CHARLES UNIVERSITY

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Indonesia: Hotbed for Terrorist Activities?

Master thesis

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Abstract

The thesis endeavours to use the concept of *relative deprivation* to explain and account for the reasons behind the various manifestations of political and religious tension in Indonesia. From the most recent series of bombings in Surabaya in 2018, to the conflicts in the Maluku Islands back in 1999, it is undeniable that Indonesia is not immune to extremist activities or religious-political conflicts. The involvement of Political Entrepreneurs (PEs), such as giving a frame to people's perceived grievances, drive sentiments of being deprived in relative to other groups. Such feelings are especially made salient with the influence of social media. At the same time, the Indonesian government's advocacy of the *wasatiyyah* concept, which means middle-path Islam, appears to be its most effective tool in countering the trend of extremism in the society. However, such an interpretation of Islam is potentially at odds with the "right" form of Islam as practiced by the Muslims in Saudi Arabia. Faced with increasing pressure from Islamic hardliners in the society, the Indonesian state ideology – Pancasila – is under much threat as people are gradually becoming disillusioned with it.

Keywords

Declaration of Authorship

1. The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature.

2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.

3. The author hereby declares that the thesis has not been used to obtain a different or the same degree.

Prague, 9 May 2019   Selynn Yan Ting, Lim

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I would like to express my gratitude towards Professor Souleimanov, for his guidance and patience especially during the initial phase of thesis writing, and for his swift email replies.

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Lastly, I am greatly honoured to have my family in Singapore who had supported me throughout the years spent in Prague, despite being constantly confused about what exactly I am studying or writing.

Introduction

Under former President Sukarno, Pancasila, or "Five Principles" translated literally, was created and it became the official state ideology in Indonesia. The basis of Pancasila was found on Javanese ancient traditions, which value the notion of harmony more than anything else. Under this guiding ideology, there exists five moral and religious principles. These are broadly categorised as, *Belief in One God*, *Unity*, *Consensus Democracy*, *Humanity and Social Justice*. This also means that despite being a Muslim majority state, Indonesia has chosen to remain secular. However, in recent years, doubts have been casted on this ideology, as there has been a trend of rising religious intolerance in Indonesia. On 13 May 2018, a family of six carried out suicide bombings on three churches as well as a foiled attempt to bomb the fourth church in Surabaya, a city in Indonesia (Soeriaatmadja, 2018). This is just one example, out of many others, that shows a rise in extremist activities committed in the name of religion in Indonesia. The steady growth in terms of the trend of religious intolerance can also be observed from the rise in incidences of hate crimes directed against the minorities such as the Christians (Ibrahim & Kotarumalos, 2017) as well as the Ahmadiyya community. Set against such a backdrop, this thesis aims to shed light into the possibility of reversing such a rising trend in Indonesia, where the Pancasila model appears to be gradually losing its standing in the society.

The broader goal of this thesis is to address the level of complicatedness present in the various manifestations of the politico-religious tension. I would like to propose that tensions have a high chance of spiralling out of control when grievances in certain community groups are given a frame or shape. As a result, the previously ambiguous and unknown grievance has a name now. The process involved in the conceptualisation of their "feelings" formalises their experiences. The participation of political entrepreneurs (PEs) and social media allow framings to look especially realistic. In turn, this offers them an explanation for the reasons behind the injustice they have encountered. Once people are convinced that there indeed is a name to their

feelings of injustice, amongst other emotions and/or experiences, the communal group which they are in might become politically salient. This is where the theory of *relative deprivation* comes in, to offer an explanation behind the so-called politico-religious tension in Indonesia. The almost symbiotic relationship between politics and religion in Indonesia makes it difficult to study or discuss politics in Indonesia in isolation without the consideration of religion, which plays an immense role in Indonesian politics. Hence, as the largest Muslim country in the world, a significant amount of attention and research should be paid to Indonesia in order to understand how Islam is practiced and played out over there.

Research target, research question

The question which I will be addressing in this paper is, *Does the concept of relative deprivation explain the politico-religious tension in Indonesia?* The aim of this research question is to examine the reasons why there exist politico-religious tension in the Indonesian society, in a broader sense, through its manifestations in the form of protests, bombings and communal conflicts, all of which will be explored in detail in the further chapters of this paper. In other words, what the underlying reasons might be behind certain events or behaviours that display signs of intolerance towards the minorities in Indonesia. The assumption that lies behind the research question is that a mixture of political and religious tension does exist in Indonesia.

Literature review

The main literature that I will be referring to in this thesis is Ted Gurr's article titled "Why Minorities Rebel: A Global Analysis of Communal Mobilisation and Conflict since 1945" (1993). His research focused on communal groups that were unaffiliated with the state, but were politically prominent or robust at any one point within the period between 1945 and 1989. Gurr (1993) defined communal groups in general as "those whose core members share a distinctive and persistent collective identity based on cultural and ascriptive traits that are important to them and to others with whom they interact" (p. 163). While some scholars have depicted these groups' identities to be static and unchanging, but Gurr's study maintains the assumption that 'all group identities, both communal and national, are to a degree situational and subject to change' (p. 162). To consider such communal groups' identities to be

politically salient, they must fulfill at least one of the main criterion: "(1) the group collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment vis-à-vis other groups in a state; and/or (2) the group is the focus of political mobilisation and action in defence or promotion of its self-defined interests" (p. 163). Set at such a context, the main variables in Gurr's research are 'political action', 'grievances' and 'mobilisation', while the predisposing variables are 'group status', 'identity', and 'traits'. Given the time lapse since the research was carried out (1980s), the question is then, does Gurr's basis of relative deprivation still stand today? Is it applicable across the few selected cases of politico-religious related incidents in Indonesia? In addition, while his work focuses mainly on minorities, I would like to see how the reasons behind minorities instigating communal violence may be applicable to the majorities in a country who develop similar grievances. This usually take the form of resentment towards the minorities who are doing better economically than the majority (Chua, 2003), or otherwise known as "market-dominant minorities". And on certain occasions, such bitterness and resentment may grow out of hand and transform into a deep sense of victimhood. Concurrently, Gurr has demonstrated four determinants of group grievances in the 1980s, which are composed of 'grievances about economic rights', 'grievances about social and cultural rights', 'grievances about political rights', and 'grievances about lack of autonomy' (p. 178).

The other literature which I will be consulting will be the book by Samuel Huntington, which is 'The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order'. Based on the world's renown hypothesis by Samuel Huntington (1996), he hypothesised that the clash of cultures will be the principle cause of conflicts after Cold War, rather than a clash between states. A theory widely rejected for its political incorrectness especially when it was first introduced, I propose that it is still valuable to take a relook at it with more than twenty years since it was first published in 1996. Since Huntington's thesis, major international events such as the 9/11 attacks and the rise of ISIS had shocked the world, raising questions as to whether he was right in saying that cultures will eventually end up in confrontation with one another. With regards to Islam, Huntington has raised a few points that may have appeared, to some extent, rather absurd in the 90s. However, to a certain degree, he has accurately foreseen the situation at least in Indonesia today.

According to Huntington, '[a]n Islamic core state has to possess the economic resources, military power, organizational competence, and Islamic identity and commitment to provide both political and religious leadership to the *ummah'*. (1996, p. 192). His analysis of the main Muslim states that might have the potential to rise up to the role of an Islamic core state reveal the possibility of Turkey assuming such a leadership, out of the six Muslim states, including Turkey itself. The five other states are Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Indonesia and Egypt. The biggest obstacle to Turkey becoming an Islamic core state, however, is its firm allegiance to the West and secularism. From the West perspective, a secular Turkey which is placed in a strategic geographical location in the world is extremely important. Today, Turkey still subscribes to secularism, while other Muslim powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran are entangled in proxy wars. Even though Iran possesses the capabilities to become an Islamic core state, the fact that Iran is a Shi'ite and Persian nation proves to be a major hurdle to assuming the leadership role. On the other hand, the main weakness hindering Indonesia from becoming an Islamic core state is its unfavourable geographical position, being located too far away from the center of Middle East.

Theoretical/conceptual framework

The type of theoretical framework that will be used in this paper will be discussed here. As a start, as was pointed out by George and Bennett, questions relating to theoretical framework fall within some of the specific questions that have to be mentioned at the beginning, which are:

> '[w]hat theoretical framework will be employed? Is there an existing theory or rival candidate theories that bear on those aspects of the phenomenon or behviour that are to be explained? … What aspects of the existing theory or theories will be singled out for testing, refinement, or elaboration?' (2005, p. 63).

Following the above guiding questions listed by the authors, the theory which I will be using is relative deprivation, as was already stated in the research question itself. First introduced by Samuel Stouffer, an American sociologist, the concept of relative deprivation has been used to explain mainly group mobilisations and communal violence. Incorporating Stouffer's concept, Ted Gurr has attempted to use his theory

of relative deprivation, alongside other theories, to explain why minorities across the world rebel since 1945. Though once dismissed and met with much scepticism when Stouffer first brought up this theory, Gurr's adoption of that theory in his research has popularised it. The reason why I choose to adopt this sociological theory to explain a politico-religious phenomenon is because the study of such events in Indonesia is interdisciplinary in nature. The study of domestic politics and security affairs will most likely require the use of more than just concepts and theories from within the international relations or political science field, especially with regards to issues such as terrorist activities conducted within the country's borders by its own people. And on other occasions, ethnoreligious conflicts and religious-related demonstrations that have happened in Indonesia are a complex combination of political and sociological phenomenon. In reality, distinguishing one from another is never straightforward. While it is not the ambitious purpose of this thesis to do an interdisciplinary study of the causes behind politico-religious incidences, I endeavour to use Gurr's take of the theory of relative deprivation to spin more plausible applications and thus more elaboration accounting for the reasons behind politico-religious tension in Indonesia. As compared to Gurr's vast abundance of data collected from all over the world, I will be focusing on three case studies to underline the politico-religious tension in Indonesia. Apart from that, the role played by social media should be factored in, an occurrence that was either not as prevalent or almost non-existent at the time when Gurr's research was published. It will be interesting to note how the entry of a new variable such as social media will add a new yet different dimension to his theory, and to test out whether his theory is still relevant in today's context. For instance, discovering whether the element of "grievance" is made more pronounced with social media. This will be further presented in the following section.

Methodology and data

The popularity and frequency of quantitative analysis using statistical methods over the years has seen also the decline of analytical works using qualitative methods such as case studies-based research. While it is helpful that the "science" in political science has become more pronounced due to the use of more *scientific* and mathematical tools, it should not lead to the diminishing significance of qualitative methods. I have adopted the following broad definition of case study approach, which is 'the detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalisable to other events' (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 4). According to the authors, case studies are generally advantageous in the following areas:

> 'Case studies are generally strong precisely where statistical methods and formal models are weak…their potential for achieving high conceptual validity; their strong procedures for fostering new hypotheses; their value as a useful means to closely examine the hypothesised role of causal mechanisms in the context of individual cases; and their capacity for addressing causal complexity' (p. 25)

At the same time, as with any other types of methods used, there will always be certain limitations associated with them. In their paper, the authors have acknowledged the disadvantages and shortcomings of the use of case study method as a mode of analysis:

> 'Recurrent trade-offs include the problem of case selection; the trade-off between parsimony and richness; and the related tension between achieving high internal validity and good historical explanations of particular cases versus making generalisations that apply to broad populations. The inherent limitations include a relative inability to rend judgments on the frequency or representativeness of particular cases and a weak capability for estimating the average "causal effect" of variables for a sample. Potential limitations can include indeterminacy and lack of independence of cases.' (p. 30)

By keeping the above factors in mind, and being aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of adopting this technique of analysis, it aims to help to limit the level of biasness to a minimum. The main cases which I have selected for this paper to answer the research question are the 2018 Surabaya bombings, "anti-Ahok" rallies and the Maluku Islands conflicts from 1999 to 2002. The reason behind the selection of these particular cases is that each case provides this paper with a unique lens and dimension to *politico-religious tension*: the 2018 Surabaya bombings were considered the first time a woman jihadist and children were part of a successful attack; "anti-Ahok" rallies came at a time when Indonesia is hailed by nations abroad as a plural and diverse model despite being a predominantly Muslim society, casting doubts on such a reputation; and lastly, the Maluku Islands conflicts serve as a classic example of how an initial tension organised along ethnic lines can suddenly escalate into *politico-religious tension*, resulting in conflicts that have claimed so many lives. Across the years, while the ways terrorist activities are conducted have evolved and will continue to do so, the use of terror to incite fear and challenge the state's authority has not changed at all. In addition, the gap of almost 20 years in between two of the case studies that will be discussed and analysed – Surabaya bombings and Maluku Islands conflicts – makes that a reasonable time gap to compare and contrast effectively. This is because, it will be interesting to note if first, Gurr's theory stands against the test of time, second, how the manifestation of politico-religious tension has transformed from 1999 to 2018, and third, how the concept of relative deprivation comes into play across these three incidences selected.

Planned thesis outline

- Introduction
- Conceptual/theoretical framework
- Literature review
- Data
- Methods
- Empirical-analytical section 1
- Conclusions

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Contents

Introduction

As a country in Southeast Asia that is understudied in Europe, events in Indonesia have been frequently glossed over without generating much discussions or insights. Yet, the ongoing complex situation in the Middle East is a forewarning of the possible developments in a similarly convoluted region like Southeast Asia.

Under former President Sukarno, Pancasila, or "Five Principles" translated literally, was created and became the official state ideology in Indonesia. The basis of Pancasila was found on Javanese ancient traditions, which value the notion of harmony more than anything else. Under this guiding ideology, there exists five moral and religious principles. These are broadly categorised as, *Belief in One God*, *Unity*, *Consensus Democracy*, *Humanity and Social Justice*. This also means that despite being a Muslim majority state, Indonesia has chosen to remain secular. However, in recent years, doubts have been casted on this ideology, as there has been a trend of rising religious intolerance in Indonesia. On 13 May 2018, a family of six carried out suicide bombings on three churches as well as a foiled attempt to bomb the fourth church in Surabaya, a city in Indonesia (Soeriaatmadja, 2018). These suicide bombers had belonged to an Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) affiliated group, known as Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). This is just one example, out of many others, that shows a rise in extremist activities committed in the name of religion in Indonesia. The steady growth in terms of the trend of religious intolerance can also be observed from the rise in incidences of hate crimes directed against the minorities such as the Christians (Ibrahim & Kotarumalos, 2017) as well as the Ahmadiyya community. Set against such a backdrop, this thesis aims to shed light into the possibility of reversing such a rising trend in Indonesia, where the Pancasila model appears to be gradually losing its standing in the society. In addition, it is thought that modernisation should have brought people together by exposing them to differences. On the contrary, modernisation appears to have reinforced such differences, causing people to form groups to counter the influence from the outside world, and to safeguard their own religious identity. At the heart of these politico-religious tension lies the socio-economic issues, where the rise in economic hardships for instance will generate much resentment and frustration, which may or may not be directed towards the "others" in the society who are more financially well-off.

The broader goal of this thesis, as will be seen throughout the paper, is not to simplify the state of affairs in Indonesia. On the contrary, it hopes to address the level of complicatedness present in the issues which we will be looking at shortly. While it can be argued that the tensions in the society have always been present, the number of incidences where such tensions escalate into a mass demonstration or even bloody conflicts do not always happen. I would like to propose that tensions have a high chance of spiralling out of control when grievances in certain community groups are given a frame or shape. As a result, the previously ambiguous and unknown grievance has a name now. The process involved in the conceptualisation of their "feelings" formalises their experiences. Together with the participation of political entrepreneurs (PEs) and social media for instance, pointing fingers at the "other" group makes such a framing look especially realistic. In turn, this offers them an explanation for the reasons behind the injustice they have encountered. Once people are convinced that there indeed is a name to their feelings of injustice, amongst other emotions and/or experiences, the communal group which they are in might become politically salient. Here is where the theory of *relative deprivation* comes in, to offer an explanation behind the so-called politico-religious tension in Indonesia. The almost symbiotic relationship between politics and religion in Indonesia makes it difficult to study or discuss politics in Indonesia in isolation without the consideration of religion, which plays an immense role in Indonesian politics. Hence, as the largest Muslim country in the world, a significant amount of attention and research should be paid to Indonesia in order to understand how Islam is practiced and played out over there.

1. Theorisation

1.1 Research question

The question which I will be addressing in this paper is, *Does the concept of relative deprivation explain the politico-religious tension in Indonesia?* The aim of this research question is to examine the reasons why there exist politico-religious tension in the Indonesian society, in a broader sense, through its manifestations in the form of protests, bombings and communal conflicts, all of which will be explored in detail in the further chapters of this paper. In other words, what the underlying reasons might be behind certain events or behaviours that display signs of intolerance towards the minorities in Indonesia. The assumption that lies behind the research question is that a mixture of political and religious tension does exist in Indonesia. The rationale behind such an assumption is derived from studies from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project. Under this project which measures six aspects of governance, I focused on one of the areas studied which is "Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism". It 'measures perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically-motivated violence, including terrorism' (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2010). According to the percentile rank, which is displayed and mapped out in the diagram shown below, 0 denotes the lowest rank while 100 indicates the highest rank which translates to a total absence of violence or terrorism. The data derived from 2017 ranked Indonesia on the 39th percentile, which is noticeably on the lower end of the percentile, indicating high political instability as well as presence of violence or terrorism in Indonesia.
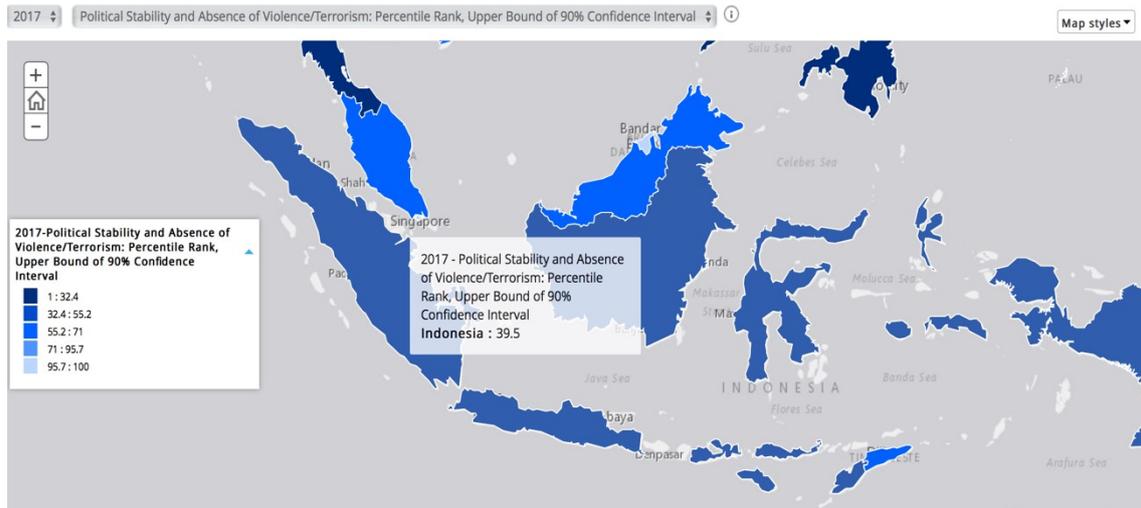
With that as a backdrop, it is undeniable that Indonesia remains a hotbed for terrorist activities that may be infused with political and/or religious hues. This should not be taken lightly, since Indonesia is the world's largest Islam country. This means, depending on the religious and political developments in that country, it might possibly result in a very different outcome in terms of the level of stability in not just the country itself, but also in the whole region. With the complicated state of affairs in the Middle East and the spread of ISIS-aligned extremist organisations and individuals around Europe, the world does not need another equivalent of that in the Southeast Asian region. Hence, the ultimate purpose of the research question is to discover the possibility of reversing the trend of politico-religious tension in Indonesia and uncovering what triggers the tension across various groups in society. Most importantly, it is also the aim of the paper to highlight that such a tension does exist, and it serves as a warning that ignoring the rise of intolerance and failure to recognise such a tension will eventually result in much agony for the country. The other main objective of the paper, is of course, to seek to use the theory of relative deprivation to explain and account for certain behaviours present in the society.

1.2 Theoretical framework: What is relative deprivation?

The type of theoretical framework that will be used in this paper will be discussed here. As a start, as was pointed out by George and Bennett, questions relating to theoretical framework fall within some of the specific questions that have to be mentioned at the beginning, which are:

> '[w]hat theoretical framework will be employed? Is there an existing theory or rival candidate theories that bear on those aspects of the phenomenon or behviour that are to be explained? … What aspects of the existing theory or theories will be singled out for testing, refinement, or elaboration?' (2005, p. 63).

Following the above guiding questions listed by the authors, the theory which I will be using is relative deprivation, as was already stated in the research question itself. First introduced by Samuel Stouffer, an American sociologist, the concept of relative deprivation has been used to explain mainly group mobilisations and communal violence. Incorporating Stouffer's concept, Ted Gurr has attempted to use his theory of relative deprivation, alongside other theories, to explain why minorities across the world rebel since 1945. Though once dismissed and met with much scepticism when Stouffer first brought up this theory, Gurr's adoption of that theory in his research has popularised it. The reason why I choose to adopt this sociological theory to explain a politico-religious phenomenon is because the study of such events in Indonesia is interdisciplinary in nature. The study of domestic politics and security affairs will most likely require the use of more than just concepts and theories from within the international relations or political science field, especially with regards to issues such as terrorist activities conducted within the country's borders by its own people. And on other occasions, ethnoreligious conflicts and religious-related demonstrations that have happened in Indonesia are a complex combination of political and sociological phenomenon. In reality, distinguishing one from another is never straightforward. While it is not the ambitious purpose of this thesis to do an interdisciplinary study of the causes behind politico-religious incidences, I endeavour to use Gurr's take of the theory of relative deprivation to spin more plausible applications and thus more elaboration accounting for the reasons behind politico-religious tension in Indonesia. As compared to Gurr's vast abundance of data collected from all over the world, I

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2. Methodology

The popularity and frequency of quantitative analysis using statistical methods over the years has seen also the decline of analytical works using qualitative methods such as case studies-based research. While it is helpful that the "science" in political science has become more pronounced due to the use of more *scientific* and mathematical tools, it should not lead to the diminishing significance of qualitative methods. I have adopted the following broad definition of case study approach, which is 'the detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalisable to other events' (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 4). According to the authors, case studies are generally advantageous in the following areas:

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At the same time, as with any other types of methods used, there will always be certain limitations associated with them. In their paper, the authors have acknowledged the disadvantages and shortcomings of the use of case study method as a mode of analysis:

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By keeping the above factors in mind, and being aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of adopting this technique of analysis, it aims to help to limit the level of biasness to a minimum. The main cases which I have selected for this paper to answer the research question are the 2018 Surabaya bombings, "anti-Ahok" rallies and the Maluku Islands conflicts from 1999 to 2002. The reason behind the selection of these particular cases is that each case provides this paper with a unique lens and dimension to *politico-religious tension*: the 2018 Surabaya bombings were considered the first time a woman jihadist and children were part of a successful attack; "anti-Ahok" rallies came at a time when Indonesia is hailed by nations abroad as a plural and diverse model despite being a predominantly Muslim society, casting doubts on such a reputation; and lastly, the Maluku Islands conflicts serve as a classic example of how an initial tension organised along ethnic lines can suddenly escalate into *politico-religious tension*, resulting in conflicts that have claimed so many lives. Across the years, while the ways terrorist activities are conducted have evolved and will continue to do so, the use of terror to incite fear and challenge the state's authority has not changed at all. In addition, the gap of almost 20 years in between two of the case studies that will be discussed and analysed – Surabaya bombings and Maluku Islands conflicts – makes that a reasonable time gap to compare and contrast effectively. This is because, it will be interesting to note if first, Gurr's theory stands against the test of time, second, how the manifestation of politico-religious tension has transformed from 1999 to 2018, and third, how the concept of relative deprivation comes into play across these three incidences selected. Even though these case studies differ from one another in terms of their nature, they are do converge along the lines of religion. Religion, as we will see throughout the case studies, plays a fundamental role in shaping the flow of events. With that being said, it is also inevitable that there lies the issue of selection bias, possibly resulting in a less-than-ideal fair outcome.

The table below summarises the three cases:

	Main Actors Involved	When	Motivation(s)
2018 Surabaya Bombings	- Dita Supriyanto family - Anton Febryanto family - Tri Murtono family	13 May 2018	- ISIS sympathisers - Rejection of state ideology
Anti-Ahok Rallies	- Islam Defenders Front (FPI) - Muslim hardliners	2 December 2016	- To remove a blasphemous non-Muslim from power
Maluku Islands Conflicts	- Christians - Muslims - Laskar Jihad - Indonesian military forces - Maluku Sovereignty Front (FKM) - Republic of South Maluku (RMS)	19 January 1999 – 13 February 2002	- Grievances - Holy war (deemed by both sides)

Across the case studies which will be looked into in detail, I will adopting Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse certain speeches or texts, using Fairclough's "three-dimensional framework", 'where the aim is to map three separate forms analysis onto one another: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice' (1995, p. 2). However, I would like to point out that the biggest limitation in this

research is most plausibly my inability in conducting CDA using the texts' original language which is Bahasa Indonesia. As much as the reliance on Google Translator together with the further verification of the level of accuracy of these Google translated texts with close friends who speak the language, I acknowledge and am aware that there might still be some shortcomings such as a lack of understanding of the social and cultural contexts behind the texts that are analysed.

2.1 Maluku Islands conflicts

The first case study examined is the Maluku Islands conflict. Conflicts that are primarily identity-based are not uncommon[1]. During the Dutch colonial rule, the Maluku Islands (or Moluccas), also known as Spice Islands, served as a vital trading port due to the highly profitable spice trade. In this paper, I am collectively referring the Maluku Islands to both North Maluku and Maluku. Prior to the Dutch, there had been other colonial powers such as the Portuguese and Spanish who had to sought to rule over the islands. The availability of the spices such as cloves and nutmeg at a time when these spices were unavailable elsewhere had brought to the islands as well as its people much affluence, putting them at a higher status than other parts of Indonesia (Stott, 2017, p. 2). It was not just the people in the Maluku Islands who had benefitted from the spice trade. The Dutch's monopoly over the spice trade had too generated massive wealth for themselves. Their legacy in the islands had seen an influx of Dutch Protestant missionaries, with Christianity concentrating around the southern area while Islam was clustered around the northern area (Stott, 2017, p. 4). The introduction and spread of Christianity in the Maluku Islands had arrived and taken place much later than Islam, which was first introduced and brought into the islands by the Arab merchants. The apparent lack of integration of those two parts of the islands has arguably laid the foundation for conflicts once the Dutch colonial power had left.

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[1] Refer to Appendix 1

Stott makes the following observation:

> 'Christians received preferential treatment under the Dutch colonial administration, especially in the regional capital of Ambon city, and enjoyed much greater educational opportunities than non-Christians in the Moluccas. As a result, Malukan Christians disproportionately filled the ranks of the colonial bureaucracy and institutions, not just within the Moluccas itself but also further afield.' (2017, p. 5)

One of the issues emphasised from Stott's statements above involves religion, where Christians were given special and favourable treatment in terms of employment and education over other religions. Next, due to these preferential policies which had resulted in a vicious cycle, the better-educated Malukan Christians had gained an added advantage in securing a position in the civil service whilst under the Dutch colonial rule. Despite being the minority group, they began to dominate economically, religiously and politically in the society. In addition, most of these Malukans were pro-Dutch and anti-independence, which essentially sets them even further apart from the bulk of Indonesians who had partaken in the shared common struggle for independence. Apart from that, within North Maluku, there had been also a distinct segregation between the Muslims and Christians. There was virtually no interaction between these two religious groups, be it the neighbourhoods that they resided in or the type of friends they made (Duncan, 2005, p. 57). It was even possible for a young person to grow up not having friends from another religious group. Under such circumstances, it was relatively easy to sow seeds of discord within such a community. With this background context, it explains why tensions are able to escalate so easily in the Maluku Islands, almost with no difficulty at all. The underlying issues that were already present, as was mentioned above, contributed to the widening and deepening of cracks in the society. Thus, it was only a matter of time before a conflict broke out.

The end of the Japanese occupation ushered in a new era for the newly independent state. In the early years of Suharto administration, like his predecessor Sukarno, he had deliberately kept Islam out of politics due to fears that political Islam will destabilise and endanger his rule, and went even further than what Sukarno had done. In 1971, the government had merged all nine existing political parties into two

parties, with just one of them acting as representatives for the Muslims (Hefner, 1993, p. 4). Such a move was viewed by the Muslims in the country as a purposeful tactic by the non-Muslims to diminish the Muslims' influence and power, posing them with a threat. At the same time, as a result of the restriction of Islamic influence in the political realm, people started seeking for alternative avenues to practice and express their religious faith. One of these is the revival of the Islamic faith, which saw an increasing number of Indonesian Muslims directing their attention towards reform Islam (Duncan, 2005, p. 57). This phenomenon is not unique to the Maluku Islands conflicts, and continues to make reappearances till today. The reform Islam movement played a part in facilitating the growing fundamental Islamic perspective that Christianity constituted a major threat to Islam. It offers the youth, in particular, a sense of purpose, especially in the era where Islam was suppressed in politics. The revitalisation of Islam appeals mostly to young Muslims, many of whom had hailed from rural areas. According to the fieldwork research undertaken by Christian Kiem (1995, p. 94), he noted that when these young migrants from rural village areas, who grew up in traditional setting where religion still took the centre stage, meet similar-age young people in schools who were born in an urban setting instead, they were suddenly forced to be in encounter with the secularised environment of the urban life. These include the apparent economic inequality between the wealthy and the poor, which were previously not made known to them. As a result of these factors, radical Islam offers these young migrants much emotional comfort. This was one aspect in which reform Islam had gained much ground in the islands.

In the case of the Maluku Islands conflicts, the Dutch colonial legacy was partially responsible for the politico-religious tension amongst the Muslims and Christians there, fuelled by a deep sense of grievances due to the perceived lack of equal and fair opportunities. However, just grievances alone do not explain why individuals from the Maluku Islands were motivated to kill and be engaged in bloody conflicts all in the name of god. The main overarching explanation accounting for these conflicts is arguably relative deprivation. Both the Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas had each believed that theirs was the oppressed group and that they were the victims instead, where one was viewing the other with much distrust and suspicion. The factor of misperception is significant too, playing a big role in spreading rumours and resulting in the escalation of emotions and feelings that may

not actually be rationale. The conflicts also saw the involvement of multiple actors, which include Christian groups such as FKM and RMS, Muslim organisation Laskar Jihad, as well as ordinary civilians. The conflicts arguably grew out of hand and became extremely violent due to the participation of Laskar Jihad, an Islamist militia which had sent armed militants to the islands. While the conflicts grew religious in nature, they had first started out from the dispute arising out of the formation of a 'new political and administrative subdistrict *(kecamatan)* in the area of Malifut' which was primarily ethnic in nature (Wilson, 2005, p. 70). The creation of *kecamatan* was perceived by the Christians as a threat, convinced that the government was deliberately selecting Javanese Muslims and bringing them in to participate in the relocation projects (Duncan, 2005, p. 58). Such a policy had planted more seeds of injustice, unfairness and grievances, on top of the previous underlying but not-yet noticeable strands of tension.

The escalation of the conflict in Maluku Islands and the shift in the nature of the conflict from ethnic to religious lines which had claimed several thousand lives (ICG, 2000) first started out from a seemingly minor dispute between a Christian driver and a Muslim youth on 19 January 1999 (Turner, 2003, p. 242). It is nearly reminiscent of the race riots that had occurred Singapore on 2 September 1964 which first started out from rumours that the 57-year-old Malay trishaw rider who had died was murdered by a Chinese, leading to the swift aggravation of tension between the Malay and Chinese race. Similarly, in the context of the Maluku Islands, the cause of the conflict was never really due to the trivial dispute. Rather, it merely provided the best condition for the past accumulated grievances and tension to erupt uncontrollably. These past issues which were not dealt with or given sufficient concerns to did not go away on their own with time, making these issues highly hazardous. It also provided interested actors, such as Laskar Jihad, a golden opportunity to sneak and blend in while the situation in the islands grew chaotic and out of control. All of the above factors mentioned, such as the Dutch colonial rule and the restriction of the participation of Islam in the political sphere, had contributed to the tragedy at Maluku Islands. To summarise the conflict, the concept of relative deprivation serves as a comprehension, overarching explanation for the plausible origins of politico-religious tension in the islands. One's political and religious identity was made salient when an individual or group starts making comparisons with the other, and hence begins to see

the differences between them. The sudden removal of the lid, due to the fall of Suharto administration, that was previously suppressing the tension amongst these groups, had smoothened the path for in the immediate burst of violent activities and surge in intolerance. Realistically speaking, every society has a certain level of tension present. The main determining factor is, whether feelings of being deprived in relative to other people or groups become accentuated or made pronounced, with the help of various actors.

2.2 Surabaya bombings

The next case study we will be looking at is the Surabaya bombings. In May 2018, a series of terrorist activities were planned and executed at Surabaya, Indonesia's second largest city. According to The Jakarta Post:

> '[t]he terror attacks in East Java took place just five days after a riot at a detention center at the National Police's Mobile Brigade headquarters (Mako Brimob) in Depok, West Java, which led to the deaths of five police officers and an inmate and a 36-hour standoff between terrorist inmates and security forces.' (Ompusunggu, 2018)

The first among the string of terror attacks happened on 13 May (Sunday), where a family of six was involved in a chain of bomb attacks on three churches across Surabaya (BBC, 2018). These churches were Santa Maria church, Surabaya Centre Pentecostal church and the GKI Diponegoro church. The attacks were led by Dita Supriyanto (the husband) and Puji Kuswati (the wife), and saw the involvement of their children whose ages ranged from 9 to 18. The bombings were most possibly planned to take place simultaneously on a Sunday to aim for a high casualty rate, given that it is the day where Christians, referring to both Catholics and Protestants, go to church for Sunday mass/service (Lamb, 2018). The first attack on Santa Maria church was carried out by the two brothers from the family (aged 17 and 15), who had driven into the premises of the church on a motorcycle with the bomb on one of their laps. The second attack at the Pentecostal church was carried out by their father, Dita Supriyanto, who had driven a car bomb into the church. The third attack on the GKI Diponegoro church was conducted by the mother, Puji Kuswati, who had

brought her two daughters along with her, aged 12 and nine (Lamb, 2018). The bomb attacks on these three churches had claimed the lives of 18 people, including the family of six. The second in the chain of terror attacks was a premature bomb which happened on the same day as the bombings of the churches, taking the lives of three family members out of six. The third suicide bombing had occurred at Surabaya Police headquarters, killing the family of five except one eight-year-old child who was one of the perpetrators. The scale and intensity of these suicide bombings had shocked many, which saw the evolution in the way terrorist attacks are being conducted such as the involvement of women as well as the entire family, which includes very young children (Schulze, 2018). An explanation for this could be the belief that by committing such acts of jihad together, the whole family can enter heaven together at the same time. The attacks also saw Indonesia's first female suicide bomber who was "successful" in carrying out the bomb attacks. These families had been inspired by ISIS, and were believed to belong to a pro-ISIS network called Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD). As stated Schulze, the common trait shared across these families is that they had all gone to Islamic studies sessions *(pengajian)* together, which is a typical means through which radicalisation and recruitment take place. The severe absence of self-reflection and self-discerning give rise to the likelihood that people such as these perpetrators become radicalised and turn extreme. I would like to draw special attention to the observation made by Noor Huda Ismail, which was originally in Bahasa Indonesia before translation:

> 'If the narrative of a high school friend of Dita (the father of the church bomber) that is viral on social media is true, then Dita has long felt that he is not "happy" to live with the pluralistic values set by Pancasila. He feels marginalised socially and politically not economically. For him, Indonesia is a secular country because it is not based on Islamic law and therefore must be opposed. Now, when they live in subcultures like this, there is a new political system offered with a "khilafah Islamiyah" trade label declared in Syria by Abu Bakar Al Baghdadi in June 2014.' (Ismail, 2018)

As seen from the above statements, the narrative of the incompatibility of secularism and Islamic law stands out very strongly. It implies also the perceived mismatch of Pancasila values and Islamic values, that one's existence would mean the exclusion of

the existence of another. Dita's dissatisfaction with the state ideology stems from its pluralistic values, which also hints at the rejection of diversity in society. Hence, if that is true indeed, there is little doubt that the type of subculture in which Dita and the rest were living in was obviously leaning towards the extreme end. This new subculture which they had subscribed to offers them an alternative system in which they could live out and exercise their Islamic values freely, without any restraints imposed by the Indonesian state's Pancasila values. In his worldview, there exists no such thing called moderation, an important factor which will be further discussed in this paper. This alternative world offers them the things they would otherwise not have in the current system they are in. Additionally, contrary to popular belief, Dita was most probably not economically deprived, given that he had lived in a middle-class neighbourhood. Thus, economic deprivation was not the main factor behind his actions. Rather, it was the discontentment and resentment against the established state that was the bigger driving force.

Ismail subsequently proceeds to make the following comments:

> 'People who are fed up with the Pancasila system are then moved to become part of the new political system. Moreover, they get a fresh breeze from the rising atmosphere of identity politics lately in Indonesia. At the same time, social media presents a "hyper reality" to them through a production video from ISIS, a Hollywood class that promises a more Islamic life and is guaranteed economically.' (Ismail, 2018)

The role that social media played is highlighted in the above comments. It had given ISIS the opportunity to romanticise its cause, and to let its viewers see its glamour. It is a distorted type of image they wish to portray to them. The statement taken from extract above about how people are getting frustrated with the state's ideology – Pancasila – signifies the tension between the state and its ideology. In addition, it also connotes the prospect of conflicts breaking out due to such disillusionment with Pancasila. And in this case, such a tension is demonstrated and revealed in the form of attacks against the police headquarters and churches in Surabaya. As was mentioned by Flairclough, in cultural analysis, 'any cultural artefact – a picture, a building, a piece of music – can be seen as a text' (Flairclough, 1995, p. 4). While the

bombing of the police headquarters symbolises the denial and rejection of the state's legal and moral authority, the attacks on the churches can be seen as an extreme form of unacceptance of the presence of Christianity. The striking point mentioned by Ismail is the "hyper reality" that appeals to people like Dita. In this context, the motivation behind his decision to bomb the churches can explained by the theory of relative deprivation. The desire to be "guaranteed economically" indicates the presence of 'active grievances' (p. 173), a factor brought up by Gurr, This is in line with what he has observed, that there are 'three types of demands…[aimed at boosting] a group's status within an existing social and political system: political rights, economic rights, and social and cultural rights' (p 173). While Gurr is accurate in pointing out how these rights are instrumental in triggering grievances and are directed at raising the group's position, the only gap remaining in Gurr's research is the catalytic role of *social media*. The case study of the Surabaya bombings is a clear example of how the misalignment between one's personal belief system and the state's ideology can lead to a catastrophic outcome, where the individual or group chooses to undertake extreme measures to oppose the state and the values it stands for. In addition, the unrealistic picture that ISIS has painted on social media has attracted the attention of people who are discontented or dissatisfied with their current state of living. They get the notion that they will be promised a better life religiously and economically should they join their cause. This is a worrying development, and a persistent issue that continues feeding into the political and religious tension in Indonesia.

3. Literature review

The main literature that I will be referring to in this thesis is Ted Gurr's article titled "Why Minorities Rebel: A Global Analysis of Communal Mobilisation and Conflict since 1945" (1993). His research focused on communal groups that were unaffiliated with the state, but were politically prominent or robust at any one point within the period between 1945 and 1989. Gurr (1993) defined communal groups in general as "those whose core members share a distinctive and persistent collective identity based on cultural and ascriptive traits that are important to them and to others with whom they interact" (p. 163). While some scholars have depicted these groups' identities to be static and unchanging, but Gurr's study maintains the assumption that 'all group identities, both communal and national, are to a degree situational and subject to change' (p. 162). To consider such communal groups' identities to be politically salient, they must fulfill at least one of the main criterion: "(1) the group collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment vis-à-vis other groups in a state; and/or (2) the group is the focus of political mobilisation and action in defence or promotion of its self-defined interests" (p. 163). Set at such a context, the main variables in Gurr's research are 'political action', 'grievances' and 'mobilisation', while the predisposing variables are 'group status', 'identity', and 'traits'. Given the time lapse since the research was carried out (1980s), the question is then, does Gurr's basis of relative deprivation still stand today? Is it applicable across the few selected cases of politico-religious related incidents in Indonesia? In addition, while his work focuses mainly on minorities, I would like to see how the reasons behind minorities instigating communal violence may be applicable to the majorities in a country who develop similar grievances. This usually take the form of resentment towards the minorities who are doing better economically than the majority (Chua, 2003), or otherwise known as "market-dominant minorities". And on certain occasions, such bitterness and resentment may grow out of hand and transform into a deep sense of victimhood. Concurrently, Gurr has demonstrated four determinants of group grievances in the 1980s, which are composed of 'grievances about economic rights', 'grievances about social and cultural rights', 'grievances about political rights', and 'grievances about lack of autonomy' (p. 178).

The other literature which I will be consulting will be the book by Samuel Huntington, which is 'The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order'. Based on the world's renown hypothesis by Samuel Huntington (1996), he hypothesised that the clash of cultures will be the principle cause of conflicts after Cold War, rather than a clash between states. A theory widely rejected for its political incorrectness especially when it was first introduced, I propose that it is still valuable to take a relook at it with more than twenty years since it was first published in 1996. Since Huntington's thesis, major international events such as the 9/11 attacks and the rise of ISIS had shocked the world, raising questions as to whether he was right in saying that cultures will eventually end up in confrontation with one another. With regards to Islam, Huntington has raised a few points that may have appeared, to some extent, rather absurd in the 90s. However, to a certain degree, he has accurately foreseen the situation at least in Indonesia today. He has identified two paradoxes in the shift from 'Islamic consciousness' to 'Islamic cohesion', referring to the Muslim identity and unity respectively. These paradoxes are:

> 'First, Islam is divided among competing power centers each attempting to capitalise on Muslim identification with the *ummah* in order to promote Islamic cohesion under its leadership. This competition goes on between the established regimes and their organisations, on the one hand, and Islamist regimes and their organisations, on the other…Second, the concept of *ummah* presupposes the illegitimacy of the nation state and yet the ummah can be unified only through the actions of one or more strong core states which are currently lacking.' (Huntington, 1996, p. 191-192)

In short, the road to establishing the unity of Muslims is almost impossible. If that is the desire, it is bound to be filled with a great amount of violence. According to Huntington, '[a]n Islamic core state has to possess the economic resources, military power, organizational competence, and Islamic identity and commitment to provide both political and religious leadership to the *ummah'*. (1996, p. 192). His analysis of the main Muslim states that might have the potential to rise up to the role of an Islamic core state reveal the possibility of Turkey assuming such a leadership, out of the six Muslim states, including Turkey itself. The five other states are Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Indonesia and Egypt. The biggest obstacle to Turkey becoming an

Islamic core state, however, is its firm allegiance to the West and secularism. From the West perspective, a secular Turkey which is placed in a strategic geographical location in the world is extremely important. Today, Turkey still subscribes to secularism, while other Muslim powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran are entangled in proxy wars. Even though Iran possesses the capabilities to become an Islamic core state, the fact that Iran is a Shi'ite and Persian nation proves to be a major hurdle to assuming the leadership role. On the other hand, the main weakness hindering Indonesia from becoming an Islamic core state is its unfavourable geographical position, being located too far away from the center of Middle East. While that is a major weakness in Huntington's eyes and most possibly in the eyes of Islamic hardliners in Indonesia, from my point of view, it might just be Indonesia's strength as well. Being situated far away from the conflicted lands in the Middle East, it is spared from being caught in the violent struggles to become the Islamic leader, which in the Islamic sense entails both religious and political leadership. However, this also brings up the question of the compatibility between Islamism and democracy. Should Indonesia insist in maintaining the stance of a nation which takes pride in its unity in diversity, does this entail the compromise of Islamism? And if that is the case, it will be met with much resistance, which may then be played out in the form of protests and demonstrations, and in the worst case scenario, a spike in terrorist attacks. Hence, the easing of politico-religious tension in Indonesia requires not just ensuring that the economy of the country is doing well, but also a careful balancing of Islam and democracy.

4. Indonesia: a model and a warning

4.1 Background context to Indonesian society

The type of Islam that is being practiced in Southeast Asia is in many ways different from the one in the Middle East, and the image of Islam is also very different from the way it is portrayed in Europe's mainstream media. In general, religion in Southeast Asia is often a combination of both local traditional beliefs and "world" religions like Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. These local beliefs and practices existed long before such major religions were introduced. Diversity characterises best the state of affairs in this complex region (Neher, 2000, p. 7), while "Unity in Diversity" (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika)* is not only a common slogan used in mainstream Indonesian rhetoric, but is also adopted into Indonesia's official national motto and mentioned in State Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia of 1945 *(Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia, Tahun 1945)*. Likened to water, religion in Southeast Asia is usually fluid in nature, taking the shape of whichever bottle or container it is poured into. Hence, it is no surprise that when the principle "Belief in One God" *(Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa)* was laid out during Suharto's New Order regime, those arguably polytheistic religions such as Hinduism were quick to modify themselves into monotheistic religions instead, or at least portray the image that they are monotheistic (Suryadinata, 2018, p. 2). However, the claim that Hinduism is a monotheistic religion is a huge contrast with the mainstream Hinduism practiced in other parts of the world such as South Asia, where Hindus worship close to 33 million gods (Dasa, 2012). Very evidently, it is nothing close to monotheism at all. On the contrary, the description "polytheistic" would probably be the most fitting. Since the principle is a vague term where "One God" does not necessarily refer to any god in particular, and is meant to be so, it provides room for alternative interpretations of that term. This vague and ambiguous principle is in turn protected by the 'Blasphemy Law', which will be further elaborated in the section below. It was created with the deliberate intention to keep the state a secular and harmonious one, as well as to provide people with religious freedom so long the religion that is practiced falls within the list of state-approved religions. Hence, the result of these objectives was the unspecified "God". On one hand, the ambiguity allows space for manoeuvre religiously speaking. On the other hand, it also indicates

the inseparable relationship between the state and religion, despite its declaration of a secular state. Navigating between these two – state and religion – has never been an easy task, requiring a fine balancing act.

4.1.1 Islam in Indonesia

To begin, there exists various Islamic schools. Following the death of Prophet Muhammad, much disagreement arose out of the question of who will be the next leader to succeed the Prophet. The denominations that emerged out of these disagreements include and are not limited to, Shia Islam, Sunni Islam, Khawarij and Ahmadiyya. Even within the Sunni denomination, there are four major schools of Islamic law – Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali. In Indonesia, the dominant Islam branch that is being practiced is Sunni Islam, while the Shafi'i school is the prominent school of thought. Given that in Indonesia where '87.2% of the population identifies as Muslim' (Desilver & Masci, 2017), it might be natural to arrive at the conclusion that it is probably an Islamic state, similar to how Saudi Arabia is. Contrary to that assumption, Indonesia remains a secular state as a whole, with only certain regions (such as Aceh) adopting the Islamic (shari'a) law. Generally speaking, the long-standing tradition and exercise of tolerance towards other religions and beliefs in Indonesia is almost characteristic of the country. While conventional Muslim leaders have been active proponents of the rights of religious minorities in Indonesia, the concern has been more about the rising level of 'society-level intolerance' as well as the lack of state capacity to safeguard the rights of religious minorities (Bush & Munawar-Rachman, 2014, p. 17). The claim that the state is lacking competency to provide all of its citizens a sense of security is hinting at the risk of state failure, albeit the chances of that occurring is still far from actualisation (Rotberg, 2003, p. 15). However, that was written at the time when Indonesia's President was Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (from 2004 to 2014), who had chosen to neglect the legal entitlements of the religious minorities, leaving the minorities community in a vulnerable and defenceless position (Hariyadi, 2010).

Whilst under the Dutch colony, Islam was suppressed in Indonesia and its involvement in politics was forbidden. As a predominantly Christian country during that period of time, Islam was perceived to be incompatible with Dutch colonial policies. It was also thought to be a mismatch with modernity, an obstacle to rising up

to the level of civilisation back in Europe (Jung, 2010, p. 292). By purposefully keeping Islam out of politics, seeds of grievances were sown into the Indonesian soil. It was then, during the Aceh war against the Dutch from 1873 to 1903, that Islam was rapidly politicised. Local Acehnese had believed that they were waging a holy war (Robinson, 1998, p. 129) in order to keep the infidels out of their territory. Even though the Dutch had won the war, the strong spirit of the locals had lingered. The Aceh War was also symbolic, in that it represented the Muslim struggle against Western imperialism. Such a historical backdrop might even be telling of the present-day religious and political situation in Aceh, where the type of Islam practiced there greatly differs from the other parts of Indonesia. Hence, it is no surprise that political Islam is a norm in Aceh. Thereafter, during the Japanese Occupation, the lid that used to be on Islam was removed all of a sudden. The Japanese came to realise that religion was the best and fastest tactic in which people could be mobilised. As such, Muslims were presented with an opportunity to break free from the past suppression of their faith. The earlier seeds of grievances sown started sprouting rapidly, and the politicisation of Islam in the form of *Jihad* took a new form. With the departure of the Japanese after World War II in 1945, a power vacuum was left behind, giving the 'young and reformist Islamic groups' (Robinson, 1998, p. 129) an opportunity to fill up. It was at this point in time that Aceh has gained notoriety as an Islamic militancy region, which was also responsible for stirring up rebellion against the authorities. The Islamic Armed Forces of Indonesia *(Darul Islam)*, an Islamist group, had called for the establishment of Islamic State of Indonesia *(Negara Islam Indonesia)*. The formation of Darul Islam can be traced back to sentiments of resentment for being deprived of the ability to practice their faith freely, in which former regimes had been suppressing the expression of their Islamic faith. The other goal of this movement was to seek the enforcement of the Shari'a law, which directly challenges the secular ideology of Suharto's New Order regime (Bruinessen, 2002, p. 119).

One of the main aspirations of Darul Islam is to see the establishment of an Islamic State of Indonesia (*Negara Islam Indonesia, NII*). That type of aspiration has witnessed some of the worst terrorist activities in Indonesia, such as the Bali bombing in October 2002, which had taken over two hundred lives, many of which were foreigners. The extent to which people like Iqbal, who was a suicide bomber at the Sari club in Bali, is willing to undertake in the name of religion and nationalism,

continues to puzzle most people. The origin of the Darul Islam movement first started at the mountainous region of West Java (Dijk, 1981, p. 10), whose leader, S. M. Kartosoewirjo, was executed in September 1962 (Temby, 2010, p. 1). In the excerpt derived from Temby's article was the last words of Iqbal:

> 'Today I say: that I am a child of DI/NII [Darul Islam/Negara Islam Indonesia] who is ready to sacrifice myself for Islam. Remember, o mujahideen of Malingping, how our imam, S. M. Kartosuwirjo, built and upheld and proclaimed the independence of the Islamic State of Indonesia with the blood and lives of martyrs, not by relaxing and fooling around the way we do today. If you are serious about seeing the glory of the buried Islamic State of Indonesia rise again, shed your blood so that you won't be ashamed to face Allah, you who acknowledge yourselves to be children of DI/NII.' (2010, p. 2)

As seen from the above excerpt, a few striking points stand out. First, is the clear indication of the alignment of the perpetrator's identity with Darul Islam. By portraying his relationship with the organisation like in a father-and-son kinship, he is pledging his obligatory loyalty to it. One cannot help but wonder where such a deep sense of nationalism comes from. In addition, the other noticeable point is the mentioning of Kartosoewirjo, since he was executed forty years ago. This reveals how Darul Islam and the whole persona of Kartosoewirjo serve as a huge source of inspiration behind Iqbal's motivation to carry out the attacks. Apart from that, symbols of blood and sacrifice are evoked as well. Nationalism, in his worldview, implies being self-sacrificial, and most probably in a violent way. The nationalistic tone in his letter is especially distinct, with the strong conviction that the Islamic State of Indonesia will be resurrected. In addition, he is also implying that to face their god, one should confess himself/herself to be a child of Darul Islam. The accentuated extremist tone in this statement is not easy to miss, which suggests that there is no in-between and that "moderation" in Islam is not an option, a topic we will looked in detail later on in this paper.

In some cases, the favouritism of a certain religion by a regime over others has resulted in such sentiments. The failure of the state to mitigate and address such

religious sensitivities, regardless of whoever was in power, has created fault lines in the society. Such cleavages have enabled extremism to enter and fill them up, resulting in the growth of acts of terror throughout the years. An example of this is when former president of Indonesia Yudhoyono's policy decision to abandon pluralism and secularism back in 2005. He was a key figure in the shaping of religious politics in Indonesia while he was in office (Bush, 2015, p. 247). During his term in office, he has been repeatedly accused of not doing enough to safeguard the interests of the religious minorities in Indonesia, including the Shittes Muslims who are seen as blasphemous in the Sunni-majority country (HRW, 2013). For example, the Shiite community in Sampang, Madura, East Java, has been the target of much hate crime. At the peak of such religious persecution back in 2012 when Yudhoyono was the president, his government's near-indifferent attitude together with the local government's half-hearted efforts to alleviate the plight of the Shittes had perpetuated the persecution of the Shitte community. Quoting the Regent of Sampang, Fannan Hasib:

> 'We can do nothing about it because the majority of the people demand the Shia community be kicked out of Sampang. Local religious leaders have also supported the demand. I will soon file a request to Governor Soekarwo to issue an ordinance to make it legal for us to relocate them.' (Harsaputra & Aritonang, 2013)

The claim that they, being the ones in authority, "can do nothing about it" is particularly puzzling. In addition, before the religion of this group of people stands their identity as an Indonesian, and a citizen of Indonesia. And yet, this was conveniently brushed past and ignored, leading to the forced relocation from their own homes. This is just one, out of the several examples, of how the central government plays a pivotal role in protecting its own citizens, regardless of their religion. The central government's unwillingness and lack of motivation to do so has influenced the local government in Sampang to follow suit too, without any fear of possible consequences for failing to protect the Shitte Muslims.

4.1.2 The "middle path"

A pluralistic state like Indonesia, where there are multiple group identities coexisting and interacting with one another, is a tricky and delicate terrain to navigate. As such, the so-called "middle path" has been the guiding principle of Indonesia for a long time, which the hardline Islamists are challenging. The nature of Islam practiced in Indonesia takes the form of local characteristics, which includes social, cultural and political realities (Abdullah, 2017, p. 2). According to Abdullah:

> '[o]ne of the principal characteristics of Indonesian Islamic thought is developed by the Indonesia founding parents and forwarded by Muslim scholars and intellectuals show the necessary involvement of social and cultural context to comprehend the realities and dynamics of Islamic theology and Islamic political thought in the country.' (2017, p. 3)

It can be argued then, that the decision by the founding parents of Indonesia to allow the flourishing of pluralism is the crucial reason why Indonesia is not embroiled in a similar kind of disarray fashion as in the Middle East. Instead, the resolution to protect the welfare of all Indonesians has served the country well for decades. Such a well-intended purpose is in turn followed up by the conscious effort to take on the "middle-path" in Islam. In Islam epistemology, the wasatiyyah as a concept, which means Islamic moderation, is deemed to 'bring forth a moderate, just and the best approach…aimed at balancing extreme and fanatical acts in every aspect of a man's life' (Hanapi, 2014, p. 51). The choice to develop and live out such a concept in the Indonesian society is of paramount importance to maintain harmony in most if not all aspects of society, such as religious. As stated by Hanapi, while there are several interpretations of what "wasata" means, the common conclusion of the meaning that has been arrived is 'the chosen, the best, being fair, humble, moderate, *istiqamah*, follow the teachings of Islam, not extreme to either end in matters pertaining worldly or the after-life, spiritual or corporeal but should be balanced between the two ends.' (2014, p. 54). By accepting and internalising the defined wasatiyyah concept, it will be an arguably effective counter-extremism tool. Such an interpretation has been actively propagated by the Indonesian authorities, a guiding concept that is supposed to manage diversity in the country and prevent people from swinging to the extreme ends. Alongside Pancasila, this concept has gradually lost its prominence over the

years. This might also explain why there has been a rise of politico-religious tension in Indonesia, with an increasing number of well-educated Indonesian Muslim students beginning to become disillusioned with the whole principle of "moderate" Islamism as purported by the government. In the case of the Islamisation of campuses in Indonesia, there are strands of evidences where it appears that young Indonesian Muslims is gradually developing a sense of deprivation relative in comparison to believers from other faiths. More significantly, having compared themselves to their other brothers and sisters in the Middle East, result in the development of deprivation, and thus grievances, amongst many other by-products. The fate of the so-called moderation in Islam looks bleak, since it is no longer relevant and appealing to the rising young generation of Indonesia. On the contrary, Islamic conservatism is gaining grounds within the young population (Thompson, 2017). Pancasila, the main principle ungirding the society, appears to be losing support from its citizens. As the state's rhetoric is increasingly being questioned, it also sees the increase in the occurrence of incidences related to religion and/or politics, usually a combination of both, contributing to the building up of tension in Indonesia. The disillusionment with Pancasila is the most visible during the post-Suharto period, who was the President of Indonesia from 1967 to 1998. With the end of the Suharto era, a tumultuous democratisation phase was rolled out, allocating much more autonomy to the different regions in Indonesia (Iskandar, 2016). The sudden democratic transition has resulted in the burst of freedom, though more often than not, one's freedom might lead to someone else's suppression.

Moreover, the idea of "moderate" Islam in a broad sense remains highly dubious and unrealistic in terms of the extent of its departure from the "real" set of Islamic beliefs. The observation first made by Barbara Metcalf (1986) back in the mid-1980s continues to hold much relevance today, who had stated that there had been '[g]rowing numbers of students from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the southern Philippines, and Africa [who] are studying in Middle Eastern universities, spreading ideas and establishing personal contacts across national boundaries'. The influence of Middle Eastern culture in Indonesia can been observed through the infiltration of Saudi Arabia's soft power, manifested in the form of sponsorship given to Indonesians to study in Saudi Arabia for example (Nash, 2018). While this can be viewed as an attempt to demonstrate its leadership qualities as a Sunni Muslim core

state, it can also be seen as way in which Saudi Arabia-educated Indonesian students bring back to their country a slightly different kind of Islamic teaching. This will most undoubtedly cause much friction when these well-educated students attempt to transfer the type of Islam picked up from Saudi Arabia over to their society. This is best exemplified by how these people who have returned from Saudi Arabia start filling up the ranks in 'Muhammadiyah, the Prosperous Justice Party, and the Cabinet' (Varagur, 2017), all of which are influential institutions in Indonesia. A noteworthy point is that FPI's leader, Habib Rizieq, was educated in Saudi Arabia at King Saud University back in 1990. While the degree to which the influences he had received while he was in Saudi Arabia might be unclear and debatable, I argue that there is without doubt that he is an extremist figure in Indonesia. As a religious representative, he is closely involved in politics too, via FPI. Some of these involvements will be further discussed under the "Anti-Ahok rallies" section. The Middle Eastern version of Islamism is arguably hardly compatible with the Indonesian version of Islamism, at least the state-endorsed version. Their extreme and exclusive view that only the Arabs can be considered to be "real Muslims" and not the rest (Cochrane, 2015) makes it stand severely at odds with the type of Islam practiced in Indonesia. There might even be a possibility that such exclusivity appeals to a lot of people, giving off the impression that they are the "chosen ones". In fact, such a fundamental stance and interpretation of the Quran will also be an awkward fit with most parts of the world. Apart from that, it does not seem to be aligned with these words spoken by Prophet Muhammad in his last sermon, where he taught the following:

> 'All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor does a black have any superiority over a white except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.' (HOTD , 2012)

If one considers the above hadith and interpret as it is stated, which is intended to provide its followers the account of Prophet Muhammad's daily life and is a principle source of guidance for the Muslims, there is an apparent tangible evidence suggesting the non-discrimination of one's race origins. As Saudi Arabia's strand of Islamic teaching such as Wahhabism, which is an orthodox Sunni Islam branch, gathers more followers and is gaining more traction in Indonesia (find stats or explanations), this might also be where the delicate balancing act between religion and politics comes in. The Indonesian government on one hand needs to be seen as "religious" and a follower of the Islamic teachings, and on the other needs to protect the interests and rights of the other Indonesian minorities. On the subject of wanting to be portrayed as religious, the government will find difficulties doing that should it actively curb Saudi Arabic's soft power in its own country. This is because, not only would such a move provoke Saudi Arabia and hurt ties, the Hajj permits granted by Saudi Arabia would most probably be negatively affected too. With the yearly Mecca pilgrimage an extremely significant affair, if the quota for that is reduced or even removed, it would have grave political and religious repercussions for the government. Besides losing religious and moral legitimacy, the government will most likely face a political crisis domestically. These potential costs are clearly too high to bear. Hence, the government will continue being caught in a dilemma. Having said that, it does not suggest that all Indonesian students who have returned from Saudi Arabia adopt extremist views. Moreover, it is difficult to track how jihadist mentality develops and unfolds throughout the journey from Saudi Arabia to Indonesia.

In addition, the Christians and Hindus in Indonesia have a shared common history with the Muslims, and had contributed to its state building in the early years of the nation's struggle for independence. Due to that, it was also observed that most Indonesian Muslims do see these minorities as part of their nation. Their early efforts had aided in the majority's tolerance towards them (Menchik, 2015, p. 20), and to be seen and accepted as part of them. The authorities in Indonesia could consider employing such a narrative more frequently, to evoke feelings of nostalgia and help its citizens reminisce their past history. After all, the process of nation building is one that is never-ending.

The Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), an independent Islamic organisation that is based on a traditionalist Sunni Islam movement, is known for its strong stance of advocating the practice of "moderation" in Islam. It is a strong advocate of Islam Nusantara, an Islamic model that is unique to Indonesia, albeit not an idea acceptable to all Indonesian Muslims. While such a version of Islam is widely endorsed by world leaders such as former president of the United States Barack Obama (The White House, 2010) given its neutral and moderate messages, it is much less so domestically. Islam Nusantara is especially an effective discourse NU's desire to "Indonesianise" Islam has always been the subject of much controversy (Hasyim, 2018), putting the state's narrative of "moderate Islam" in spotlight. There have been active efforts by the NU to spread the "middle path" ideology across the world, as seen from the recent campaign put up by the NU (Cochrane, 2015). Such efforts are readily welcomed by the international community, as it appeases and also convinces them that Islam is not synonymous with extremism or terrorism, making this Islam Nusantara model highly popular with the West.

However, adopting the "middle path" potentially leads to much contradiction. This question has repeatedly surfaced throughout this paper and will continue to do so. Broadly speaking, "moderation" in Indonesian Islam have the following attributes:

'1) non-violent ideology in propagating Islam; 2) adopting the modern way of life with its all derivatives, including science and technology, democracy, human rights and the like; 3) the use of rational way of thinking; 4) contextual approach in understanding Islam, and; 5) the use of ijtihad…' (Hilmy, 2013, p. 28)

One of the questions that arises out of this is, is "moderate Islam" still considered Islam then? In fact, as Hilmy points out, 'the term "moderatism" is not well-acknowledged in the discourse of classical Islamic thought…[and] it is a highly contested concept' (2013, p. 26). According to him, '[i]n Indonesia, the concept of moderatism is used to indicate a particular religious thought or practice that adopts neither two poles of Islamic thought; the typical-Western liberal thought and radical Islamism thought' (2013, p. 27). Most Indonesian Muslims would see themselves as moderate, falling into neither of the two "extreme" categories. However, taking such

a position is extremely ambigious, and might even be accused of not being a faithful follower with the lack of sound theological foundation. At the same time, leaders from around the world, including Indonesia, have actively held up the narrative of "moderate Muslims" as a means to promote inclusivity, diversity and tolerance in society. Here is the distinction between a moderate Muslim and a militant Muslim: '[f]or moderate Muslims, ijtihad is the preferred method of choice for sociopolitical change and military jihad is the last option. For militant Muslims, military jihad is the first option and ijtihad is not an option at all.' (Khan, 2005, p. 41). A point worth noting is that Indonesian Islam is just as diverse and varied as Middle Eastern Islam, rather than just being collectively homogenous in nature.

4.2 The ambiguity of 'Blasphemy Law'

Under Law No. 5/1969 and Article 156(a) of Indonesia's Criminal Code (*Kitab Undang-undang Hukum Pidana, KUHP*) which was made into a law from the decree by former President Sukarno, granting religious leaders the right to invoke the law to safeguard the interests of the six official and recognised religions – Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism (Crouch, 2012, p. 4). Initially, the law was merely symbolic in nature, but has since evolved into an fully functioning law that has been used by the Indonesian authorities to hold individuals liable on the charge of blasphemy. While it is a relief that the state grants permission to the practice of the five other recognised religions, the law penalises those whose religion fall outside of the accepted religions. In addition, following the democratisation and opening up of Indonesia, it has also led to the rise of hard-line Islamists, where Islam became increasingly politicised. Together with the prejudiced law, these factors have resulted in the persecution of individuals found to be going against the established law. However, throughout the Indonesian Constitution of 1945, there lies several inconsistencies and ambiguity (Abdi, 2014, p. 54):

'Article 28E

(1) Every person shall be free to choose and to practice the religion of his/her choice, to choose one's education, to choose one's employment, to choose one's citizenship, and to choose one's place of residence within the state territory, to leave it and to subsequently return to it.

(2) Every person shall have the right to the freedom to believe his/her faith *(kepercayaan)*, and to express his/her views and thoughts, in accordance with his/her conscience.

(3) Every person shall have the right to the freedom to associate, to assemble and to express opinions.

Article 29

(1) The State shall be based upon the belief in the One and Only God.

(2) The State guarantees all persons the freedom of worship, each according to his/her own religion or belief.' (Indonesian Constitution)

Comparing Article 28E and Article 29, it is almost equivalent to stating that while an individual is allowed to practice his/her religion freely, he/she is not quite allowed to do so due to the state defined "One and Only God". Article 29 (1) is furthered protected by the Blasphemy Law, which implies that it is considered blasphemy if one practices a religion outside of the state-approved religions. This is essentially controversial, since it denies one's right to practice other religions that are not recognised as legal by the state.

In recent years, the Blasphemy Law has come under much domestic and international scrutiny due to a rising number of blasphemy cases. For instance in 2018, around six individuals were found guilty of violating the law, and thus sentenced to one to five years' worth of imprisonment (Human Rights Watch, 2019, p. 279). The nature of the offences committed across these cases vary, which includes a seemingly trivial example of an ethnic Chinese Buddhist getting charged due to him complaining about the level of noise at a local mosque. In fact, this example reveals the relatively low level of tolerance with regards to the execution of the law. This has resulted in the abuse of such a law, where individuals may be charged under the Blasphemy Law even if the offences committed do not qualify as blasphemy, strictly speaking. According to Oxford dictionary, blasphemy refers to '[t]he action or offence of speaking sacrilegiously about God or sacred things'. The term 'blasphemy' is a rather vague term to begin with, and to create a law out of this term without clear boundaries within it is essentially dangerous. This gives rise to the possibility of authorities in Indonesia manipulating and abusing this law. The existence of such a law has led to a growth in intolerance in the society, where people are becoming easily triggered. At the same time, it provides interested parties to label someone who is a political opponent as blasphemous, as seen in the "Anti-Ahok" rally. That label is powerful enough to remove someone from power, made possible with the public's wrath.

4.2.1 "Anti-Ahok" rally

In the third and last case study, we will be looking at the most recent infamous case of former ethnic Chinese Christian governor of Jakarta Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, or better known as "Ahok" in Indonesia, best illustrates the ease and convenience at which the law can be used to remove political opponents, especially those who are not Muslim. In 2016, Mr. Basuki became the target of much hatred and anger, where nearly 200,000 Muslim demonstrators gathered at Jakarta, demanding the arrest of Mr. Basuki for blasphemous remarks against Islam (Agence France-Presse, 2016). The December 2 mass protest (or also known as "212 Movement") was a combination of religious, political and ethnic sentiments, which saw the involvement of protesters with various agendas. The spiral of events first started out with a public campaign event at the Thousand Islands (*Pulau Seribu*) attended by Mr. Basuki's Muslim supporters, where he "casually" alluded to a specific verse in the Qur'an during his speech, which originated from Al Ma'idah verse 51. According to that verse, it states that:

> 'O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.'

There are two methods to understand this verse – textual and contextual (Marcoes, 2016). As stated by Marcoes, usually, both approaches are used in the Islamic tradition when interpreting the holy verses. Textualists tend to read the Quran word for word, without taking into account the context attached it. On the other hand, contextualists interpret the Quran with flexibility, and like the name suggests, they read it with context, taking into account the 'developments of the time' (Marcoes, 2016). These two approaches are fundamentally different, so it is no surprise that a longstanding disagreement exist between them since the death of Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam. This is also where the confusion rests at, since different people adopt different methods of interpretation, making the claim that theirs is the only "right" way of interpretation. In short, at the heart of the problem is the ongoing and endless arguments over what and which teachings are considered to be the "right" version of Islam. To complicate things further, the "normal average"

Muslim in Indonesia is not in a position to interpret and study the Quran by themselves. Usually, the *imam* is the authorised religious figure who passes on to the followers the "correct" interpretation. Since it is a top-down approach, these followers are generally speaking incapable and unable to decipher for themselves what the verses actually mean. The interpretation of Quran is dependent on the religious teachers and scholars. The implication of this is that, the average Muslim is not able to decide for himself or herself if a verse should be interpreted in a contextual or textual manner. They usually attend an Islamic seminar or lecture (*pengajian*) to acquire a deeper understanding of the holy text. This is arguably where the threat of radicalisation best flourishes, as was illustrated in the Surabaya bombings, where one of the perpetrators in the suicide attacks Dita was deeply convinced by everything the leader at the *pengajian* said. However, the degree to which one adopts the contextual and/or textual approach remains a major source of contention. Apart from that, in general, there are two main sources in Islam from which Muslims consult – Qur'an and the Prophet's teachings. While the Qur'an is believed to be 'the direct word of God inspired to the Prophet Muhammad…[the Prophet's teachings are]…his words, actions, and things he approved of…called Sunna. The Sunna is found in texts called hadith.' (Why Islam, 2018). For the Muslims, the hadiths are important because they supplement the Qur'an with a background context, without which reading the Qur'an on its own would make little sense. While the hadiths are not considered to be directly inspired by God such as the Qur'an, they are collections of the words and actions of Prophet Muhammad recorded by his companions. As such, Muslims read the hadiths and view them as a guide to how they should lead their lives.

Coming back to the speech, Mr. Basuki was warning his audience about individuals who exploit such a verse to dissuade them from voting for non-Muslim political candidates. However, when his speech turned into a viral video which was then circulated like wildfire online, the original intent of Mr. Basuki's words became twisted. The message became a blasphemous one, in which it sounded as though he found faults with the holy text. There lies a discrepancy between what was actually said by him versus what the protesters thought he had said. This was largely caused by Buni Pani, who had intentionally "tampered" with the video before uploading it online (Hariyadi, 2017). Apart from this discrepancy, the other issue was Mr.

Basuki's failure to delve deeper into how Indonesian Muslims understand and read the verse, or even the Holy Quran, before he made those remarks. As a consequence, it had given interested parties the chance to label him with the charge of blasphemy and pulled him down directly from power. The movement had successfully resulted in the sentencing of Mr. Basuki to two years in prison. As President Joko Widodo's political ally, that was a direct blow on his political career ahead of the Jakarta elections in which he was running for a re-election to be appointed for the second term in office. It was also an indirect blow on the President, where he too received criticisms from hard-line Islamic groups for aligning himself with blasphemous political allies and faced accusations for being anti-Islamic. Conservative groups from the opposition parties started the activism on social media, with the currently trending hashtag *#2019gantipresiden* (#2019changepresident) on Instagram (Arifianto, 2018), accumulating around 1.48 million posts with that particular hashtag. The series of events were not a purely religious one, which spilled over to other areas such as politics and even ethnicity, such as attacking Mr. Basuki's ethnicity as a Chinese.

As seen from the case illustrated above, the politico-religious tension in Indonesia has manifested itself through the anti-Ahok rally in Jakarta. The Muslim supporters behind the mass rally could not have created such a large-scale movement without the involvement and participation of powerful organisers, with social media acting as the platform on which the different actors naturally made use of. The main organisers are the National Movement to Guard Ulama's Religious Edicts (GNPF Ulama) and the Islam Defenders Front (FPI). The FPI, in particular, was mainly responsible in the successful mobilisation of a large number of people to protest against the former Jakarta governor. Apart from being involved in the series of high-profile protests, the FPI had also contended that non-Muslims should not be ruling over the Muslim-majority population in the city (Soeriaatmadja, 2017). As a relatively infamous organisation which is behind acts of violence against non-Muslim minorities, the FPI had also protested against Mr. Basuki when he assumed the role of an acting governor back then. Hence, it is obvious that this is the chance they have been waiting for a long time, to remove him from power in the name of god. FPI's founder and leader, Habib Rizieq Shihab, who was mentioned at the earlier part of this essay, had led in the mass demonstration in front of the Jakarta City Hall. FPI was responsible and notorious for its involvements in the Ketapang incident, on 22

November 1998. In one of his statements during the gathering of "212 Rally Alumni", he mentioned the following:

> 'During the 2019 elections, it is *haram* [forbidden] for us to vote for presidential and legislative candidates backed by parties supporting the blasphemer. Let's vote for presidential and vice presidential candidates based on the decision of Ijtima Ulama [the consensus of the ulema].' (Tehusijarana, 2018)

The choice of diction 'haram', which means forbidden by Islamic law, invokes the authority of the religion to put pressure on the voters. It is apparent that both religious and political symbols were used in the statements, despite Rizieq Shihab claiming otherwise. The specific call to dissuade votes against candidates such as turning away from the current President Joko Widodo since he "supported" the blasphemer – Mr. Basuki – has a clear indication of religious and political undertones. The allusion to the 2019 elections is too, political.

At the same time, the mass protest was more than just a religious affair, but rather, a means of entry for the various opposition parties to delegitimise and pull Mr. Basuki down from his power. Besides religion, the ethnic card was pulled out as well, where his Chinese ethnicity became a point of contention as well. The anti-Ahok case did not end with his imprisonment, and has since resurfaced as Indonesia prepares itself for the next election this coming April. In this instance, Gurr's theory of relative deprivation as a whole is not entirely relevant in explaining how feelings of being deprived vis-à-vis other groups (mainly the wealthier Chinese) contributed to the coordination of the 212 movement. In addition, very minimal violence was committed, which had resulted in hundreds injured and one dead. However, in his research, Gurr's statement that 'deep grievances and a strong sense of group identity and common interest…provide highly combustible material that fuels spontaneous action whenever external control weakens' (Gurr, 1993, p. 167) proves to be extremely fitting in the anti-Ahok case. While "external control" in this case has yet been weakened, it reveals the already present "combustible material" in the Indonesian society, just waiting for the *right* window of opportunity to explode. Such right moments can include words spoken by political leaders portrayed as anti-Islam (or other forms of opposition against certain communities in the society) even if these

words are unintentional in stirring negative sentiments. In a way, the Muslim supporters behind the "moral" movement feel as though their religion has been compromised and humiliated. The politicial entrepreneurs (PEs) thereafter strategically tapped on such feelings of mild grievances and blew them up, successfully causing the Muslim community in Indonesia to experience feelings of deprivation, as if their moral values based on their religion which they hold up so highly have been denied of. For instance, the role played by Jakarta's new governor, Anies Baswedan, should not be neglected. As a PE, he had The concept of PEs will be further elaborated and analysis in the next section. In short, the danger lies in the fact that something as intangible and invisible as slight feelings of unhappiness can be manipulated by interested political actors, convincing people that their personal beliefs are threatened. Weak social fabric, together with a lack of acceptance and tolerance of "others", are some of the favourable conditions fuelling the rise of extremism in the country. Some of the possible counter measures to these will be further addressed at the later part of this paper.

The large scale protestation across Jakarta to bring down its governor is a striking reminder of the presence of extremism in not just the city itself, but most possibly in the country as well. Indonesia has had a long history of the suppression of Islam most evidently in politics despite having a majority of Muslims in the state. By suppression of Islam in politics, I am referring to the continued effort by the political leaders who are in power to uphold Pancasila and choose to keep Indonesia a secular state despite growing demands and voices to turn Indonesia into an Islamic state. Such a natural inclination to remain secular might be attributed to the earlier Dutch colonial policies to "modernise" the country. As a result, the type of Islam practiced in Indonesia, or even other countries in Southeast Asia such as Malaysia, has been transformed and shaped into a religion that is deemed compatible with modernisation. This is in stark contrast to that of the Middle East, where the two main branches of Islam (Shia and Sunni) with a great amount of influence lie in countries like Iran and Saudi Arabia, which happen to have never been colonised before. The conjecture is then, the absence of colonial policies to revamp or even revolutionise the religion to be harmonious with modernity has resulted in the apparent incongruousness of Middle Eastern Islam with the majority parts of the world today. While the controversy related to colonial rule is not the main task of this thesis, nevertheless it

is worth mentioning. This is because, in mainstream media in the West, there persists a knowledge gap in the understanding of Islam. It is simply assumed that Islam across the world is homogeneous, failing to make an appropriate amount of distinction. As a result, that flawed understanding endures. The introduction of the Dutch way of thinking and beliefs into the Indonesian society has ironically facilitated the almost smooth and amicable integration of Islam in Indonesia into the rest of the world, albeit a set of failings and imperfections of the colonial rule. Indonesia risks going down the path Middle East has taken, with the rise of Muslim hard-liners who are pressuring the government to abandon its secularistic guiding principles. At present, there are a few favourable conditions for the burst of extremist activities or acts of terror that are only awaiting for the right time to arrive. These include but not limited to, the rise in discontentment and disillusionment with Pancasila, the Islamic hardliners' perception that Pancasila is incompatible with Islam, and growing trend of young, well-educated Indonesian students shifting towards "conservative Islam". As the notion of diversity slowly loses its appeal over the years, various manifestations of politico-religious tension in Indonesia appears to be occurring too. There have been greater calls across the public discourse to return Islam its authenticity, which more often than not implies the adoption of a more fundamental interpretation of the holy texts.

On a closer look, the anti-Ahok rallies are not that different from the earlier two case studies. Across all three case studies, the element of *grievances* has been present consistently. While the degree to which one group feels deprived in relative to another group varies from one case study to another, sentiments of injustice, unfairness, and (mis)perception of the other as a threat all contribute to the building up and display of politico-religious tension in Indonesia. In the next section, I will be raising the subject of PEs and social media, both of which are responsible in helping to make those sentiments even more salient than before.

5. Role of PE

Across the cases looked at in this paper, one common trait stands out. That is, the issue of identity. I follow through both Ted Gurr and Edward Aspinall's proposition that a group's identity can be made manufactured, and subsequently made salient. Thus, the salience of one's identity is chiefly an outcome of social construction. Apart from that, the view of the "other" who resides in the society is often securitised and framed in a way that attempts to persuade people that the "other" threatens the identity of the majority in the state. Such manipulative framing techniques are regularly used by political entrepreneurs (PEs). As a widely used constructivist concept within the field of social movements, PEs are individuals who evoke and play up the whole notion of "identity" within a group or community, convincing them that this so-called identity is a natural phenomenon. By doing so, PEs stir up their emotions and unite them via such an identity, which is made salient. By recognising and understanding that grievances are not merely a natural phenomenon, but can be engineered, it helps to explain why politico-religious tension in Indonesia is manifested the way it is. Grievance, in other words, is also a social construction (Aspinall, 2007, p. 953). Identity is hardly static, but rather, highly fluid. Taking advantage of the malleable nature of identity, capable PEs can shape and mould that identity, and put forth their agenda. However, grievances alone do not adequately account for the reasons behind the rise in politico-religious tension in any societies, since they are considered to be always existent. Instead, the main contributing factor is, people who manipulate the seemingly "mild" grievances, and making them pronounced. By giving these grievances a name, there is a potential that one's identity can be aroused. The purpose of this paper is to draw attention at the danger of PEs in Indonesia, who may be politically and religiously motivated to stir sentiments of grievances among the Muslim population. And these sentiments are best galvanised when the economy is not performing well, such as high unemployment rates. This was most evidently seen in the May 1998 riots or sometimes even referred to the Indonesian Anti-Chinese Riot, which happened at the time when the Indonesian economy was performing badly. The ethnically Chinese Indonesians were the target of frustration and resentment, as they were the market-dominant minorities in Indonesia despite only making up less than 5 percent of the

inhabitants (Landler, 1998). The public had also directed such anger towards then-president Suharto who had close ties with some of these Chinese businessmen, viewing him as the reason for the corruption and poor economy. In the West, the role of religion in political mobilisation is sometimes underestimated, with the history of the period of Christendom so distant that one hardly notices the existence of that disgraceful past. Religion is very much alive still, even in the twenty-first century.

5.1 Symbiotic relationship between politics and religion

As was mentioned at the earlier section of this paper, the Dutch colonial power had intentionally suppressed the involvement and representation of Islam in politics during colonisation. I would like to propose that this is where the Dutch colonial policies had laid the foundation of grievances, which most prominently manifested in the breaking out of the Maluku Islands conflicts. During Japanese Occupation, the previously contained Islam under the Dutch colonial rule found itself being unleashed. Depending on whichever political actor in power and control, the feelings of the different groups are often tampered with due to the intentional manipulation by certain political actors. Apart from the Dutch and the Japanese, political leaders such as former presidents of Indonesia Suharto and Yudhoyono had caused the salience of one's identity and/or built up the religious tension in the population through the type of policies they had implemented. The intentional stirring up of mistrust towards non-Muslim Indonesians, including the politicians and neighbours, has serious consequences. The most notable example is the consequences brought about by the policies implemented during the New Order regime. It had forcefully merged the four main Islamic political parties, as Suharto had viewed political Islam as one of the threats to his power (Nash, 2018). The other perceived threat was university-organised political opposition groups, an issue that persists till today, though demonstrated in a different form. The movement within the campus ground spread outside of it very quickly, where the situation eventually got out of control. The public involvement apart from the students had witnessed the Muslim majority's venting of their long pent-up frustration on the ethnic Chinese citizens in Indonesia, putting all of the blame and self-perceived grievances on them. It might be a major relief that the anti-Ahok rallies did not turn out the way the May riots did. Since significant components such as an economic crisis and discriminatory policies were

not present, anger towards Mr. Basuki's perceived blasphemous remarks alone were not ripe for an escalation into a deadly riot.

The situation today may look different that in the nineties, but I assert that the threat lingers on. For instance, it was found that '[d]ozens of Indonesian mosques are preaching extremism, including violence against non-Muslims, to government workers' (Smith, 2018). Should Muslims in Indonesia become more and more convinced that the Islamic identity does not just stay within the walls of the mosque but also present in governmental leadership, this will lead to the blurring of the demarcation between religion and state. Following the description of Islam by Huntington, the 'concept of Islam as a unified religious-political community has meant that cores states have usually materialised in the past only when religious and political leadership – the caliphate and the sultanate – have been combined in a single ruling institution' (Huntington, 1996, p. 192).

At the political level, it is a common practice for politicians in Indonesia to join hands with Muslim leaders so as to gain moral legitimacy and appeal to the voters (Burhani & Hui, 2019). Among the Islamic organisations in Indonesia, NU, which happens to be the largest, is known for its tolerance towards the non-Muslims (Menchik, 2015, p. 21) as well as its active participation in the politics. The vital role that religion plays in the country is not be underestimated. This can be observed from how President Joko Widodo has shifted from his initial reputation of not being Islamic enough during the elections in 2014 to the naming of the Muslim cleric Ma'ruf Amin as his vice-presidential nominee. As the 'chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Indonesia's highest Muslim clerical body, and also the *rais aam* (supreme leader) of Nahdlatul Ulama' (Hui & Irawanto, 2018), these credentials will be crucial to boost the President's chances of getting elected for the second term. Back in 2005, MUI had issued a set of *fatwa*, which is a ruling on a point of Islamic law given by a recognised authority, as defined by the dictionary. One of which was the *fatwa* against pluralism, liberalism, and secularism (Bush & Munawar-Rachman, 2014, p. 23). Based on the document published by the MUI online[2], it defines pluralism as the understanding that all religion is the same because the truth for each

religion is relative, therefore one cannot claim the exclusivity of one's religion as the only true one, while the rest is wrong. Pluralism also teaches that everyone, regardless of religion, can enter heaven. Next, liberalism entails the understanding of religious texts (Qur'an and Sunnah) using free mind or logic, and only accepting religious doctrines that are in line with one's logic/thinking. Lastly, secularism denotes the separation of the "worldly affairs" from the religion. It means that religion is only kept between you and God, while the relationship amongst fellow human beings are arranged non-religiously, via a social agreement. Moving on from the definitions of pluralism, secularism and liberalism, what the *fatwa* actually encompasses is the following. First, it holds the beliefs that pluralism, secularism and liberalism are against the Islamic teachings. Second, Muslims are forbidden to follow pluralism, secularism, and liberalism. Third, with regards to Muslim's belief and way of worship, they should be exclusive in nature. This means that they should not mix their religious practice by taking aspects from other religions. Fourth, if Muslims are staying with or surrounded by non-Muslims, Muslims are called to be inclusive and they are still allowed to socialise with other people who are followers of other religions when it comes to social interactions. Hence, in short, when it concerns religion, it has to be kept exclusive. However, regarding social interactions, the *Ummah* (Arabic word for community) Islam is inclusive, and advises against harming one another. In general, a *fatwa* is usually a response to a query the public from within the Muslim community might have, intended as a form of guiding principle for its followers. Thus, even though officially Indonesia is a secular state, religion is hardly separated from politics. There is without doubt that the challenge and contestation against the state's adoption of secularism will be an ongoing struggle

Furthermore, there has been a trend of a rise in "identity" politics in Indonesia, where voters vote for the "identity" of certain candidates instead of focusing on other more important factors of consideration such as the candidates' capabilities (Tjendro, 2019). Over time, this puts the country in the danger of being fragmented, as minorities are squeezed to the sidelines. There is a high likelihood of a sudden outburst due to the built up of politico-religious tension over a period of time, be it in the form of rallies, riots, or even acts of terror. The May 1998 riots should serve as a

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[2] The original text is in Bahasa Indonesia before translation, downloaded from the online MUI

stark warning of the fragility of the social fabric in Indonesia, and the lack of closure from that riots has already created a certain level of mistrust amongst the communities in the society. In fact, it is observed that 'many ethnic Chinese have prepared escape plans in case of future riots and still distrust indigenous Indonesians' (Pandika, 2014). When circumstances such as lack of wise leadership, unemployment and poor economy are actively present, with the addition of PEs, these will facilitate the salience of one's identity, accentuate grievances and thus displaying the phenomenon of relative deprivation.

platform: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxhrwTs0UuTXYXhFcW52TXdmRUU/view

6. Influence of New Media

Since Gurr's study, there have been significant changes in the way people communicate with one another as well as the means through which information are transmitted and received. During the time of his research, as society was at the beginning of undergoing swift changes due to modernisation, it had witnessed the springing up of communal violence in different parts of the world. Today, the entry of a new variable which is social media would most probably play a big role in influencing the extent of relative deprivation experienced by communal groups. And that is, new media. It redefines how information is created and transmitted, as compared to traditional forms of media such as newspaper. Social media enables every individual who has access to technology to be capable of producing their own content. The role played by social media is especially prominent in the case study of the "Anti-Ahok rallies", where the turn-up rate of people at the demonstration was immensely high due to the rapid circulation of messages through Whatsapp and social media (Indra, 2016)[3]. Innovative forms of communication have greatly altered the speed at which information can be received within a short period of time. In addition, the organisers of the protest employed social media tactics, as was seen from the way they had created posters with green background that say "AKSI BELA ISLAM 4 NOV 2016" [4]that people could use to set as profile photos, combined with the dissemination of the hashtag "#PenjarakanAhok" online. The colour green in Islam is typically associated with the Islamic concept of paradise, and using green as the main background colour of the poster is effective in appealing to the subconsciousness of Muslim supporters. Such a strategy might sound trivial, yet it is able to garner much influence in an almost silent and subtle manner. Visual images can act as a very powerful tool, since "language" is not merely written or spoken, but rather, integrated with 'visual images, music and sound effects' (Flairclough, 1995, p. 4). The success seen from the mass mobilisation of people from Jakarta and outside of Jakarta relied not only on the physical turn-out of supporters, but also depended heavily on the online supporters through various social media platforms. This is definitely a new type of trend, not documented and observed by Gurr during the time of his writing. In turn, it affects the politico-religious tension in the society, through the almost endless

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[3] The original article was written in Bahasa Indonesia, before translation.

exchange of information online. The speed at which the news spread is dangerous and even contagious, and is made worse when the news is not even factually accurate or is distorted and misrepresented in the first place. Misinformation online is a major source of threat in not just Indonesia, but in other parts of the world as well. The development associated with technology and new media have opened the doors to fellow followers of the same faith in other parts of the world. Through social media platforms such as Twitter, news typically travel and reach its audience rapidly with just a tap on the smartphones. This is also where ISIS was able to infiltrate into all corners of the earth, influencing people who hail from different background to join them in the holy war against the infidels. The way new media works as compared to traditional forms of media is such that everyone, regardless of their qualification or background, can be a content contributor. The freedom of such non-conventional type of press is a double-edged sword, and exposes countries to threats from the "outside". Unlike conventional warfare, such a threat is hard to detect and contain. Indonesia is no exception, and is definitely not immune to it. The evolution of new media has made the socio-economic fault lines even more prominent than before, as it is now possible to see how well the "neighbour next door" is doing, as compared to oneself. Such is one of the paradoxes of technological advancement, where one's feeling of being relatively deprived in comparison to someone else kicks in, convincing him/her that he/she that the other people who are doing better are liable for their situation. This also echoes what was mentioned earlier in this paper, where the so-called market-dominant minorities have led to much frustration of the majority in the population. The minorities thereby become the subject of such vengeance, especially when the economy of the country is doing poorly. While social media platforms allow different types of opinions to be expressed freely, they have brought forth the high influx of information (either domestic or international) containing extremist views. This might also help to explain why, modernisation has not seen the most of the people in the nation embracing secularism. Instead, it is practically transforming into a more conservative state. Such a trend is especially puzzling, given that modernisation is supposed to result in states becoming less religious over time. Yet, as we have seen throughout the recent incidences in Indonesia, religion still remains a powerful card to be used in politics (Hamayotsu, 2013). Its popularity with both the

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[4] Refer to appendix 2

politicians and the people have not dwindled over the years. It continues to provide people with an alternative explanation for the "difficult" situation they find themselves in, which brings us back to the point on giving people a frame for their grievances. When the society only selectively chooses what it wants to hear, and the PEs grant them that by providing it with a frame, that will contribute to the accumulation of tension in the society.

7. Counter-Extremism Measures

To counter the trend of extremism in Indonesia, an important measure to undertake is to reignite the value of diversity within the public discourse. Pancasila is arguably the main overarching principle keeping the whole country stable, without it the consequences are simply unthinkable. While the question of whether it is a constructed state narrative is not within the discussion of this paper, and even if it is not "religiously correct", I maintain the position that it is politically correct and essential to do so. Without it, the society might be thrown into disarray. In a large country like Indonesia, both top-down and bottom-up (such as grassroots) counter-extremism measures and strategies will have to be undertaken.

In Indonesia, the realisation that an increasing number of young Indonesian Muslims are taking on a more fundamental approach to Islam has led to increased efforts to develop community-based programmes. One of these programmes is the "CERITA programme", where CERITA is the acronym for "Community Empowerment in Raising Inclusivity and Trust through Technology Application". In Bahasa Indonesia, *cerita* means story. The authorities are conscious of the need of these young millennials to have a platform on which they can freely express their opinions, concerns or just sharing their stories. Such a platform, be it social media or other methods, is essential. Forceful attempts to shut opinions out or silence oppositional voices will only drive these people to seek alternative avenues to do vent their frustration, sometimes taking the more extreme route. CERITA was introduced in April 2017, and 'uses the art of storytelling to fight discrimination, promote inclusivity and build trust' (The Habibie Center, 2017). One of the main goals of this programme is to 'strengthen social cohesion (Unity in Diversity) and counter social tension based on attitudes towards cultural and religious differences' (The Habibie Center, 2017). Once again, the state narrative of "Unity in Diversity" is reiterated and promoted. According to the official post on The Habibie Center Facebook page, it says that '[r]ising intolerance and radicalism, directly and indirectly caused by the rapid dissemination of information, especially through social media, has been an issue of great concern that threatens unity in Indonesia'[5]. The statement is accurate in

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[5] Taken from a Facebook post made on 11 February 2017 by The Habibie Center

underlining the accumulating sense of urgency and unease towards such a trend of "intolerance" and "radicalisation". Social media as a platform is commonly used by young people who are tech-savvy. However, it is also the platform on which people in general, and not just the young people, are the most susceptible to radicalisation, collectively termed as cyber-extremism. Social media channels such as YouTube, Twitter and Instagram are all sites where terrorist organisations like ISIS are highly active. In fact, ISIS has a social media control centre known as Al Hayat Media Centre, which disseminates propaganda campaigns and messages, intended to mislead and portray an unrealistic picture of their cause (Awan, 2017, p. 139). ISIS too, has been keeping up with the advancement of social media technology by developing its own Twitter application on Google Play store called "The Dawn of Glad Tidings", to inform jihadists worldwide on the last updates on its terror activities in Iraq and Syria (Chasmer, 2014). The CERTIA programme set up by the Indonesian government is a tool that helps to redirect the youngsters' attention to a regulated and safe environment to express doubts, questions and opinions. Faced with the pervasive threat of ISIS recruiters radicalising young Muslims online, this programme might be effective in countering such a threat in the long run.

The other notable figure which plays a huge role in countering the threat of extremism in Indonesia and in maintaining the state's moderate stance on Islam is NU. It 'preaches an Islam of compassion, inclusivity, and tolerance of other faiths, as opposed to ISIS's fundamentalist, Wahhabi-inspired theology' (Delman, 2016). NU has its network spread all over the world, directly challenging ISIS's narrow interpretation of Islam which views everyone else who does not approve of its idea as infidels. The presence of NU in not just Indonesia but also in the world has been important in providing Muslims an alternative path to take relating to Islam. At the same time, it is helpful that Indonesia is a reasonably stable country politically speaking and that it is not an authoritarian regime. Without these favourable factors, the figures for the number of radicalised individuals or terrorist incidences would most likely be much higher. Hence, the government would need to continue to work towards the preservation and maintenance of a sound political system and a functional state so as to eliminate any chances of terrorist organisations to expand its network and spread its influence in the country.

Conclusion

Looking back at the research question, which is, "Does the concept of relative deprivation explain the politico-religious tension in Indonesia?", the main issue identified while studying the various case studies is the perception that the "other" is either doing better economically, or the perception that they themselves are in a less-than-desired position. Perception has been consistently playing a vital role throughout these cases, which is instrument in sowing seeds of grievances especially when perception morphs into misperception. This is when one party feels that they are deprived financially, and/or even religiously, in relative to another party. The theory of relative deprivation, which was popularised by Ted Gurr's research, is a fitting concept to explain why such feelings of being deprived in relative to another group might contribute to the politico-religious tension in Indonesia. However, in his research, relative deprivation in terms of religion was not studied or mentioned. In this thesis, I attempted to apply his concept to not just in the economic, socio-cultural sense, but also religion more specifically, even though it could be broadly classified under the socio-cultural category. In addition, I had strived to include and consider the element of social media in the theory of relative deprivation, a significant variable that is absent from Gurr's original research. By taking social media into consideration, the theory stands out even more and add a new dimension to it. In particular, social media has made one's identity salient, where an individual is suddenly made aware of one another's differences. Such differences take various forms, which includes economic differences, political differences, and also religious differences. And on some occasions, the perception of such differences can be positive, while on other occasions, it is negative. When the differences are viewed unpleasantly, tensions arise and conflicts may happen. Consequently, people take on extremist stance out of various motivations and reasons. As seen across the cases studied, a few similar traits are shared among them. These are, a leader's charisma to influence and persuade and subsequently radicalise his followers, claiming moral and religious legitimacy, pursue of Islamism with the belief that Pancasila doesn't align with Islamic values, the promise of something more in the future (be it in heaven, or in ISIS territories).

With the current situation in the Middle East and the threat of transnational terror attacks today, Indonesia's progress is of importance to the international community. Reiterating Samuel Huntington's thesis, the long-term goal of moving towards the unity of Muslims is a near impossible task. If the task was to be undertaken, it is very likely going to be met with much violence. This is reflective of the ongoing struggle between various Islamic powers today. Indonesia's disadvantageous geographical position – situated far away from the Middle East – might not be that disadvantageous after all, at least not in the religious sense. Its own unique way of living and belief system, mainly the Pancasila ideology, continues to offer the world a model that successfully incorporates both democracy and Islam. In recent years, the rise of extremist stance and the growing cleavages in the society as well as the increasing vulnerability of the social fabric have been of great concern to the authorities in Indonesia. Politico-religious tension, often manifested in the form of acts of terror such as the series of bombings in Surabaya in 2018, continues to pose a major source of threat to the stability of not just Indonesia itself, but also the whole Southeast Asian region. The fact that it is a country with the highest percentage of Muslims in the world further adds to the reasons why it is important to study and look at the developments in Indonesia. It provides the West a model to fall back on and compare with when analysing the situation in the Middle East. At the same time, with the ongoing threat of extremism and radicalisation in Indonesia, it is undeniable that it is a hotbed for terrorism. However, I assert that what is keeping the lid on to prevent the uncontrollable burst of terrorist activities is the state's unyielding stance on the concept of "Unity in Diversity". Without which, secularism and tolerance towards other state-recognised religions will most possibly cease to exist. It is a constant effort to invoke such narratives to remind the public what they stand for and believe in. The Maluku Islands conflicts act as a forewarning of the potential consequences should the majority of Indonesians stop developing disillusionment with Pancasila and if it ever ceases to be the state's ideology and guiding principle. This is because, it will most likely leave a vacuum behind should it be removed, giving other political actors with hidden agendas a window of opportunity to enter and fill up the vacuum.

In this paper, we have also examined how the state's narrative of the "middle path" Islam, or wasatiyyah concept, plays a pivotal role in steering the country away

from the path of extremism and anchor it in moderation. However, holding up such a rhetoric is potentially problematic, due to the possibility of it being seen as "un-Islamic" or heretical. By taking on the "moderate" interpretation of the holy texts, it raises the question of whether it can still be considered as Islam, especially in the eyes of their fellow Sunni Muslim counterparts in Saudi Arabia. It is also the issue revolving around the "correct" interpretation that has led to many disagreements, and continues to be a major point of contestation across groups and factions within the religion, which can grow extremely violent at times. With that being said, as people grow disillusioned with the idea of tolerance and narrative on moderation in Islam, it will contribute to the weakening of the social fabric in Indonesia, leading to a rise in politico-religious tension. The case of anti-Ahok rallies was a clear example of such presence of tension in the society. As was established in this paper, politics and religion in Indonesia share a symbiotic relationship. For an average Indonesian Muslim, electing the political candidate is akin to a religious commitment. Thus, political entrepreneurs such as FPI's leader Habib Rizieq were quick to point out to the Muslim population that Mr. Basuki had to be removed from his position as he was blasphemous by invoking the name of god.

In sum, the presence of terrorism in Indonesia is not a new phenomenon. From Darul Islam to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), and to the more recent group JAD, terrorist organisations have always be present and new ones will continue to emerge. The key difference is, how Indonesia can build up its psychological defence that is able to withstand and resist against the evolution of terrorist tactics and strategies. The three main case studies presented in this paper demonstrated the different indications of politico-religious tension in Indonesia, where I used Fairclough's CDA analytical method to unpack the speeches, texts, and reports made by various actors involved in the cases studied. The question of whether Indonesia will be engulfed in a hotbed of terrorist activities depends heavily on the political developments of the country, where the government plays a huge responsibility in steering its citizens towards the "moderate" Islamic path. More importantly, the people need to continue believing in the Pancasila model, as well as the state's narrative on "Unity in Diversity", for the easing up of politico-religious tension in society.

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List of appendices

Appendix 1: National Violence Monitoring System, Indonesia (extracted from http://snpk.kemenkopmk.go.id)
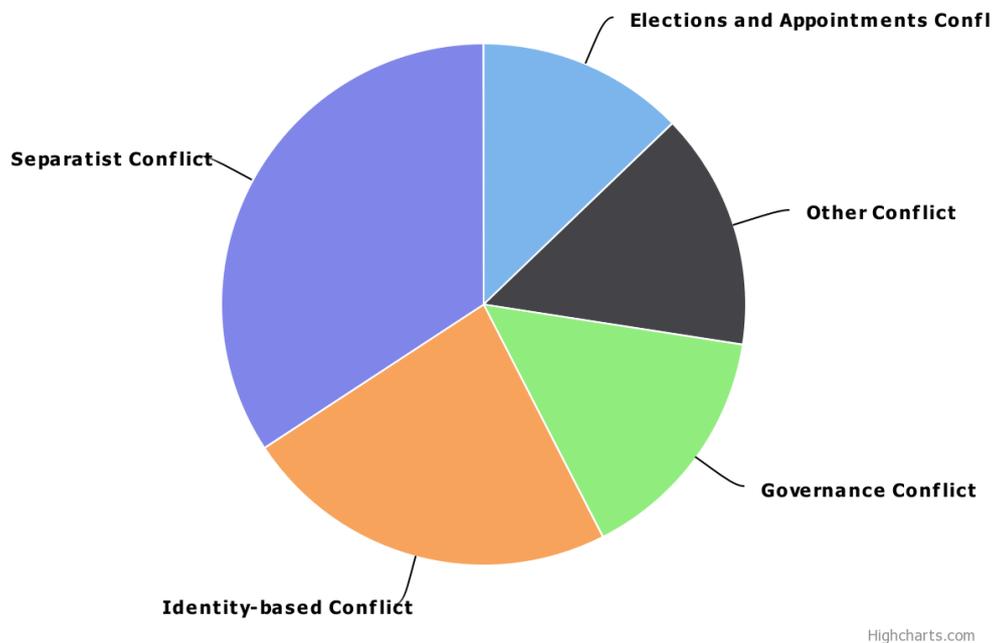
Appendix 2: AKSI BELA ISLAM II 4 NOV 2016 #PenjarakanAhok