after all, the weak and vulnerable administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid had been ousted and replaced by

one headed by Megawati Soekarnoputri, whose leadership of the decidedly ecumenical PDIP and strong position in the national parliament and in the military establishment guaranteed stronger protection for non-Muslims throughout Indonesia.

This national constellation combined with shifts in the international arena in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., to spell the forced eviction of Laskar Jihad from Poso, Maluku, and Maluku Utara and its effective elimination in due course. But as the formation of that paramilitary group had already foreshadowed in early 2000, the gradual disappearance of Christian-Muslim pogroms in the provinces and the effective dislodging of Islam from state power in Jakarta also prefigured the emergence of new forms of religious violence in Indonesia, under the distinctive sign of jihad.