

## Chapter 2

# Islam, Politics and Identity

**Abstract** The chapter, by examining the history of Islam, shows interplay between localism and transnationalism in the local dynamics, which is largely ignored in analyses of the contemporary politics of Islam. Yet the Islamic regulations in contemporary West Sumatra would not be possible without the interaction of local and transnational actors and ideas. The regional governments' engagement with Islam have an historical perspective. The institutionalising the tenets of Islam dated back to the royal courts of the pre-colonial Islamic kingdoms and the colonial government's Office for Native Affairs even though it has only become possible to pass regional laws (*peraturan daerah*, perda) in the post-Suharto era. This chapter argues that the relationship between a global Islam and a local identity was simultaneously accommodating and contested, as indeed it is today. In doing so, the chapter examines a brief historical overview of Islam in West Sumatra from the advent of Islam in the Malay world to its role in the post-Suharto era. The chapter seeks to contextualise the key phases in West Sumatra's history in the broader history of the archipelago and the Malay world, and to show how key events in West Sumatra and at the national level set the parameters for later debates about Islam and identity in the region.

**Keywords** Global Islam · Local politics · Identity

One of the defining debates in the literature on Islam and local politics in Indonesia over the last decade has been over whether the inspiration for Islamic regulations passed at the local level is transnational and global or whether it is fundamentally local. One camp focuses on the global rise of Wahhabism and its impact on regional Islamic awareness, arguing that increasing piety has driven this phenomenon (see, for example, Hasan 2007). For the other camp, which is concerned primarily with the dynamics of local politics, the key question concerns the extent to which local elites have used Islamic regulations to position themselves to gain access to and remain in power (see, for example, Buehler 2008). Related to this second approach

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This chapter of this book has been published in the Journal of Indonesian Islam, the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Ampel Surabaya entitled 'Islam, Politics and Identity in West Sumatra'.

is the broader debate on whether decentralisation would undermine national cohesion and, if so, what role religion would play in that process. For van Klinken (2001, 2002), New Order repression, combined with religious and regional tensions, was a key driver in the local politics of the post-Suharto era, leading, for example, to serious violence in Maluku in the period between 1999 and 2002. Aspinall and Fealy (2003), too, emphasise the role of communal and ethnic dynamics in the quest for local political power and economic resources, which has led *putera daerah* (lit. sons of the region) to seek control over local government and local economic resources.

The interplay between these two impulses, towards globalised piety on the one hand and local dynamics on the other, is largely ignored in analyses of the contemporary politics of Islam, as are their historical roots. Yet the Islamic resurgence would not be possible without the interaction of local and transnational actors and ideas. Moreover, an understanding of the contemporary phenomenon of regional governments' engagement with Islam requires historically informed research. Without an historical perspective, it appears that the current trend towards Islamic regulation has no precedent in Indonesia's regions. Yet while it is true that it has only become possible to pass regional laws (*peraturan daerah*, *perda*) in the post-Suharto era, regional governments have a long history of institutionalising the tenets of Islam, dating back to the royal courts of the pre-colonial Islamic kingdoms and the colonial government's Office for Native Affairs.

This chapter provides a brief historical overview of Islam in West Sumatra from the advent of Islam in the Malay world to its role in the post-Suharto era. In doing so, it seeks to contextualise the key phases in West Sumatra's history in the broader history of the archipelago and the Malay world, and to show how key events in West Sumatra and at the national level set the parameters for later debates about Islam and identity in the region. The chapter argues that now, as in the past, the relationship between Islam, a global religion, and Minangkabau culture was simultaneously accommodating and contested, as indeed it is today.

## West Sumatra, the Malay World and the Coming of Islam

The term 'Minangkabau' initially referred specifically to people who originated from the mountainous inland region of what is now the province of West Sumatra. According to the Minangkabau historical chronicle, the *tambo*, the first Minangkabau settlement was in Pariangan, Padang Panjang (Batuah and Madjoindo 1956: 19, 20). The *tambo* describes this settlement as the first *nagari*, a term that means both village and state. Without providing details of historical events, the *tambo* explains that a king from the southern part of West Sumatra came to Pariangan, married the sister of a local leader, and then was himself appointed as the new leader (Manan 1999: 48). The king, whose name was Sang Sapurba, then installed *pangulu*, or head officers, and built a council hall from which to govern the people.

The Minangkabau created new settlements, called *rantau* (Batuah and Madjoindo 1956), which became a source of revenue for the royal family (Manan 1999: 49). This is how the term ‘*rantau*’ came to mean ‘outside the Minangkabau heartland’. There are two terms that describe the areas and communities of the inner highlands of Minangkabau, namely *darek* (*darat* in Indonesian), which describes the Minangkabau heartland geographically, and *alam*, which describes it philosophically. Although the meaning of *rantau* is now much broader, in the past, it referred to the coastal areas of Sumatra and the areas downstream and to the east of the highlands (Kato 1980: 731). As a verb, *merantau* means to leave one’s *nagari* or village, a concept traditionally applying primarily to the practices of young men who left the homeland in search of wealth, knowledge and skills before returning to establish a family (Manan 1999: 46). Women, meanwhile, remained in the heartland, living in their family homes and tending to crops and engaging in trading and other kinds of economic activities.

The Minangkabau people are a matrilineal society in which ancestral property such as land and houses is passed down from mothers to daughters. Kinship is also based around the female line. Each elite woman owns a ‘big house’ (*rumah gadang*) and rice lands or other ancestral property. In the past, these women controlled land, labour and subordinate kin and held power not only within households and rice land but throughout the village (Blackwood 2001: 132).<sup>1</sup> In terms of belief, a mixture of animism and mysticism dominated this community before a South Indian version of Hindu-Buddhism was brought to the region by Indian merchants in the third and fourth centuries (Manan 1999: 50). The temple of Muara Takus in Jambi is evidence of the extent to which ancestor worship became linked to the adoption of Hinduism in the region in this period.

At this time, Sumatra was very much part of the Malay world (*alam Melayu*). That world was based around the powerful and prosperous Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms of Srivijaya, based in Bukit Seguntang in Palembang, and Melayu, which was associated with the Batang Hari River in Jambi in the seventh century (Andaya 2001: 31). In the eleventh century, after the collapse of Srivijaya, and in a period when international trade between India and China through the Straits of Malacca came to be dominated by the Cholas of India, the term Melayu referred to interior areas in Jambi (Andaya 2001: 31). In the fourteenth century, Melayu appeared in Javanese literature, where it referred to an area that extended to other territories such as Lampung, Pattani in modern Thailand, Kelantan in Malaysia and the Minangkabau region of West Sumatra (Reid 2001). In that same century, Malacca, a region made prosperous by its position at the centre of key trading routes, emerged as the new centre of the Malay world. With the establishment of the kingdom of Malacca, the name Melayu and its defining characteristics such as dress, language and religion became associated with Malacca Malays (Andaya 2001: 33). Thus, when Malacca became a powerful Muslim state in the same century, Islam came to be identified

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the farming practices of women in contemporary West Sumatra, see Blackwood (2008).

with Malay culture. It was this connection that began the association of Islam with the Malay people (Utrecht 1984: 31). And while a Hindu-Buddhist Minangkabau kingdom was established in 1347 by Adityawarman, a prince from the post-Srivijaya kingdom of Dharmasraya who was raised in the Javanese kingdom of Majapahit (Colombijn 2006: 55), those living in the coastal areas of West Sumatra identified themselves as Malays rather than Minangkabau, as a result of the influence of the Malaccan Malays (Drakard 1990: 11).

After the Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511, a series of powerful sultanates appeared in the Malay world, including Aceh, which, by the seventeenth century was among the wealthiest and most powerful states in the region. Although Islam began to take root in the Malay world in the thirteenth century, along with the adaptation to local conditions of Islamic thought and concepts relating to politics, jurisprudence, and Sufi ideas and practices (Azra 2002: 103). In this period, Islam became important for economic and political reasons, enabling Malay Muslim kingdoms to participate intensively in Indian Ocean trade and establish contact with Muslim traders and political authorities in the Middle East (Azra 2004: 9). Aceh itself established strong connections with the Ottoman Empire in Turkey (Reid 2005: 69–93), a connection that influenced the development of Islam in the Malay world.

Scholars have proposed a number of theories in their attempts to explain the conversion of the Malay world to Islam. Al-Attas (1969) argues that Islam was introduced directly by Arabs to Malay Sumatra in the seventh century, citing a Chinese report of the existence of an Arab settlement in East Sumatra in 674, the earliest known record of probable Muslim settlement in Malay Sumatra. Others argue that Islam came to the Malay world from India in the twelfth century, citing the existence of international maritime trade routes, the commonality of schools of jurisprudence and the similarity of gravestones and literary styles and themes between India and the Malay world as evidence for this theory (Meuleman 2005: 24). Others say that Islam came from India to Sumatra at the end of the thirteenth century through the kingdoms of Pasai and Perlak (Alatas 1985: 168; Andaya 2001: 36). What is clear is that in the fourteenth century, the laws of Malacca (*Undang-undang Melaka*) used the term ‘*Kanun*’ (Arabic *qanun*) meaning administrative law, as used in the Ottoman Empire, and the Pasai chronicle of Aceh also frequently invokes both the terms ‘*adat*’ (from the Arabic *ada*), meaning customs, and ‘*Kanun*’ (Milner 1981: 47).

Importantly also, merchant Arabs from the Hadramaut (now Yemen and Oman), who had visited and settled in Malay Sumatra before the seventeenth century, settled in the Straits of Malacca and what is now South Sumatra, from the late seventeenth century (Roff 1967: 81). Many reformist Muslims in the Malay world, such as Nuruddin Al-Raniri and Sayyid Abd Al-Samad Palimbani, were of Hadramauti descent (Azra 2002: 139). This contact continued into the early twentieth century, when Ahmad Surkati taught Islam at various schools in Batavia (Jakarta). By the early twentieth century, there were more than twenty thousand Hadramauti Arabs in the archipelago (Reid 2004: 230).

## *The Arrival of Sufism*

Sufism, which came to Malay Sumatra via the trading routes between various parts of Asia and the Middle East, was an important element in the introduction of Islam to the Malay world. Sufi Islam is described as ‘the apprehension of divine realities’ (Nicholson 1914: 1). According to Trimingham, Sufi Islam emphasises the belief that it is possible to have direct experience of God or direct communication with God under the guidance of charismatic leaders (Trimingham 1998: 1). The mystical expression of the Islamic faith has both an intellectual dimension, consisting of Sufi teaching, and an organisational dimension called *tariqa* (tarekat in Indonesian), or brotherhood (Voll 1998: vii).<sup>2</sup>

Sufi traders used Islam as a means of establishing cooperation with local chiefs and the merchant class (Federspiel 1970). Because of the dominance of trade in the region, the centres of religious power were at the same time centres of economic power.<sup>3</sup> As Utrecht (1984: 33) points out, Islam took hold fastest among the trader class. Wealthy merchants had the means to fund the education of their children and to fulfil the religious obligation to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca, which consequently brought them into closer contact with Islam (Federspiel 1970: 7). Sufism was, however, subsequently transmitted through other channels, as Sufi teachers married the daughters of Malay Indonesian nobility, which mean that their children had royal blood and therefore were well-placed to spread Islam (Johns 1961: 17).

The nature of Sufism played an important role in the acceptance of Islam in Malay Sumatra. Johns (1961: 15) argues that the Sufis who preached Islam in the region ‘were prepared to preserve continuity with the past and to use the terms and elements of pre-Islamic culture in an Islamic context’. As Sufi Islam did not challenge local animist beliefs, it could penetrate the Malay world in a peaceful way (Snouck Hurgronje 1906). At the same time, however, some scholars argue that Sufi Islam created a new identity in the Malay world (Utrecht 1984; Woodward 1989), serving as ‘a liberation creed’ against the feudalism of the Hindu society and caste system imported from India and institutionalised under the Hindu kingdoms (Utrecht 1984: 30). Islam also provided local rulers with a consensual basis upon which to engage with Muslim merchants in coastal towns (Kahane 1980: 130). According to Woodward (1989), the majority of the population, notably the lower classes in urban centres, were eager to liberate themselves from the caste system, quickly embracing the idea of equality before God and Sufism’s emphasis on merit instead of inherited status. However, as other scholars have pointed out, the ruling

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<sup>2</sup> Howell (2001: note 2) argues that the term Sufi has many different meanings. It can be associated with devotional practices and religious concepts that are quite separate from Sufism’s common association with mysticism.

<sup>3</sup> Kahane (1980), among others, has pointed out that economic interests, not purely religious motives, enhanced the spread of Islam into the Malay archipelago.

classes did not only convert to Islam themselves, but also encouraged the general populace to do so as well (Johns 1961).

Sufi Muslim merchants from Gujarat and Persia began visiting West Sumatra in the thirteenth century, establishing trade links through the gold industry. Gold traders from both the west and east coasts of Sumatra carried Sufi Islam with them to the Minangkabau highlands and the centres of the gold trade became the first to be converted to Islam (Dobbin 1983: 119). Three centuries later, one of the Minangkabau kings converted to Islam (Hadler 2008a: 977). Conversion took place on a large scale in the seventeenth century, when a Sufi centre was established in Ulakan in the district of present-day Padang Pariaman (Hadler 2008a: 977). Syaikh Burhanuddin, known as the Tuanku (religious leader) of Ulakan, was the first Sufi teacher of the tarekat organisation, Syattariyah, in Ulakan (Abdullah 1966: 8).<sup>4</sup>

### *The Coming of Syaria-Oriented Islam*

The hold of Sufism in West Sumatra was not to go unchallenged. Changes in the wider Islamic world and their continuing impact on Malay Muslims gradually affected the form of Islam in the region. The modern reform movement only became influential in the nineteenth century, but Syaria-oriented Islam began infiltrating Sumatra as early as the seventeenth century. The first Syaria-oriented Muslim preacher in Malay Sumatra was Nuruddin al-Raniri, from Randir in Gujarat, who had studied Islam in Mecca before travelling to Aceh in 1637 (Azra 2004). Raniri favoured the Syaria-oriented Islam that he had learned in the Middle East over the Sufi mysticism that had its roots in India, and he set about spreading the teachings of a more Syari'a-oriented Islam (Azra 2004: 63).

As a result of the efforts of Raniri and others, by the nineteenth century, Islamic practices associated with the Middle East were more visible in Malay Sumatra than in Java. Islam had a significant role in community affairs and in the private lives of individuals in Sumatra, whereas in Java most were purely nominal Muslims (Snouck Hurgronje 1906). As the Syaikh of Islam, the highest position below the Sultan of Aceh, al-Raniri issued a fatwa condemning the Sufi doctrine of *wujudiyah* as heretical. In response, the seventeenth century Sultan of Aceh, Iskandar Thani, ordered the killing of all Sufi adherents who refused to recant their belief in the doctrine (Azra 2004: 63–64).<sup>5</sup> In the late eighteenth century, the Wahhabist movement, which declared that belief in God was not enough to make one a Muslim and that one must worship God purely and exclusively because worship of

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<sup>4</sup> There is some disagreement on this. According al-Attas (1969), the Acehnese Syaikh Abdullah Arif, Sheikh Burhanuddin's teacher, introduced Islam into Padang Pariaman in West Sumatra in the seventeenth century.

<sup>5</sup> Wujudiyah is the cyclic ontology of divine self-manifestations. For example, the universe is seen as 'a series of neo-platonic emanations' and each of these emanations is considered as an aspect of God himself (Azra 2004: 53).

any being other than God is idolatry (*shirk*) (Commins 2009: x), had reached the Malay world. Wahhabism not only obliged all Muslims to observe the practice of daily prayers and fasting, but also attacked popular religious practices that positioned holy men as intercessors with God (Trimingham 1998: 105).

According to van Dijk (1984: 8), the introduction of Syaria-oriented Islam into the Malay world marked the beginning of a new chapter in the relationship between Islam and the state, in which Islam became a considerable source of social tension, ranging from dissatisfaction with indigenous symbols, rebellion against local rulers, to all-out war. The most important of these conflicts in West Sumatra was the Paderi war, which took place between 1803 and 1837. It was initiated by West Sumatran pilgrims returning from Mecca, who sought to implement the principles of Wahhabism they had encountered in Saudi Arabia over the way Islam was practised their homeland. The term itself was derived from Pedir or Pidie, the part of Aceh where Malays set out on and returned from the pilgrimage (van Dijk 1984: 10).

The Paderi war exploited changing economic and social relations among the Minangkabau (Dobbin 1974, 1977, 1983). The collapse of the existing cash economy, which had been based on gold mining, led to the emergence of a new system based on the cultivation of coffee, which transformed economic and political relationships between and within villages. The wealthy were thrown into turmoil by the collapse of the gold industry at precisely the same time that it became possible for those at the bottom of the economic ladder to cultivate coffee in the hills on common village lands without the need for large investments. This gave rise to a group of 'new rich' farmers eager to challenge the economic order (van Dijk 1984: 9). Before the Paderi war, an emerging leader of this group, Tuanku Nan Tuo, had taken steps to secure trading routes by promoting Islamic regulations and confronting those responsible for robberies and other forms of misconduct (van Dijk 1984: 10). According to Dobbin (1983: 127–128), the introduction of Islamic regulations also made it possible for leaders such as Tuanku Nan Tuo to claim the land necessary for coffee cultivation from traditional landholders, thus further cementing the new economic order.

The Paderi movement emerged in these newly rich coffee villages. It sought to challenge the entrenched positions of wealthy traditional leaders, aiming to replace what its followers perceived to be a corrupt traditional order with the laws of Islam (van Dijk 1984: 10). The movement's most prominent leader was Peto Syarif, who became better known as Tuanku Imam Bonjol. Establishing a fortress in Bonjol, the Paderi movement flourished for 35 years, before the Dutch, acting in support of the traditional order, finally took full control of the Minangkabau heartlands in 1837. The Paderi leaders were subsequently captured and exiled (Dobbin 1983: 193–206), bringing the Paderi movement to an end. However, some Paderi leaders joined the tarekat Naqsabandiyah, which later attacked the Sufi tarekat, Syatariyah (Abdullah 1972: 203).

By attacking the authority of traditional leaders, the Paderi movement also attacked an interpretation of Islam, since customary law (*adat*) and Islam had influenced one another for centuries, and both had come to incorporate elements of the other (van Dijk 1984: 11). West Sumatra's *adat* leaders were also Muslims,



albeit superficial and heterodox in the eyes of the Paderi movement. Indeed, the complexities of the Paderi war point to the fact that adat and Islam may be interpreted differently, and each may be used for political or economic gain (Biezeveld 2007).

## The Regulation of Islam Under the Dutch

The Dutch, who had an interest in gaining control over the coffee trade, sided with traditional adat leaders against the Paderi movement (Biezeveld 2007: 208). They continued to favour the adat leaders, promising them taxation concessions in the 1833 Long Declaration (Plakat Panjang), which abolished a cultivation system in favour of a direct tax (Kahin 1999: 25). This enabled the Paderi movement to identify adat leaders as friends of the enemy. Indeed, the term ‘Adat Basandi Syarak’ (local customs are based on Syari’a), among the Minangkabau of West Sumatra, was coined by Tuanku Imam Bonjol during the Paderi war specifically in response to the Dutch positioning of adat as a superior source of authority over Islam (Hadler 2008a: 986).<sup>6</sup>

Similar policy decisions subsequently led to the Aceh war, which took place between 1873 and 1912. When the Dutch chose to support the traditional Acehnese figures of authority (*uleebalang*) over Muslim administrators, Islamic leaders such as Tengku Cik Di Tiro and Muhammad Saman declared a holy war against the colonial ruler.<sup>7</sup> After an extended period of fighting, Islamic leaders including Tuanku Mahmud, Tuanku Raja Kumala and Teuku Polem initiated a peace settlement with the Dutch in 1909 (Alfian 2006: 114). It was during the Aceh war that the Dutch established an Office of Native Affairs charged with studying Islam and local culture to provide advice to the Indies government. The office was assisted by the Islamic scholar, Ch. Snouck Hurgronje, who had been Consul in Jeddah before becoming Advisor on Native Affairs to the Netherlands Indies government. Snouck Hurgronje went on to play important role for the Dutch in improving military tactics and winning the war in Aceh (Benda 1958: 340).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> ‘Adat basandi Syarak, Syarak basandi Adat’ was widely accepted as a form of compromise between Islamic and adat leaders by 1837 (Hadler 2008b: 29).

<sup>7</sup> Islam was constructed as the source of a common identity in the fight against the Dutch, in which the Dutch were described as infidels and even Jews (Aspinall 2009: 25).

<sup>8</sup> The Dutch engaged in a number of other attempts to control Islam around this time. Among other measures, the colonial authorities forced pilgrims to obtain a passport in order to travel to Mecca between 1825 and 1852. In order to do so, each pilgrim was required to obtain a certificate from his district head vouching for his financial capacity to make the return journey and provide for his dependents at home. Arab migrants were also required to live in special cantonments in the main towns and to apply for a pass every time they wished to leave their place of residence (Reid 2005: 231).



These wars were just two of many instances in which the Dutch prioritised adat over Islam in the nineteenth century. In 1847, the Dutch appointed adat leaders in West Sumatra as colonial agents charged with collecting the coffee harvest through forced cultivation, in order to improve the collection and delivery of this crop. At that time, the new position of ‘traditional leader responsible for forced labour’ (*panghulu suku rodi*) was created to implement the government’s coffee policies in many nagari, with the salaries attached to the positions being a percentage of the coffee production of their areas (Kahin 1999: 26). When the Dutch introduced the Ethical Policy at the end of the nineteenth century, local Muslims interpreted it as not only being linked to the Dutch support for adat, but also as part of the effort to undermine Islam and strengthen the position of Christian missionaries (Benda 1958: 339). In 1914, the Nagari Ordinance was passed with the aim of re-establishing West Sumatra’s autonomous village communities and recognising the right of adat leaders to hold authority in the nagari (Kahin 1999: 26). The Dutch also attempted to codify adat in 1929, using information gathered from native customary law tribunals, the opinions of chiefs and elders who were consulted by van Volkenhoven and other adat scholars (Jaspan 1965: 252). The key issues at stake were those of marriage, divorce, and inheritance, issues over which there was a real competition between adat and Islamic law.

In the early twentieth century, attacks on traditionalist Islam in West Sumatra were coming from the proponents of both secular modernity and modernist Islam. In 1906, Datuk Sutan Maharaja established a movement that promoted education for women on the basis of their status in Minangkabau culture. In order to improve their position, he established 12 schools for women and a feminist newspaper, *Sunting Melayu* (Malay Ornament), which was edited by his daughter, Ratna Djuita and later by Rohana Kudus, the ‘Kartini of West Sumatra’ (Abdullah 1971: 12). In 1910, he went on to establish the Minangkabau Union (Minangkabausche Bond) to unite all Minangkabau people living in the *darek* and the *rantau* including Aceh and Negeri Sembilan. At the same time, Muslim reformists led by those who had been students of Syaikh Achmad Khatib in Mecca, such as Djamil Djambek in Bukittinggi, Haji Abdullah Ahmad in Padang, Haji Rasul in Padang Panjang, and Taib Umar in Batu Sangkar, among others, not only challenged the adat-oriented interpretation of progress favoured by Datuk Sutan Maharaja, but also attacked the heterodoxy of the Sufi orders and the Minangkabau matrilineal inheritance system, arguing that the former two ideas were heretical and the latter was an infringement of Syaria (Abdullah 1985: 141). Reformist Muslim ideas had spread in Indonesia after the opening of Suez Canal in the nineteenth century, which saw an increasing number of pilgrims travelling from the archipelago to Mecca and Egypt. As Laffan (2003) has demonstrated, these connections were crucial to the Indonesian nationalist movement because they provided an alternative model to Europe for modernising intellectuals (see also Azra 2004).

Influenced by the Young Turks movement in the Ottoman Empire, a group of reformist Minangkabau Muslims called the Kaum Muda (Group of the Young), set themselves up in opposition to the Kaum Tua (Group of the Elders), a term they used to refer to the Sufi orders (Abdullah 1971: 16). As in other parts of the Malay

world, the reformists attacked Sufi heterodoxy, urging a return to the Qur'an and the Hadith. They also denounced Islamic practices which they saw as heterodox, for example the way in which the Prophet's birthday was celebrated. In the case of the matrilineal system, however, the Kaum Muda compromised by suggesting that inheritance be divided into two categories, 'high inheritance' (*pusaka tinggi*) or 'ancestral inheritance' (*harta pusako*) and 'low inheritance' (*pusaka rendah*) or 'individual inheritance' (*harta pencaharian*). The first category would continue to be distributed according to the matrilineal line, while the second category was to be transferred in accordance with Islamic inheritance law (Abdullah 1985: 143).<sup>9</sup> The division in the inheritance system shows how firmly Islam had become part of Minangkabau identity.

## Nationalism and Islam

In the early twentieth century, an anti-Dutch rebellion broke out in Minangkabau after the 1908 introduction of direct taxation by the Dutch, a policy that disregarded the promises made to adat leaders in the Long Declaration. Uprisings ensued in many parts of West Sumatra, led by both Islamic and adat leaders. Cooperation between the Islamic and adat leaders marked the genesis of nationalism in the struggle against the Dutch in West Sumatra (Kahin 1999: 27). The same year saw the establishment of Budi Utomo in Java, an event now commemorated as marking the beginnings of the Indonesian nationalist movement.<sup>10</sup> Among the first organisations to campaign for an improvement in the social and economic conditions of indigenous people in the Indies was the Islamic League (Sarekat Islam). Established in 1912,<sup>11</sup> Sarekat Islam was initially concerned with protecting indigenous batik merchants against ethnic Chinese domination (Willmott 2009: 26) but, as it expanded throughout the archipelago it joined the growing call for political reform in the interests of the indigenous population as a whole.

From 1919, Sarekat Islam struggled over ideological divisions between its Muslim and communist leaders (Kahin 1999: 27). This division emerged after the Dutch granted limited expression to Indonesian people through the establishment of a People's Council (Volksraad) in 1918 (Vickers 2005: 77–78). This council, which served as a forum for the expression of social grievances, was supported by leaders

<sup>9</sup> See Chap. 6 for further discussion of this issue.

<sup>10</sup> In West Sumatra, early stirrings of nationalism were apparent in Abdul Rivai's appeal for *kemajuan*, the notion of social progress, in 1904. A Minangkabau student in Holland and the Malay editor of *Bintang Hindia* (Star of the Indies), Abdul Rivai stressed the importance of social development within an Indies nation state (Abdullah 1971: 12).

<sup>11</sup> There is some controversy about the beginnings of Sarekat Islam. According to Shiraishi (1997: 76), the organisation was established under that name in 1912, replacing an earlier organisation, Rekso Roemekso, which was founded in 1911. However, according to McVey (1965: 8), Sarekat Islam was established in 1911 as the Islamic Commercial Union in Surakarta.

of Budi Utomo and some moderate members of the Sarekat Islam but not by the younger, radical members of Sarekat Islam such as Semaun, who later became the first chairman of the Communist Party of Indonesia (Kahin 1999: 27). After violent incidents involving attempts to rebel against colonial rule, the Dutch security body accused the League of harbouring a group of violent subversives. In the ensuing internal debates, moderate elements in the leadership, including a number of Minangkabau politicians, staged a walkout, leading to a split in the organisation in 1919 (Vickers 2005: 78–79).

Meanwhile, in West Sumatra, tensions between the Kaum Muda and Kaum Tua were initially reduced with the emergence of the nationalist movement. The vehicle for reconciliation was the establishment of a branch of Sarekat Islam in Padang in 1915 by two Kaum Tua leaders, Haji Achmad, a local Muslim merchant, and Syaikh Chatib Ali, a Kaum Tua leader. A number of Kaum Muda followers joined the organisation (Abdullah 1971: 24), but the truce did not last long. 5 months later, the Padang branch of Sarekat Islam split into two opposing groups, the White Card (Kartu Putih) faction established by the Kaum Muda and the Red Card (Kartu Merah) faction aligned with the Kaum Tua. The more left-wing Red Card faction was recognised by Sarekat Islam in Java because of its opposition to Dutch colonialism while the White Card faction had the approval of the Dutch (Abdullah 1971: 25–26).<sup>12</sup>

Muhammadiyah also came to play an important role in the Kaum Muda movement. Founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan on 18 November 1912, Muhammadiyah was, like Kaum Muda, a reformist organisation that supported the opening up of the process of interpretation (*ijtihad*), setting aside the interpretations of institutionalised scholars for a fresh look at religious sources. Muhammadiyah was also concerned that Muslims were preoccupied with such things as superstition and heretical practices, and sought to purify the faith from those practices (Dhofier 1982).<sup>13</sup> Ahmad Dahlan had been educated for several years in Mecca, where he studied the Qur'an, theology, astronomy and religious law, along with the writings of the Egyptian reformist Muhammad Abduh. This experience greatly affected his approach to Islamic thought, particularly in regard to the need to correct false doctrine and to unite Muslim countries politically so that they could fight against the domination of Western colonialism (Palmier 1973: 17). The name 'Muhammadiyah' reflected the goals and objectives of the organisation, which were to realign Islamic practices with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

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<sup>12</sup> Datuk Sutan Maharaja responded to the establishment of the West Sumatran Sarekat Islam by forming a Minangkabau Adat party called the Adat Association of the Minangkabau World (Sarekat Adat Alam Minangkabau, SAAM) in September 1916. Most of the party's members were local panghulu and their adat staff. Datuk Sutan Maharaja not only cooperated with the Dutch but also formulated his own explanations for the relationship between adat and religion, in which adat was positioned as being in line with Sufi Islam, and *tasauf* (a personal approach to God). His rejection of the idea that adat should be directly based on Islamic laws, as was claimed by Kaum Muda movement, led him to cooperate with the Kaum Tua (Abdullah 1972: 230, 232).

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of Muhammadiyah's position on education, see Chap. 5.

Muhammadiyah was introduced to West Sumatra in 1925 by Abdul Karim Amrullah, also known as Haji Rasul, a strident opponent of communism who had spent time in Java. By 1927, one-fifth of the whole population of his nagari of Sungai Batang, Maninjau, around 2,440 people, had joined the organisation (Abdullah 1971: 78). From Maninjau, Muhammadiyah subsequently established branches in Padang Panjang in 1926, Bukittinggi in 1927, Padang and Batusangkar in 1928, where it provided a base for West Sumatrans who sought to distance themselves from the revolutionary communists who dominated the local branch of Sarekat Islam (Abdullah 1971: 71, 84–90).<sup>14</sup>

### *The Rise of Political Parties*

From the 1920s to the 1940s, a range of political parties emerged in Indonesia as the level of political activism increased. At the national level, the Indonesian National Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI) was established in 1927, while leftists within Sarekat Islam established the Islamic League Party (Partai Sarekat Islam, PSI), which later became the Indonesian Islamic League Party (Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia, PSII) in 1929.<sup>15</sup> In the same year, Tan Malaka also established the Republic of Indonesia Party (Partai Republik Indonesia, Pari) (Kahin 1999: 58). In West Sumatra, the Kaum Muda established a politically-oriented socio-economic organisation, the Association of Indonesian Muslims (Persatuan Muslim Indonesia, Permi) in 1930, which became a political party in 1932 (Noer 1973: 50). The Kaum Tua established the Association of Islamic Schools (Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah, PTI) in the same year (Abdullah 1971: 135). A local branch of the PSII was established in 1930, while a local branch of the PNI was established in 1932 (Abdullah 1971: 110, 183). In 1932, Permi proclaimed itself as a revolutionary and non-cooperative party by refusing to hoist the Dutch flag during religious celebrations (Abdullah 1971: 176). In 1933, Kaum Tua, Kaum Muda, Muhammadiyah and the local branch of PSII also began to adopt a revolutionary stance.<sup>16</sup> In response, in 1933 the Dutch imprisoned the leaders of Permi and the PSII, including Rasuna Said, Rasimah Ismail, Datuk Singo Mangkuto and Djamaluddin (Kahin 1999: 56). In 1938, the colonial authorities established the Minangkabau Council (Dewan Minangkabau) in an attempt to control increasingly radical local political organisations (Kahin 1999: 90).

<sup>14</sup> Kahin (1999: 84) argues that West Sumatran society at this time was plural and the categorisation of society into adat, Islamic and communist blocs is unhelpful (Kahin 1999: 84).

<sup>15</sup> After the collapse of the Islamic Caliphate in Turkey and the failure of the Islamic World Congress in Mecca planned in 1927, the PSII and its successor emphasised Indonesian nationalism rather than Pan-Islamism (Abdullah 1971: 122).

<sup>16</sup> Divisions between Islamic organisations also emerged. For example, Permi accused Muhammadiyah of being too close to the Dutch while Muhammadiyah accused Permi activists of not being motivated by Islam (Noer 1973: 264).

## *Legacies of the Japanese Occupation*

The arrival of the Japanese in 1942 increased enthusiasm for the cause of independence. The Japanese not only put an end to Dutch power but also promoted nationalist and anti-Western sentiments in the country (Vickers 2005: 86–87). Japanese troops arrived in Padang in March 1942 and the local Dutch commander surrendered ten days later (Kahin 1999: 95). West Sumatra was then managed by the Department of Military Administration (Gunseibu) of the 25th Army in Singapore, one of three Japanese military commands in Indonesia; other two being the 16th Army in Java and the Navy in the eastern islands and Kalimantan (Vickers 2005: 88). A year later, the 25th Army headquarters moved to Bukittinggi, from where it administered the whole of Sumatra (Kahin 1999: 95).

The Japanese had been in contact with Islamic leaders in Indonesia and West Sumatra for a short period of time prior to the occupation (Kahin 1974: 79). The study of Islam had been significant in Japan since the 1920s and the Japanese Islamic Association (Dai Nippon Kaikyo Kyokai), established in 1938, had invited Muslims to attend an Islamic exhibition in Tokyo in the same year. No Indonesian Muslims attended (Benda 1958: 105–106), but in 1941, just before Japan entered the Second World War, Japanese agents had contacted Indonesian Muslim organisations such as Sarekat Islam (Benda 1958: 105). In January 1942, shortly before the fall of the Dutch administration, Japanese agents had met Chatib Suleiman, a member of the Dutch-sponsored Minangkabau Council, and organised a secret organisation centred in Padang Panjang (Oki 1978: 206). After seizing power, the Japanese rulers allowed the Islamic flag to be raised on Islamic holidays and established the Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations (Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia, Masyumi), which after independence became a major political party until it was banned in 1960. In their management of Islam, the Japanese continued the Dutch Office for Native and Religious Affairs by establishing the Religious Affairs Office (Shumubu) at the end of March 1942 (Benda 1958: 111). The Minangkabau reformist, Abdul Karim Amrullah, was appointed as an advisor to this body in 1942. In 1943, the Japanese also established and trained Islamic militias, which were later the nucleus of Islamic militancy during the Darul Islam and PRRI/Permesta rebellions.

In West Sumatra, the Japanese established a People's Committee (Komite Rakyat) to succeed the Dutch Minangkabau Council, along with an organisation called Greater Japan Youth (Pemuda Nippon Raja) led by Chatib Sulaiman. However, after the Japanese consolidated their authority in the region in late 1942, all organisations were banned from political activities (Kahin 1974: 79–80). After suppressing political organisations, the Japanese authorities sought to play a role both within adat and Islam. At the supra-village level, they favoured Islam, for example, by sending Islamic leaders from West Sumatra to a Malay Islamic conference in Singapore and establishing the Minangkabau Supreme Islamic Council

(Majlis Islam Tinggi Minangkabau) in 1943 (Oki 1978). At the village level, on the other hand, local adat leaders were given power through the maintenance of the Dutch administrative apparatus (Kahin 1999: 106).

## Islamic Politics After Independence

When the Japanese surrendered to the Allies on 15 August 1945, Sukarno, his West Sumatran born Vice President, Muhammad Hatta, and a number of other leaders were reluctant to proclaim independence because they felt time was needed for planning and to set up new institutions. Their hand was forced by radical youth associated with a group known as Menteng 31, who kidnapped Sukarno and Hatta and forced them to proclaim independence on 17 August 1945. The proclamation of independence, the arrival of British troops charged with disarming the Japanese and repatriating Dutch prisoners of war, and signs that the Dutch were preparing to reassume management of their colony led to revolution in many parts of the country. During the revolution, the Dutch were aligned against the military and diplomatic efforts of the newly-proclaimed Republic of Indonesia. As a result, Indonesia was divided between the Republic and Dutch-controlled areas, with the Republic only in control of small areas of Sumatra and Java (Vickers 2005: 97–99).

One of the tasks undertaken in the lead-up to the declaration of independence was the design of a constitution. A key debate in that process occurred over the status of Islam in that document. On 22 June 1945, the Preparatory Body for Indonesian Independence (Badan Usaha-usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia, BPUPKI) proposed that Indonesia be established as an Islamic state, or at the very least, that Islam be made the state religion (Hosen 2007: 62). Known as the ‘Jakarta Charter’, this proposal included the stipulation that all Muslim citizens be required to observe Islamic law and fulfil the obligation to pray, fast and pay zakat (Van Bruinessen 1996: note 5). Opponents to the Jakarta Charter, who included Sukarno and Hatta, were concerned that its inclusion in the Constitution would lead to the secession of non-Muslim areas of Eastern Indonesia. Ultimately, on 18 August 1945, one day after the proclamation of independence, the motion was defeated.<sup>17</sup>

Some prominent Muslims argued that the omission of the Charter from the constitution meant the document did not guarantee their right to observe Islamic law (Hosen 2007: 63). In an attempt to placate the Muslim lobby, Sukarno promised Islamic leaders that they would later be given the opportunity to campaign

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<sup>17</sup> Islamic parties, including Masyumi, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the Indonesian Islamic League Party (Partai Sarikat Islam Indonesia, PSII), campaigned for inclusion of the Jakarta Charter in the national philosophy and the constitution for a second time during the deliberations of the Indonesian Constituent Assembly in 1959 (Prins 1959: 122). However, the proposal did not gain the required two-thirds majority support (Hosen 2007: 67; Nasution 1992: 32).

for the inclusion of the Charter through constitutional procedures (Hosen 2007: 67).<sup>18</sup> Moreover, to shore up support for resistance to the return of the Dutch, Sukarno established the Ministry of Religion in January 1946 (Noer 1978: 13). However, tensions between Islamic groups and the Republican government were exacerbated in 1947 with the signing of the Linggajati Agreement between the Republican government, led by the Minangkabau Sutan Sjahrir, and the Dutch, which stated that they would work together to establish 'a sovereign, democratic, federal state', of the United States of Indonesia as part of a Netherlands-Indonesia Union—an agreement considered by Islamic political parties and organisations as evidence of the influence of the Dutch in the Republican government (Kahin 1999: 123). The collapse of this agreement led to armed conflict with the Dutch in what they referred to as the 'police action' of 1947.

In the following year, the Darul Islam rebellion broke out in West Java, led by Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwirjo. The rebellion in West Java was followed by Darul Islam rebellions in Kalimantan, and more significantly in South Sulawesi in 1950, led by Kahar Muzakkar, and in Aceh in 1953, led by Daud Beureueh (Feith and Lev 1963).<sup>19</sup> Kartosuwiryo, who had initially supported the Republican government, proclaimed the Islamic State of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia) in 1948 in protest over the Renville Agreement, the second truce between the Dutch and the Indonesian Republic (Kahin 1999: 175). In a response to the Darul Islam movement, Sukarno began to consider ways of increasing Muslim support for the Republican government. He established a Council of Ulama in West Java in 1958, the head of which was the former regional military commander.<sup>20</sup> After attempts in 1960 and 1961 to persuade the movement to disband, Sukarno sent military troops to capture Kartosuwiryo and his followers on 4 June 1962.

At the same time as it faced the outbreak of the Darul Islam rebellion, the Republican government was at war with the Dutch who attacked guerrilla strongholds in Java at the end of 1948. This second Dutch 'police action' led to the taking of the Republican capital, Yogyakarta, at the end of 1948. President Sukarno and Vice President Hatta were taken prisoner, leaving Syafruddin Prawiranegara to establish a caretaker government (Pemerintah Darurat Republik Indonesia, PDRI) in Bukittinggi. With the departure of the Dutch in 1949, the West Sumatran Muslim politician Muhammad Natsir was appointed Prime Minister.

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<sup>18</sup> A number of attempts made to revive the Jakarta Charter during the New Order period and the early the post-Suharto era also failed (Hosen 2007: 59–107).

<sup>19</sup> Kahin (1999: 176) argues that Darul Islam did not take hold in West Sumatra because the Minangkabau were not attached to any particular regional political party and were not yet interested in regional autonomy. Kartosuwirjo and Kahar Muzakar were executed in 1962 and 1965 respectively. The Indonesian government negotiated with Acehese leaders in 1962, leading to a peace agreement that restored Aceh as an autonomous province with special rights to implement Islamic law. The same approach was used by Jakarta in 2005 following the 2004 tsunami and the subsequent cessation of conflict. (For a detailed discussion of Aceh's relations with Jakarta, see Aspinall 2009).

<sup>20</sup> The national-level council, the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI), was subsequently established in 1962, with the aim of gaining more support from Islamic groups (Noer 1978).



With the implementation of the parliamentary system in the 1950s, many anti-colonial organisations were reconfigured as political parties.<sup>21</sup> The secular nationalist Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) was led by Sukarno and Hatta, while Masyumi was re-formed as a modernist Muslim party under the leadership of Natsir. Traditionalist Muslims were represented by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), headed by Kyai Haji Idham Chalib. The parliamentary system also strengthened the position of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). In the national election of 1955, the PNI received the largest proportion of the vote with 22 %, while Masyumi, NU and the PKI gained 20, 18 and 16 % respectively (Hosen 2007: 66).

From the mid-1950s, efforts to balance the competing interests of Muslims, communists and the military increasingly consumed Sukarno. Ideological factionalism was evident in the military as well. The military leadership had generally favoured the Pancasila doctrine, leading to the expression of secularism, but Abdul Haris Nasution, the Armed Forces Chief of Staff and Minister of Defence, wanted to institute Islamic doctrines as an ethical and moral guide for the Armed Forces (Crouch 2009: 410). The ideological contest between competing political interests at the national level had a geographical element as well. Some regions were dominated by one ideology while others were dominated by another. For example, areas in the north and south of Central Java were dominated by the PKI while most of the eastern and western extremes of Java were under the control of the Islamic political parties. Masyumi dominated Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Maluku while the PNI was strong in the southeastern islands from Bali to Timor (Vickers 2005: 123–124).

In an attempt to control these ideological conflicts, Sukarno adopted a consensus approach. However, when the Ali cabinet collapsed in March 1957, leaving no single political party with a majority of votes (Lev 1966: 12), Sukarno declared a return to the 1945 Constitution, giving him and the military forces authoritative power in the country.<sup>22</sup> In this he split decisively from his deputy, Hatta, who had also been prime minister in previous governments. The declaration of martial law increased regional grievances in Indonesia, which the Djuanda cabinet attempted to assuage by delivering funds for regional development (Lev 1966: 30). A National Conference (Musyawarah Nasional) for regional leaders was also held twice in 1957 in an unsuccessful attempt to create national unity (Lev 1966: 30).<sup>23</sup> The PRRI/Permesta rebellion began in September 1958, when regional military officers such as Husein, Sumual and Barlian, the commanders of Central Sumatra, North Sulawesi and South Sumatra respectively, met in Palembang. They demanded that the national government return Hatta to his position, grant extensive regional

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<sup>21</sup> It is important to note that youth groups also played important role in debates around national ideology. The Indonesian Islamic Students' Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia, HMI), formed in 1947, was closely associated with Masyumi during the Sukarno years, and constituted a strong force of opposition against communism (Baswedan 2004: 674).

<sup>22</sup> Hatta had resigned as Vice President in protest against Sukarno's growing authoritarianism in December 1956.

<sup>23</sup> Sukarno was almost killed in an assassination attempt known as the Cikini Affair in November 1957 (Lev 1966: 33).

autonomy, make changes in military leadership, and outlaw communism in Indonesia (Lev 1966: 36; Kahin 1999: 178). In response Sukarno sent military units led by Abdul Haris Nasution to quell the rebellion, and made illegal Natsir's Masyumi as well as Sjahrir's Socialist Party. From Pekanbaru, the national military officers took control of Medan, then Padang, and finally Gorontalo and Manado in North Sulawesi, although PRRI/Permesta leaders carried on guerrilla warfare until 1961 (Lev 1966: 40). In a final attempt at appeasement, Sukarno issued President Decision No. 1/PNPS/1965 in January 1965, which subsequently became Law No. 5/1969 on Prevention of the Misuse of Religion and Blasphemy. The law contained a prohibition on deliberate and public advocacy of an interpretation of a religion adhered to in Indonesia, or the performance of religious activities resembling the religious activities of a religion adhered to in Indonesia, where that interpretation or activity deviated from the accepted tenets of that religion.<sup>24</sup>

Sukarno lost power when the army, under the direction of General Suharto, destroyed the Communist Party after an attempted coup on 30 September–1 October 1965, during which six top military leaders were killed. In the months that followed, around half a million members of the Indonesian Communist Party and others accused of being communists were killed by the Indonesian army and Muslim paramilitaries supported by Islamic organisations. General Suharto officially banned the Communist Party, together with all affiliated social and cultural organisations, in March 1966. Under intense political pressure, Sukarno transferred much of his authority to the army and to Suharto in a Presidential Decree dated 11 March 1966.

## *A West Sumatran Perspective*

West Sumatra was deeply involved in national politics, and in the politics of Islam, during the Sukarno years as a consequence of the engagement of Minangkabau figures like Haji Agus Salim from the PSII, Hatta and Sjahrir in the nationalist movement, and their subsequent rise to power within the Republican ranks. The province itself was also a site of Republican activity. In an attempt to shore up support for a return to colonial status, the Dutch promoted the concept of a Minangkabau state (Negara Minangkabau) through local adat leaders, introducing a form of regional government called General Unity (Persatuan Umum), which had a military arm called the Association of Black Cats (Serikat Kucing Hitam) in 1946. This initiative, which attracted adat leaders who had been officials during the Dutch colonial period, served to increase the polarisation between these local leaders and Islamic groups (Kahin 1974: 110–111).

As part of its campaign against the Republicans, in 1947, the Dutch introduced the Special Autonomous Region of West Sumatra (Daerah Istimewa Sumatera Barat, DISBA) in Padang, as a step towards the planned establishment of the

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<sup>24</sup> As will be seen later, this law was important in the politics of Islam in the post-Suharto era.

Negara Minangkabau in 1949 (Kahin 1999: 152). Ultimately, however, this initiative failed, and, as noted above, Bukittinggi became the seat of the Emergency Government of the Republic of Indonesia (Pemerintahan Darurat Republik Indonesia, PDRI) after the Dutch attack on Yogyakarta in 1948 (Kahin 1974: 115).

Relations between the Republic and local Muslim politicians began to sour with the signing of the Linggajati Agreement in 1947. Islamic groups such as Masyumi and Muhammadiyah and religious militia such as Hizbullah, Sabilillah and Lasjmi accused the regional Republican and military leaders of continuing to maintain close ties to the Dutch and proceeded to stage an attempted coup in March 1947. Kahin (1999: 123) argues that the attempted coup was prompted not only by suspicions of the regional Republican government's close relationship with the Dutch but also because Islamic political parties were not represented in the village administration and in the regional Republican government. They also resented the fact that local Islamic militias were not given arms. Islamic groups, according to Kahin, considered higher-ranking military officers to be adopting luxurious and immoral lifestyles that were inconsistent with Islamic principles.<sup>25</sup> Attempts were made to bring Islamic militia groups under the control of the regular army after the formation of the Banteng Division in 1947. The fusion of the militias and the regular forces was not particularly successful, as some militia commanders refused to forfeit their independence and some military units remained loyal to their militia commanders and to various political parties.<sup>26</sup>

The West Sumatran division of Masyumi joined a movement created by veterans of the Banteng Division over the issue of regionalism in 1956. Together they formed the Banteng Council and declared the Banteng Charter, demanding greater regional autonomy, especially in matters of defence and finance. The Banteng council was opposed by the local branch of the PKI, which prompted the formation of a local network called the Joint Movement against Communism (Gerakan Bersama Anti Komunisme, GEBAK) on 4 September 1957. Led by Colonel Dahlan Djambek, GEBAK accused communist groups of accepting funds from foreign Chinese, also suggesting that communism had caused the split between Sukarno and Hatta. Among the propaganda used by GEBAK was the statement that West Sumatra was considered as Islamic and national government was communist (Kahin 1999: 191–204).<sup>27</sup> Mansoer Sani, the new military head of Sawah Lunto

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<sup>25</sup> The tension between Islam and the Republican government in West Sumatra also affected the relationship with communists in the region. During the March 1947 coup the Army commander was Colonel Ismael Lengah, who had a secular education and was considered by Islamic groups to be a socialist and a follower of Tan Malaka. Lengah refused to return weapons of the Islamic militia even though Muhammad Natsir and the Vice President Mohammad Hatta at that time asked him to do so (Kahin 1999: 125–127).

<sup>26</sup> The Banteng division became the Territorial Division I and II (Divisi Bukit Barisan) of the Indonesian National Army (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, TNI) in 1950.

<sup>27</sup> Kahin argues that Djambek's accusations should be contextualised in the fact that he had been forced to resign from the Indonesian military in Jakarta after being charged with corruption, and was seeking opportunities for influence on his return to Padang (Kahin 1999: 202–204).

Sijunjung district removed all communists, mostly immigrants from Java, from civilian and military positions and arrested their leaders in 1957.

The PRRI movement in West Sumatra was headed by Syafruddin Prawiranegara and Muhammad Natsir. According to Leirissa (1991), the rebellion was caused by four factors. First, there had been a significant Javanisation of the outer islands from 1955, which local powerbrokers feared would enable the national government to easily control Central Sumatra. Second, the national economy was in crisis, and poverty was rampant not only among civilians but among lower level military units in the region. Third, there had been a history of local and national coup attempts by communists, including the local attempt on 3 March 1947 in West Sumatra. Finally, fragmentation in the local and national armed military made a regional uprising possible. Kahin (1999: 198, 207), however, suggests that the PRRI was made possible because of US support as part of attempts to encourage a national front against communism. The national government sent military forces to the province and PRRI leaders were captured and killed in 1961 (Kahin 1999: 226). Following the rebellion, control over the regional army was put in the hands of communist groups within the Diponegoro Division, who proceeded to entrench their power in the local military (Kahin 1999: 236). Civilians who supported the rebellion were also detained in jails or kept under house arrest (Kahin 1999: 228). The political repression that followed the PRRI prompted many Minangkabau to migrate to other regions, including Jakarta, and also to Malaysia.

The involvement of Masyumi leaders in the PRRI and Darul Islam rebellions led Sukarno to ban to ban the party and imprison a number of its leaders, including Syafruddin and Natsir. The same fate befell the Indonesian Socialist Party (Partai Sosialis Indonesia, PSI) and its leaders, including Sukarno's long-time nemesis, the West Sumatran Sutan Sjahrir (Kahin 1999: 236). In West Sumatra, the banning of Masyumi meant that Muslims voters were forced to support the traditionalist Perti, which had rejected support for the Banteng Council and the PRRI movement and agreed with Sukarno's Guided Democracy (Kahin 1999: 246). It was in this political context that Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim Amrullah, better known as Hamka, the son of the founder of Muhammadiyah's West Sumatra branch, Haji Rasul, began criticising Sukarno from Jakarta. Hamka had worked in the Ministry of Religion in Jakarta from 1951 to 1960, also serving as a Masyumi member of the Indonesian Constituent Assembly representing Central Java from 1955 to 1960. Hamka challenged Sukarno's personal and political behaviour, including his polygamous tendencies and his close association with communism, a view widely shared in West Sumatra. Sukarno responded by having Hamka arrested in 1964 under the Subversion Law.

After the failure of the alleged communist coup in Jakarta in 1965, the national government held trials for regional communist leaders in Padang, including Major Djohan Rivai, Lieutenant Colonel Bainal and Sukirno as well as PKI members such Djajusman (Kahin 1999: 240). Tens of thousands of communists were jailed without trial, and although no exact figures are available on the number of those killed (Kahin 1999: 248), it is clear that the numbers were significant. In addition, communist officials who had been dominant in the administrative structure of West

Sumatra after the PRRI were replaced by anti-communist military officers in 1966 (Kahin 1999: 235). The regional army under Colonel Poniman also isolated traditional adat and religious associations that had been associated with communism, such as the Supreme Consultative Council of the Adat of the Minangkabau World (Majelis Tinggi Kerapatan Adat Alam Minangkabau, MTKAAM) and the Islamic Educational Movement Party (Partai Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiyah, Perti) (Kahin 1999: 245–246). In their place, a new adat organisation, the Minangkabau Adat Consultative Body (Lembaga Kerapatan Adat Alam Minangkabau, LKAAM) and a group called the Contact Body for the Struggle of the Islamic Community (Badan Kontak Perjuangan Umat Islam, BKPUI) were established in 1966 (Interview with Saafroedin Bahar, 3 November 2010).

## Islam and Politics in Suharto's Indonesia

Over the course of his presidency, Suharto adopted a 'two-pronged Islamic policy', on the one hand denouncing the politicisation of religion (and especially Islamic political parties) while encouraging personal—but moderate—piety (Liddle 1996: 621). For a short time, the Muslim lobby was viewed favourably by the new regime as a result of Muslim involvement in the anti-communist massacres. Members of HMI who had fought against communism took up positions in Suharto's administration and the Islamic parties were confident they would do well in the election promised by Suharto in his early days in office (Hefner 2001: 503). However, at the same time, Suharto moved swiftly to contain political Islam. He refused to support an attempt to revive Masyumi in April–May 1967, because of the party's former association with rebellion and its promotion of political Islam (Ricklefs 2001: 356–357). Masyumi members subsequently joined the Indonesian Muslim Party (Partai Muslimin Indonesia, Parmusi), which was later controlled by Suharto, who prevented prominent members, including Mohammad Natsir, Muhammad Roem and Pramoto Mangkusaswito, from heading the party (Samson 1973: 5).<sup>28</sup> In 1968, the People's Consultative Assembly rejected calls for the inclusion of Jakarta Charter in the Indonesian Constitution for the third time in Indonesian history. Those who sought to link Islamic laws with the constitution were accused of being subversive (Hosen 2007: 72).

Despite Suharto's political vehicle, Golkar, winning by a landslide in the 1971 election, the New Order continued to seek to limit the influence of political parties, in 1973 fusing the nationalist parties into the Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, PDI) and all remaining Muslim parties into the United

<sup>28</sup> The former Masyumi leaders established the Islamic Propagation Council of Indonesia (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII) in 1967. DDII has strong links with Saudi Arabia. It has sent Indonesian youths to study in the Middle Eastern countries and has funded the construction of mosques and Islamic schools in Indonesia (Hasan 2002).

Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP).<sup>29</sup> NU and Muhammadiyah were depoliticised in the 1970s, while allowing those organisations' religious activities to continue (Caraway 2007: 78). Muslim political forces were also one of a number of targets of the Campus Normalisation Act of 1978 (Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus, NKK), under which all political activity on university campuses was banned. However, the repression of student activism actually served to push some groups of students more towards Islam. Students at the Bandung Institute of Technology (Institut Teknologi Bandung, ITB), for example, made the Salman Mosque the centre of their social and political activities, a focus that exposed them to the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood, a movement that positions Islam as the solution to all political, social and personal problems.

In the early 1980s, there was a fear of Islamic terrorism, in part the result of the National Intelligence Organisation (Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara, BAKIN)'s anxiety over the increase in Muslim militancy following the Iranian Revolution (Conboy 2004: 161). A number of violent incidents did indeed take place. A Garuda jet was hijacked in 1981, while Chinese Indonesian banks and the Borobudur monument were bombed in 1984. In 1982, Suharto introduced a policy on ethnic, religious, racial and class relations (Suku, Agama, Ras dan Antargolongan, SARA) (Heryanto 1997). This policy began to be implemented with the passing of Law No. 21/1982 on the Duties of the Press, which mandated that it was the duty of all media to strengthen national unity and cohesion by avoiding reports on events related to ethnicity, religion, race or class which might lead to social conflict. With Suharto's subsequent announcement, the term SARA became a tool for the government to use against any political activities that it considered to be a threat to the New Order regime (Heryanto 1997).

At the same time that his government was increasingly seeking to control political Islam, Suharto made appeals to personal piety as a means of achieving his national projects. In 1982, the Ministry of Religion was expanded and Islamic centres, schools and mosques began receiving subsidies from the Pancasila Muslim Charity Foundation (Yayasan Amal Bhakti Muslim Pancasila, YABMP). In the following year, Suharto convinced the MUI to issue a decree to help accelerate the government's family planning program. Suharto had sought support from Islamic leaders on family planning since the 1970s, and it was for this reason that the two methods of fertility control most opposed by Muslims, abortion and sterilisation, were omitted from the program. At the same time, the support of the MUI was sought on the use of intra-uterine devices, which had been controversial before the decree was issued. Some Islamic leaders were also invited to receive formal training and then asked to actively promote the family planning project (Warwick 1986).

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<sup>29</sup> Golkar won the 1971 election easily, with 62 % of the vote in Indonesia as a whole (Hindley 1972: 58). For more discussion on this period see for example Reeve (1985) and Suryadinata (1989).

However, not all Muslims were appeased by the New Order regime's support for religious activities. The most serious incident in the early 1980s was the Tanjung Priok Massacre of 1984. Thousands of Muslims engaged in protest against the government. Troops fired into the crowd with automatic rifles, killing dozens, perhaps even hundreds (van Bruinessen 1996). Van Bruinessen (1996) argues that the protest in the Tanjung Priok was mainly triggered by protesters' economic grievances. In the following year, Suharto announced that Pancasila was to be the sole foundation (*azas tunggal*) for all social and political organisations. As Hosen (2007: 72) has shown, *azas tunggal* had two different consequences for Muslims: those who rejected it went to jail while those who accepted it, including Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, continued to operate in conjunction with the Suharto government. Opponents of the doctrine feared that accepting Pancasila would compromise their organisational integrity and independence, and turn them into secular organisations (Ramage 1995: 37).

Eventually, however, a number of changes to be made that increased state support for Islamic institutions. In 1989, the Islamic education system was accorded formal status as a sub-system of the Indonesian educational system, and religious education was made compulsory in state primary and secondary schools, as well as in universities (see Chap. 5 for more details). In the same year, Islamic courts were integrated into the national justice system (Hosen 2007: 73). In 1990, the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia, ICMI) was established under the sponsorship of Suharto and headed by B.J. Habibie, then the Minister for Research and Technology. The stated goals of ICMI were to unify Indonesia's Muslims, to improve their economic status and to ensure Islamic values were reflected in government policy (ICMI 2011; van Bruinessen 1996).<sup>30</sup> Among other initiatives, ICMI established the Muslim newspaper *Republika* as a competitor to the Catholic-owned *Kompas* and the Protestant-owned *Suara Pembaharuan*. The publication of *Republika* was seen as a necessary foil for these other papers because Indonesian newspapers are known to promote the interests of their owners and their allies (Tapsell 2010). ICMI also initiated the establishment of the Islamic Bank Muamalat Indonesia in 1991 to compete with Chinese owned banks (van Bruinessen 1996).

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<sup>30</sup> Schwarz (1999) argues that the organisation was in fact set up to facilitate Muslim input into public policy. However, van Bruinessen (1996) claims that ICMI was designed to generate Muslim support to balance growing dissent within the armed forces. From 1987 to 1993, Suharto was in conflict with the powerful armed forces commander, the chief of the major intelligence services and then the Minister for Defence, the Catholic Benny Moerdani. According to Baswedan (2004), Suharto's change of heart was not only designed to balance the power of the armed forces, but also to accommodate the increasing strength of Islamic elements within Golkar. At the 1998 national convention, members of ICMI and former members of HMI gained control over the party's leadership. .



## *West Sumatra*

In an attempt to mend bridges in West Sumatra, on coming to power, the Suharto regime appointed Harun Zain, a Minangkabau born in Jakarta but then a teacher at Andalas University in Padang, as governor of the province in 1967. Harun was eager to show West Sumatrans that they would benefit by working with the New Order, working hard to develop agricultural and communication infrastructure in the province (Kahin 1999). In 1969, as part of the lead-up to the 1971 election, the military officer Saafoedin Bahar was appointed head of the local Golkar branch. He subsequently led the campaign to convince West Sumatra's people that support for Golkar was crucial for the continuance of regional development (Interview with Saafoedin Bahar, 3 November 2010). In West Sumatra, Golkar ultimately bettered its national average, winning 63 % of the votes in that election (Kahin 1999).

Harun also sought to re-establish an understanding of Minangkabau heritage and regional identity that did not emphasise Islam, for example by promoting the use of traditional architecture in official buildings (Kahin 1999). As part of this push, Islamic leaders were sidelined in Harun's regional development program. Supporters of Masyumi, for example, were asked to distance themselves from political Islam in the interests of regional development (Kahin 1999).

Azwar Anas, a military officer, replaced Harun Zain as Governor of West Sumatra in 1977. The greatest challenge he faced during his term in office was that of implementing Law No. 5/1979 on Village Governance, which determined the basis on which funding was to be allocated to each province. Although Azwar succeeded in establishing a way of identifying villages (based on the Javanese concept of the *desa*) that did not disadvantage the province in terms of funding (Kahin 1999: 258), the implementation of this law undermined the status of the nagari, which not only linked rural society to land, inheritance and rice cultivation but also to social and cultural relationships, including those based on kinship and cultural Islam.

In an attempt to retain some traditional authority, Azwar established a Village Adat Council (Kerapatan Adat Nagari, KAN) within each *desa* in 1983 (Kahin 1999: 260). However, local dissatisfaction with the division of nagari into several *desa* continued to grow. After Hasan Basri Durin was appointed governor in 1987, he overturned Azwar's policy, regrouping some of the smallest *desa* in 1988 (Kahin 1999: 261).<sup>31</sup> He also encouraged cooperation between traditional rural leaders, Islamic scholars, intellectuals and government officials, establishing the Manunggal Sakato program in 1990. In the following year he established Village Development Discussion Bodies (Musyawarah Pembangunan Nagari, MPN), which were made up of both nagari leaders and government officials.

Muchlis Ibrahim replaced Durin as governor in 1997 but he stepped down 2 years later when his recommendation for the position of Deputy Governor was rejected by the central government. Ibrahim had supported Nurmawan, a bureaucrat in the provincial office. However, Syarwan Hamid, the Minister for Internal Affairs, appointed

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<sup>31</sup> Between 1987 and 1996, the number of *desa* decreased by 1,000 (Kahin 1999: 261).

Zainal Bakar, the candidate backed by the regional parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD). The tension between the governor and the DPRD marked the beginning of a new era in West Sumatran local politics, in which Islam once more became a pivotal factor after many years in the wilderness under the New Order.

## Islam and Identity Since Suharto

When Suharto was forced to step down from the presidency in 1998, his close ally, B.J. Habibie, was appointed as the new President. Following the fall of Suharto, Indonesia's political system underwent dramatic change through a series of institutional reforms, which saw the reintroduction of an open system of electoral democracy. In the process, Islamic parties re-emerged as a force in the new multi-party system. Islamic nationalist parties established during this period included the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB), led by Abdurrahman Wahid, the head of NU and a long-time campaigner for democracy, and the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN), led by Amien Rais, an academic, democracy campaigner and then leader of Muhammadiyah. Other Islamic parties were the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP), the party established in 1973, the Crescent and Star Party (Partai Bulan Bintang, PBB), the successor to Masyumi, led by Yuzril Mahendra, an academic and prominent Muslim political figure from Bangka Belitung, who served as Suharto's speech writer in his final term, and the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan, PK) that emerged from the university students' association, the Body for Islamic Propagation on Campus (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus, LDK) in the early 1980s, inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwanul Muslimin) movement in Egypt.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the failure of Islamic parties to gain a majority in any of the post-1998 elections, they have played an important role in national politics since the fall of Suharto. In 1999, the Central Axis (Poros Tengah) coalition of Islamic parties delivered the presidency to Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) rather than to Megawati, the leader of the winning party in the 1999 election, the Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Perjuangan Indonesia, PDIP). Representatives of various Islamic parties have also taken key roles in government. Yusril Mahendra, the head of the PBB, was a minister in various departments from 2000 to 2007, while Hamzah Haz was Vice President in the Megawati administration from 2001 to 2004. Hidayat Nurwahid, the president of the PKS, served as leader of Indonesia's highest legislative body, the People's Consultative Assembly, between 2004 and 2009. The PKS, which has played an influential role in the Islamicisation of political discourse, has alternated between appealing to an Islamic agenda and emphasising issues of general concern such as corruption, law

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<sup>32</sup> The Justice Party changed its name to the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS) in 2002 after failing to reach the electoral threshold of 2 % in the 1999 election.

enforcement and social welfare.<sup>33</sup> During this time, a number of Islamic laws were also passed at the national level, including laws on Zakat Management (1999 and 2011), Islamic banking (2008), charitable land (*wakaf*) (2004), pornography (2008) and the Hajj (2008). In the process of constitutional reform from 1999 to 2002, the PPP and the PBB lobbied for the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter. However, this move was strongly opposed by other Islamic parties, especially PAN and PKB.<sup>34</sup>

A second key development in the post-Suharto period was the introduction of decentralisation. In 2001, after more than three decades under a centralised national government, political power was devolved under Law No. 22/1999 on Regional Autonomy to around 400 district authorities in all but five areas, namely national defence and security, the judicial system, fiscal and monetary policy, foreign and religious affairs.<sup>35</sup> Decentralisation and democratisation have proven to be a powerful mix, as members of local parliaments and heads of local executives have been directly elected since 1999 and 2004 respectively. This dramatic shift in the architecture of Indonesia's political system has fundamentally changed the relationship between politicians and officials and voters. Since that time, local governments have passed regulations on everything from labour relations to taxation. An unintended consequence of the decentralisation of regulatory authority has been the passing of more than 160 religious regulations at the district level. West Sumatran local parliaments have been responsible for more of these laws than local parliaments in any other province, (Crouch 2009: 54, 58), although laws passed by the West Javanese province of Banten have been the most controversial.<sup>36</sup> In addition, a number of other mechanisms, including Gubernatorial Letters (*Surat Gubernur*), Gubernatorial Instructions (*Instruksi Gubernur*), Mayoral Instructions (*Instruksi Walikota*), Circulars (*Surat Edaran*) and Appeals (*Himbauan*) have been used to enforce aspects of Islamic practice. As demonstrated in the chapters that follow, Islamic practices are also promoted through public discourse by way of seminars, conferences, and the regional media—but also through the actions of radical organisations such as *Lasykar Jihad*, the Islamic Defenders' Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI) and the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*, MMI), which have particularly targeted 'un-Islamic' forms of behaviour, for example, by engaging in raids on entertainment venues.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Scholars have written extensively on the PKS. See, for example, Fealy (2010), and Tomsa (2011).

<sup>34</sup> Hosen (2007) argues that this was the case because Muslims have generally been more concerned more with maintaining the right to practise Islam freely, than with the establishment of formal Islamic laws through which the state enforces religious practice.

<sup>35</sup> For more discussion on Regional Autonomy, see, for example, Aspinall and Fealy (2003), Hadiz (2010) and Sakai (2002).

<sup>36</sup> A report from Human Rights Watch in 2010 suggests that more than 200 regional Islamic regulations had been implemented throughout the country.

<sup>37</sup> The most radical of these organisations is the *Jamaah Islamiyah*, which was the main group behind the bombing of Western-linked targets like the Sari Club in Bali in 2002 (Jones 2005). Some observers assert that there has not been a strong enough response from the government to

Such has been the controversy over local governments' enthusiasm for Islamic regulation that in 2004 the central government passed Law No. 10/2004 on Law-making in an attempt to prevent the practice, declaring that religious affairs remained the responsibility of the central government (Crouch 2009: 56). However, local Islamic regulations continue to be promoted and enforced. In West Sumatra, the most recent of these was Regulation No. 2/2010 on the Implementation of Zakat, which was passed in April of that year.

## **Conclusion: The Assertion of Islamic Identity in West Sumatra**

The chapter has demonstrated the interplay between transnational and local factors from the advent of Islam in the Malay world to the post-Suharto era. The chapter has identified the key phases in West Sumatra's history and positioned them in the broader history of the archipelago and the Malay world. It has also demonstrated that the relationship between Islam and Minangkabau culture was simultaneously accommodating and contested, and that the strong association between Islam and regional identity only solidified in the post-Suharto era.

The chapter has demonstrated how the Minangkabaus' matrilineal culture has been shaped by successive waves of foreign influence, including Hindu-Buddhism as well as Islam. As has been shown here, the Minangkabaus' connection with the Malay world increased the acceptance of Syaria-centric understandings of Islam, first introduced by reformist Muslims coming back from Mecca in the 17th century. Gradually, Syaria-oriented Islam, and later Wahabism, largely replaced the Sufi form first adopted, which was more accommodating of local beliefs. However, as also shown here, Islam as an ideology was subordinated after Independence days, and again under the New Order, this time to a largely secular formulation of national identity.

Indeed, it has only been in the post-Suharto period that Islam has assumed a hegemonic position in Minangkabau identity discourse. In contemporary West Sumatra, regional governments has been utilising claims that local customs are

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(Footnote 37 continued)

acts of this kind because of links between the military and the militant groups and a failure of law enforcement (van Bruinessen 2002; Azra 2006). Lieutenant-General Prabowo Subianto has been said to be associated with the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World (Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam, KISDI) and the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII), both of which strongly support militant Islamic groups (Rabaza 2010: 26). As reported by Wikileaks, the FPI was also initially funded by the former head of the Indonesian Police Department, Retired General Sutanto, now the head of the Indonesian Intelligence Agency (Badan Koordinasi Inteligen Nasional, BAKIN). There are many studies on Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. See, for example, van Bruinessen (2002), Rabasa (2003), Eliraz (2004), Lim (2005) and Hadiz (2008).

based on Islam and Islam is based on the Qur'an (*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*, ABS-SBK). This assertion is ubiquitous, appearing as justification for almost every political decision made at the provincial level and below. Moreover, every disaster, from the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis to natural disasters such as floods, landslides and earthquakes, has been attributed to the community's failure to meet its religious obligations. For example, after the 2004 tsunami, large billboards were displayed throughout the city of Padang proclaiming 'religiosity must be practised in order to prevent a tsunami'.

Important as they have been, however, it is not simply the twin processes of democratisation and decentralisation in the Post-Suharto that have given rise to the Islamicisation of social policy in contemporary West Sumatra. As the chapters that follow show, Islamic regionalism has drawn on two additional and related processes, both of which have transnational elements. First, the failure of the central government to support economic development in this resource-poor province has prompted regional leaders to seek out alternative models and sources of capital for development, many of them drawn from elsewhere in the Islamic world. Second, in a continuation of the process chronicled in this chapter, engagement with the global *umma* has encouraged a quite dramatic shift in local understandings of what it means to be a Muslim and therefore, in the current political context, a Minangkabau.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-15412-1>

The Transnational and the Local in the Politics of Islam

The Case of West Sumatra, Indonesia

Salim, D.P.

2015, XI, 174 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-15412-1