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ISLAMIC STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA: THREE CASE STUDIES

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Abstract


ISLAMIC STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA: THREE CASE STUDIES (83 pp.)

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This thesis describes how and to what extent three Islamic student organizations – Muhammadiyah youth groups, Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (KAMMI), and remaja masjid – are developing habits of democracy amongst Indonesia's Muslim youth. It traces Indonesia's history of student activism and the democratic movement of 1998 against the background of youth violence and Islamic radicalism. The paper describes how these organizations have developed democratic habits and values in Muslim youth and the programs that they carry out towards democratic socialization in a nation that still has little understanding of how democratic government works. The thesis uses a theoretical framework for evaluating democratic education developed by Freireian scholar Ira Shor. Finally, it argues that Islamic student organizations are making strides in their efforts to promote inclusive habits of democracy amongst Indonesia's youth.

Approved:

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Glossary of Frequently Used Indonesian Terms

Reformas – Indonesia's democratic reform movement of 1998

shari’ah – Islamic law

dakwah – 'Invitation' or 'proselytizing', but also known as religious education and spiritual deepening

Mujahidin – 'Struggler' or one who engages in the lesser jihad

Muktamar – National congress

Fatwa – Islamic legal pronouncement

Ulama – Religious intellectual or authority

Kaderizasi – The process of becoming a member of a group

Musyawarah – The process of coming to consensus in Islamic communities

Sholat – Islamic prayer

Pasar Murah – Cheep market

Pesantren – Islamic boarding schools

Musholla – Prayer houses

Pancasila – The secular nationalist ideology of the Suharto period
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Chapter 1: Activism, Islam and Youth in Indonesia

“All forms of education are political because they enable or inhibit the questioning habits of students thus developing or disabling their critical relation to knowledge, schooling, and society.”
Ira Shor (1992, p. 12-13)

Islam and Democracy

Youth activists and youth organizations have played an important role in initiating social change in Indonesian society. During the Second World War they mobilized against the Japanese for independence. In the 1960s, student groups now known as the “Generation-of-66” organized to topple President Sukarno (Hefner 1997, p. 79). During Suharto’s “New Order” regime, youth in the Muslim Student Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia, HMI) were leaders of a civil society movement inspired by the slogan “Islam yes, Islamic parties no” (Hefner 1997, p. 90).

The decades between 1980 and 2000 saw a rapid increase in organized Muslim youth activities known as the Salman Mosque movement on state university campuses. This movement grew out of Salman Mosque located at the Bandung Technological Institute (ITB) and created a model for campus devotional movements throughout Indonesia (Hefner 1997, p. 79). Islamic student organizations from this movement participated in “a series of campaigns against state policies seen as insensitive to Muslims” (Hefner 1997, p. 79).

In “Islamatization and Democratization in Indonesia,” Robert Hefner (1997) describes the history of student activism in Indonesia beginning with the Salman Mosque movement of the 1970s through reformasi. According to Hefner this movement was a “counterculture of high moral idealism and principled criticism” of the government and
Indonesian society (Hefner, 1997 p. 92). Young Muslim activists from groups such as HMI worked for change within the structure of the New Order government or through NGOs. Hefner observes that they “…began to quietly subvert elite culture from within.” As Suharto felt growing student opposition, he used programs such as the “Campus Normalization Act” (1978) to check this movement. Still, Islamic student activists did achieve some important successes. In 1988, rules were issued allowing for more religious education in schools and the authority of the nation’s Islamic courts was strengthened. In 1991 they succeeded in pressing for legislation to allow Islamic dress to be worn by women in public schools and in closing the state lottery two years later. The closing of the lottery was seen as “an astonishing defeat for the New Order government” (Kraince 2003, p. 17).

In 1998, pro-democracy and pro-Muslim student activists converged to organize the reformasi. Reformasi was a political movement spurred by an economic, political, and human rights crisis that led to the fall of Suharto and the authoritarian New Order regime. In “Towards an Integration of Domestic and Transitional Dimensions of Democratization,” Anders Uhlin (2002) recognizes that, “without the mass protests organized by student activists and other society actors Suharto would probably have been able to stay in power” (p. 8). However, he states that the ethnic and religious conflicts of the past several years are “of utmost importance for future political developments in Indonesia.” He suggests that the reconstruction of Indonesia’s political system as a democratic one must include the voices of labor, women, and environmental movements, as well as the NGOs, intellectuals, and religious leaders who have been widely acknowledged in democratization literature. He recognizes that institutional
democratization has seen some success in the past several years, but sees little progress in social democratization.

With its successful direct elections in recent years Indonesia is now recognized as the world's third largest democracy. This is a point of pride among many Indonesians. One reason for the success of democratic governance has been Indonesia's long standing tradition of civil society that Tocqueville (1898) recognized as an important factor in cultivating a democratic society. However, Indonesia's incipient democracy has not been without its problems. Indonesia continues to confront the legacy of its former authoritarian government which has made understanding democracy challenging and at times confusing for those newly participating in the democratic process.

In April 2004, Voice of America reported that although people were enthusiastic about going to the polls, analysts found that they might not be sufficiently informed in order to make wise choices on election day. Socially disadvantaged and isolated groups in Indonesia have had few opportunities to participate in politics. Furthermore, the Indonesian educational system typically utilizes the "banking method" which relies on memorization of facts rather than fostering participation and cooperation and is thus inadequate for teaching democratic practices. A follow up survey to the election conducted by The Asia Foundation in 2003 emphasized the "need to bring the process and the possibilities of democracy closer to the people at the grass roots level."

To understand democratic trends in Indonesia we must look at the way youth are socialized towards or away from habits of democracy and civil society. Scholarly and popular articles about democracy in Indonesia occasionally make mention of Muslim
youth groups and civil society, but as Robin Bush (2005) points out, there is “very little elaboration of what a present-day Muslim civil society looks like in concrete terms.”

In his book “Civil Society” Robert Hefner has pointed out that "democratic life depends not just on government but on resources and habits in society at large. Formal democracy requires a “culture of organization greater than itself” (2000, p11).

Assessing whether associations “make democracy work,” then, we have to look carefully at what their members actually say and do. In particular, we have to examine the ways their members relate to one another and to outsiders, and ask whether the overall pattern contributes to a public culture of inclusion and participating or un-civic exclusivity. (p 24)

According to Hefner, religious organizations “affirm democracy, volunteerism, and a balance of countervailing powers in a state society” thus promoting habits of democracy (p 13).

Mass-based religious organizations are well suited to conduct programs of democratic education because they have well established structures and networks. This thesis examines three Islamic student organizations whose primary functions are educational and in the realm of civil society in order to determine if, how, and to what extent they instill habits of democracy in their members. It describes each organization's goals, activities, decision making processes, and attitudes towards participation, cooperation, and tolerance against a theoretical framework of democratic education developed by Freirian educational philosopher Ira Shor. Furthermore, it seeks to describe the concerns and efforts of young Muslims from various ideological backgrounds who believe that democracy and Islam are compatible in Indonesia. Finally, the thesis describes the perceptions held by professionals who work with and observe these
organizations (such as university professors, third-sector professionals, and politicians) about each organization and democracy.

**Youth and Violence**

Indonesia is a diverse and dynamic nation with scores of ethnic groups and languages. However, with all its richness of culture, one in ten people in Indonesia still live in poverty, and Indonesia has remained at the 110th position on the human development index since 1995.\(^1\) In “Young People, Politics and Religion in Indonesia,” Nilan (2002) points out that frustration at these conditions is one reason why violent conflict is so pervasive. At the same time, today’s youth are better educated, having access to information technology. This has led to a situation which Nilan calls ‘self-socializing,’ where in youth negotiate their individual life trajectories. “When social and political conditions are such that self identity is fragile, young people are vulnerable to the emotive urgings of the ethno/local and religious separatist movements that threaten the stability of the nation-state and processes of globalization” (Nilan 2002, p. 3). This means that many youth have turned to fundamentalist religion. It is youth, explains Nilan, who “always form the vanguard of religious radicalism” in Indonesia. She shows that religious radicalism is one coping mechanism for deeply embedded social problems that potentially stand in the way of political development in Indonesia.

In “Violent Youth Groups in Indonesia” Stein Kristiansen (2003) further explores the causes of youth violence in Indonesia. He cites the rise of criminality and unemployment, as well as continued human rights violations and the long tradition of youth gangs, as the primary causes of violence in Indonesia. Like Nilan, he says that

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\(^1\) In 2004 Indonesia fell one place on the HDI putting it in the 111th place
religion is an important identity maker for young people and probably more so for the marginalized. “Religious identities are perhaps more salient in contemporary Indonesia today than at any other time in modern history” (2003). Kristiansen acknowledges that Islamic parties have been at the forefront of the democracy movement but he points out that religion has often been used to legitimize violence. He calls attention to the many groups willing to use violence to achieve their goals. For example, the Kaabah Youth Movement (Gerakan Pemuda Ka’bah or GPK) is an organization that feels their purpose is to “force people to follow proper Muslim morals and values” by rejecting discotheques, alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. Typically, violent youth groups draw support from unemployed youth. These groups provide members with a sense of family, trust, and emotional comfort. Their number increased greatly following reformasi.

The first systematic examination of violence in Indonesia since reformasi was made by Varshney and Panggabean (2005). In “Patterns of Collective Violence in Indonesia” (2005) they use media reports to show that there was a dramatic increase in violence between the years of 1997 and 1999, and demonstrate a high level of violence through 2001. Within the category of ethno-communal violence, inter-religious violence has led to the greatest number of deaths. The most deadly Muslim-Christian strife took place since 1998. Varshney and Panggabean found that, “youth clashes are the single most important trigger, or spark, for group violence in Indonesia.” Their study finds that 40 per cent of lives lost in violence resulted from riots precipitated by youth clashes. They conclude that, regardless of the roots of this violence, the question must be asked:

\[2\] Before 1998 much Muslim-Christian violence was observed, but resulted in fewer deaths than the years following 1998. Since 1998 violence has resulted in a greater number of fatalities.
“Can something be done to absorb Indonesia’s youth in more productive channels?” (Varsheny & Panggabean 2005, p. 35).

In his dissertation “Youth, Gangs and the State in Indonesia,” Loren Ryter (2002) adds to this argument by tracing the ways in which state sanctioned youth organizations in Indonesia were used as tools of power consolidation by Indonesia's president Suharto. He explains that youth organizations, working in tandem with the Indonesian army, were “the most visible, outspoken defenders of the state and some of the most notoriously violent and well-organized ‘criminals’ in Indonesia” (2005, p 3).

Religion is particularly effective in providing a cause for violence, because it is uniquely resistant to outside influences and organizes around a uniquely “ultimate” set of claims, authorities, and consequences (Eller, 2006, p. 149). In Indonesia, violence in Kalimantan, Maluku, and Poso did not begin over religious issues. In Kalimantan, conflict was rooted in disputes over resource management and political power (Bamba, 2006, p. 402), while in Maluku and Poso it was largely the result of unchecked transmigration policies and the breakdown of traditional structures of governance during the Suharto era (Panggabean, 2006, p. 418-419). In Maluku and Poso, various factions were able to manipulate both Christian and Muslim religious rhetoric to mobilize and justify violence. In Kalimantan, however, young Muslims and Christians have been the ones involved in the reconciliation efforts.

**Radical Islamist Youth Movements**

Following reformasi, the unity of pro-democracy and pro-Muslim groups deteriorated to reveal a dichotomy between those supporting the establishment of a democracy “based on tolerance, social justice, and a strong civil society,” and those
which promote Islam as a political ideology that will establish a just society (Kraince, 2003, p. 2).

Two studies suggest that these Islamist movements have had a significant impact on Indonesian society. The first, released by the U.S. Department of State in 2000, showed that 75 per cent of Indonesia’s Muslims felt Islam should play a large role in the government (von der Mehden, 2002, p. 8). The second study, released by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat, PPIM) in 2002, found that in the 1999 election 46 per cent of Muslims favored the implementation of shari’ah (Islamic Law) and 53 per cent of Muslims polled voiced support for various radical Islamic groups. However the PPIM study also found that only 16 per cent of voters that year supported Islamic parties (Hefner 1997, p. 91).

These studies demonstrate two possible political futures for Indonesia. One leads toward a pluralistic and transparent democracy and a tolerant society. The other leads to a radically sectarian state. William Liddle (2004) has assured us that Indonesia’s two largest socio-religious groups, Nadlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, with a combined following of 60 – 80 million people, will act as a centrist balance to the more radical “Islamist” groups. Others, such as James Fox (2004), Marten van Bruinessen (2002), and Sidney Jones (International Crisis Group, 2005), have given serious consideration to the more radical trends in Indonesia's Islamic community. These include dakwah (religious education) groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), as well as extremist organizations such as Darul Islam Indonesia (DII), Jemaah Islamiyah, and others. The establishment of these new extremist

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3 Nahdlatul Ulama is Indonesia’s largest socio-religious organization and represents the traditional wing of mainstream Islam in Indonesia. Muhammadiyah is Indonesia's second largest socio-religious organization and represent the modernist wing of mainstream Islam in Indonesia
Islamic groups has taken place against the background of violence that, whatever the actual cause, has been accompanied by ethnic and religious rhetoric. This was seen during the 1998 riots against ethnic Chinese, and during violent conflicts that have taken place between Christians and Muslims in various regions of Indonesia which have killed thousands in the past five years.

Fred R. von der Mehden (2002) addresses the problem of religious radicalism in Indonesia by assessing political changes in relations between Southeast Asia and the Middle East. He points to groups like Laskar Jihad, which caused considerable violence in Maluku and Sulawesi, Jemaah Islamiah, and the Council of Mujahidin for Islamic Law Enforcement (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI) as being susceptible to radical influence from the Middle East. Indonesia, he argues, is particularly vulnerable due to political pressures in the post-Suharto period. He cites the “development of required religious education in public schools, the considerable increase in religious literature and pamphlets from the Middle East…, more inter-personal regional contacts, and the development of literacy and communications” as ways that Indonesians are better able to identify with their Middle Eastern counterparts. These factors, he argues, make Islamic radicalism in Indonesia more connected to radical Islam in the Middle East. Fenton (2004) also tells us that “…as a component of local ethnic identities, Islam also connects people to a global identification” (p. 223).

In “Currents in Contemporary Islam in Indonesia” James J. Fox (2004) explores the nature of various Islamic organizations and radical ferment in Indonesia since reformasi. He examines Hizb ut-Tahrir, a fundamentalist group that he feels is “a good exemplar of the changing Islamic community.” Hizb ut-Tahrir is an Islamic group in the
the tarbiyah movement, a movement for Islamic education. Tarbiyah groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir are considered by Western observers to be fundamentalist in origin and radical in practice. Tarbiyah groups are influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood and seek to establish an Islamic state and the implementation of shari’ah law. Fox also discusses several Mujahidin groups that believe that Islam is under threat from secularization and the west. He counts twenty-three individual Islamic groups that maintain militia auxiliaries citing FPI, The Islamic State/Army of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia/Tenaga Islam Indonesia, NII/TII) and Jemaah Islamiah as examples.

In 2005 alone, religious tensions have been highlighted by four bombings in Poso, Tentena and Bali. While it should be made clear that these particular bombings were not the direct result of inter-religious tensions, the fact they were carried out by Indonesian Mujahidin networks demonstrates the way in which religious sentiments can be mobilized towards violent ends (International Crisis Group 13 October, 2005). These attacks represent the reality that violent fringe groups, although not representative of the majority of Indonesia’s Islamic community, are presently operating in Indonesia.4

Radical Islamist groups appear also to be pushing moderate Muslim groups towards a more conservative position. According to Merle Ricklefs (2005):

“there has recently been a major upsurge in the probably never ending contest between Indonesia’s liberals and conservatives, indeed between people who might be seen as quite radical at one extreme and as reactionaries at the other.”

Two events, the issuance of five fatwa5 by the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) and the decisions reached at the Muktamar (congress) of Muhammadiyah which was held in

4 It should be added that, on the other hand, Ricklifs (2005) has noticed following the Bali bombing that many conservative Muslims seemed to be loosing patience with violent Muslim actors.
5 Fatwa are legal pronouncements in Islam, issued by a religious law specialist on a specific issue.
Malang, East Java, in July 2005, demonstrate a turn to the right in the Islamic community. The five fatwa decreed that "religious teaching influenced by pluralism, liberalism, and secularism are against Islam.” They also banned women from leading prayers in the presence of men, mixed marriages, and inter-religious prayers. A nontraditional Islamic sect known as Ahmadiyah was declared to be heretical (“The 11 Fatwa issued by MUI,” Jakarta Post, 2005, July 30). The MUI fatwa were immediately condemned by liberal Islamic and inter-faith leaders as marginalizing majority groups. MUI was also criticized for not banning the use of violence as Islamist groups had justified previous attacks on Ahmadiyah by a 1980 fatwa against the group.

After the most recent MUI fatwa, two groups, the Islamic defenders Front (FPI) and the Anti-Apostasy Movement Alliance (AGAP), led violent attacks on liberal Islamic groups, including Ahmadiyah and Jemaah Islam Liberal (JIL) and what they call “illegal churches” in West Java (Jakarta Post, September 6, 2005). They claim that groups such as JIL had been outlawed as a result of the MUI fatwa. In mid-September the Jakarta Post reported that four mosques, 33 houses and four Islamic schools had been burnt to the ground in one night (Suwarni, 2005, September, 21). Several days later, the Post headlines read “MUI edicts cause more violence, scholars say.” One Islamic leader expressed his concern that the situation in Indonesia “will become like the Taliban in Afghanistan.”

The Muktamar of Muhammadiyah was disappointing for female members of Muhammadiyah. Many who had held leadership positions in Aisyiyah, a women's branch of Muhammadiyah, expected to be elected to the central board of Muhammadiyah. However, all were voted down (Ricklefs 2005). Many of the ulama
refused to hear the voices of women or recognize their contribution, “booing them down” when they tried to speak. Din Syamsuddin, a politician and intellectual trained at UCLA, was elected for a five year term as the Chairman. Syamsuddin is regarded as “a hardliner conservative by some and a political opportunist by others” (Ricklefs, 2005). His election is seen as a victory for the conservative, puritan side of Muhammadiyah.

As the former Chairman of the MUI, he was elected Chairman of Muhammadiyah amid promises that he would step down as MUI Chairman. Following the muktamar, however, a new post, “vice-general chair,” was created in the MUI that would allow him to command a degree of influence in both groups. He has dismissed the suggestion that the MUI fatwa might have triggered the recent religious violence (Ricklefs 2005). Most recently he was quoted in the Jakarta Post for denouncing a U.S. State Department report that pointed to “certain policies, laws and official actions [that] had restricted religious freedoms, and… had occasionally tolerated discrimination against and abuse of religious groups by private actors” (Sihabat, 2005, November 2).

**Muslim Youth Groups Promoting Democracy**

In his book *Civil Islam*, Hefner (2000) argues that the organizations that characterize Islam in Indonesia have potential to be “agents of civil society and democratization by promoting civil participation.” Democracy, argues Hefner, requires a society characterized by volunteerism, independent associations, a balance of powers between state and society as well as among civil organizations, and balances congenial to democratic habits of heart (p. 215). However, Hefner (1997) notes that by itself, civil society guarantees neither democracy, justice, nor pluralism. Civil society becomes a vital support for all three if it serves to strengthen the presence of two other elusive social
arrangements: "extra-governmental associations that act as counterweights to the state’s monopoly of power and a social pluralism that helps to legitimate the idea that people have a right to their own ideas and actions.” Hefner also points out the magnitude of the social capital commanded by Islamic groups in Indonesia for the effective performance of social tasks and for coordinating specifically social resources (p. 22). Civil society projects, he says, help individuals develop “habits of the heart” conducive to a democratic good.

“... democratic governance depends not just on formal elections or constitutions but on informal endowments found in society as a whole. These endowments include a political culture emphasizing citizen independence, trust in one’s fellows, tolerance, and respect for the rule of law. These cultural resources are in turn best fostered, it has been argued, through a peculiar social organization known as civil society’ (p. 23).

Kraince (2003) suggests that there were two “distinct” poles of Islamic student activism following reformasi: a liberal Islamic movement calling for the establishment of a pluralistic democracy based on tolerance, social justice, and a strong civil society, versus hardliner groups who promoted Islam as a political ideology aiming for sectarian control of the state (2003). Some Islamist organizations viewed human rights as dangerous because they undermined scriptural authority. However other young Muslims looked to their religious traditions in order to formulate arguments in support of democratic reform.

Mujani & Liddle argue in “Politics, Islam, and Public Opinion” (2004) that Indonesia’s two largest Islamic groups, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, act as “pillars of democratic and secular virtue” (2004, p. 121). They recognize that slow economic development has worsened inequality, that state officials have pursued forms of crony capitalism, and that many Muslims have seen little benefit from
democratization. However, while many Indonesian Muslims believe that the laws should somehow be basically in accord with Islam, few support radical policies promoted by Islamic activists such as restricting the public role of women, amputation of hands of thieves, or other policies associated with Western notions of shari’ah law. They say that NU and Muhammadiyah members tend to be involved with other non-Muslim groups and that this participatory culture is indispensable for a strong democracy (2004, p. 121).

In “NU Youth and the Making of Civil Society” Farid Wajidi (2004) provides examples of civil society activism within Nahdlatul Ulama student organizations. Wajidi describes the efforts of NU Muslim activists in NGOs in Yogyakarta and their efforts to rethink the relationship between Islam and problems facing Muslim Society. Since the late 1970s, NU and its auxiliary groups have been pulling away from politics in an effort to empower society. They have adopted a transformative and bottom-up approach to community development. They focus on providing opportunities to advance pluralism, to support the oppressed, liberalism, human rights, gender issues, multiculturalism, indigenous Islam (Islam pribumi), and religious tolerance.

Robin Bush (2005), of the Asia Foundation, provides support for Hefner’s optimistic assessment that Islamic organizations in Indonesia generally support democratic civil society. She describes many civil society efforts carried out by Islamic organizations, including mass initiatives in civic and voter education, policy advocacy, poverty eradication, environmental sustainability, and health care. These efforts are important for those who organize and benefit from them directly, and they also have the positive effect of building civil society in the larger society.
In “The Intellectual Roots of Radical Islam in Indonesia” (2005) Muhammad Sirozi points out that the decentralization period following *reformasi* that paved the way for democracy in Indonesia has also provided fertile ground for radicalism which, he says, has been one of the important characteristics of post-Suharto Indonesia. He recognizes both the strength of modernist Muslim groups and the pernicious nature of more radical groups and suggests that education is the surest way to prevent the spread of religious radicalism in Indonesia. He argues that if no educational measures are taken, radical Islam will flourish and hinder the democratization of social, religious and political life throughout the world.

Religious fundamentalists have emerged as a significant force of religious, social, and political change that has influenced progress toward democratization in Indonesia. Claiming moral superiority, these groups often promote the establishment of an Islamic state and *shari’ah* law while preaching that democracy is incompatible with Islam. It is unclear to Sirozi whether such radicalism is a political action that uses Islam to gain political legitimacy, or if this is a religiously motivated attempt to gain religious authority.

**Research Design and Methodology**

This thesis explores how democratic ideas and religious tolerance are applied and practiced in three of the largest and most dynamic Islamic youth organizations in Indonesia. They include the youth organizations of Muhammadiyah, the Muslim Student Action Union (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, KAMMI) and several groups in the remaja masjid (Teenage Mosque) network.
Data for this ethnographic study was collected over a three month period in the summer of 2005. It included a combined total of nearly 150 participants from each of the Islamic student organizations including male and female university students and university faculty who acted as mentors to these groups. The only consideration was the individual’s willingness to speak openly about their experiences.

Interviews were used to collect the majority of the data. They took place both at university facilities where activities of these organizations took place and at their offices. They were primarily conducted with the organizations’ officials who were best able to provide information about the mission and activities of the organizations. Interview questions were open-ended and usually led to other questions. These are examples of questions used to start discussion:

- How are leaders chosen?
- How are programs and policies decided?
- How are differences of opinion handled?
- Who benefits from your programs?
- Who can participate in your programs?
- Do you ever have joint projects with other Muslim organizations, general organizations or with organizations from other religious traditions? If so, how are these programs developed and where are they headed?
- How is money raised?

The interviews were primarily held in two cities in Indonesia. Jakarta was chosen because it is the capital city and the hub of these groups and their affiliates. Yogyakarta was chosen because these groups are known to be active here. I also conducted
interviews with a remaja masjid group in Solo and with Muhammadiyah groups at their national congress in Malang.

Questionnaires were also used to collect qualitative information about the organizations’ individual members’ experiences, concerns, and values. For the purposes of this project the members of each of these organizations are referred to as “activists,” because this is what they call each other and because it is also the word used by Shor in referring to individuals that are educated to have a ‘critical consciousness.’

Finally, a sample of professionals, politicians, and scholars who observe each of the three of these organizations were interviewed to gauge outsiders’ perceptions of how well they promote habits of democracy. Each of the participants of this part of the study was chosen because they are known to have worked closely with young Muslims on the national level and to continue to observe their organizations.

In conducting ethnographic research I faced many obstacles. First there was an issue of how to identify and recruit participants. My criteria for choosing individuals were that they were active participants in one of the targeted groups, that they were of appropriate age for the study, and that were willing to talk to me. The bias inherent in this type of population is that only a certain type of individual would feel comfortable discussing these issues with me. Because I could not force those who did not feel comfortable speaking with me, their voices will be excluded. I found, however, these activists – being activists – to be very open and accommodating to my questions and no one chose not to participate. Second, gaining access and developing trust was also an obstacle. Developing trust is essential for obtaining candid responses from participants, although it does not guarantee them. Responses, therefore, have been evaluated in light
of the fact that the interviewer was an American. It is possible that some might view the interviewer as an enemy from an alien or invasive culture. Lastly, there were the language and cultural barriers that accompany any research done in a foreign culture. One example of this was that I used the phrase “secular organization” in referring to organizations without religious affiliation. Although the activists, keeping in mind that I am a non-native speaker, could understand what I intended to ask, it was pointed out to me, that this had a negative connotation and that “general organization” was the phrase more commonly used.
Chapter 2: Three Case Studies

Muhammadiyah Youth Organizations

Indonesia’s oldest socio-religious organization, Muhammadiyah, was founded in Yogyakarta in 1912. It is one of the largest educational and social movements in Southeast Asia and consists of various auxiliary organizations. All Muhammadiyah organizations take as their main mission Islamic *dakwah*, but they have extensive civil society initiatives as well. Muhammadiyah’s projects range from initiating environmental awareness programs to voter education projects to establishing Islamic hospitals and mosques throughout Indonesia. As a socio-religious organization, Muhammadiyah does not overtly participate in national politics. However, as a large and active member of Indonesia’s civil society movement, Muhammadiyah plays an important role in influencing government policy.

Formally, Muhammadiyah is an organization with both male and female participants but it also hosts Aisyiyah, an autonomous organization comprised of women and focusing on promoting the agency of women.\(^6\) Aisyiyah was founded in 1917 to improve the economic and social well being of its members and the communities in which they are active. Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah have several large and active youth organizations. These organizations offer participants opportunities to engage in intellectual dialogue, civil society initiatives, and social functions independently of

\(^6\) In the 2005 Muhammadiyah Muktamar (congress) there was some debate as to whether or not Muhammadiyah should allow women to be full members of Muhammadiyah, or if they should be excluded from the main group because they had Aisyiyah to function through as a Muhammadiyah subsidiary. The debate became heated and many women were heckled and booed when they attempted to address the audience to argue that they be allowed to remain within the larger Muhammadiyah organization as they always had been.
Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah. Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah, the University Student's Solidarity of Muhammadiyah (IMM), founded in 1965, is comprised of branches that function on the campuses of Muhammadiyah and state universities. Although its name suggests that IMM is an organization for undergraduate and graduate students, many IMM alumni remain active members of IMM, whose membership encompasses young adults, ages 18 to 30. IMM has chapters in each of the 160 Muhammadiyah universities. All students enrolled in Muhammadiyah universities are members of IMM but not all are considered to be active participants in the organization. In total, IMM estimates that there are nearly 100,000 active members in Indonesia. Yogyakarta alone is home to four IMM branches. Nation-wide, there are some 200 branches in 30 provinces.

Ikatan Remaja Muhammadiyah, Teenage Solidarity of Muhammadiyah (IRM), founded in 1974, operates out of Muhammadiyah high schools, but has many active members who are university students. Just as in IMM, many IRM alumni remain active in the organization whose members are usually between the ages 15 and 23. While activists often graduate from IRM into IMM, this is not expected of them. Many IRM activists choose to stay in IRM through their university studies. One reason for this is that IRM is sometimes perceived to be more socially pro-active, while IMM is perceived to focus more on intellectual dialogue. It was also suggested that many IRM activists remain in the organization out of a sense of nostalgia. Although most activists tend to focus on one of the two groups, membership in them is fluid and there is no recruitment competition between them. Officially, all students studying in Muhammadiyah schools,
nearly four million, are members of IRM. However, IRM estimates core participants at around one hundred-thousand. IRM has 30 provincial boards and 262 City boards.

Membership in IRM/IMM is offered to both male and female activists. However, a third youth organization, Nasyiatul Aisyiyah (NA), is comprised only of female participants and offers programs that focus on issues affecting young women. Founded in 1931, NA's massive membership is estimated at 4 million women, ages 17 to 35 (Syamsiyatun, 2004). NA activists tend to be very active members of their community. An NA survey conducted in 1995 found that 76% of its members assuming leadership positions within the group were university students and graduates; 82% were occupying jobs related to education and research (Syamsiyatun, 2004). Activists in NA are neither required to, nor restricted from, participating in IRM/IMM.

The first opportunity I had to speak with a representative from Muhammadiyah was with Paryanto Rohma at the offices of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta. Paryanto is an alumnus of both IRM and IMM and is presently an official in Pemuda Muhammadiyah, Muhammadiyah Youth (PM), an organization for Muhammadiyah activists, ages 30-40. He explained to me that one focus of IRM/IMM is to present different perspectives and theories on issues, be they religious, political, or social, and to help young activists to think critically about their world. The goal of these organizations is to “develop new generations that are religiously aware, yet can play a role in the processes of developing a modern society.” This means mastering new ideas and technologies and living peacefully in a global community. Through tabwun (the process of deepening one’s understanding), Muhammadiyah youth organizations “make members be more critical of social issues,” Paryanto said.
One way IRM/IMM tries to present different perspectives is to “be very inclusive to other individuals and groups from outside of their own religious tradition.” He admitted, however, that while this was a characteristic of IRM/IMM/NA policy and programs nationally, in practice these policies sometimes looked different in different regions in Indonesia. For example, Muhammadiyah groups in East Java tend not to work with organizations outside of the Muhammadiyah fold. He explained that variation between branches is not a problem for Muhammadiyah because the various Muhammadiyah groups are given autonomy to conduct their programs.

IRM, IMM and NA share many characteristics. They all recognize the same three pillars: religion, humanity, and intellectuality. They have similar internal activities that focus on educating members on a wide variety of themes, advocacy and extending services to “marginalized” people, social research on Islam and democracy, and networking. However, just as the characteristics of local Muhammadiyah branches vary from region to region, IRM, IMM, and NA differ in the types of activities they offer their activists and the social issues they address. Generally, IRM activists are very socially minded and their programs tend to be proactive in nature. IMM, whose activists are university students, tend to be less socially proactive, but engage their activists in intellectual dialogue in order to “deepen and master” university study. NA is very proactive, focusing their activities on societal issues of gender discrimination.

The IRM/IMM recruitment process is called *Mataf Masa Taaruf*. It is a short training intended to familiarize interested youth with the ideology of Muhammadiyah. *Mataf Masa Taaruf* includes programs that simulate the intellectual discourse IRM/RMM members are expected to participate in as activists. Completing this process does not
mean that an individual is an IRM/IMM activist but that an individual is ready to begin
the next training cycle called *Kaderizasi*.

Recruitment is done by the IRM/IMM branches. The branch leaders that I spoke
with said that they began their recruitment processes by advertising that they would be
accepting a new recruitment class. This was done by setting up informational booths in
public places, such as senior high schools and university campuses, where IRM/IMM
have branches. Open houses, held either at IRM/IMM offices or the homes of individual
activists, are also used as recruitment venues. At these events, interested youth are given
information about the mission of IRM/IMM and meet activists. Recruitment is open to
any Muslim of appropriate age. Non-Muslims are not allowed to join these groups or
participate in the recruitment process. However, anyone is allowed to observe the
recruitment process along with most IRM/IMM programs.

Once an interested individual has completed *Mataf Masa Taaruf*, he or she begins
the longer process of *kaderisasi*. By beginning *kaderisasi*, an individual becomes an
activist of IRM/IMM. *Kaderisasi* is a three-tiered hierarchical process wherein activists
in the organization graduate from one tier to the next. In doing so they gain rank while
accepting more responsibility and becoming more deeply dedicated to the organization.
IRM/IMM leaders must reach the appropriate rank to be eligible for certain leadership
roles or to accept certain offices within the organization. Although IRM/IMM
sometimes work along side KAMMI, PMII, and HMI, activists involved in *kaderisasi* are
forbidden from joining these organizations. Many IRM/IMM activists I spoke with,
however, were active to varying degrees in remaja masjid.
Like Muhammadiyah, IRM/IMM elects national leaders and determines policies at a nationwide congress called a *muktamar*. The *muktamar*, held once every two years, is an opportunity for IRM/IMM delegates from around Indonesia to come together and choose, revise, and expand on the agreed upon values and guiding ideology of IRM/IMM. Delegates from each province are elected at the local level and sent as representatives to the *muktamar* where they facilitate workshops to develop a handbook. This handbook contains the policies and procedures of the organization.

The values chosen during the *muktamar* become the platform or model of reference by which local branches can develop their policies and programs. However, it was explained to me by the national chairperson of IRM, Ahmad Rais, that in practice, the *muktamar*’s decisions are sometimes not compatible with the needs of a given province or district. Therefore, IRM prefers that regional branches make decisions about how they will interpret and adopt certain national policies. IRM/IMM national boards in Jakarta recognize that the branches better understand local needs and issues in their communities. For this reason branches are given a degree of autonomy so that they can create policies and programs that are based on both the national values of IRM/IMM and local needs.

Sometimes there are deeper differences of opinions within IRM/IMM that must be resolved. Whenever possible they allow the branches to handle differences of opinion at the most local level possible. They account for difference of opinions in terms of differences in knowledge, experience, and circumstance. If necessary, they arrange a forum at the level of the province to allow the disagreeing parties to explain their position. This also becomes a time for the national board to reevaluate and correct
unsound policies. As long as there is a reasonable explanation for the differences in the policies or positions, the branches are at liberty to disregard a national policy or implement it in a way they feel is more appropriate. However, because all activists in IRM/IMM are made aware of the organization’s national policies before they are allowed to become members, disagreements in policy rarely happen. “Locations do differ, but all branches maintain the same values,” Paryanto said.

New leaders are chosen in Muhammadiyah student organizations once every two years. At the lower levels leaders are often chosen by *musyawarah*, which can be roughly translated as conference or consultation, but the connotation is that it is about consensus building. Muhammadiyah participants explained that the process of *musyawarah* is essentially the same as "democracy" because it allows everyone to participate in making decisions.

At these lower level branches, it is usually possible to come to a consensus on leadership without holding campaigns or a vote. When an agreement cannot be reached by *musyawarah* at the local levels, a ballot vote will be taken. Local leaders are then eligible to be elected to the district and province branches. For each of these levels, either *musyawarah* or direct ballot elections are used.

Leadership at the national level is decided in a slightly different way. Leaders are elected by delegates elected at the provincial level rather than by popular vote. Because Indonesia is such a large country, it would be difficult for the national level officials to be voted upon by each member. Therefore, those who have won leadership positions at the province level act as delegates to the national *muktamar* (convention). Only leaders at the province level vote in the national *muktamar*, although any members who can afford
to come are allowed to attend the process. At the muktamar, the national leadership is chosen by the delegates. The chairman Ahmad Rais of IRM said that this was unfortunate and that they would like to have direct elections for all levels of leadership in IRM. However, because it is such a large organization and because it is difficult to disseminate information on all the possible candidates, direct elections are not realistic.

Funding for these Muhammadiyah organizations comes from various places. Each of them charges their activists a small fee which is insufficient to cover the cost of their programs. IMM, being less socially proactive and therefore requiring less money to operate, usually receives the majority of their budget from the Muhammadiyah universities out of which they operate. IMM receives additional funding through donations from alumni, companies, and the Indonesian government. IRM also receives funding from Muhammadiyah but has developed impressive partnerships with The Asia Foundation (TAF) and the Ford Foundation, both of which fund various projects. They have also received money from the German embassy. Some of the funding IRM receives from The Asia foundation is given to NA for their participation in TAF projects. Through Aisyiyah, NA has received funds from UNICEF to build and manage a children's center in Aceh. Through the Voter Education Network for the People (Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilih untuk Rakyat or JPPR) NA has received funding to conduct voter education programs. NA also receives funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and NA alumni.

Most external IRM/IMM programs focus on building democracy in their communities and nationally. Their programs are done, of course, within the context of Islam. These activists insist that Islam transcends everything in life and democracy is
part of and consistent with Islam. They say this is because “Islam is a religion of peace and it gives everyone a voice.” For example, all IRM/IMM and NA branches participate in voter education programs that help to insure that Indonesians understand the election process.

**Ikatan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah (IMM) and Democratic Education**

IMM organizes anti-corruption programs, civil society programs, and trainings that provide their activists with business and domestic skills. They have also developed trainings, seminars, and publications to educate Indonesian citizens on the environment of issues. IMM has created a website that discusses facets of environmental stewardship, such as water purification, air pollution control, waste management, recycling, soil preservation, noise protection, and energy efficiency.

Another focus of IMM is to be active in inter-faith activities that involve Muslim and non-Muslim communities. In Yogyakarta, IMM works with Interfide, an organization dedicated to facilitating inter-religious dialogue, understanding, and cooperation in Yogyakarta. Interfide was begun by a group of Hindu students at the Gandhi ashram in Yogyakarta but incorporates eight different organizations from various religious traditions throughout the city. Through Interfide, IMM cooperates with other organizations in developing meaningful activities that promote dialogue between Buddhists, Christians, Catholics, Hindus, and other Muslim organizations.

In 2002, IMM worked with The Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution at Gadgah Mada University in Yogyakarta to create a youth camp for peace and conflict resolution. The five day camp was held in Magelang, a small community on the side of mount Merapi near Yogyakarta, and included 70 – 80 participants from various
Yogyakarta organizations as well as independent participants from other countries including a group of Quakers from New Zealand.

Also in Yogyakarta, IMM activists spoke excitedly about a peace training they were developing for September 2005. This training was to be open to all Muslim groups interested in pluralism and conflict prevention and would focus heavily on multiculturalism. Because of the heavy focus on multiculturalism, I asked them why it was that only activists from the Muslim community were invited. They explained that because this was the first training and its planning was uncertain, it would be offered to Muslims as a first step in creating a more inclusive program. If the program is successful, they intend to continue to develop it so that it can be offered to all religions.

Since the tsunami that ravaged Aceh province in December, 2003, many Indonesian and international organizations have been working together to extend aid and relief efforts there. IMM has established a partnership with Save the Children, a secular organization from the United States, to coordinate their relief efforts. The post-tsunami relief effort has been a time for IMM and other organizations to cooperate despite their religious differences.

**Ikatan Remaja Muhamadiyah (IRM) and Democratic Education**

Like IMM, the primary programs of IRM are Islamic education and the promotion of democracy and civil society in Indonesia. When I met with IRM officials, activists in their early twenties, in Jakarta, they said that IRM external programs are intended to benefit all groups in society. Human values, they said, is the basis of their program. Their core activities include trainings for gender awareness, conflict resolution, non-violent political resistance, election monitoring, and voter education.
All IRM programs are developed to support a pluralist society. For example, one focus of IRM is to counter forms of *shari’ah* (Islamic Law) that the more fundamentalist Islamic organizations are seeking to put into place in Indonesia, because IRM feels that these forms of *shari’ah* marginalize other religious communities. Rais, the current chairperson of IRM, said that, “substantially, IRM agrees with the values of *shari’ah*, but many of the individual rules of *shari’ah* are incompatible with different religious traditions. These rules should not be imposed on communities whose beliefs fall outside of *shari’ah*. ” They mentioned KAMMI as an example of an organization that is intent on implementing *shari’ah*.

When the Christian-Muslim conflicts in Maluku occurred, local IRM groups dedicated themselves to confronting violence there. They developed facilities to create a neutral environment where dialogue between young Muslim and Christian leaders could take place. They also received funding from the German Embassy to work with the Christian community in creating a school for pluralism that employed both Muslim and Christian teachers and that facilitated programs for inter-religious cooperation in South Sulawesi.

In partnership with the British Council IRM developed and facilitated “The Young Global Citizens Project,” held in Indonesia in January 2005. This was an exchange project that involved participants from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, the U.K., and observers from Vietnam. The purpose of this project is “to build mutual understanding, learning and respect between young people with different cultural backgrounds” (Rais, personal communication, July 1, 2005). This ten day conference included 41 participants and focused on the role of religion in nation and identity
building, the importance of inter- and intra-faith dialogue to the global community, and recognizing and learning from differences between majority and minority societies.

Representatives of IRM admitted that while they were very interested in inter-religious and international cooperation, there was much suspicion in the larger Muhammadiyah community about this cooperation. Because of this suspicion, they said, many members of Muhammadiyah will refuse to partake in refreshments at functions that are supported by institutions such as The World Bank, the IMF, and even the Asia Foundation and Ford Foundation. IRM, however, said that they were excited about opportunities to participate in international dialogue and are trying to find partners in North America to work with to incorporate them in projects such as the Young Global Citizens project.

When I asked them about the MUI fatwa and Din Syamsuddin’s support of the fatwa against pluralism and liberal Islam, they told me that they were very disappointed that he had broken his promise to leave MUI. They had met with him and told him that they thought the fatwa were aggressive against non-Muslims and they wouldn't support the fatwa (Rais, personal communication, July 1, 2005). The next month they were featured in the Jakarta Post for teaming up with a Buddhist organization to plant trees in Jakarta (“Religious groups plant trees” 2005, September 6). That same month they were again featured in the Jakarta Post for their inter-religious efforts in the Young Global Citizens Project. Both of these efforts were clearly in defiance of the fatwa.

I maintained close contact with the national board of IRM throughout my time in Indonesia and was able to learn more about the views of group leaders outside of formal interviews. In one of the last conversations I had with IRM members in Jakarta, I told
them that I was using ideas of democracy similar to those of Paulo Freire. I was suppressed when they all told me that they knew about Paulo Freire. One of them told me that Freire was their "hero for democratic education," and added that Gandhi was their "hero for non-violence." Several months later I read an article in *Convergence* (2005) that detailed the influence of Paulo Freire's pedagogy in Indonesia. According to this article, one of the Indonesian educators who championed Freire's pedagogy was Syafi'i Ma'arif, former Chairman of Muhammadiyah. I realized in thinking back over my interviews with IRM members, that our discussions had reflected Freirian ideals. Often the leader did not reply to my questions but deferred to other members so that they would have an equal opportunity to speak about Muhammadiyah habits and activities.

### Nasyiatul Aisyiyah (NA) and Democratic Education

Many female activists of IRM/IMM participate in NA. NA’s activities are similar to those of IRM/IMM but they more explicitly seek to extend agency to women. For example, NA participates in the same voter education network as IRM/IMM but NA targets female voters who often as their husbands tell them.

Major areas of focus for NA are concerned with domestic violence and human trafficking. NA is also active in the Jakarta-based Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP), an interfaith organization. Since the tsunami that ravaged much of South and South East Asia in December 2004, NA has been collaborating with the more radical Hizb ut-Tahrir to extend aid to Aceh province. Although Hizb ut-Tahrir ideology is far different from Muhammadiyah, this partnership might be an important opportunity for the two groups to exchange ideas.
Nasyiatul Aisyiah also facilitates several programs in conjunction with the Asia Foundation. In East Java, for example TAF is helping NA activists to increase access of women entrepreneurs to resources for developing businesses and establishing regional economic forums. They also collaborate to facilitate trainings to make soybean drinks and tempeh (soybean cake) for women in shelters.

Activists said that in the future they would like to expand civil education programs by cooperating more closely with the Voter Education Network for the People (Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilih untuk Rakyat or JPPR) network. They would also like to form partnerships with international organizations which they feel will help them to develop their gender empowerment programs.

**Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (KAMMI) – Muslim Student Action Union**

KAMMI, the most recent manifestation of the Salman movement, is one of Indonesia’s newest and most dynamic Islamic youth movements. It was founded at the height of the Reformasi movement that demanded Suharto's resignation and offered its support to Vice President, B. J. Habibie, Suharto’s successor. KAMMI is best characterized by its strong moral and anti-corruption stance. In August 1998, members of this group formed Partai Keadilan (PK), now known as Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS), the Peace and Justice Party, which was, at the time, “arguably the only political party with a clear program and transparent structure” (Van Bruinessen, 2004). KAMMI presents itself as an independent extra-campus organization influenced by Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, as does PKS.
KAMMI comes out of the *dakwah* movement, a religious movement of purification and intensification. All *dakwah* groups believe Indonesia should have an Islamic government, but, while other *dakwah* groups in Indonesia reject democracy outright, KAMMI maintains the belief that “there is no contradiction between Islam and democracy” (Van Bruinessen, 2004). They see the Islamization of Indonesia as a primarily moral movement cultivating Islamic values and not a political movement. However, KAMMI is deeply entrenched in political action recognizing that Indonesia’s 90% Muslim majority “provides a way to establish an Islamic government” (Collins 2004, p. 13). KAMMI “does not believe there is a short cut to that distant objective” such as violence (Van Bruinessen, 2004). Instead, KAMMI advocates social change through the self-discipline of the individual. They believe change comes through education and persuasion. KAMMI is also known to explicitly support the public roles of women in society, although I found that no women were in leadership roles (Van Bruinessen, 2004), officially or unofficially, which led me to believe that this support was limited.

Although KAMMI and PKS claim no formal relationship, KAMMI maintains that they share “a social, cultural, ideological relationship with PKS.” For this reason, leaving PKS out of any study about KAMMI is difficult, and all the scholars I spoke to about KAMMI mentioned PKS as well. While sharing the values of PKS, KAMMI is generally considered to be much more “fundamentalist” than mainstream Muslim organizations. As Martin van Bruinessen puts it, “[PKS] is clearly not a liberal party.” However, he points out that “[PKS] is one of the very few forces… that may seriously contribute to a gradual democratization of the country” (Van Bruinessen, 2004).
KAMMI claims a membership of 150,000 to 160,000 members. Not only do they have branches in 30 Indonesian provinces, they have long established branches in Japan and Germany. Yogyakarta, as one of the centers of KAMMI activity, has 14 branches and nearly 2,000 activists.

KAMMI's main agenda is to develop leaders for fighting corruption and combating the global interests that they see as being “very hurtful to people.” They work to spread their campaign at the university level in order to prepare this new leadership for Indonesia. At the local level, KAMMI activists see themselves as “an opposition force to the government.” They claim that their opposition is always in accord with what people want. By “the people” they mean people of all religions; however, KAMMI’s mission is distinctly Islamic. “The point,” activists say, “is to establish a system of checks and balances based on Islamic values,” which they believe also represent “global values.” KAMMI believes that these global values represent the interest of all religions. Many Muslim groups I spoke to did not agree with this premise.

I first visited KAMMI at their regional headquarters in Yogyakarta where their offices are housed in a modest building. They rent from a Catholic man because, they say, they have a good relationship with him and the rent is cheap. Before we began they asked me why an American wanted to learn about Islam. They admitted their fear that America might want to use its knowledge about Islam against Islamic nations. They also voiced suspicion that the United States had a double standard on issues such as the Israel-Palestine conflict and the “Iraq invasion” that is particularly pernicious to Muslims. This concern was voiced continually by KAMMI activists; however, from the beginning they were very open and welcoming to me. They offered me cake and refreshments and said
that their door was always open. I spent almost four hours with them during which time they served me supper between answering my questions and taking breaks for Muslim prayers.

KAMMI members also call their forum for decision making *musyawarah* and explain the process in a similar way to Muhammadiyah, but KAMMI members but feel that *musyawarah* is significantly different from democracy. “Whereas democracy means that each man has one vote, the majority is the winner and the minority’s voice is no longer considered, *musyawarah* ensures that minority voices are taken into consideration.” In this way, they feel that *musyawarah* is superior to democracy.

When I asked the central board of KAMMI how internal disputes were handled, they said that the central board had no right to interfere with local level branches, but *musyawarah* provided a system for handling disputes. At the local level, however, I was told that there had never been a disagreement between the local and national branches. In fact, one of the criticisms other groups have of KAMMI is that their activists always agree with each other and disagree with outside groups. Groups like NA and Interfide in Yogyakarta said that they found KAMMI difficult to work with. When NA invited KAMMI to their functions, they found that repeated disagreements made KAMMI almost impossible to work with. However, NA said that they would continue to invite KAMMI.

Nationally, KAMMI officials are elected by a representative body that comes together in general assembly. District branches are allowed to send two delegates to the general assembly. These delegates, elected at the district level, are potential candidates for national level positions.
Not all activists are permitted to participate in choosing KAMMI leaders. Only cadres of the second and third level are allowed to participate and vote. First level cadres are allowed to observe. Leadership is seen by activists to be a responsibility and a burden; most activists, they said, would prefer not to be nominated for leadership roles.

The KAMMI process of recruitment and *kaderisasi* is much like that of the Muhammadiyah groups. Recruitment is advertised to all Muslim students on a campus by setting up a booth and attracting interested individuals to start their training program. It is generally believed that KAMMI is quite exclusive, however, I didn't find anything to suggest this in their recruitment process. KAMMI seems interested in attracting a large number of recruits and has grown very quickly since it was founded in the late 1990s.

The first step, *Dakwah Marhalah*, is a three day training that introduces interested students to the KAMMI ideology and to other activists. Following this short training, activists begin a three-tiered process of *kaderisasi*. *Kaderisasi* has three facets; physical, spiritual and intellectual. Each of these group trainings happen continually.

While an individual is considered an activist at the first level of *kaderisasi*, their voice is limited in processes of electing leaders and decision making. The process of *kaderisasi* is a long one, and it can take several years to move from the entry level to the third level. As is the case with Muhammadiyah, activists gain more privileges and responsibilities by advancing in *kadarisasi*. To reach the highest level of membership, for example, an activist must have management experience with KAMMI in a regional branch.

Unlike Muhammadiyah groups, there are limits on the length of time activists can be active in KAMMI. Undergraduate students can participate in KAMMI for ten years,
or fourteen if they become graduate students. Students of the trade schools can participate in KAMMI for six years.

**KAMMI and Democratic Education**

Most of KAMMI’s external activities are positioned to act as social levers against government policies with which they disagree. KAMMI’s major external projects are political in nature and incorporate action and discussion with the goal of mobilizing a “social conscience campaign.” This campaign, they say, is designed to empower people to choose their own destiny. The campaign’s activities commonly include staging protest demonstrations and the dissemination of information about political issues. At the time of this research, an increase in oil prices was a national problem that they were focusing on. KAMMI also claims to be involved in voter education programs, but because they had no affiliation with the official voter education network, it is unclear what their involvement is.

KAMMI also has outreach programs. For example, they encourage activists to volunteer at Muslim orphanages to teach remedial subjects to children. Periodically, they conduct a *Pasar Murah*, or cheap market, that sells inexpensive goods to Muslims in impoverished communities. KAMMI also conducts workshops on Islamic cooperation in the business sector to help interested Muslims realize their business potential. In Aceh, KAMMI is working with several organizations to offer victims of the *tsunami* various services. They are building a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) and are teaching Muslims how to read the Qur’an as well as life and entrepreneurial skills.

KAMMI is explicitly non-violent; however, they do not participate in cooperative conflict resolution trainings that are popular among other Indonesian organizations.
They forbid violence among their activists but any conflict resolution training they
develop is only for KAMMI members.

If they have a common interest with another organization, KAMMI will
sometimes invite these organizations to participate in joint projects. Usually these
projects are planned and facilitated by KAMMI and cooperating groups are simply
participants. In Yogyakarta, KAMMI says that it has staged protest demonstrations with
the Republic of Indonesia Christian Student Movement (Pergerakan Mahasiswa Kristen
Republic Indonesia, PMKRI) and the Indonesian Catholic student movement (Gerakan
Mahasiswa Katholic Indonesia, GMKI). On the national level KAMMI occasionally has
joint programs with Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia (ICMI) or the Indonesian
association of Muslim Intellectuals; the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI); Persekutuan
Masyarakat Kristen Indonesia or the Unity of the Christian Community of Indonesia
(PMKI); and the government. Inter-faith dialogue projects are not one of their focuses.

KAMMI receives funding from its activists who pay a small fee for participating
in their programs. They also receive money from alumni and private donors and
businesses. They do not receive funding from PKS.

**KAMMI & PKS**

Like KAMMI, PKS is a young organization: 70-80% of PKS members are under
35 years of age. Because PKS was founded by KAMMI alumni, most onlookers
associate the two groups. However, both KAMMI and PKS say that the two groups have
no formal association. KAMMI leaders say that “there is a social, cultural, ideological
relationship with PKS but no formal or structural relationship,” while PKS
representatives said that “the relationship between the two groups is based on a mutual culture and value system.”

Baktir, the coordinator of recruitment for PKS, said that they do not specifically target KAMMI members as potential PKS recruits. PKS advertises recruitment to all potential activists through the internet and via personal interaction. Recruits often come from religious groups and labor organizations. Baktir said that PKS received a large number of recruits from *pesantrens*, NU, Muhammadiyah, HMI, and KAMMI.7 When I asked Baktir if he thought that KAMMI was an exclusivist organization, he said no and reminded me of Christian members in Papua.

One of PKS’s more controversial goals is to implement *shari’ah*, Islamic law, in Indonesia. Baktir said that although the present legal system in place in Indonesia is acceptable, its implementation is not, and to overcome this requires that the entire system be reformed. PKS argues that they support a form of *shari’ah* which would solve problems in Indonesia’s current legal system and that would be acceptable for all of society. NU, JIL, IRM, and the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP) in Jakarta are among the Islamic organizations that disagree.

Another controversial issue between PKS and more “liberal” Islamic groups is their stance on women in politics. PKS has supported the idea that 30% of the seats in the parliament should go to women, but many women I spoke to said that in PKS they were given a “subservient” role. Several women I spoke with in NA said that they had joined PKS because of its strong Islamic stance. They came to realize, however, that they were given a subservient role within the party, and were dissatisfied and left PKS. “PKS,” two of these women said, “does not support democracy.” Conversely, one

7 I was promised a formal list of these organizations but never received it.
female activist in KAMMI was satisfied with her position. She said, “Women do have explicitly different roles than men and they should not deviate from those roles. It is more proper for us and is better and in line with the KAMMI value system.”

**Remaja Masjid (Mosque Youth)**

In 1972 the Indonesian Mosque Community was established. Douglas Porter (2002) explains how the Indonesian Mosque Council (Dewan Masjid Indonesia, or DMI) working under the authority of the MUI, was “one of the various corporatist institutions coordinated by the Department of Religion” (p. 84). As tensions between Muslim activists and Suharto’s regime mounted in the late-1980’s DMI was used by the state to co-opt an affiliation known as the Badan Komunikasi Peduda Masjid Indonesia or Indonesian Mosque Communication Body (BKPMI). In 1990 DMI insisted that BKPMI include in its title the word youth (*remaja*) changing BKPMI into BKPRMI and focusing its activities on teaching the Qur’an to youth. One of its other main tasks was “to keep loitering youth or juvenile delinquents off the streets and channel them into mosque-oriented social activities such as sports, art, morality lessons, and skills trainings.” BKPRMI, explains Porter, “was an integral part of the regime’s overall effort to increase the states jurisdiction over the Muslim community’s religious affairs through religious instruction” (p. 84-85).

Today BKPRMI is popularly known as remaja masjid, or “mosque youth,” a generic term used for youth organizations that are mosque-based and which function independently. Because remaja masjid function out of individual community or university mosques, the activities and mission of each remaja masjid group varies from mosque to mosque. Each remaja masjid group has a character and mission of its own and
can promote either pluralistic and democratic values or the struggle for an Islamic state and the realization of *shari'ah* law, or a combination of both.

A couple of generalizations can be made about remaja masjid. First, these groups are not oriented around political parties. They function at the grass roots level, recruiting youth from communities or universities. Their goals are introducing agnostic youth to Islam and helping young Muslims better understand Islam. Remaja masjid groups try to instill the values of each mosque in their young participants. Second, through remaja masjid, young Muslims often have opportunities to socialize with peers who may associate themselves with other Islamic groups, be they more radical or liberal.

There are as many remaja masjid groups in Indonesia as there are mosques and Islamic schools, making it difficult to generalize about them. However, when discussing remaja masjid groups it is useful to distinguish between those based in community mosques and those based in university mosques. Remaja masjid groups in community mosques tend to target a wider variety of Muslims, including high school and university students and young professionals. Their activities, internal and external, focus on educational programs. Their membership tends to be more cohesive, many members coming from the same community where they live, allowing them to participate in the group for long periods of time. Community remaja masjid groups often receive funding from alumni, while campus groups rely on their university for funding. Activists in university remaja masjid groups are exclusively university students. They come from various regions throughout Indonesia and return home for holidays or following graduation. Alumni, therefore, tend to be less active in the campus groups. The activities
of university remaja masjid groups tend to focus less on education, perhaps, and more on civil society projects.

I visited five remaja masjid groups. Two are the largest and most well known remaja masjid groups in Indonesia; RISKA at Masjid Sunda Kalapa, and YISC at Masjid Al-Azhar, both in Jakarta. I also interviewed leaders of remaja masjid at the University of Indonesia (UI) in Jakarta and Gadjah Mada University (UGM) in Yogyakarta because these are two of the largest and most prestigious universities in Indonesia. Finally I interviewed leaders of is a remaja masjid group at pesantren An-nur in Solo where there has been concern over “radical” Islamic elements.

**Remaja Islam Sunda Kalapa (RISKA): Masjid Sunda Kalapa**

RISKA, at Masjid Sunda Kalapa Riska, was established in Jakarta before the Sunda Kalapa Mosque was built in 1971. It claims 500 core activists who range from 15 to 30 years of age. Many alumni are also active. RISKA’s leaders tend to be young professionals working in a variety of fields. They said that “the Qu'ran and Sunnah are their absolute guidance. All perspectives must be taken into consideration, but there must be one solid path for Islam.”

RISKA’s activities are mostly educational, focusing particularly on Islamic education. Islamic education involves classes in reading Arabic and the Qur’an, and theological study. They also have programs in journalism, art, and photography. Gender specific classes are developed by and offered to women. Gender specific classes “recognize that the Qu’ran defines separate roles for men and women.” Common themes of these classes include domestic skills, how to choose a husband, how they should dress, beauty classes, and others.
Their activists come from the mosque and surrounding community. Recruitment is open to all Muslims. They recruit through television, newspapers, magazines, and other advertisement media. There are no restrictions as to what other organizations activists can participate. Most members they say tend to be activists in KAMMI or The Exclusive Body of Indonesian Students (Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa Se-Indonesia, BEM SI).

RISKA elects leaders every two years by holding ballot elections. All activists are allowed to participate in voting, run for offices, and campaign for positions. Usually, older activists with more experience in the group are elected as leaders. Following the elections RISKA’s newly elected leaders revise policies and find ways to improve the organization. Elected leaders appoint others to various boards and committees that function as decision making bodies and develop the group programs. Suitable activists for these positions are appointed based on the experience and qualifications of the individual activist.

RISKA does not function autonomously from Masjid Sunda Kalapa. Instead, there is an advisor from the mosque with whom they plan potential programs. Usually the program advisor of the mosque allows RISKA to conduct the programs they choose. Some programs, however, are not permitted if they are too political, or if they overlap or contradict programs of the mosque. RISKA receives funding from activists, alumni and from Masjid Sunda Kalapa.

RISKA has several civil society projects. These projects are offered exclusively to the Muslim community. One of their larger projects is the *Pasar Murah*, or “cheap market” that is open to less advantaged Muslim communities. RISKA also conducts
blood drives which are advertised only to the Muslim community, but activists say non-Muslims may give blood as well. Since the tsunami, RISKA has been collecting clothes and Islamic educational materials to send to the victims in Aceh. They are working with the Red Cross and Red Crescent who distribute these materials.

RISKA is trying to build a more cohesive network of remaja masjid groups throughout Jakarta. They hope this network will include remaja masjid groups from more than 30 mosques. The goal is to create a strong and mobilized network of like minded youth who can work together toward common goals. Included in this network is Jakarta’s largest remaja masjid, YISC from Masjid Al-Azhar. They said, however, that the network is just beginning and it is uncertain how successful it will be.

The female activists of RISKA vocally participated in my interviews more than female activists of any other organization in this study. They were interested in the subject of this study because of the leadership roles they had taken in the group. Yet, they felt that there are strict limits to what they could do as women. For example, when asked, they all said that they were not permitted to marry non-Muslims. When I asked them if a woman could be president the majority said “no,” but they could not come to an agreement. When I asked if a woman could be the chairperson of RISKA, some said “of course,” while others said “maybe,” qualifying the answer by saying that “women can be a leader of RISKA because it is not a very important position” in comparison with the Indonesian presidency. By this she meant that women could take leadership roles if the role was not of great importance. Women, they agreed, could only lead prayer if a man was not present.
RISKA said that they take no official position on violence. They agreed that Habibi has been Indonesia’s best president. The hope RISKA’s activists have for the future is that the US will take “a more comprehensive look” at the Iraq War and will stop causing violence there. They also said they hoped that the West will understand that Islam is a religion for women and that they are happy with the role they are given in Islam.

**YISC Masjid Al-Azhar**

YISC is the largest remaja masjid group in Jakarta. They estimate 700 core activists and 1000 alumni and peripheral activists. Their purpose is “to create alternative activities for youth in Jakarta through the study of Islam.” The goal is to improve attitudes of the youth through “inspirational Islam,” and “to develop the new generation’s attitudes in a positive way.”

Like RISKA, YISC’s activities are largely educational, focusing on both religious and non-religious topics. On Sundays they hold programs in Islamic studies, in reading the Qur’an, and in Arabic. They also host discussions about current affairs. These discussions are not intended to incite political activism but to inform members of national and global social issues. As an organization they do not get involved in political debate. They also have educational activities for teaching English, arts, and various hobbies.

Generally, activists in YISC are between the ages 18 and 35; 70% of YISC members are between 23 and 30 years of age. Recruitment for new members is done through the mosque. Although activists are not allowed to join other such organizations, many are involved in Gamari, a large interfaith initiative in Jakarta. In choosing leaders and activities or dealing with internal conflicts, YISC leaders say that they try to
make decisions as informally as possible. Although they do not call their decision making processes 'musyawarah' or 'muktamar,' everyone has an equal voice which is given equal consideration. In choosing leaders they encourage interested activists to conduct campaigns. Ballot voting is used to choose leaders following campaigns.

Activists are offered many volunteer opportunities to work as youth mentors. YISC’s civil society activities also focus on education. Many of these are outreach programs for Muslim schools and orphanages. They said that for these programs they focus on Muslim populations because there were Christian groups to work in Christian schools and orphanages and they didn’t want to make the Christian community feel that they were proselytizing their youth. However, their *Bakti Sosial*, or “social duty projects” offer support and basic needs to all people in underprivileged communities, not just Muslims.

The current chairman of YISC, Aknam Mansun, said that their “most important activities are non-partisan and non-sectarian.” They try to accommodate all outside organizations and individuals who want to work with their group. This means that they involve a wide variety of people who can be labeled as “liberal” and those labeled “fundamentalist.” For example, YISC hosts Gamari (an interfaith organization) on a monthly basis. This is an opportunity for them share their religion and faith with Hindu and Christian participants of the Gamari initiative. Conversely, Masjid Al-Azhar is known to frequently host more “radical” clerics.

Activists at YISC mentioned their disappointment in US policy in Iraq and Afghanistan and Israel-Palestine policy. They remain hopeful, however, that “the US will find more suitable and realistic solutions to global political problems and will
improve the situation of peace” in the world. While other groups have had reason to be suspicious of aid offered by Christians to Aceh, YISC praised Christian (and Hindu) relief efforts in Aceh, although it is a strongly Muslim region.

*Jama’ah Shalahuddin (JS)*

Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta has Southeast Asia’s second most prestigious program in the social sciences. The university hosts a large variety of religious and non-religious or “general” student organizations including Jama’ah Shalahuddin. Each faculty has its own *musholla*, or “prayer room” where various activities are held, and a large campus mosque known as Takmir Masjid which hosts the remaja masjid group.

Like other campus remaja masjid groups, JS’s programs focus less on education and more on social activities. However, they do have leadership trainings and domestic arts classes for female activists. They plan social events associated with activities during the month of Ramadan. During the rest of the year, they try to offer programs designed to help the underprivileged by providing them with food, clothes, and sometimes small amounts of money. They often have programs that target youth in Yogyakarta, such as academic Olympiads.

JS is part of Lembaga Dakwah Kampus National, a nationwide affiliation of campus mosque based organizations. As an affiliate of Lembaga Dakwah Kampus National, they visit other universities to offer consultation for starting remaja masjid groups. JS has not yet worked with inter-religious organizations but they believe in the national principles prescribed in *pancasila* that insure that Indonesia is a multicultural and multi-religious nation.
Salam UI

The University of Indonesia was founded near Jakarta in 1950 making it one of Indonesia’s oldest universities. It offers strong programs in the social sciences and has an international focus. UI is home to Salam UI, the remaja masjid which functions out of the campus mosque.

I tried to get an appointment to meet with members Salam UI for several weeks, but they never got back to me. Eventually, I went unannounced with a female alumnus of Salam UI to see if there would be any activists to speak with us. My companion, wearing a jilbab (a scarf worn on the head by female Muslims), approached some female activists in the Salam UI office. However, when we explained that we were interested in learning more about remaja masjid programs, they went to find men to speak with us instead.8 We explained to the men who came that we would like to speak with several of their activists and that we hoped to get the opportunity to speak with some female participants, but they returned with more young men.

The young men spoke with us for a couple of minutes before excusing themselves for sholat. We waited for them for about 40 minutes during which time we sat on a hallway floor of the mosque reading inflammatory anti-US and Israel signs and stickers. There were also several boxes of Sabili, a weekly Islamic journal that is widely considered to voice radical views against non-Islamic societal groups, in their offices.

When we left the mosque, the head of Salam UI noticed us leaving and approached us to

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8 It is possible that the female members I hoped to speak with chose not to speak with us because I am a man. However, it was my female companion Kamellia, an alumnus of Salam UI, who approached the female students. The two of us were not confronted by this problem with any other organization we visited.
apologize for not meeting us. He said he had been in a meeting and asked if there was another time I could meet him.

In the short time we spoke with Salam UI activists, they explained that the remaja masjid had programs for Arabic, history of Islam, an Islamic learning center, and classes about Muhammad’s life. They also said that they try to keep their activists up to date on the situation in Palestine which was corroborated by the literature they had hanging up on the wall outside their office. The only Salam UI program listed in the UI website was *Shabani* (*Shari’ah Banking Training*) with the theme of *Shari’ah Banking Principles and Practice for Working* on September 28 – 29, 2004. This event was aimed at students who were ready to go into the working world. The materials that were discussed were *Shari’ah Fiqh Banking*, *Shari’ah Accounting Banking*, *Shari’ah Practice Banking*, *Shari’ah Agreement Banking* and *History of Shari’ah Banking*.

**Pondok Pesantren An-Nur: Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia (LDI)**

The remaja masjid group at Pondok Pesantren An-Nur is different than other community mosque groups in that the mosque is incorporated into an Islamic boarding school, or *pesantren*. The *pesantren* is responsible for the educational aspect of this community, while social activities are associated with the mosque’s remaja masjid. An-Nur also deserves special consideration because it is located in Solo, Central Java, a city which has been noted as home to radical Islamists such as Jemaah Islamiah. For example, until his arrest in connection with the 2002 Bali bombings, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir was living and teaching at an Islamic boarding school in Solo.

The social activities of An-Nur are open to individuals of all religions. Some programs draw greater inter-religious participation than others. For example, their social
events for breaking the Ramadan fast naturally draw Muslim participation, and weekly athletic events usually include youth from the pesantren and the neighboring community which is largely Muslim. These include soccer matches, martial arts programs, and other sporting activities. An-Nur conducts environmental programs for cleaning up the community while raising environmental awareness. On the other hand, An-Nur conduct social events that encourage Muslims to visit their Christian and Hindu neighbors on their holidays, developed to unite the different communities.

The larger civil society activities of An-Nur tend to attract larger inter-religious attendance. They include blood drives, activities for underprivileged communities such as providing free medicine to the sick, and fixing homes that are in disrepair. The recipients of these projects are chosen based on need, irrespective of religious orientation. An-Nur also offers programs to develop the economic prosperity of the community, like a banking service and a ranching cooperative. They also offer courses to teach skills like sewing and welding. Although they stress equality for men and women and these classes are open to both sexes, genders are kept distinctly apart in accordance with Islamic teaching.

Visiting pesantren An-Nur was a very unique experience. I was first taken to the pesantren by some young Christians. They admitted to me that because of radical Islamist groups, they thought Indonesia was a dangerous place to be, and they wondered if I also felt the danger. However, they shared with me their impressions of pesantren An-Nur, which were very positive. They corroborated the stories I was told about An-Nur’s tradition of being open to people of all religions and said that they were treated very well by the group. I was also the beneficiary of An-Nur’s hospitality. They went
out of their way to welcome me and assure me that An-Nur and LDI is an accepting and “safe place” for people of all religions. They invited me to a question and answer session and to spend the night at the pesantren. While I was with them, they were eager to point out and read Qur'anic passages that stressed inter-faith acceptance and that incorporated teachings of Jesus. One of the men I spoke with said that he converted to Islam from Hinduism but that he could only be an LDI Muslim because of its peaceful nature.
Chapter 3: Public and Participant Perceptions of
Muhammadiyah, KAMMI, and Remaja Masjid

Analysis of Data from Questionnaires

Questionnaires were distributed to individual activists so as to get a better understanding of the kinds of people that participate in each group and the reasons they participate. The questionnaires provided interesting insight into the experiences of the individual members.

I found that there was a great deal of similarity in answers by members of all three organizations. For example, in each group the activists mentioned that they became involved with their respective group because they wanted to gain experience working with people and being involved with learning about and confronting social issues. Unsurprisingly, they also wanted to do pursue these goals while working within the tradition of Islam. However, one of the most telling tendencies I noticed in the questionnaires was that, while their answers were similar, activists of each group often used specific formulations that were not used by any other group. For example, KAMMI respondents often spoke about "gaining knowledge" as a reason for their participation in the group. Muhammadiyah respondents, on the other hand, never used the word "knowledge," but wrote instead of "intellectual development," or "education" as if these things were processes and less telos oriented than "knowledge." In the case of remaja masjid groups, it is more difficult to generalize about their answers because each group is different. Remaja masjid activists, however, consistently used the words "education" and "leadership."
When asked why they chose to participate in their respective organizations, Muhammadiyah activists commonly used the words hak (rights) and masyarakat (society) to explain their interests in extending rights to the society. KAMMI often used the word susuai (appropriate) to explain that KAMMI's activities are most appropriate for the improvement of society. Again, remaja masjid respondents are less unified because it is a far less organized network. They most often used pengalaman (experience) to explain that they were interested in gaining professional or domestic experience in the organization’s activities. These answers are telling and give us an understanding of the concerns of the activists. The words they use tell us how they frame their goals and define and express themselves. What is more interesting, however, from an educational standpoint, is that all members of a given group use the same words. The tendency of members of these different Islamic youth groups to express themselves in a common, group formula distinguishes the groups one from another. This attests to the power of socialization within these groups. That is to say, how they are educated or socialized, within the organizations has an explicit effect on how they define themselves.

When I asked remaja masjid activists why they chose to participate in that organization, they repeated that they wanted to gain experience and skills and learn more about Islam. KAMMI activists answering the same question sometimes spoke of "nationalism" and "developing Indonesia as an Islamic nation." Many mentioned that they were interested in becoming involved socially and politically in society through KAMMI. Some mentioned that they liked KAMMI's non-violent approach to dakwah. Finally, they all seemed to feel that KAMMI acted as a watchdog to the national and local governments. Answers from Muhammadiyah activists focused on societal
development more than political participation. However, some did mention explicitly that through Muhammadiyah they could "promote and develop democracy." Along these lines, male and female respondents perceived Muhammadiyah as less gender biased than other Islamic groups. Some mentioned that they could be "free-thinkers" while still being committed to Islam. Muhammadiyah's commitment to Islamic civil society was often mentioned. Many Muhammadiyah activists said that they participated in the youth organization because their families are members of the larger Muhammadiyah.

Another telling answer in the questionnaires was the response when asked if their respective organization afforded them chances to work with other organizations on common goals. Activists were asked to list groups that they had collaborated with through their respective organizations in three categories: Muslim organizations; 'general organizations' (or organizations without religious orientation); and organizations of other religious traditions. All respondents from KAMMI listed at least a couple of Islamic organizations with which they collaborated. HMI (HMI-MPO) and IMM were most commonly mentioned. Many had also worked with "general organizations," or organizations without a religious affiliation. Fewer had worked with organizations of other religions. The respondents that reported having cooperated with other organizations usually listed many organizations in each category, while those who did not list as many organizations tended not to list organizations of other religions. Muhammadiyah respondents were not as consistent as KAMMI respondents in this respect. Those who listed a high number of organizations listed them in all three categories. For those who listed fewer organizations, the organizations that they listed did not necessarily fall into the Islamic or general categories. Organizations listed were
often Christian or Buddhist organizations. In some cases, Muhammadiyah activists reported that they had worked with more non-Muslim religious groups than Muslim groups. Respondents from the remaja masjid groups, especially in Jakarta, mentioned working with other remaja masjid groups. RISKA and YISC had a particularly close relationship. Otherwise, there were surprisingly few instances that activists of remaja masjid groups had opportunities to work with other organizations.

If we compare the three organizations, Muhammadiyah groups seem to offer the most opportunities for working with other groups, be they Islamic, general, or non-Muslim religious organizations. Remaja masjid seemed to offer the fewest chances for participation with other such organizations. The organizations that did come up included Muhammadiyah, Hisb ut-Tahrir, PKS, and a couple of campus groups. KAMMI respondents tended to be the most active but almost always with other Islamic organizations.

The final question asked of individual participants was whether or not they felt democracy was compatible with Islam. All of the respondents answered "yes," but here again, the answers within each group were remarkably similar. Remaja masjid participants usually answered a simple "yes" without qualifying their answer. Some respondents wrote of the opportunities they had in their respective remaja masjid group for participating in elections and making decisions collectively. KAMMI respondents believe that democracy and Islam are compatible but often qualified their response with statements such as:

"Democracy is a word that is actually not used in Islam but is allowed as long as its consequences are not against Islamic law."
They pointed to Islamic notions of "justice" and "rights" and the similarities of these notions to Western democratic notions. They explained the similarities between *musyawarah* and democracy. The branch in Yogyakarta, however, made it clear that they felt *musyawarah* was a superior process of decision making than popular notions of democracy. Muhammadiyah activists felt less inclined to qualify their belief that democracy and Islam are compatible. One Muhammadiyah activist wrote:

"Muslims and non-Muslims have rights that are the same and that allow them to live side by side despite social, economic and cultural differences. [Democracy] gives us the right to live together with respect for one another."

Responses of Muhammadiyah activists to the question of Islam's compatibility with democracy sounded enthusiastic in comparison with the other two groups. This enthusiasm is rooted in their belief that "Islam gives [people] the freedom to encourage any ideology in society including political and democratic ideologies."

**Analysis of Outsider Interviews**

Interviews conducted with professionals, scholars, and politicians who work with and observe those Islamic youth organizations provided further insight into the importance of those organizations in educating people for tolerance and learning. In a question and answer session with several American students, Doug Ramage provided a good frame of reference for understanding how to evaluate today's Indonesia (presentation 6/6/05). He said that following Suharto's fall, there was a real fear in the international community that Indonesia would either "Balkanize" or "Talibanize."

Despite the violence that followed Indonesia's democratic movement, the processes of decentralization and democratization has made Indonesia a stronger nation. "Sometimes,
democracy needs chaos." Amongst other benefits, he said, this process has gone a long way in calming separatist tensions while it has taken away the major criticism of the New Order period: that too much power was centered in Jakarta. Now, officials and parties in the municipalities have real power for the first time. Ramage said also that there is no question but that there has been growth of Islamist and militant sects since decentralization, but "it is a mistake to couple this growing militancy with political Islam." In fact, history has shown that if Muslim parties hope to compete in national and local elections they must de-Islamicize their message. Dr. Riza Arfani in the department for International Relations at Gadjah Mada added to this saying that in the 2004 elections, "it became obvious that reliance on religious symbolism was greatly reduced and political platforms were de-religionized" (Interview, 6/21/05).

While in Yogyakarta, I was able to speak on occasion with Dr. Rizal Panggabean of Gadjah Mada University who provided me with much insight into violence and youth groups. Panggabean said in the first of several interviews; "Let’s face it, for us there has always been a possibility that religious radicalism will grow in this country. This is nothing new... and the trend has not decreased since the September 11th attacks." He went on to say that international networks of violent Muslims have been increasing since the 1980s. This influence very much affects the psychology of people in Indonesia. However, he said, "the presumption that these networks are very tight and effective units is neither within the possibilities of the culture nor the group's [political and economic] means." He believes that alarm over radical Islamist networks in Indonesia probably gives them too much credit. However, Panggabean pointed to the ways in which social and economic differences between Muslims and Christians can lead to violent conflict.
"The fact that various religious and ethnic communities develop in a more or less segregated fashion is proof that there are real differences between these communities. Therefore, it can be assumed that there are real differences between religious communities. As a result of these differences churches and mosques are often burned. The natural development of segregated communities certainly contributes to this and other violence" (interview 6/27/05).

When I asked how this violence could be prevented, he said that any productive activity that incorporates youth in communities is important in the mitigation of violence in Indonesia. Many Indonesian youth that are not integrated into the economy or their communities have no activity to employ their energy. They hang around in the bazaars or on street corners panhandling and have very little to do. They have very little involvement with the community. In the past they have sometimes been offered money by a politician or even religious interests to participate in a demonstration and to yell a little while sitting on the sidelines. These situations can become violent. He cited Poso as an example of this. Most outreach and educational programs that are done by NGOs or other groups target youth in universities, schools, and churches and mosques. This is usually not the type of crowd that becomes violent. NGOs usually do not go to the streets or bazaars for these programs. He added, "What do the youth in Ambon want? No one talks to them. They feel that the people in the mosques and churches are hypocritical, because they have sometimes employed them in violence." They are not members of the regular mosque or church community but are paid to participate in the violence. They say that that they are participating in the violence as part of a remaja masjid group, for example, but when the violence is over the Mosques and Churches are the first to criticize the violent perpetrators (interview 6/27/05).
When I asked if he thought Muslim student organizations could help to prevent violence, he began by saying that when he wrote his 2005 study of violence, he understated the role that youth have played in provoking violence. He explained that the real question was whether youth organizations could create forums for inter-religious dialogue and social events. Religions create a calendar with social events that can be used for peace. We need to find what opportunities the various religions provide for bridging the inter-religious gap. We should learn what is inclusive and what is exclusive about each group. If they are inclusive, then yes, they can play a role in reducing conflict. If they are not, there is probably less opportunity for them to participate in violence prevention. In this respect, he felt that KAMMI was exclusive. Having observed their discussions from time to time, he concluded that KAMMI "emphasized many exclusive aspects of Islam in the way they relate to other religions and how they define gender roles. Even within Islam, they are exclusive and prefer putting themselves outside other religious communities, such as Muhammadiyah or NU." He encouraged me to take a close look at IRM, which, he observed, does “very excellent and progressive work to the extent that the larger Muhammadiyah organization sometimes gets nervous." He cited their work on gender equality, community development projects, and human rights activism as examples of their progressive work. Remaja masjid organizations, he said, must be looked at individually. In Ambon some of the groups did work to discourage violence, while others participated in it. "Remaja masjid groups can definitely be an important vehicle for violence reduction" (interview 6/27/05).

In Jakarta I spoke with Nur Hidayah (interview, 7/15) of the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), an organization that is working to counter religious
radicalism in the post-Suharto era. She explained to me that in the People’s Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, or MPR) in 1999 PKS, was amongst conservative Islamic groups that tried to include words that she thought reflected "religious intolerance" to the national constitution. The bill, known as Article 29 subarticle 1, would implement shari’ah law throughout Indonesia and govern the role of religion in daily life. Although this law failed in the MPR, conservative Islamist groups continue to try to pass shari’ah law into legislation at the regional level. She mentioned that this was taking place particularly in Aceh (currently under shari’ah) and in the provinces of West Sumatra, West Java, and South Sulawesi. One group supporting this is PKS, which, she said, has been very difficult to engage in dialogue. On the other hand, Muhammadiyah, like NU, has attempted to develop liberal "indigenous Islam," which "has certainly been more in line with the majority of Indonesian Muslims." PKS, she said, has realized that their campaign of exclusivity will make it difficult to gain much more support. Echoing these sentiments, Amien Rais commented that groups like PKS/KAMMI have limits on growth imposed by their own exclusivity. "They change tactics and manipulate their message, but people prefer pluralism to exclusivity." He warned however, that radicalism can grow if we give it fertilizer by making the laws more accepting of extremism (presentation 8/8/05). Rais and Mrs. Hidayah, like Panggabean, said that economic impoverishment was the major determinant in spreading religious radicalism.

Also in Jakarta I interviewed with Norma Permata, Program Officer for the Islam and Civil Society initiative at the Asia Foundation. "The Muslim community," he said, "is the best network to disseminate programs for civil society and pluralism" (interview
Unfortunately these programs are common only for liberal Muslim groups which are perceived to promote liberal versions of Islam. According to him, the strata for Islamic groups began with the *abangan* and liberal networks such as Islam Liberal (JIL) and NU; Muhammadiyah sits in the middle ground representing moderate Islam; and PKS/KAMMI are amongst the fundamentalist and conservative groups. Conservative groups, he explained, often need to find a common enemy like corruption, Israel, or the US to rally around. Pertama said, "We have seen how they can sometimes gather on very thin common ground to promote their group’s vision." He continued that just as religious extremism is undesirable, extreme pluralism is also not good as it does not speak to the conservatives. If democracy is to win the hearts of Indonesians, programs supporting democracy must be extended to the conservative groups as well as the liberal ones. The Asia Foundation is very concerned with education as a way to discourage fundamental Islam. They work mainly through the NU student organization PMII but also have programs with Muhammadiyah student organizations. PKS, he said, might be a good alternative to the groups that are even more radical. Programs must be broadened to include conservative Muslim groups. Remaja masjid groups are all different and only loosely organized. In Permata's opinion, they are not, at the moment, a possibility for a cohesive network of positive social capital.

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9 The *abangan* are the population of Javanese Muslims who practice a less orthodox version of Islam than the traditionalist known as *santri*. 
Chapter 4: Culture, Civil Society, and Muslim Youth

Organizations

Paulo Freire has shown that all people have culture and the power to remake the culture that they possess and are continually reproducing (in Shor, p. 60). Freire advocates an education or pedagogy that enhances and expands every human being's ability to understand and transform the world of which she or he is a part (Johnson 1996, p. 227). Recognizing the role of education in socializing students, Ira Shor (1992) discussed democratic socialization in both schools and society, for both students and adults. His primary intention is to provide an understanding of how to develop what Freire called a ‘critical consciousness,’ empowering students to make meaning in their culture as opposed to culture being handed to and dominating them. According to Shor, ‘Equalizing’ socialization, or socialization that encourages individuals to question the existing status quo, requires a critical democratic pedagogy which invites students to make their own education (Shor 1992, p. 105-110). Shor argues that traditional education is not ‘the great equalizer’ Horace Mann spoke about and will not help to overcome social inequalities.

In Indonesia’s Muslim community, ‘equalizing’ socialization is most likely to occur in non-traditional learning environments. Activist groups, community advocates, feminists, consumer advocates, empowering educators, opposition groups, environmental activists, and labor unions pursue what Freire called "cultural action for freedom" (p. 189). Because each of the organizations examined in this thesis have strong educational
components, Shor’s work can be used as a platform for determining if, and in what ways, each of these organizations socialize their activists in democratic habits.

To democratically socialize or educate youth means giving them the tools to give meaning to past events and see possibilities for the future and their place in the world in which they live. For Shor, “…participation is the point at which democracy and learning meet…” (p. 18). In a democratic educational setting, leaders “must give up the right to dominate the discourse,” allowing all participants an equal chance to voice their opinions and to be heard. They should feel that they are equally able to create and recreate culture and their futures. (p. 166). This includes cooperation between individuals and groups of various ages, ethnicities, genders, and ideologies. Failure to allow others to participate or to cooperate with others on an equal level denies the practice of democracy.

Democratic values also include beliefs in justice, equality, tolerance for differences, fair play, and free speech. Conversely, authoritarianism (but not legitimate democratic authority), sexism, narrow-minded ethnocentrism, and environmental disregard can be seen as undemocratic values (p. 226). Conflict exists in all communities. However, when conflict situations become destructive or violent, the quality of that democracy must be reevaluated.

Recalling Robert Hefner's (2000) argument, democratic government depends not just on formal elections and constitutions, but on informal endowments and habits found in society as a whole. These endowments include a political culture emphasizing citizens’ independence, trust in one's fellows, tolerance, and respect for the rule of law.

“Theocracy requires a civic organization characterized by volunteerism, independent associations, and a balance of powers between state and society as well as among civil organizations and balances congenial to democratic habits of heart” (p. 215).
Hefner (2000) and Gill (2000) have both argued that these cultural resources for democracy are best fostered through civil society. However, he admits, not all organizations are ‘civil.’ Therefore, each organization serves to enhance democratic habits to greater and lesser extent. In assessing whether associations "make democracy work," Hefner suggests that we have to look carefully at what their members actually say and do. In particular, we have to examine the ways their members relate to one another and to outsiders and ask whether the overall pattern contributes to a public culture of inclusion and participation or uncivil exclusivity (p. 23).

In this conclusion I point out where each of these groups is stronger and weaker in socializing their members in habits of democracy in Shor's sense and the ways in which the habits or practices of these three organizations are more and/or less democratic.

Muhammadiyah groups are certainly perceived to be the most democratic by onlookers. In all cases in which Muhammadiyah groups were mentioned, respondents were impressed with this organization for having an inclusive, moderate profile, and for their strides towards the empowerment of women and conflict resolution. Those I spoke to thought that IRM in particular was making great strides towards promoting a Freirian style of "critical conscience." This is consistent with the fact that they have chosen Freire as a mentor. Muhammadiyah's heavy involvement in civil society initiatives with other organizations also distinguishes them, promoting equal participation, cooperation and inclusion with such groups. Furthermore, the enthusiastic involvement of Muhammadiyah groups in programs designed to enhance democracy for all in Indonesia, such as the voter education, is legitimizing democracy not only within Muhammadiyah, but for the general public as well. This research suggests that the Muhammadiyah groups
are exemplary in promoting habits of democracy amongst their members and in Indonesian society at large.

In regards to Shor's work in democratic education, Muhammadiyah is making great strides to develop a critical consciousness in its members. Muhammadiyah youth organizations function autonomously and are free to choose policies and activities that do not always fall tidily in line with policies of the larger Muhammadiyah organization. As has been demonstrated, they are not afraid to disagree with the larger organization when they feel Muhammadiyah is being intolerant of other groups. Muhammadiyah offers their members many chances to participate in civil society activities that are developed to benefit the society at large and not just the Muslim segments of society. Many of these activities involve cooperation with groups from other religious traditions. Finally, because Muhammadiyah youth organizations cooperate with other groups, both liberal and conservative, and are very sensitive about how issues like *shari'ah* or *fatwa* might infringe upon the rights of those from other religious organizations, they have demonstrated a great degree of tolerance.

KAMMI, while being nonviolent and promoting democracy, is perceived to be very exclusive in their ideas and actions. Their support for the implementation of *shari'ah* can be cited as an example of this exclusivity. While they are known for being quite critical of "un-Islamic" groups as well as of Islamic groups with whom they disagree, they are also known for being quite critical of the government, particularly in instances of corruption. So, on the one hand their highly critical stance against other groups can be seen to be less cooperative and tolerant. On the other, the critical and pro-active role they have played in relation to the government has instilled a critical
consciousness and participatory attitude in their participants. I was rarely given opportunities to speak with female members of KAMMI, and I did not find any in leadership positions.

KAMMI is seen by all, save Baktir of PKS, to have a less democratic structure and less transparent than Muhammadiyah. This is consistent with the findings of van Bruinessen's (2004) and Collins’ (2004) commentary on KAMMI. KAMMI continues to push an Islamic platform, even though agencies like ICIP and TAF are working to counter these efforts. However, Norma Permata of The Asia Foundation suggested that more programs need to be extended to conservative groups like KAMMI so as to prevent them from feeling disenfranchised.

KAMMI has also made great strides to instill in their members a critical consciousness, particularly against the government. However, KAMMI members seem to seldom disagree with KAMMI leaders and generally follow the position of PKS on the issues they are most concerned with. This has prevented them from being open to self-criticism. KAMMI is less interested in cooperation with other organizations unless they share same convictions as KAMMI. Members of KAMMI say that they are willing to work with other groups, but only if they have a common goal. This attitude does not cultivate tolerance or shared understanding.

Opinions on remaja masjid groups were hardest to collect, because remaja masjids do not have a strongly cohesive system of affiliation. They do, on the other hand, have a vital role in either perpetuating or mitigating violence. In this way, they are perhaps the most important of these three groups. While remaja masjid groups have been accused of being involved in violence, it has also been the case that outside parties have co-opted
unemployed youth to participate in violence merely calling themselves remaja masjid participants while they were not (Panggabean, interview 6/27/05). According to Norma Permata said, "they do not represent a body of social capital that can be worked with" (interview 7/13/06). While some groups were active in inter-religious dialogue programs and participatory and cooperative civil society projects, others were not.

Remaja masjid members are very motivated. They often cooperate with other remaja masjid groups or and sometimes with interfaith organizations as well. Generally speaking, remaja masjid groups do not function autonomously from the mosques out of which they operate. For this reason it would seem that they have fewer chances to develop the critical consciousness about which Freire and Shor write. Interestingly, women in remaja masjid groups participated in small group interviews more than did women in Muhammadiyah or KAMMI. However, they also often felt they should not assume leadership roles within their organizations. Many of them attended classes that taught domestic skills or how a Muslim woman should dress or choose a husband, but mention was never made of gender empowerment as it was in Muhammadiyah groups.

**Conclusion**

Reilly and Graham (2006) have explained that the process of democratization itself is often seen to unleash forces of opposition and tension within a society that makes conflict more likely and that processes of democratization sow the seeds for ongoing internal conflicts (p. 19). This is particularly true in developing democracies such as Indonesia where “the majority of the population still has little understanding of democracy” (The Asia Foundation, 2003). In Indonesia, democratic socialization through civil Islamic organizations is essential for promoting democracy, developing
channels for peaceful resolution of conflicts, and mitigating the influence of radical interests. While Hefner and Gill have pointed to the importance of civil society networks in establishing strong democracies, Sirozi and van den Mehdan have both pointed out the importance of education in socializing youth towards or away from violence, towards or away from democracy and civil society.

The proper socialization of young adults is essential for teaching habits of democracy, non-violence, and civil society. Muhammadiyah groups, KAMMI and remaja masjid programs that promote habits of democracy to a greater or lesser extent are positive in themselves because they offer people practice in democracy, strengthen civil society, and provide some assistance to marginalized people. Perhaps even more importantly, however, these groups, to greater and lesser extents, mobilize Islamic symbols and rhetoric in support of civil society, democracy, and peace. This is important even for youth who do not participate directly in these organizations, because many of them, as spectators and peers of other activists, will be exposed to the inclusive and peaceful message of these youth organizations.

It has been argued that "Southeast Asian Muslims offer us some hope for easing the desperate situation of Islamic civilization and the disintegrating order of the world at the turn of the new century" (Hooker, 2003, p. 232). Habits of democracy, as promoted by the Muhammadiyah student groups, are exemplary methods for easing tensions between Islam and democracy. However, Norma Pertama of the Asia Foundation makes a strong point in suggesting that it is the more conservative branch of the Islamic community that must be relied upon to legitimize democracy as Islamic. For this reason, KAMMI and remaja masjid groups should become the focus of educational and civil
society programs that seek to enhance participation, cooperation, and tolerance between various societal groups in Indonesia. In my opinion remaja masjid groups can play a particularly important role in promoting habits of democracy because they have a strongly Islamic mission, are based in mosques, are open to participation of the lower classes of society, and have been known to participate in violence. As far as I know this is the first study of these groups. My recommendation for future research is to examine in greater depth the activities of remaja masjid groups and the loose network that links them along with new partnerships they are working to develop.
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**Interviews:**


Appendix A: Indonesian Abbreviations

AGAP - Anti-Apostasy Movement Alliance (Aliansi Gerakan Ant Pemurtadan)

BEM SI - The Exclusive Body of Indonesian Students (Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa Se-Indonesia).

BKPMI - Badan Komunikasi Peduda Masjid Indonesia or Indonesian Mosque Communication Body

DII - Darul Islam Indonesia

DMI - Indonesian Mosque Council (Dewan Masjid Indonesia)

FPI - Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam)

GMKI - The Indonesian Catholic student movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Katholic Indonesia)

GPK - Kaabah Youth Movement (Gerakan Pemuda Ka’bah)

HMI - Muslim Student Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia)

ICIP - International Center for Islam and Pluralism

IMM - The University Student's Solidarity of Muhammadiyah Ikatan

IRM - Teenage Solidarity of Muhammadiyah (Ikatan Remaja Muhammadiyah)

JIL - Liberal Islam Network of Indonesia (Jemaah Islam Liberal)

JPPR - The Voter Education Network for the People (Jaringan Pendidikan Pemilih untuk Rakyat)

KAMMI - Muslim Student Action Union (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia)

LDI - The Institution of Islamic Education (Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia)
MMI - Council of Mujahidin for Islamic Law Enforcement (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia)

MPR - People’s Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat)

MUI - Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia)

NA – The Young Generation of Aisyiyah (Nasyiatul Aisyiyah)

NII/TII - The Islamic State/Army of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia/Tenaga Islam Indonesia)

PM - Muhammadiyah Youth (Pamuda Muhammadiyah)

PMKRI - The Republic of Indonesia Christian Student Movement (Pergerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Republic Indonesia)

PPIM - Center for the Study of Islam and Society (Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Mahasiswa Muhammadiyah)

PSK/PK The Peace and Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or PKS, formerly Partai Keadilan)

TAF - The Asia Foundation