Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia: The Quest for the Caliphate and *Shariah*[1]

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Abstract

Since the fall of a notoriously authoritarian President Suharto in May 1998, Indonesia has been undergoing considerable reform of its socio-political condition. Freedom of expression that would have been inconceivable in the past is now guaranteed. The exemplar of this is the assurance of active participation in the public sphere. It is against this favorable backdrop that Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), a revivalist group aspiring to establish the caliphate and to apply the *shariah*, took the opportunity to emerge publicly in 2000. However, despite this favorable political opportunity, its effort to advance its causes does not go unchallenged. Its radical thoughts are often perceived by its assailants as a threat. This paper thus aims to examine the dynamics of the group in its attempts to sustain its footing and to cope with constraints it faces. Social movement theory is applied to better understand its emergence and network patterns as well as political maneuvering.

Introduction

There have been major attempts to adopt social movement theory for the purpose of examining both the emergence and dynamics of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) (Arifin 2005; Karagiannis and McCauley 2006; Karagiannis 2006a, 2006b; Nashir 2007) and other Islamist movements in general (Wictorowicz 2003, Hasan 2006). Wictorowicz's work (2003) undoubtedly aimed to bridge the gap between academic works devoted to analyzing of such groups but mostly lacking in theoretical framework and social movement works that are laden with theoretical framework on the one hand but lacking in analyses of Islamist movements on the other (McAdam et al. 1996; Porta and Mario 1999). These works, though share an object of study, are in a sharp contrast in terms of methodology with works which employ no social movement theories, placing emphasis on historical-descriptive approaches (Cohen 1982; Commins 1991; Farouki 1996, 2000; Cohen 2003; Baran 2004; Mayer 2004; Turmudi and Riza 2005; Rahmat 2005). In order to explain the dynamics of HTI within the socio-political context of Indonesia, this paper uses a social movement theory that is widely used as a tool to analyze Islamist movements. This social movement theory consists of such perspectives as political opportunity, resource mobilization, and framing. Political opportunity perspective argues that the rise and dynamics of social movements are stoutly affected by political circumstances in a country where they operate. The ebb and flow of social movements is thus reliant on the volatility of political structure of the country which could either provide opportunities

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or restraints. While political opportunity perspective closely relates to institutionalized political systems, resource mobilization theory holds that the success of social movements in advancing their causes are contingent upon their ability to effectively exploit available resources through which they are involved in collective action. Political opportunity and resource mobilization perspectives are, however, considered insufficient to comprehensively elucidate the struggle of social movements for implementing their objectives. Framing perspective is consequently needed to explain the process in which particular perceptions of the social movements are socially constructed. These perceptions are indeed essential to mobilize supporters and to appeal to the public (McAdam et al. 1996; Porta and Mario 1999).

This paper is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter analyzes the ebb and flow of political Islam in Indonesia. It describes the level of openness of political system and state's tendency toward suppression from the era of Sukarno to the end of Suharto's regime. It shows how and in what ways HTI together with the other revivalist groups took the opportunity to emerge publicly as a result of major shifts of political system after the fall of Suharto. The second chapter deals with the organizational aspects and network patterns of the group. This chapter analyzes not only HTI's organizational structure and its relationships with the other branches of HT in the world, but also its attempts to disseminate its ideas as far reaching as possible and to extend its networks to the extent that it could expediently materialize its political agendas. The third chapter examines the group's strategies to build its major frame and to counter negative images directed at the group as well as to sustain its footing in the country.

The Dynamics of Political Islam in Indonesia and the Emergence of HTI

Demand for the application of Islam as a state ideology is by no means new in Indonesia. The country's founding fathers, however, vied with each other to put forward either Islam or secularism as the state ideology. Indeed, the early phase of Indonesian history was primary colored by two competing cleavages: *santri* and *abangan*. Geertz (1960) argued that *santri* was a term used to refer to orthodox Muslims, especially among merchants and wealthy peasants in Java Island, while, in contrast, *abangan* referred to those who syncretized Islam and Hindu-Budhist traditions and are considered much less devout Muslims than *santri*.

In the eve of Indonesian declaration of independence on August 17, 1945, the country's prominent political figures convened to formulate the state ideology. The *santri* national figures such as Agus Salim and Wachid Hasyim demanded that Islam be adopted as the state ideology, whereas the *abangan* figures such as Sukarno and Muhammad Hatta held that such exclusive ideology would not fit the multi-religious makeup of the country. After much deliberation, *Pancasila* which literally means five tenets was made the state ideology. The initial tenets of *Pancasila* were as follows:
(1) Belief in one God with an obligation to follow *shariah* for its adherents;
(2) Just and civilized humanity;
(3) The unity of Indonesia;
(4) Democracy guided by inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives;
(5) Social justice for the whole people of Indonesia.

This initial version was later protested by eastern part of Indonesian territory which population was largely composed of Christians and Hindus. Representatives of this territory threatened to separate themselves from Indonesia if the phrase in article 1, "with an obligation to follow *shariah* for its adherents" was not removed. This phrase which was familiarly referred to as *Piagam Jakarta* (Jakarta Charter) was eventually turned down after the representation of *santri* figures agreed on its removal. This revised version of *Pancasila* remains unaltered to this day.

Nevertheless, the removal of *Piagam Jakarta* was considered a defeat of 'nationalist Muslim' elements (Faisal 1999).

In addition to the aforementioned attempt to formulate an Islam-based state ideology, though unsuccessful, there were subsequent rebellions under the banner of Darul Islam that strove to establish an Islamic state separate from Indonesia. Consequently, from 1949 to 1962 Indonesia was undergoing troubled times in dealing with the rebellions occurring in some such regions as West Java, Central Java, Aceh, South Sulawesi, and South Kalimantan.[2] These rebellions, however, diminished and some of its members continued with their struggle underground as Kartosuwiryo, the leader of Darul Islam, was captured and executed by the Indonesian army in August, 1962 (Awwas 2007).

Having failed in 1945, *santri* elements found an opportunity to put forward Islam as a state ideology by means of 1955 general election under the system of parliamentary democracy. The new elected members of parliament resulting from this election was, however, entitled to set up a brand new state constitution. There were four 'big parties' that participated in this one of the fairest elections in the country. They were PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia or Indonesian National Party), Masyumi, Nadhatul Ulama, and PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia or Indonesian Communist Party. These parties were clear-cut representation of *santri* and *abangan* cleavages. Despite their differences, PNI and PKI were categorized as *abangan* parties, while Masyumi and Nadhatul Ulama were considered *santri* parties.[3] Both Masyumi and Nadhatul Ulama gained 39.33% of the total vote which was slightly higher than the combined vote percentage of PNI and PKI that acquired 38.68% (Feith 1957). Since there was no party that won majority vote, competing parties in the newly-formed parliament had to work very hard to implement their political agendas. They were inescapably involved in a fierce and prolonged debate on whether to choose Islam or secularism as the state ideology.

In 1959, the parliament members claimed to have finished about 90% of the overall new constitution draft. However, President Sukarno issued a decree on July 5, 1959, ordering that the parliament be dissolved. This was most likely attributed to the fact that Sukarno was eager to re-apply presidential system in which he could have more leeway to rule the country. The decree also stipulated that the previous '1945 constitution' along with its *Pancasila* be applied (Noer 1983, 1987). From this very episode to the end of Sukarno's regime, Indonesia was ruled under the so-called 'guided democracy' which was tantamount to authoritarianism. It was against the backdrop of this particular democracy that Sukarno asserted that he had the authority to strictly dominate the country's politics and was therefore not reluctant to wipe out his political opponents. At this juncture, while Masyumi, the biggest Islamic party that was ranked the second in 1955 general election, was disbanded, the other such Islamic parties as Nadhatul Ulama, PSII (Partai Serikat Islam Indonesia or Indonesian Islamic Union Party) and Perti (Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiah or Islamic Education Movement) came to terms with this restricted political condition.

In 1966 Sukarno failed to meet people's demands for disbanding PKI following its involvement in masterminding the killing of six high-ranked army generals. This era of turmoil was exacerbated by over inflation, thus significantly lowering Sukarno's popularity. Suharto, then Strategic Commander of Army, played a leading role in appealing to the public by wiping out PKI. He officially succeeded Sukarno on March 12, 1967. Under new regime, *santri* elements expected that their aspirations would be more accommodated given Suharto's successful track record in getting the country rid of communism which had invariably been considered an opponent by *santri*.

In the first general election held by the new regime on July 3, 1971, there were four participating Islamic parties; PSII (Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia or Indonesian Islamic Union Party), Parmusi (Partai Muslimin Indonesia or Indonesian Muslims Party), Nadhatul Ulama, and

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2 For a more detailed account of Darul Islam rebellion, see Dijk 1981.

3 For a more comprehensive explanation of participating political parties in Indonesian 1955 general election, see Feith 1957.

Perti (Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiyah or Islamic Education Movement). However, throughout the regime this was the first and the last general election in which various Islamic parties were allowed to participate. Under the slogan of political stability, officially through law number 3 issued on August 27, 1975, Suharto took measures to reduce the number of political parties. Previous secular and Christian parties were merged into a new party called PDI (Partai Demokrasi Perjuangan or Indonesian Democratic Party), while Islamic parties were merged into a PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or Development and Unity Party). The last party was Suharto's Golkar (Golongan Karya or Functional Groups) (Karim 1983).

Though this measure was considered a clear attempt to curtail political freedom, it was, however, not as severe as subsequent laws on the imposition of *Pancasila* as the one and only ideology for political parties and mass organizations. According to the law number 3 issued on February 19, 1985, it was stipulated that *Pancasila* be accepted and applied as the one and only political parties' ideology. PPP as the only representation of Islamic party was pressured to change its Ka'bah[4] symbol to a star symbol as a result of this measure. Four months later under the law number 8 issued on June 17, 1985 the imposition of *Pancasila* as the one and only ideology was extended not only to political parties, but also to all mass organizations. This consequently forced such Islamic organizations as Muhammadiyah, Nadhatul Ulama, HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or Islamic Students Union) and PII (Pelajar Islam Indonesia or Indonesian Islamic Students) whose ideology was either Islam or Islam and *Pancasila* to delete Islam from their organizational foundations and to stick to *Pancasila* as their sole ideology (Ismail 1999). The other unfavorable measure taken by the regime through the Department of Education was the prohibition of the wearing of headscarf among female Muslim students in the public schools (Liddle 1996).

This set of measures had obviously put Islamic elements along with their political aspirations on the fringes of the country's political scene. However, in the late 1980s, Suharto began to approach Islamic elements, seeking a new client with which he could maintain the status quo. This was attributable to the fact that Suharto could no longer rely on his old client, General L.B. Murdani, then Armed Forces Commander, who had been serving as Suharto's most trusted person in the armed forces from 1983 to 1987. Suharto seemed to be irritated when Murdani challenged him with such sensitive issues as the need to come up with the presidential succession and complaints about his family's business activities (Liddle 1996; Honna 2003). Liddle (1996) pointed out that for the purpose of appealing to Islamic elements, Suharto's regime took some such measures as publishing a codification of Islamic family law, prohibiting a national sport lottery that was previously permitted, abandoning the prohibition on the wearing of headscarf among female Muslim students in the public schools, granting permission to establish an Islamic bank, promoting the establishment of ICMI (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia or Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association) that aimed not only to promote Islam, but also to develop science and technology as well as to improve the quality of human resources. This state-promoted organization provided Muslim intellectuals with a quintessential stepping stone to higher political office. In addition, for the first time, in the age of 69, Suharto and his family went to Mecca for the pilgrimage.

This episode of harmonious relations between Suharto and Islamic elements did not, however, accommodate political issues such as those of the re-inclusion of Jakarta Charter in *Pancasila* and the abolition of law on the imposition of *Pancasila* as the one and only ideology. At this juncture, Islamic elements were given more leeway to play a decisive role in the public sphere in so far as they did not touch upon any political issues. The mainstream Islamic ideas at the time were far from being classified as a threat by the regime, since they were more focused on how to succeed in contributing to Suharto's development agendas than carry such sensitive issues as *shariah* or Islamic state (Liddle 1996; Bruinessen 2002). This sort of patron-client relation remained steady to the end of Suharto's regime.

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4 *Ka'bah* is a cub building located inside Al-Harom Mosque in Mecca on which Muslims direct their face during prayer.

Asian financial crisis that struck the country in the late 1990s was the impetus for massive demonstrations performed mainly by students and intellectuals. The skyrocketing inflation coupled with Suharto's incapability of solving the problem were the raison d'être of this large-scale protest demanding that Suharto who had been in power for approximately 32 years be toppled. 'Reformasi', a word that is derived from 'reformation', thus, became the most prevalent slogan that were ubiquitously expressed. Due to strong pubic pressure, Suharto opted to resign on May 21, 1998 and was replaced by his Vice President, B.J. Habibie.

From the era of President Habibie onward, Indonesia has been gradually reforming its political system and military. The armed forces that used to play a dominant role in socio-political sphere is now undergoing considerable reforms.[5] Active public participation in the political spheres is guaranteed. The act of criticizing the government was therefore no longer deemed taboo. The euphoria in the 'reformasi' era was expressed by the establishment of political parties with multifarious platforms. Thus, as many as 48 political parties that participated in 1999 general election, the first election held in 'reformasi' era, did not come as a surprise. In addition to these political parties, there were a number of Islamic revivalist groups that tried to take advantage of this favorable political opportunity to emerge and to advance their causes.

The perspective of political opportunity argues that the ebb and flow of social movements is inextricably connected to political factors of a country attached to them. The level of openness of political system and state's tendency toward suppression are among the principal features of this theory (McAdam 1996, Porta 1999). During his regime, Suharto took measures to safeguard the national stability at the expense of freedom of expression. A subsequent set of law that was issued to reduce the number of political parties and the imposition of *Pancasila* as the one and only ideology for all political parties and mass organizations were a few examples of his political maneuvering to effectively obstruct the opportunity of his political assailants. Furthermore, in the era of authoritarianism in which the military fully backed up the regime, any kinds of demonstration and expression would be regarded as not only a strong taboo, but also considered illegal. This was all done under the cloak of maintaining national stability. Any person or institution that failed to comply with such uncompromising rules would be imposed strict sanctions. The low degree of level of openness and the high degree of state's tendency toward repression rendered the activities of both leftist and rightist movements impossible. If there were such movements, they really had to work hard to operate clandestinely. This degree of openness and repression, however, significantly decreased following the fall of Suharto. As Indonesian public as well as international community closely monitored the transition period from the old authoritarian regime to the new 'reformasi' one, Habibie and his subsequent successors were strongly committed to implementing democracy and its values. It is definitely against this very backdrop that HTI (Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia) with other such Islamic revivalist groups as FPI (Front Pembela Islam or Islamic Defense Front), FKAWJ (Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah or Forum for Followers of the Sunnah and the Community of the Prophet) and MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia or Indonesian Holly Warriors Council) appeared publicly, trying to benefit from this favorable political opportunity to start carrying out their agendas.

Before we discuss HTI in detail, the characteristics of the other Islamic revivalist groups mentioned above will be briefly described. The author uses the term revivalist to label these groups on the grounds that they demand a high profile in the realm of social and politics. Esposito and Voll (2001) did not define Islamic revivalism as condition in which Islam had disappeared or has been absent in the Muslim world and should therefore be revived. They held a view that revivalism was, however, viewed as not only a religious, but also a socio-political phenomenon. Based on this definition, they classified such Islamic groups as Muslim Brotherhood and Pakistan-based Jamaat-i-Islami as Islamic revivalist movements. The underlying feature of most of these groups is a strong belief that *shariah* should be applied in the society in toto, though they differ on how to put it into

5 For comprehensive analyses on Indonesian military reforms, see for example Honna 2003.

practice. Let us now move on to Indonesian Islamic revivalist groups.

The first group is FKAWJ (Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah or Forum for Followers of the Sunnah and the Community of the Prophet). It was an umbrella organization of Laskar Jihad, a paramilitary group that waged *jihad* (religious war) in two Indonesian areas of Ambon and Poso that had been suffering from protracted civil war between Muslims and Christians since the demise of Suharto's regime.[6] The group firstly drew public attention when it held a mass gathering in Yogyakarta in January 2000. The formation of Laskar Jihad itself was intended to be the paramilitary wing of FKAWJ and to back Muslims in these particular regions. It was established and led by a Yemeni descendant, Ja'far Umar Tholib, an influential figure of *Salafis*, an Islamic community that claims to be the followers of *Salaf al-Salih* (devout ancestors). Ja'far resented the fact that the government was helpless in taking swift and decisive measures to deal with the conflicts. The new government had considerable difficulties to overcome multi-dimensional crises the country faced. On the one hand it attempted to escape from the crises in the new atmosphere in which democracy and civil supremacy gained momentum, but on the other hand it underwent considerable international and domestic pressure for its past heavy-reliant on military approaches to coping with the country's internal problems. It was against this backdrop that Laskar Jihad, allegedly under the auspices of disenchanted military factions, found the opportunity to dispatch more than seven thousands holy fighters over a two-year period to these embattled regions (Hasan 2006). While fighting against Christian paramilitary groups, it also attempted to succeed in spreading *da'wah* (Islamic propagation) to the society in the regions. The group was also recognized for its uncompromising attitudes toward immoral acts. It was not hesitant to attack cafés, brothels, and discotheques in the name of the *shariah* implementation. Following the Bali Bombing tragedy that claimed the life of 202 people, most of whom being foreigners, and wounded hundreds of people, Ja'far surprisingly decided to disband the group together with its paramilitary wing on October 12, 2002. Through a press conference, Ja'far stated that the group's deviation from its original aim and the fact that the paramilitary wing was no longer needed in the regions were among the reasons for its dissolution.

The second group is FPI (Fron Pembela Islam or Islamic Defense Front).[7] It was established by some *habaib* (Muslims who claim to the descendants of Prophet Muhammad), *ulama* (Muslim scholars), and Muslim activists on August 17, 1998 in Al-Umm traditional Islamic school, Jakarta. Nevertheless, the group's real activities such as holding religious conferences, Islamic teaching circles, and even demonstrations were in existence prior to its date of establishment. The central figure of the group who also serves as the leader is Muhammad Rizieq Shihab, a Yemeni descendant who graduated from King Saud University majoring in Islamic law. The primary goal of the group is to carry out *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* which roughly means 'calling people to do good deeds and preventing them from bad deeds'. Though it claims to have built a large number of branches in various big cities in the country, Al-Zastrouw (2006) pointed out that its organizational structure and orientation lack clarity. Within its organizational hierarchy, *habaib* and *ulama* are the ones who mostly fill the strategic positions, while the rank and file members are largely drawn from ordinary people who do not necessarily have good Islamic backgrounds. In addition, many the unemployed and thugs are strikingly recruited to fill the very bottom of organizational hierarchy due to the group's leaders' belief that this type of people need to be guided to the right path and it is part of their responsibilities to accommodate them. Like FKAWJ that set up a paramilitary wing called Laskar Jihad, the group also largely relied on Laskar Pembela Islam (Islamic Defence Force) to advance its causes. The group is, however, involved in activities such as demonstrations to demand that the *shariah* be applied, yet in the name of the implementation of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar,* it also frequently conduct a sweep of places that they regard as non-Islamic such as

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6 For detailed descriptions of FKWAJ, see for example Davis 2002; Bruinessen 2002; Hasan 2006; Umam 2006.

7 For comprehensive analyses of FPI, see Al-Zastrouw 2006. For other accounts that concisely discussed the group, see for example Bruinessen 2002; Hassan 2006; Umam 2006.

brothels, cafés, and discotheques to admonish their owners for running such business. Rizieq Shihab was recently arrested and put on trial by the police for bearing responsibility as the leader of the group whose members were involved in a physical attack on an alliance called AKBB (Aliansi Kebangsaan untuk Kebebasan Beragama or The Nationalist Alliance for Freedom of Religion) as it commemorated the birth of *Pancasila* on June 1, 2008 in the area of the National Monument, Jakarta. FPI claimed that its members were provoked into an attack by AKBB that at that time performed a protest against a demand for disbanding Indonesian branch of Ahmadiyya, an Islamic organization in which FPI viewed as illegal and was accordingly worth disbanding. The arrest of its leader might, however, weaken its future activities.

MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia or Indonesian Holly Warriors Council) is the third group to be discussed here.[8] It was established on August 7, 2000 in Yogyakarta city as a result of 'the first national congress of mujahidin' aiming to discuss such issues as the application of *shariah* and the implementation of the caliphate or *imamah* (Islamic leadership). There were approximately two thousands participants attended the congress. They mostly consisted of *ulama* and Muslim intellectuals from around the country who had strong stance on the application of *shariah*. The congress ultimately proposed a draft called *Piagam Yogyakarta* (Yogyakarta Charter) whose contents insisted that all ideologies that contradicted Islam be rejected and *da'wah* and *jihad* for the sake of the dignity of Islam be carried out. Abu Bakar Baasyir, a figure of Yemeni descent, was chosen as the leader of the group. Together with Abdullah Sungkar, another Yemeni descendant, who founded a Ngruki traditional Islamic school in Solo city, Baasyir was ever arrested in November 1978 for getting involved in an attempt to establish an Islamic state. They were released in 1982, but decided to flee the country to Malaysia a few years later in order to prevent from facing another jail punishment following his rejection of the imposition of *Pancasila* as the one and only ideology issued in 1985. Both of them returned to Indonesia in 1999 as the country entered a 'reformasi' order, but Sungkar died not long afterward (Umam 2006; Hasan 2006). In 2003 he was charged with immigration violation. In 2004, he had to face another charge of his involvement in 2002 Bali Bombing. He was then punished a jail sentence and released on June 14, 2006 after spending two years and six months in prison.[9] Hasan (2006) indicated the group's involvement in dispatching holy fighters to the embattled Ambon and Poso, though, in contrast to Laskar Jihad, it preferred to operate in small units. Compared to the other aforementioned groups, MMI, closely associates itself with Jakarta Charter and Darul Islam Movement and gives weight to the issue of *shariah* application as shown by its effort to lobby Muslims parliamentarians to incorporate the *shariah* into the state constitution and to support its enactment in the regional level. Mass gatherings, seminars, paramilitary trainings, and demonstrations constitute its main activities.

After briefly describing the features of three Islamic revivalist groups that have been illuminating political Islam in Indonesia since the fall of Suharto, our focus now turns to Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) which constitutes the main topic of this paper. Although it has been only 8 years since its first public appearance in 2000, the group is by no means new, for its first cells were created in 1982 by a young Lebanese Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) member who migrated to Australia, Abdurrahman al-Baghdadi. He was invited to do a stint in Al-Ghazali Islamic boarding school located in Bogor city by Abdullah bin Nuh, an Indonesian Islamic scholar who ran the school. He took this opportunity to set up HTI's initial cells and to educate them according to the group's platform through his interaction with Muslim students in a Bogor Institute of Agriculture mosque called Al-Ghifari.[10] University students were the most targeted segment of its *da'wah* during its early period. From Bogor Institute of Agriculture, its cells extended into many other universities, particularly in Java Island. It was through LDK (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus or Campus *Da'wah*

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8 For furher discussion on the group, see Bruinessen 2002; Hasan 2006; Umam 2006.
9 Detik.com. Abu Bakar Baasyir Bebas 14 Juni (Abu Bakar Baasyir Released on June 14). July 23, 2008.
http://www.detiknews.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2006/bulan/05/tgl/23/time/181145/idnews/601102/idkanal/10
10 For the transmission of revivalist movements from the Middle East to Indonesia, see Rahmat 2005.

Circle)[11], an Islamic circle that has existed in virtually all universities in Indonesia since 1980s, that HTI endeavored to disseminate its thoughts. Rahmat (2005) noted that in addition to HTI, Tarbiyah Movement, an Islamic group whose ideas were heavily influenced by an Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood that eventually transformed into an Islamic political party which is now called PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or Justice and Welfare Party) also benefited from the existence of LDK. However, due to certain platform differences, in an effort to appeal to Muslim students these two groups were inescapably involved in an intense competition. The group had invariably been operating clandestinely from the outset by not revealing its appellation aimed at averting state apparatus oppression. Such a strategy was not uncommon in the era, given the fact that the regime would not have allowed any perceived threats emerging from this sort of movement under the pretext of maintaining national stability. It was not until the group launched its first International Conference on Caliphate which was held in Tennis Indoor Stadium, Jakarta on May 28, 2000 that the name of HTI was ultimately proclaimed to the Indonesian public. In this conference, there were two HTI figures: Muhammad Usman and Muhammad al-Khaththath, one HT figure from Australia: Ismail al-Wahwah, and one HT figure from Malaysia: Sharifuddin M. Zain, delivered a speech. Apart from publicly introducing HTI, the conference aimed to convey a message that the caliphate is the only solution for dealing with multi-dimensional problems afflicting the whole Muslims today. One of the speakers, Muhammad Usman, argued that the notion of nationalism has, in fact, plunged Muslims into prolonging miseries, for it has divided the Muslim world into a multitude of nation-states to the extent that there is no unity among 1.4 billions of Muslims. This first public appearance, however, did not only surprise the public, but also those who had been studying and loyally adhering to its thoughts. As a matter of fact, many of its present members were not aware that the thoughts that they had been studying and familiar with actually belonged to HTI.[12]

In this chapter we have discussed the nature of political Islam in Indonesia as well as the ebb and flow of the struggle of Islamic elements which are famously referred to as *santri* for the application of *shariah*. The analyses were focused on the dynamics of Islamic actors that played an important role in the country's politics as well as measures taken by both Sukarno and Suharto regimes to effectively curb the development of Islamic elements. We then moved on to discuss the impact of the fall of Suharto that provided a favorable political opportunity for the emergence of the so-called Islamic revivalist groups. There is a group that appears to be the reincarnation of Darul Islam movement as represented by MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia or Indonesian Holly Warriors Council). Another group is FKWAJ with its paramilitary wing called Laskar Jihad that arouse out of the government's incapability of overcoming Ambon and Poso conflicts. The others are FPI (Fron Pembela Islam or Islamic Defense Front) that campaigns for *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (calling people to do good deeds and preventing them from bad deeds) and HTI (Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia) with its aspirations to the caliphate. Their platform and programs might be different from each other, yet they all agree that the application of *shariah* in Indonesia is of paramount importance. In the next chapter, we will pay closer attention to organizational and ideological aspects of HTI. Emphasizes will be given on how HTI mobilizes its resources within the socio-political context of the country.

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11 For more detailed descriptions of LDK, see its website on http://www.fsldkn.org.
12 Abdullah (spokesperson of HTI Central Java Province Branch), in discussion with the author, March 20, 2008.

Organizational Aspects and Network Patterns

In this chapter, we will be examining HTI's organizational aspects and network patterns. The perspective of resource mobilization assumes that the success of social movements relied on their ability to exploit material resources and mobilize dissident support (McAdam et al. 1996). Employing this perspective, we will ascertain how HTI struggles for recruiting its members and building its networks within the socio-political context of Indonesia. We will also analyze the group's organizational structure so as to ascertain the patterns of its relationships with the central leadership and the other branches of HT. Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) is an Indonesian branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)[13], a self-proclaimed transnational political party established in Al-Quds, Jerusalem by an Islamic scholar as well as judge, Taqiuddin al-Nabhani in 1953.[14] It was not until the beginning of 2000s that HT which is literally translated as 'Party of Liberation' received considerable attention in the academic realm, thanks partly to the very occurrence of 9/11 that brought about 'War on Terrorism' campaign pioneered by the U.S. aiming to annihilate such terrorist groups as Al-Qaeda and Taliban.[15] This has inevitably brought a number of Islamic groups ranging from Palestine-based Hamas which has always been considered a rogue group to much less radical Muslim Brotherhood launched in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna[16], not to mention HT to the target of this particular long-term war. Once arguably the least known Islamic group, HT is now gaining more and more popular exposure, particularly in the eyes of think tanks which are concerned with efforts to thwart perceived threats posed by radical Islamic groups.

According to some literature, Taqiuddin al-Nabhani pulled out of Muslim Brotherhood before founding HT in which he used to be active due to disagreement over organizational methods it adopted which he regarded as being too soft (Cohen 1982; Cohen 2003; Baran 2004). However, quite the opposite, HTI dismissed this supposition and held that al-Nabhani never officially joined Muslim Brotherhood, yet he did make friends with some of the group's members in Jordan such as Muhammad al-Khayyat.[17] The other scholar such as Farouki (1996) who conducted a very comprehensive research on the group seemed to maintain her objectivity by not giving comments on this disputed issue. Commins (1991) pointed out that al-Nabhani aspired to revive a transnational Islamic caliphate (*khilafah*) which once united all Muslims in the world but ended up being dissolved by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, alias Attaturk officially March 3, 1924.[18]

The resumption of Islamic way of life and promulgation of Islamic teachings (*da'wah*) serves as its general objectives.[19] Although these objectives seem to be very common and share tone with other Islamic groups, HT articulates them into a much more definite approach by placing emphasis on the restoration of the caliphate. Albeit the goal of establishing the caliphate is of paramount importance, its members do not leave aside an effort to carry *da'wah* in order to change the situation of corrupt society whose way of life—according to them—has been heavily contaminated with such non-Islamic thoughts as democracy, nationalism, capitalism, secularism, the

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13 Muhammad Ismail Yusanto, (national spokesperson of HTI), in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.

14 For a general description of Hizb ut-Tahrir, see Central Hizb ut-Tahrir official website: www.hizbuttahrir.org
        and for official website of Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia branch, see www.hizbut-tahrir.or.id

15 There are several literature that either exclusively or partly touch upon Hizb ut-Tahrir prior to year 2000 such as those by Cohen 1982; Commins 1991; Margulies and Yildizoglu 1988; Farouki 1996; Midlarsky 1998. However, we can search easily an abundance of them from the year 2000 onward (e.g. Cohen 2003; Mayer 2004; Akbarzadeh 2004a; 2004b; Baran 2004, Karagiannis 2006a; 2006b; Mandaville 2007).

16 For accounts of Muslim Brotherhood, see for example Husaini 1956; Mitchell 1969.

17 HTI member, in correspondence with the author, February 1, 2008. This member spoke under the condition of anonymity as he was not a person in authority to answer inquiries about the group. In keeping with the group's rules, only the spokesperson has this particular authority.

18 For the history of Ottoman Empire, see for example Frazee 1983; Faroqhi 1999.

19 Hizb ut-Tahrir Official Website. Definition. Dec. 29, 2007. http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org/index.php/EN/def

nation-state and some other Western-inspired thoughts into an Islamic society.[20] The rejection of the aforementioned mainstream notions has undoubtedly placed HT in an array of Islamic groups with an extreme posture not only against the West but also conventional wisdom, exposing itself to vulnerable position in the epoch of "War against Terrorism" which appears to be tantamount to "War against Extremism". HT views the clash of civilization, particularly between Islam and the West as inevitable (Hizb ut-Tahrir 2002).

Its method to convey the *da'wah* emulates the one practiced by Prophet Muhammad throughout his prophethood. Accordingly, HT specifies its method of action into three stages as follows:[21]

(1) The fist stage: the stage of culturing to produce people who believe in the idea and the method of the Party so that they form the Party group;

(2) The second stage: the stage of interaction with *ummah*, to let *ummah* embrace and carry Islam so that *ummah* takes it up as its issue, and thus works to establish it in the affairs of life;

(3) The third stage: the stage of establishing the Islamic state (*khilafah*), implementing Islam generally and comprehensively, and carrying it as a message to the world.

HT claims to have passed the first stage of action since the very beginning of the party establishment. It is, however, still grappling with the second stage as the ultimate objective—establishing the caliphate—to date remains unattainable. It is worth noting that HT recognizes the concept of *tholabun nusroh* (seeking for protection) in which HT could give a *bai'ah* (the process of taking an oath of loyalty) to a certain political figure who holds power or will most likely hold power in the near future. This was evident when HT sent delegations to meet with Ayatollah Khomeini in Paris in the eve of Iranian Revolution, asking him to be a caliph on condition that Khomeini agreed with HT's proposed concept of the caliphate. This lobbying effort ended in failure as Khomeini did not adequately respond to this offer which was most likely due to his different understanding of the concept of Islamic leadership and Islamic state (Farouki 1996; Abedin 2004b). Though this attempt was a complete failure, the group seems to be consistent in seeking a potential caliph to whom it can give a *bai'ah*. In the mid 1990s, the group reattempted to persuade Mullah Omar, then Afghanistan's de facto head of state, to accept a caliph position offer. However, this also ended unsuccessfully as Mullah Omar was only interested in being a leader of Afghanistan, not a leader of the caliphate which is transnational by nature.[22]

HT membership is open to Muslims men and women either they are Arab or non-Arab. Its membership is also, interestingly, accessible not only to Sunni Muslims but also to Shiite as it is clearly affirmed in its organizational foundation that it invites all Muslims regardless of their nationalities, colors or schools of thought (*mazhab*).[23] However, in practice it is most likely that the majority of its members are drawn from Sunni Muslims due to differences of the concept of *imamah* (Islamic leadership) between Sunni and Shiite (Farouki 1996; Abedin 2004b). The majority of Shiite Muslims believe that there are 12 imam (leaders) after the death of Prophet Muhammad who were infallible and able to guide *ummah* according to the divine law and it is therefore only them who deserve to lead the *ummah*. However, according to Shiite, the twelfth imam had disappeared and has been hiding, yet he would come out one day to bring justice to the world. In contrast, Sunni Muslims hold a view that any Muslim who fulfills the requirements for being an imam has the right to lead the *ummah* regardless of whether or not he is of Prophet's descent.

The way the group operates and recruits its members resembles Marxist-Leninist party which is highly secretive, deliberately selecting cell model to circumvent persecution by authorities in most countries it is present. Its members take responsibility to flourish the cell in which one cell consists of four to five individuals who do neither necessarily know nor make contact with other

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20   Hizb ut-Tahrir. Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22   HTI member, in discussion with the author, March, 2008. Due to the sensivity of this information and the informant's security considerations, the author decided not to reveal his name.

23   Ibid.

cells, functioning in line with a pyramid model (Cohen 2003, Farouki 1996; Cohen 2003; Akbarzadeh 2004a; 2004b; Baran 2005; Arifin 2005). Nevertheless, Muhammad Ismail Yusanto, the national spokesperson of HTI, totally disagreed with this 'Marxist-Leninist' label on the grounds that such a label was fallacious. In an article entitled "Sharia and Caliphate for a Better Indonesia," (Jakarta Post April 28, 2008) Yusanto argued that the hierarchical structure of any organizations cannot be exclusively categorized as adhering to either Marxist-Leninist or communist party, for if we stick to this premise the military and parochial organizations can also be simply labeled as communist accordingly. In addition, the group's clandestineness posture may not apply to certain places where HT is granted permission to exist.[24]

While it is evident that HT eschews being an exclusive sect-based group, its financial resources, though solid, are anything but definite (Karagiannis 2006a, 2006b). Nonetheless, Cohen (1982) and Farouki (1996) mentioned that the group largely derived its financial sources from member fees. This fact was also contended by HTI internal sources.[25] However, an internal source said that in addition to member fees, the group may receive financial support from those who are not necessarily HTI members, but on condition that they have to be in the position of supporting HTI thoughts and this financial support must be unconditional. HTI referred to this type of people as *muayyid* (supporter).[26]

HT's headquarters location is among the most contentious issues to discuss. While many posited that London, Britain serves as its base (Cohen 2003; Akbarzadeh 2004a, 2004b; Ayoob 2005; Adamson 2005; Karagiannis 2006a), Jordan is, too, claimed to be its headquarters (Ilkhamov 2001; Baran 2004; Abedin 2004a). Cohen (1982) and Farouki (1996) elaborated that in its initial phase, the group's headquarters changed from one country to another. The initial headquarters from which the *amir*, a term used to refer to the group's highest leader, played a dominant role in a day-to-day organizational activities was located in Jerusalem. As al-Nabhani moved to Damascus in 1953, the headquarters was relocated with him. Likewise, it was moved to Beirut in 1956 and 1959 when al-Nabhani stayed there. These shifts in headquarters location did not, however, come as a surprise due to the fact that in many Middle East countries the group was under tight surveillance to the extent that it needed to carefully select a place where it was deemed secure. This unfavorable political situation in the Middle East remains more or less the same today in which the group is considered outlawed. Despite disagreement over the headquarters' location, it is most likely that Jordan is the real base of the group. Jordan has always been serving as HT's stronghold and it is implied that HT base in Jordan exerted its authority when it severely criticized then leader of HT Britain, Omar Bakri Muhammad, for deviating from the group's strategy. Omar eventually resigned from his post in 1996 and decided to establish a splinter group called Al-Muhajiroun (Farouki 1996, 2000). Accordingly, the assumption that London serves as its headquarters seems to be baseless, for it is not based on a comprehensive understanding of the group's organizational structure. London is merely a branch of HT and it is part of HT British branch that has the same standing as other HT branches such as Indonesia, Australia, Turkey, Palestine, Uzbekistan, etc.

Farouki (1996) pointed out that the highest organizational structure of HT is called the leadership committee (*al lajna al-markaziyah*) which is headed by *amir*. The leadership committee holds supreme authority in which his decisions are binding on all HT members. Moreover, this committee has immense authority and prerogative to lead the party and to monitor its overall progress. The group is accordingly an exemplar of a centralized organization that exacts strict compliance from all of its members. Al-Nabhani was the founder as well as the first *amir* of the group that lasted until his death on June 20, 1977. He was then succeeded by Abdul Qadim Zallum who had worked hand in hand with him since the group inception. When Zallum passed away, he

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24 Yusanto, in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.
25 Yusanto. Ibid.
26 HTI member, in discussion with the author, March, 2008. Due to the sensivity of this information and the informant's security considerations, the author decided not to reveal his name.

was replaced by Ata Abu Rashta, then HT Jordanian branch spokesperson, on April 13, 2003.[27] Abu Rashta is therefore a present *amir* of the group. It is typically the nature of the group that the tenure of the *amir* lasts until his death unless there is a palpable violation of Islamic law committed by the *amir* amid his period. However, in HT's overall history, there is no leadership succession that is due to this violation. This succession type strictly follows the leadership succession patterns in the period of Caliph Rasyidin (the rightly guided Caliph) in which the tenure of the caliph ended and was replaced when he was dead. Below the leadership committee there is a provincial committee (*al lajna al-wilayah*) which is led by a man referred to as *mu'tamad*. The committee consists of five to ten members who are responsible for everything related to the group's affairs in the province. These members are electable and all the group's members have the right to participate in direct election of the committee in the province where they dwell. As for the *mu'tamad*, it is nevertheless always directly appointed by *amir* for reasons of maintaining firm control over the committee members. *Mu'tamad* accordingly possesses special powers within the provincial committee members. The provincial committee represents the leadership committee in the provincial area it operates and its position is therefore so strategic that the success or failure of the group in this province largely relies on its role. The provincial committee is actually HT branches in the state level such as represented by HT Indonesia, HT Britain, HT Australia, HT Turkey, and so forth. These HT provincial committees report all of their activities mainly by means of the Internet and directly to the leadership committee and there is no necessary horizontal coordination and communication among these provincial committees (Rahmat 2005). It is stipulated in its administrative law that the provincial committee is established in the capital of the province. According to HT's organizational structure, the capital of Indonesian provincial committee is therefore the capital of Indonesia which is Jakarta. Below the provincial committee is a local committee whose members consist of five people, including its head who is referred to as *naqib*. The local committee is established by the provincial committee in each urban center. The local committee of HTI accordingly resides the capital of Indonesian provinces. HTI claims to have successfully built its local committee in virtually all the country's provinces. As it is written in its monthly magazine (*Al-Wa'ie* Number VIII, February 2008), its local committees have scattered over such regions as Java and Madura Islands which are considered the stronghold of the group, Sumatera Island which includes Riau Islands and Batam, Sulawesi Island, Bali Island, Nusa Tenggara Island, Maluku Island, Kalimantan Island, and the very eastern part of the country, Papua. The *naqib* is responsible to deliver reports regarding the group's activities in this urban center to the provincial committee and to supervise study circles (*halaqa*) which constitute the lowest and the smallest unit of HT's organizational structure. The study circle is headed by *mushrif* and consists of five members or novices (*daaris*) who are still in the stage of studying the group's literature. The *mushrif* bears responsibility to guarantee the smooth knowledge transfer of HT's literature to the novices.

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27 Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain Official Website. Profile of Sheikh Ata Abu Rashta. July 22, 2008.
http://www.hizb.org.uk/hizb/who-is-ht/prominent-members/profile-of-sheikh-ata-abu-rashta.html

Figure 1. The Organizational Structure of HT. This figure is drawn according to the group's structure as depicted by Farouki (1996).
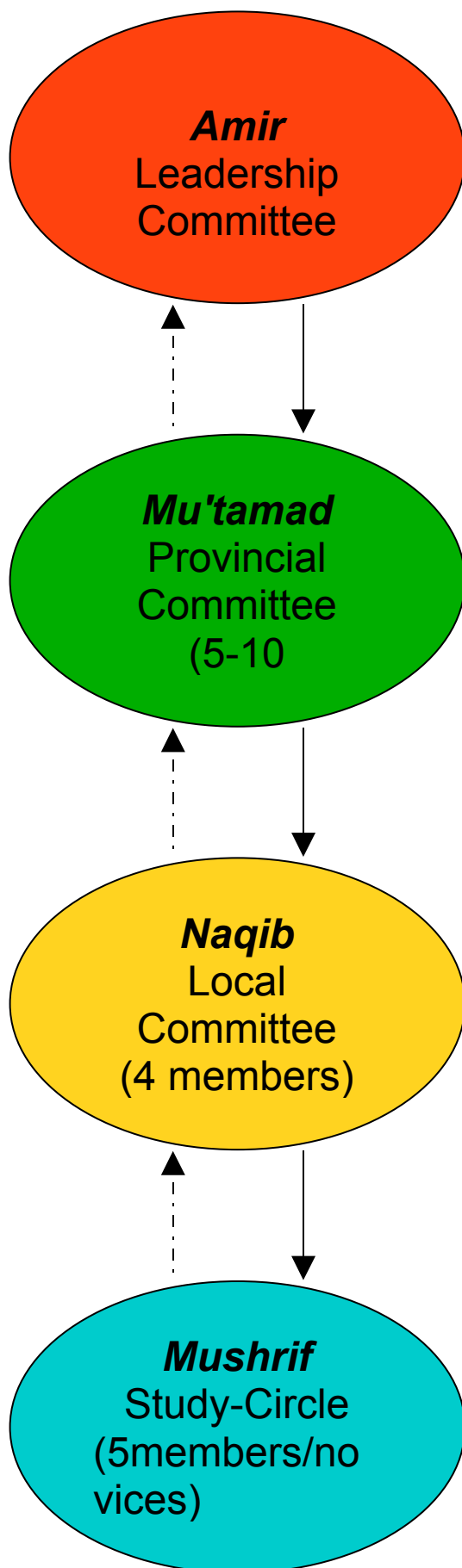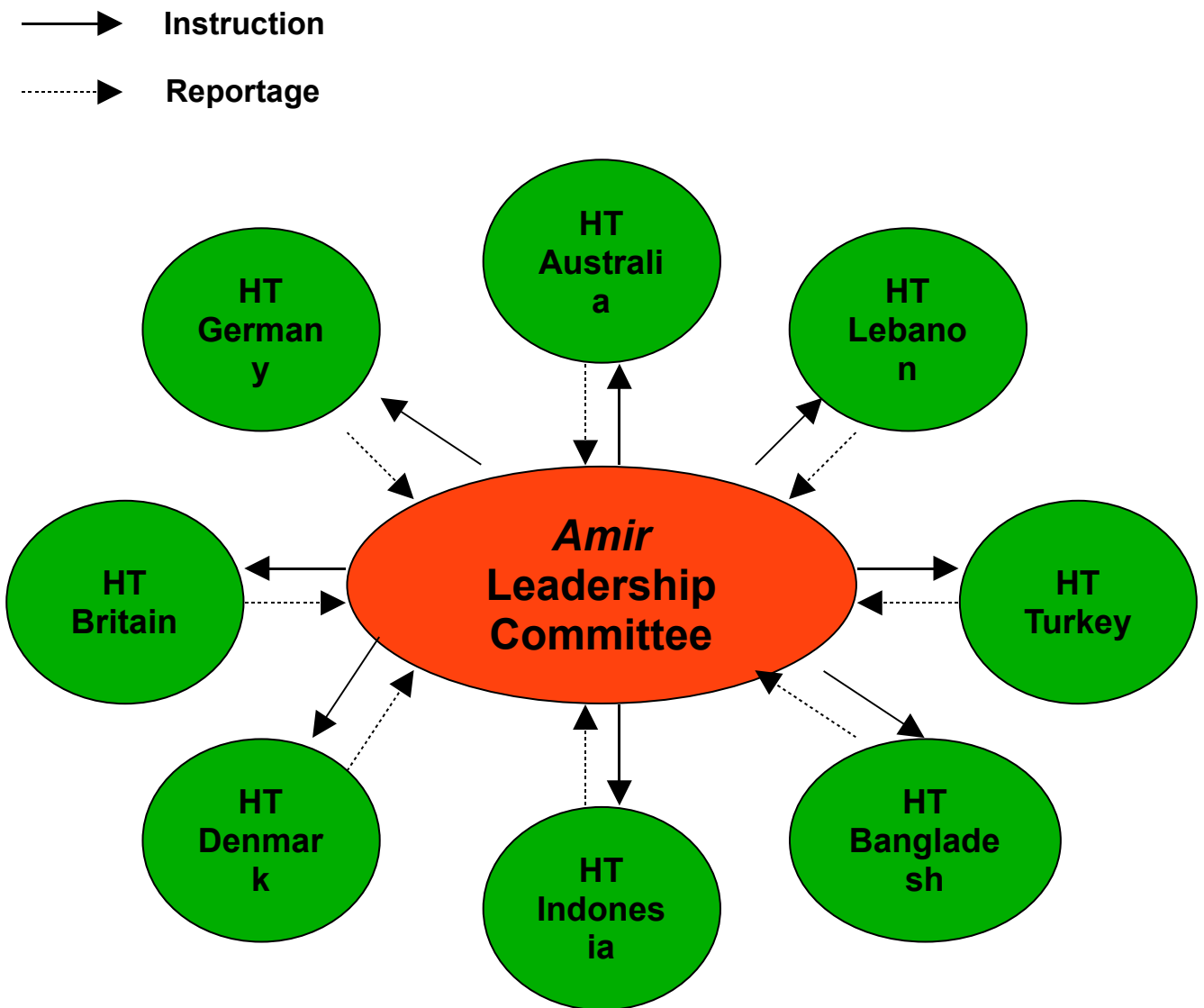
→ **Instructions**

⟶ **Reportage**

Amir
Leadership
Committee

Mu'tamad
Provincial
Committee
(5-10

Naqib
Local
Committee
(4 members)

Mushrif
Study-Circle
(5members/no
vices)

Figure 2.
The Relations between the Leadership Committee and Provincial Committees. This figure is drawn based on the descriptions of HT's structure as pointed out by Rahmat (2005).

For security considerations, HTI never reveals its *mu'tamad*. Furthermore, its de facto leader is, however, not clear. Muhammad al-Khaththath and Hafidz Abdurrahman are interchangeably referred to as the group's leader. For instance, Rahmat (2005) mentioned that Al-Khaththath was the group's leader and Al-Khaththath did claim that he was *ketua*[28] or the leader of HTI.[29] However, in many occasions such as in the International Conference on Caliphate held in August 2007 and a friendship visit paid by a number of prominent figures of PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or Justice and Welfare Party) to HTI's headquarters, Hafidz Abdurrahman is, interestingly, also referred to as *ketua*, but in a more specific term: *ketua umum*[30] or chief leader.[31] The hierarchical relations between these two prominent members are nonetheless unclear, yet it is very probable that both of them constitute the HTI provincial committee members. When asked about who the actual HTI leader was, Yusanto evaded the question, arguing that such a matter was not important.[32] In addition to the group's leaders, the group has a national spokesperson who resides in the capital of the country and it is due to the nature of this position that Muhammad Ismail Yusanto, the national spokesperson, gains more media coverage than any other HTI's personalities. Yusanto was born in Yogyakarta city, on December 2, 1962 and obtained his undergraduate degree from Geology Department, Gadjah Mada University in 1988 and master degree in management from the Institute of Indonesian Entrepreneur Development in 2000. At young age he learned about Islamic studies in several Islamic traditional schools such as Budi Mulia and Krapyak in Yogyakarta and Ulil Albab in Bogor. Together with Muhammad Al-Khaththath, he is among the first generations of HTI and is likely to belong to the provincial committee.[33]

For the purpose of boosting support in Suharto era, HTI took advantages of the presence of Islamic study circles in campuses. At that time, the group did neither reveal its appellation nor claimed that the thoughts they disseminated belonged to HT. Nevertheless, the group kept struggling for gaining support mainly from university students through campus Islamic study circles called LDK (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus or Campus *Da'wah* Circle) whose existence was prevalent since the 1980s. The group's perseverance in keeping its identity a secret throughout this stealthy period was nonetheless striking. As mentioned earlier, many of the group's present members who used to learn about its ideas were, in fact, not aware of the fact that they were gravitated to HTI.[34] To boost the dissemination of its thoughts, the group published a weekly bulletin that mainly contained its critical views on the country's political situation. The bulletin was distributed to mosques on every Friday before the Friday sermon and its names in each of its past local branches were, however, dissimilar. For example, the group's former bulletin in Semarang city was named *Al-Mishkah*, while in Yogyakarta city it was *Al-Miqyas*.[35] This was the group's another strategy to elude the security apparatus surveillance. Despite the fact that it was struggling clandestinely in Suharto era, the nature of the group's strategies to recruit members and to spread its messages remain the same. HTI frequently holds public Islamic study circles (*halaqa*) in such places as mosques, campuses, seminar rooms, and so on aiming to firstly draw peoples attention. Participants who are then interested to study further about certain issues addressed in these particular study circles will be individually approached by the group's members. Afterward, the more effective transfer of the group's thoughts takes place in a small *halaqa* consisting of 5 *daaris* (students) in a private house that is guided by the aforementioned *mushrif*. In practice, *mushrif* bears considerable responsibilities for assuring that these *daaris* understand and internalize the group's principles. In

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28 *Ketua* is in an Indonesian word which literally means a leader.
29 Muhammad Al-Khaththath, in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.
30 *Ketua* means leader, while *umum* literally translated as general, but contextually translated as chief. The phrase *ketua umum* therefore means chief leader.
31 HTI website. "Tifatul Sembiring Silaturahmi ke Indonesia (Tifatul Sembiring Paid a Visit to HTI)." July 24, 2008.
32 Yusanto, in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.
33 Yusanto, in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.
34 Abdullah, in discussion with the author, March 20, 2008.
35 Ibid.

this *halaqa*, *daaris* learn HT's literature that are mostly authored by al-Nabhani such as *Nidham ul-Islam* (System of Islam), *Attakatul al-Hizbi* (Structuring of a Party), and *Mafahim* (Concepts of Hizb ut-Tahrir). Arifin (2005) mentioned that in order for the *daaris* to be a member, it approximately takes one year or even more. Such a fact was confirmed by a HTI member. Indeed, this member added that the group really pays attention to the quality of its prospective members. In other words, when it comes to membership, the quality takes precedence over quantity.[36]

HTI is also aware that the use of the media helps facilitate the group to smoothly spread its thoughts. The group accordingly publishes its own weekly bulletin called *Al-Islam* mainly aims at Friday sermon attendants and monthly magazine called *Al-Wa'ie* for broader market segmentations. Both *Al-Islam* and *Al-Wa'ie* contain the group's critical views on the country's socio-political issues such as the skyrocketing of fuel and commodities price, the privatization of national companies, the country's acute problems on corruption, and so forth. In response to such problems, the group undoubtedly offers the caliphate and *shariah* as the solutions. Moreover, the group owns a well-maintained official website on http://hizbut-tahrir.or.id/ and another website that is maintained by Shiddiq al-Jawi, a leading figure of HTI Yogyakarta branch, which is accessible on http://www.khilafah1924.org/, thus enabling the public to easily get familiar with the group's platform. In addition to these mediums, the group makes attempts to establish relationships with many radio stations through which it is given an opportunity to regularly participate in their talk show programs. For instance, HTI South Sumatra branch is given slots to deliver Islamic lectures on regular basis in such radio stations as Oz FM, Real FM, and Indralaya FM.[37] In Yogyakarta, the group used to have an on-air program on every Saturday evening called Tanya Ustadz which literally means 'asking questions to Islamic teachers' in a local favorite radio station called Unisi FM. The program aimed to give the radio listeners the opportunity to ask any questions regarding Islam to the interviewees and they were given leeway by the radio station manager to determine the weekly topics to be discussed. This relationship, however, ended in around 2005 due to the shift of the radio station's market segmentations. The end of this valuable radio slot was, however, not the end of the story as the group subsequently secured a new radio slot in Arma 11 radio station.[38] Such radio slots undoubtedly facilitates the group not only to effectively circulate its ideas, but also to appeal to the public, though the group cannot deny the fact that there are also a large number of radio listeners who are annoyed with its radical stance against capitalism, secularism, democracy, nationalism, and other such ideas that are considered erroneous.

Together with other Islamic organizations in the country, for the first time HTI plays a role in an influential Islamic council called MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia or Indonesian Muslim Scholars Council) by placing its two prominent members in its list of committee members for the period 2005-2010. MUI was established on July 26, 1975 in Jakarta as a result of a conference which was attended by a large number of Muslim scholars from all over the country. According to its administrative law, the organization has five goals and roles as follows:[39]

(1) MUI as a representation of Muslim scholars acts as a legacy of the Prophet Muhammad that attempts to carry Islamic *da'wah*;
(2) MUI aims to issue *fatwa* (Islamic decrees);
(3) MUI serves as a guide of the *ummah*;
(4) MUI acts as an organization that implements reform and renewal;
(5) MUI carries out amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (calling people to do good deeds and preventing them from bad deeds)

Though the *fatwa* is not binding, MUI is nevertheless an influential Islamic that recently comes up with controversial *fatwa*. As a result of its national conference held in July 2005, it issued a *fatwa*

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36 Budiyanto (the spokesperson of HTI South Sumatra branch), in discussion with the author, March 7, 2008.
37 Ibid.
38 Tindiyo (the spokesperson of HTI Yogyakarta branch), in discussion with the author, March 24, 2008.
39 MUI Official Website. Mengenai Kami (About Us). July 25, 2008. http://www.mui.or.id/mui_in/about.php

that banned JAI (Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia or Indonesian Ahmadiyya Community) which was considered adhering to a misleading belief that its founder and then supreme leader, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was a Prophet, while in fact MUI held that there was no longer any Prophet after the Prophet Muhammad.[40] It was not until June 9, 2008 that the government accommodated the *fatwa* by issuing the so-called collective ministerial decree ordering JAI to stop its overall activities. The decree stipulated that JAI members who do not comply with this decree be imposed sanctions.[41] The two HTI prominent members who hold positions as committee members for the period 2005-2010 are Muhammad Ismail Yusanto and Muhammad al-Khaththath. Yusanto holds a position as Vice Chairman of the Commission of Research, while al-Khaththath serves as Vice Secretary of the Commission of *Da'wah*. The Commission of Research functions as a division whose jobs are to perform research activities concerning Islam and its laws and to give research-based suggestions to the general committee for the sake of issuing *fatwa*. This commission has a strategic role, for any measures (including *fatwa*) taken by MUI is based on its recommendations.[42] Meanwhile, the aim of Commission of *Da'wah* is to perform and promote *da'wah* all around the country. By getting involved in the MUI' s committee members, HTI could undoubtedly maximize the realization of its political agendas.

Given that HTI aspires to spread its thoughts as far reaching as possible, the group endeavors to strengthen its relationships with other Islamic organizations. Turmudi and Riza (2005) argued that the group seemed to refrain from classifying itself as the best Islamic group and from execrating other Islamic organizations. The group does attempt to establish good relationships with other Islamic organizations, yet this is achieved to ensure the success of the dissemination of its thoughts not only to ordinary Muslims, but also to the members of other Islamic organizations. HTI found a chance to expand its influence within the Islamic organizations when MUI held a congress on April 17, 2005 in Jakarta that was attended by all of its committee members and other Islamic organizations as well as leaders of traditional Islamic schools and Islamic universities from all around the country. At the end of the congress, declaration was issued and one of its key points was that attempts must be made to apply *shariah* in the country. This congress then instructed a group of *ulama* to form a special committee to implement the declaration. In this follow-up meeting held in May 2005, this group of *ulama* then thought that it was necessary to found a forum aiming to facilitate communication and exchange of information among Islamic organizations called FUI (Forum Umat Islam or Islamic Ummah Forum). According to its general secretary[43], Muhammad al-Khaththath, who is also the leader of HTI, the forum another aim is to provide training programs for Muslim cadres and to respond actual issues concerning Islam both at national and international levels.[44] The forum claims that its members are comprised from virtually all Islamic organizations as well as Islamic political parties. However, in reality, not all of them are active. In fact, the two biggest Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah and Nadhatul Ulama and Islamic political parties such as PKS, PPP, and PBB, are absent. The active member organizations are for instance, HTI, Misi Islam (Islamic Mission), Al-Ittihadiyah, Al-Irsyad, Gerakan Persaudaraan Muslim or Muslim Brotherhood Movement, As-Syafiiah, and Al-Azhar. In order to let its activities known to the public, the forum publishes a fortnightly tabloid called *Suara Islam* or the Voice of Islam which is

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40 Detik.com. MUI Kembali Fatwakan Ahmadiyah Sebagai Aliran Sesat (MUI Issued a *Fatwa* labeling Ahmadiyya as an Illegal Organization). July 28, 2005.
http://jkt.detiknews.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2005/bulan/07/tgl/28/time/201122/idnews/412058/idkanal/10

41   Detik.com. SKB 3 Menteri: Ahmadiyah Harus Hentikan Aktivitas (Three Ministerial Decree: Ahmadiyya Has to Stop Its Activities). June 6, 2008. http://www.detiknews.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2008/bulan/06/tgl/09/time/170751/idnews/953075/idkanal/10

42 Antara.com. MUI Tetapkan 10 Aliran Sesat (MUI Specified 10 Illegal Islamic Groups). Nov. 6, 2007.
http://www.antara.co.id/arc/2007/11/6/mui-tetapkan-10-kriteria-aliran-sesat/

43 In FUI, the position of general secretary is the second highest rank―below the leader. The position of leader is held by Mashadi who is also the leader of KISDI (Komite Solidaritas untuk Dunia Islam or The Committee of Solidarity for the Muslim World).

44 Muhammad al-Khaththath (the general secretary of FUI), in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.

accessible on-line on http://www.suara-islam.com/ through which all of its member organizations are given space to express and write about their thoughts and organizational agendas. Despite the fact that its representativeness falls short of expectations, FUI is undeniably a valuable forum for HTI to infuse Muslim cadres from other member organizations with the group's ideas by means of the aforementioned training programs.

We have discussed in this chapter HTI's organizational aspects and network patterns. Employing the perspective of resource mobilization which argues that the success of social movements relied on their ability to exploit material resources and mobilize dissident support. It was described how under the repressive Suharto's regime the group operated clandestinely and concealed its identity while attempted to seek support, taking advantages of members' personal networks and widespread campus Islamic study circles. As Suharto stepped down, the group gained confidence to publicly emerge and to continue struggling for both spreading its thoughts as far reaching as possible and recruiting new members. HTI succeeds in placing its two prominent members in an influential Islamic council called MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia or Indonesian Muslim Scholars Council), therefore giving the group more opportunity to expediently actualize its political aspirations. To strengthen its footing, the group not only makes use of such mediums as bulletin, magazine, and website to communicate its ideas to the public, but also to form an alliance with other Islamic groups called FUI (Forum Umat Islam or Islamic Ummah Forum) which, too, helps infuse HTI's thoughts to the FUI's member organizations. In the next chapter, for the purpose of figuring out the group's political maneuvering to sustain its existence within Indonesian socio-political scenes, we will try to examine the group's attempts to frame its strategies for the sake of mobilizing support and to counter negative public perceptions of the group.

Framing Strategies

The framing perspective principally assumes that perceptions attached to social movements are socially constructed and indeed vital to providing the movements with effective tools to appeal and mobilize public support (McAdam et al. 1996). HTI is aware that the ability to develop its cultural tool kits is of paramount importance. In its effort to address the country's multi-dimensional problems such as the prolonging economic crises, the cutting of subsidies in such fundamental sectors as energy, education and agriculture, and the privatization of national companies, the group offers the caliphate and *shariah* as the solutions. For example, in an article entitled "HTI Demo Kedubes AS: Rice Datang Cepu Melayang (HTI Performed Demonstration In Front of U.S. Embassy: Rice Came, Cepu Gone)," the group condemned the visit of Condoleezza Rice to the country and argued that her visit aimed to pressure the government to cede the exploitation control of Cepu Block, an oil-riched area in Central Java Island, to a U.S.-owned Exxon Mobile Corporation.[45] In another article entitled "Demo, Hizbut Tahrir Tolak Kenaikan BBM (Demonstration, Hizb ut-Tahrir Rejected Gasoline Price Hike)," HTI vehemently criticized the government's decision for increasing gasoline price as it would consequently magnify the country's poverty rate.[46] In addition to these issues, the group also targeted the government's failure to provide the public with inexpensive education following the significant cutting of subsidies in an education sector as reported in an article entitled "HTI: Pendidikan Indonesia Sama Seperti Zaman Pra-Kemerdekaan (HTI: The Recent Situation of Indonesian Education Was Not Different From That of

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45 Detik.com. HTI Demo Kedubes AS: Rice Datang Cepu Melayang (HTI Performed Demonstration In Front of U.S. Embassy: Rice Came, Cepu Gone). March 15, 2006.
http://www.detiknews.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2006/bulan/03/tgl/15/time/143700/idnews/559137/idkanal/10
46 Kompas.com. Demo, Hizbut Tahrir Tolak Kenaikan BBM (Demonstration, Hizb ut-Tahrir Rejected Gasoline Price Hike). May 13, 2008.
http://www.kompas.com/read/xml/2008/05/13/14024527/demo.hizbut.tahrir.tolak.kenaikan.bbm

Pre-Independence Era.[47] These are only few examples of issues that were frequently addressed by HTI. Demonstration is therefore one of the group's major means of participation in the country's public spheres which enables the group to find justification for coming up with the ideas of the caliphate and *shariah*. HTI absolutely believes that only the caliphate and *shariah* could overcome these crises. The caliphate and *shariah* thus function as HTI's frame which helps the group shape its image and mobilize support.

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47 Detik.com. HTI: Pendidikan Indonesia Sama Seperti Zaman Pra-Kemerdekaan (HTI: The Recent Situation of
    Indonesian Education Was Not Different From That of Pre-Independence Era). Aug. 16, 2004.
    http://jkt.detikfinance.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2004/bulan/08/tgl/16/time/105922/idnews/191979/idkanal/10

Figure 3

With his child a member of HTI carried a placard read, "Buang Kapitalisme—Tegakkan Syariah dan Khalifah!" which is literally translated as "Get Rid of Capitalism—Implement *Shariah* and Caliphate!" This photograph was taken on March 19, 2008 in Semarang city when HTI Central Java branch performed a demonstration which was participated by around 100 HTI's members. The demonstration protested against the government's incapability of dealing with the country's multi-dimensional crises.

The idea that *shariah* is the solution of crises is not new in the country as its development dates back to very beginning of Indonesian history. Indeed, as has been pointed out before, some of the country's founding fathers seek to formulate a *shariah*-based state ideology, though this attempt eventually resulted in failure. Furthermore, it is not only HTI that espouses such an idea. There are some other contemporary Islamic groups such as FPI (Fron Pembela Islam or Islamic Defense Front) and MMI (Majelis Muhjahidin Indonesia or Indonesian Holy Warrior Council) as well as Islamic political parties such PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or Development and Unity Party), PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or Justice and Welfare Party), and PBB (Partai Bulan Bintang or Star and Crescent Party) also advocate this very idea (Baswedan 2004). However, when it comes to the caliphate, the public as well as moderate Islamic organizations, particularly Nadhatul Ulama do not seem to be familiar with this very idea, yet it is often used by the group's assailants as justification for declaring that the group has potential for endangering the existence of Indonesia. In an article entitled "NU dan Khilafah Islamiyah (Nadhatul Ulama and Islamic Caliphate)," Solahuddin Wahid, a leading figure of Nadhatul Ulama contended that the chief leader of Nadhatul Ulama, Hasyim Muzadi, ever demanded the government that HTI be disbanded[48]. Wahid then argued that the nature of the caliphate was the complete opposite of the foundation of Indonesia that was based on *Pancasila*. Another attack on the caliphate was expressed by Muhyiddin Abdusshomad, another Nadhatul Ulama's figure, in an article entitled "NU Vis a Vis Transnationalisme (NU Vis a Vis Trans-nationalism)."[49] He showed strong disapproval of the caliphate which he regarded as a transnational concept and it was thus not suitable for Indonesia. The other criticism was given by Zuhairi Misrawi, Director of Moderate Muslim Society, an Islamic institution in Jakarta that works for promoting moderate Islam. In an article entitled "Rethinking Khilafah (Rethinking Caliphate)," Misrawi commented that the caliphate was not an ideal type of state on the grounds that in its history it was prone to corruption and collusion.[50] Furthermore, he added that in Islam there was no instruction to establish such type of state. The notion of the caliphate put forward by the group accordingly appears to be more alien and problematic to Indonesians than that of the *shariah*.

Before we discuss HTI's response to such unfavorable perceptions, we will firstly define and briefly describe the term of the caliphate. Caliphate is a term that refers to a worldwide Islamic state that had existed since the era of Caliphs Rashidin (632-661). After the Prophet Muhammad (570-632) was dead, his earliest successors were called the Caliphs Rashidin which literally means rightly guided caliphs or the loyal companions of Prophet Muhammad; they were Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali. The nomination of caliphs was based on consensus among companions and once a consensus was reached the companions gave the pledge of allegiance to the purported caliph (*bai'ah*), a symbolic contract between the leader and the people in which the leader swears an oath to lead in compliant with Islamic law (*shariah*) and the people, in return, pledge their allegiance. After the death of Uthman, a civil war broke out, bringing about divisions among Muslims over who had the legitimacy to occupy the caliph post. Ali, the last caliph in the Caliphs Rashidin period, held office for only five years, before Muawiya eventually assumed the leadership and moved the capital of caliphate from Medina to Damascus. The caliphate era under the Muawiya was named Umayyad Dynasty (7th-8th century). This period was labeled as a dynasty due to its deviation from previous model of leadership succession. While in the Caliphs Rashidin the leadership succession did not subscribe to a hereditary model, from the Umayyad Caliphate onward this model was not uncommon. The subsequent major caliphates were the Abbasid (8th-13th century) with its capital in Baghdad and the Ottoman (13th-20th century) with its center of authority in Istanbul. It was a

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48 Republika. NU dan Khilafah Islamiyah (Nadhatul Ulama and Islamic Caliphate). Feb. 12, 2008.
    http://202.155.15.208/koran_detail.asp?id=323017&kat_id=16&kat_id1=&kat_id2=
49 Suara Pembaruan. NU Vis a Vis Transnationalisme (NU Vis a Vis Trans-nationalism). Feb. 4, 2008.
    http://www.suarapembaruan.com/News/2008/02/04/index.html
50 Media Indoensia. Rethinking Khilafah (Rethinking Caliphate). Aug. 24, 2007.
    http://www.mediaindo.co.id/berita.asp?id=141076

unitary state which administratively consisted of a capital city and a large number of provinces. HT believes that throughout the caliphate period, the *shariah* was applied and it was only through the caliphate that the implementation of the *shariah* could be maintained. The termination of the last caliphate on March 3, 1924 was regarded by the group as a regrettable episode that led not only to the disorientation, but also disunity of Muslims around the world. It is against this backdrop that the group aspires to revive the dissolved caliphate.[51]

After we defined and briefly described the concept of the caliphate, we will now try to compare this transnational political entity as it is viewed by the group with the nation-state as a common type of political entity adhered to by all states in the world today and Indonesia is no exception. This comparison will help us elucidate the underlying differences between these two political entities which will thus provide us with the raison d'être of why HT and, of course, along with its branches in the world reject such mainstream ideas as secularism, nationalism, and democracy. To this end, the theory of the nation-state proposed by Benedict Anderson (1991) and Anthony Smith (1986, 2000) will be employed to explain why the nation-state is a relatively new phenomenon and distinct from other previous political entities that ever existed such as kingdom or the caliphate itself. One of the most striking features of HT is its rejection of the concept of the nation-state as acknowledged by most analysts concerned with the group (e.g. Wee 2002; Baran 2005; Farrar 2006). In the era in which the nation-state has been a universal model of political entity which is taken for granted, this posture is so unusual that the group is most likely the only one of its kinds that espouses the establishment of the caliphate which, by nature, renders the nation-state meaningless.

There are at least four clear-cut features which are embedded in the model of the nation-state and consequently distinguish itself from caliphate. The first is the element of a finite geographical boundary the nation-state possesses. It is not unusual that all nation-states on the earth have their own finite imaginary line upon which they establish their moral and political claims. The nation-state is a limited political entity and beyond which exists other nation-states (Anderson 1991). While a finite boundary is the sine qua none for the nation-state, the caliphate requires no such a boundary as it is—antithetical to the nation-state—an infinite boundary which can either enlarge due to annexation or shrink due to, for instance, land concessions as a result of losing a war.[52]

The source of law serves as the second feature of the nation-state. While the caliphate derives its law and order from divine scripts, the nation-state is born out of French Revolution in which the role of both religion and religious institutions are radically diminished, inescapably being relegated to a mere individual sphere.[53] Based on article 7 of a proposed constitution formulated by al-Nabhani (2002), the Islamic law is implemented on all citizens who hold citizenship of the caliphate. It is applied to both Muslims and non-Muslims in such matters as transactions, punishments and evidences (at court) as well as the system of ruling and economics. However, non-Muslims are guaranteed freedom to practice their own beliefs. One may argue that in fact there are some nation-states being considered applying Islamic law (*shariah*) such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, not to mention Indonesia, but from HT's perspective they are far from being the real Islamic states nonetheless. Some of the reasons are attributable to the fact that they do not implement the *shariah* in toto as set out by the group and meet no requirements for being comparable to the caliphate, for they keep adhering to the concept of the nation-state. As for Iran, despite contentions that it represents a successful model of political Islam, HT condemns its retention of sectarian principles, yet Iran embraces the system of Republic which is, too, alien to Islam (Abedin 2004b).

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51 Various scholars also use the term of caliphate to refer to the aforementioned periods of political entity, see for example Muir 1963, Belyaev 1969, Arnold 1965, Tabari 1987, Le Strange1993, Scales 1994.

52 Tindiyo (the spokesperson of HTI Yogyakarta branch), in discussion with the author, December 4, 2005.
    For further description of how the early phase of the Caliphate expanded its boundary, see Al-Baladhuri 2002.

53 Many believe, including Anderson, that French Revolution played a key role to bring the nation-state into existence, rendering the old model of political entity—kingdom—obsolete (e.g. Merriman 2004; Hutchinson and Smith 2004). For comprehensive historical account of French Revolution, see for example, Doyle 2003.

The third element is the notion of nationalism which disagrees with the very basic bond of society in the caliphate. Nationalism is considered a notion being inseparable from the concept of the nation-state, serving itself as the most fundamental bond upon which relations between people and their nation-state are molded. Thus, nationalism is defined as a sense of loyalty or belonging to the nation-state which is of paramount importance and invariably in existence in so far as the nation-state model remains unaltered (Smith 2000). In truth, it is only in the era of the nation-state where such vital ingredients as shared history of the past, myths, legend and the likes are reinvented and subsequently invoked through mass education and the media, irrevocably boosting people's sense of deep attachments to their nation-state. These attachments as a consequence become the basic bond of all people or 'citizens' living in an imagined community called the nation-state. In contrast to the nation-state upon which nationalism as its derivative tenet is anchored, the caliphate utilizes no ingredients but Islam to engender the true sense of unity and belonging, consequently rendering nationality-based attachments worthless. Al-Nabhani (2002) castigated nationalism for being badly chosen to serve as a bond in three following reasons:

(1) It is a tribal bond which is inappropriate to bind man with man in his quest for revival;

(2) It is an emotional bond that arises from the survival instinct, thus resulting in the love for dominance;

(3) It is an inhuman bond for it causes conflicts among people over dominion.

After rejecting nationalism, al-Nabhani claimed the Islamic creed ('aqeedah) to be the only correct bond which binds mankind in life, yet it is unequivocally stated in article 1 of the proposed constitution of the caliphate.

The fourth and the last element in dispute is the source of sovereignty and authority applied in the nation-state and the caliphate. Al-Nabhani (2002) argued that the nation-state did not recognize the distinction between the source of sovereignty and authority, whereas the caliphate did. As opposed to the nation-state which derives the source of both sovereignty and authority from the people, al-Nabhani suggested that in the caliphate sovereignty belonged to the divine law (*shariah*) not to the state or the people, while the authority belonged to the people (*ummah*) and it was manifested in the state. As a consequence of such a perspective, HT firmly holds a view that God has provided us with an all-encompassing system of rules (*shariah*) according to which we should adhere. However, the group does not see that this sort of principle is materialized in today political system in which the parliament which constitutes the representation of the people functions as a legislative body that is entitled to make law. This explains why the group adopts an approach of non-participation in general election and thus consciously opts to become an extra-parliamentarian movement (Okar 2001; Mandaville 2007; Ronen 2002; Cohen 2003; Mayer 2004; Turmudi and Riza 2004; Karagiannis 2006b).

Figure 4
Competing Elements between the Nation-State and the Caliphate

No.	Competing Elements	The Nation-State	The Caliphate
1.	Boundary	Finite	Infinite
2.	Source of Law	Secular Law	Divine Law
3.	Basic Bond of Society	Nationalism	Islam
4.	Source of Sovereignty	People	*Shariah*
5.	Source of Authority	People	People (*Ummah*)

Despite its rejection of general election, HT ran candidates as independents in Jordanian elections for the Chamber of Deputies in 1954 and 1956. Abdul Qadim Zallum, the second HT's *amir*, in fact competed for a seat, but he did not succeed25. In both elections the only elected HT's figure in the region was Ahmad al-Daur. The party was actually illegal as the Jordanian government never granted it legal recognition, but it registered as an association under the Ottoman Law of Associations which was at that time still effective nonetheless (Cohen 1982, Farouki 1996; Commins 1991; Okar 2001; Moaddel 2002). It appears that its decision to participate in both elections not long after the party establishment is attributable to its early attempts to ascertain the most suitable method for effectively achieving its goals. Learning from the past useless experience in elections coupled with ubiquitous Arab governments' heavy-handed measures against its members, it significantly changed its posture and came up with a seemingly fixed ground posture: being an extra-parliamentarian movement. In Jordanian political arena such a posture was conspicuous when it boycotted 1989 election, the first election to take place after the abolition of political parties by the government in 1957, due to the fact that it saw no benefit in participation and refused to recognize the constitution (Okar Ibid., 558). However, in striking contrast to its universal propensity for being an extra-parliamentarian movement, in the group's International Conference on Caliphate held in Jakarta, August 12, 2007, as written in an article entitled "HTI Bakal Jadi Parpol or HTI Will Become a Political Party," HTI's spokesperson, Yusanto, stated that the group did not rule out participation in a future Indonesian general election as a contestant on the grounds that as an international party it had experience in doing so in Jordan.[54] In the next paragraph we will try to ascertain the real HTI's stance on general election and to analyze the group's strategies to sustain its footing by producing positive images in the society.

In regard to general election as a method, HTI believes that it is allowed (*mubah*) and not forbidden (*haram*).[55] Yusanto argued that general election was actually a method that fell in accordance with the Islamic concept of *wakalah* (representation). He said that *wakalah* consisted of four components as follows:
(1) *Wakil* (representative);
(2) *Muwakil* (people who are represented by *wakil*);
(3) *'Amal* (deeds or activities that will be executed by *wakil* on behalf of *muwakil*);
(4) *'Aqad* (pledges made by both *wakil* and *muwakil*).
From these four components, Yusanto stressed that *'amal* is so important that if the deeds are good, the representation is also good, but if deeds are bad, the representation is also bad. Accordingly, general election per se cannot be classified as bad or good as it is only a method to choose representatives. HTI believes that the primary goals of these representatives are to make the parliament a place for spreading *da'wah*, to scrutinize the executive, and most importantly to apply *shariah* utterly. According to Yusanto, these are the only goals that the representatives must fulfill. Adhering to this very understanding of general election as a method, HTI holds that it either may or may not join the general election depending on the existing socio-political circumstances. HTI nevertheless decided not to participate in Indonesian general election on the grounds that it refrained from being a rival for Islamic political parties and Islamic groups. By not being a rival, the group claims to have rightly positioned itself as a partner of both secular and Islamic elements so that it could comfortably propagate *da'wah* to them. The group also denied inducing its members to take a non-participation stance on general election. In an article entitled "Meminta Umat Islam tak Terjebak Perpecahan: Ribuan Anggota HTI Lakukan Aksi Damai (Asking Muslims Not to Be Plunged into Disunity: Thousands of HTI Members Performed Peaceful Demonstration)" (Pikiran Rakyat, March 8, 2004), a member of HTI West Java branch, Abdul Jabbar, asserted that the group

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54 Detik.com. HTI Bakal Jadi Parpol (Hizb ut Tahrir Indonesia Will Become a Political Party). Aug. 12, 2007.
  http://www.detikinet.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2007/bulan/08/tgl/12/tim
  %09%09e/101247/idnews/816087/idkanal/10
55 Yusanto, in discussion with the author, March 12, 2008.

never tried to induce its members to take a non-participation stance on general election. He added that HTI would cast votes in general election on condition that contesting political parties were committed to applying *shariah* in Indonesia. Another HTI member, Fitra Sagara, delivered a more candid remark on election during the event of local election being held in Sumedang district, saying that election was a product of democracy and HTI was against the concept of democracy. However, holding the same view as Jabbar, Sagara stated that the group never forced its members to take a non-participation stance on general election.[56]

At this juncture, it is evident that HTI attempts to develop an image as an Islamic group that is not against participation in general election. The fact that the group refrains from being regarded as a rival for Islamic elements as mentioned by Yusanto above cannot, however, provide the group with justification for not taking part in general election, for HTI seems to elude the government's sanctions as specified in the general election law number 12 years 2003. The law stipulated that any actions or activities that discourage people to exercise their rights to cast votes on voting days be considered illegal and thus is subject to punishment (The Secretary of the State of Indonesia 2003). Moreover, as can be analyzed from its publications, in contrast to its public statement, the group does attempt to show to the public that, in fact, general election cannot satisfy the public expectations and contesting political parties are too preoccupied with their own interests. In an article written by one of its leading figures, Farid Wadjdi, argued that there was an increasing number of turn out rate in local elections due to the fact that people no longer trusted to participating political parties which failed to accommodate their aspirations. In addition, he also indicated that people were getting apathetic to democracy.[57] Despite the fact that HTI has interests in forging good relationships with Islamic elements through an alliance called FUI (Forum Umat Islam or Islamic Ummah Forum) which it claims to have consisted not only Islamic mass organizations, but also Islamic political parties, though implicitly, the group does not refrain from criticizing such Islamic parties as PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan or Development and Unity Party) and PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera or Justice and Welfare Party). In the same article, Wajdi frankly cited a survey conducted in October 2007 by a well-known survey institute called LSI (Lembaga Survei Indonesia or Indonesian Survey Institution) whose findings revealed that these two parties' platform was getting more secular and the public support toward them were stagnant, if not decreasing. In the same vein, another article entitled "Parpol dan Kekecewaan Masyarakat" ("Political Parties and People's Discontent") (*Al-Wa'ie*, No.90 Year VIII, February 2008), resented the fact that participating political parties in two general elections that have been held by the country after the demise of Suharto's regime fell short of the public expectations. In this article, HTI referred to survey findings which pointed out that the public support toward political parties, including Islamic parties, has sharply declined. The group attributed this support decline, particularly among Islamic political parties, to their lack of correct vision and mission as well as party structure.

Moreover, in regard to the right to participate in general election, Yusanto maintained that casting votes on voting days are the right of every Muslim, yet he added that Muslims must bear responsibilities for any consequences that arouse from the right they exercised. He further specified that the only ideal political parties for which we should cast our votes were those that were committed to implementing the caliphate and *shariah*.[58] When it came to such criteria, Yusanto thus indirectly pointed at his own group. HTI is not the only Islamic group that espouses the *shariah*, but it is undeniably the only group that has ardent aspirations to the caliphate. In addition, another internal source mentioned that if the participating political parties were given rights to radically change the state constitution to the extent that it would be totally in accordance with Islam, the

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56 Tribun Jabar. HTI: Pilkada Tak Sesuai Syariat Islam (HTI: Local Elections Do Run Parallel with Islamic Teachings). Feb. 21, 2008. http://tribunjabar.co.id/artikel_view.php?id=3103&kategori=9

57 HTI Official Website. Membaca Trend Politik Masa Kini (Reading Current Political Trend). July 27, 2008. http://hizbut-tahrir.or.id/2008/07/22/membaca-trend-politik-terkini/

58 Yusanto, in discussion with the author, March 24, 2008.

group would consider participating in the election. A radical change in the state constitution, however, necessitates changing the very basic of state ideology: *Pancasila* which is almost impossible to achieve, though it is stipulated in chapter XVI Indonesian constitution that it could be amended provided that it is agreed by at least two-thirds of the total number of the People's Consultative Assembly. Throughout Indonesian history, *Pancasila* remains the de facto state ideology and aspirations to revise its contents lie on the very fringes of public discourses. According to these facts and given the very nature of the group that claims to be a political party which exacts strict compliance from its members (Farouki 1996, Rosenau 2007) and whose cadres are strongly tied with its very ideology[59], it is most likely that the group's statement which is frequently said to the public that it gives freedom to its members to either cast votes on voting days or take a non-participation stance as well as to possibly contest seats in the future general election is more political maneuvering than the truth. It is political maneuvering to deliberately prevent itself from violating the aforementioned law on general election and to implicitly show its disappointment with the fact that the existing political parties, both secular and Islamic, fail to accommodate the people aspirations. These are among the group's strategies to sustain its footing so that it can safely continue to implement its agendas. The other strategy is exemplified by HTI's attempts to present itself as a group that advances its causes for the sake of Indonesia. According to Yusanto, the way the group shows its love for the country is by giving constructive criticism to the government as proven by a large number of issues it has been addressing such as those regarding oil and energy, water resources, capital investments, etc. In terms of oil and energy policy, as mentioned before, HTI condemned the cession of an oil-riched Cepu Block to the U.S.-owned Exxon Mobile Corporation.[60] In an article entitled "Bahaya Jika PLN Diswastanisasikan" ("The Danger of Privatizing PLN") (*Al-Wa'ie*, No. 91 Year VIII, March 2008), it strongly rejected the government's plan to privatize the national electricity company, PLN (Perusahaan Listrik Negara or State Electricity Company) on the grounds that it would inescapably increase the electricity price and the people would be consequently burdened with it. Such a strategy is deemed appropriate by the group to convince the public that HTI is making its best efforts for the better Indonesia.

In this chapter we have discussed that it becomes evident that HTI frames itself as an Islamic group that aspires to implement the caliphate and *shariah*. It is through these two slogans that the group attempts to mobilize support. However, in the process of utilizing such slogans, the group does not go unchallenged. It is often attacked for lacking of nationalistic sentiment toward Indonesia due to its strong support for the idea of the caliphate which is transnational by nature. It was also described how the group sustains its footing by not completely revealing its posture to the public due to some restraints. The group invariably says to the public that it never induces its members to refrain from casting votes on the voting days of general election, though such posture is in fact merely political maneuvering. In addition, though its idea of the caliphate is laden with transnational nature, HTI attempts to present itself as a group that works for the better Indonesia by giving its constructive criticism to the government.

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59 Budiyanto, in discussion with the author, March 7, 2008.

60   Detik.com. HTI Demo Kedubes AS: Rice Datang Cepu Melayang (HTI Demo Kedubes AS: Rice Datang Cepu Melayang. March 15, 2006.
   http://www.detiknews.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2006/bulan/03/tgl/15/time/143700/idnews/559137/idkanal/10

Conclusion

Political opportunity perspective assumes that the ebb and flow of social movements is inextricably connected to political factors of a country attached to them. The level of openness of political system and state's tendency toward suppression are among the principal features of this perspective. The socio-political dynamics of Indonesia has invariably been illuminated by attempts to implement the *shariah* since the very beginning of its history. The first generation of Islamic elements made a significant effort to put forward Islam as the state ideology. However, such effort ended in failure and the final agreed ideology of the state was not exclusively based on Islam. Until the last period of Sukarno regime, Islamic elements never gained success in re-including *Jakarta Charter* in *Pancasila*. In fact, in his last period, Sukarno took strict measures to effectively curtail the political opportunity of his opponents by dissolving the parliament and disbanding the biggest Islamic political party, Masyumi. Sukarno was replaced by Suharto in 1967 due to his unwillingness to disband PKI, the communist party, and to overcome economic crisis. In Suharto period, Islamic elements initially hoped that this new President would give them more freedom to participate in political spheres. Nevertheless, in 1975 Suharto took measures to reduce the number of political parties, merging Islamic political parties into one party under the banner of PPP. In 1985, he issued another law which ordered that *Pancasila* be adopted by all political parties and mass organizations. Such measures were considered putting the aspirations of Islamic elements on the fringes of the country's political scene. Due to his incapability of solving financial crisis striking the region in the late 1990s, Suharto was forced to step down in 1998 and starting from this very moment Indonesia entered a new phase of democracy in which freedom of expression and freedom to establish any political parties and mass organizations are guaranteed. Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), a revivalist group aspiring to implement the caliphate and *shariah*, thus emerged publicly in 2000, benefiting from this favorable political opportunity.

Resource mobilization perspective assumes that the success of social movements relied on their ability to exploit material resources and mobilize dissident support. Since the beginning of its existence in 1980s, the group operated clandestinely in order to circumvent the security apparatus. At this juncture, the group mainly relied on study-circles in campuses that have been prevalent in 1980s both to spread its ideas and to seek support. The group gained confidence as it emerged publicly in 2000 and accordingly gained more leeway to implement its political agendas. With the aim of augmenting its members, the group relies on study-circles it holds in mosques, campuses, and so forth. In addition, the group attempts to establish relationships with other Islamic groups and Islamic parties in an alliance called FUI. These relationships facilitate the group with considerable opportunity to spread its thoughts as well as influence within Islamic elements. In this alliance, HTI's leader, Muhammad al-Khaththath, holds a strategic position as a general secretary. Moreover, two leading figures of the group, Muhammad Ismail Yusanto and, again, Muhammad al-Khaththath succeed in holding positions as committee members in an influential Islamic council called MUI whose one of main jobs is to issue *fatwa*. The group's involvement in this council undeniably helps the group to effectively realize its political agendas.

Framing perspective assumes that perceptions attached to social movements are socially constructed and indeed vital to providing the movements with effective tools to appeal and mobilize public support. The group primary uses the slogans of the caliphate and *shariah* to advance its causes. However, with these slogans, particularly the caliphate, HTI is often considered a threat to the existence of Indonesia and regarded as lacking nationalistic sentiment toward Indonesia. For the purpose of countering these images, HTI makes a great effort to present itself as a group that works for the better Indonesia by giving constructive criticism to the government in such issues as oil and energy, water resource, private investments, and so forth. The group also convinces to the public that it never induces its members to take a non-participation stance on general election and allows its members to cast their votes for their preferred political parties. In reality, such a posture was

nevertheless more political maneuvering than the truth, aiming to avoid from being punished according to general election law stipulating that any actions or activities that discourage people to exercise their rights to cast votes on voting days be considered illegal and thus is subject to punishment.

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Map of Indonesia

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