

Ulama, The State, & War

Islam-State Relations in the Aceh Conflict

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Negotiating the Power of Religious Non-State Actors

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The attention garnered by non-systemic, local factors in the study of war has evolved considerably.ⁱⁱ Particular attention has been paid to the importance of religious identity in driving and defining conflict, an emphasis particularly evident for Islam.ⁱⁱⁱ Islamic non-state actors are considered threats to both state and human security, but at the same time can strengthen both by providing social services, governance, legitimacy, global partnerships, and a locus of resistance against injustice. The literature on Islam, the state, and war is marked by contradictory or indeterminate findings. What is the relationship between Islamic non-state actors and the state in times of war? Under what conditions does Islam lend itself to strengthening the state, escaping from it, or resisting it? What motivates Ulama to act as defenders of or threats to human security? What are the implications for foreign actors?

This paper presents a case study of how community Islamic leaders reacted to the recent separatist conflict in Aceh, Indonesia. Despite a history of religious conflict led by highly organized Ulama,^{iv} the recent separatist conflict was fought in terms of self-determination and human rights, never Islam. The uncertain position of Islam during the conflict provides an avenue for exploration. Based on village interviews during several research trips, I find that, unlike village chiefs, Acehnese Ulama lacked consistent roles during the conflict. In a single conflict, non-state religious actors simultaneously supplemented, contested, and supplanted the state, threatening while protecting human rights. Not only did the positions of Aceh's Muslim leaders vary, *how* they varied was predicted by regional conflict dynamics. In areas dominated by the Indonesian state, Ulama tended to join state organizations, assist the army, and criticize the rebels. In contested areas, Ulama largely withdrew from politics and aided locals. In rebel strongholds, Ulama fought against state forces and presided over conservative rebel courts. Explaining the source of this fragmentation gets to the heart of the

relationship between non-state religious actors and human security. Ulama support for the stronger party could be viewed as narrow self-interest, a survival mechanism with little regard for others. But an alternative interpretation is that Ulama mobilized in defence of their immediate communities, with variation explained not by the power of the combatants in a given region, but instead by the brutality of the weaker army. The latter view suggests a classic security dilemma, in which mobilizing for peace unintentionally exacerbates war, which may allow for rather straightforward policy interventions to work with well-meaning Islamic leaders who wish to safeguard human security.

I begin by reviewing how Islam can be used to resist, support, or escape the state, and how in times of war, can safeguard or undermine the security of local people. I suggest a fourth potential interpretation; beyond lending itself to all three positions, Islam may contain institutional traits which predispose it to exceptional fragmentation. Second, I turn to Aceh: an overview of Islam and the state in historical conflicts and the background of the recent separatist conflict. Third, I introduce my field research, describing how village religious leaders responded to separatism. I then analyze these findings, focusing on the crucial question of why Ulama sided with power in different zones of control. I conclude by considering policy implications.

ISLAM, THE STATE, & WAR

In times of war, should we expect religious leaders to rally against the state, withdraw from politics, or enhance the state? In this section, I provide a cursory outline of writers, religious tenets, and examples which privilege each position. In the end, I suggest a fourth approach; not only does Islam allow all three possibilities, but institutional traits in the faith

consistently lead to multiple positions. In its relationships with the state and war, Islam is all over the map, and is so for identifiable, institutional reasons.

Resisting the State

Islam is commonly portrayed as a party to violent movements resisting the state. Arguments emphasizing how Islam resists the state are diverse; it is helpful to distinguish between Islam resisting *the* state and resisting *a* particular one. Resisting *the* state is the more radical stance, in which the very concept of the territorial state is challenged, not just its form. Islam can be said to challenge the state because its core tenets are universal, beyond race, class, or borders. Early believers sought to unite tribal groups and develop a broader community, the Ummah.^v Like transnational civil society and multinational corporations, the Ummah challenges state sovereignty through the movement of people and their supranational identities. If Muslims in one region are abused, as in Mindanao or Palestine, it is the concern of believers everywhere.^{vi} Transnational Muslim identity is reinforced by the Haj, scholarly networks, trading networks, and the Arabic language, and more recently, Wahhabi financial aid, Islamic media, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and the Islamic resurgence more generally. In extreme cases, the Ummah is evoked to support demands for dismantling the state in favour of a Caliphate. But those who advocate overthrowing the state, as well as observers preoccupied with such threats, occupy the fringes.^{vii} Islam contains more teachings on building the state than dismantling it.

More concrete is the propensity to mobilize Islam to resist *a* state—non-Muslim or insufficiently Muslim regimes. First, Islam can inspire Muslim minorities to resist or separate from non-Muslim majorities. Muslim minority populations tend towards isolation, possessing a strong sense of identity and boundary reinforced by dietary requirements,

marriage rules, or separate institutions such as schools. This means that assimilation efforts run up against a particularly strong wall, by no means a negative trait. When faced with assimilationist non-Muslim states, this sense of difference frequently leads to separatism.^{viii} Second, Islam can also be mobilized to resist a state which, although Muslim, is considered insufficiently so by voices demanding more Islamic polities. The most obvious example of Islamicization as a threat to a regime is the Iranian Revolution. But revolutions are rare, requiring particularly strong Muslim networks and a uniquely unpopular government. In many cases, Islamic organizations begin by trying to reform abusive states, becoming more radical over time. The result is that some movements wish to develop an alternative state (Hamas, the Islamic Brotherhood), while others are able work within it (PAS in Malaysia, PKS in Indonesia). The character of Muslim reform movements depends a great deal on how the state responds, and in this way, Islamic reformers are not unlike a number of non-state actors, where protest treads a fine line between opposing and reforming a state.

Strengthening the State

Islam contains elements that can be used to resist either the state or a particular one. But the state can also be strengthened through Islam, which contains statist teachings, can be the core of a national identity, may be harnessed by corporatist states, or extend state capacity. First, Islam contains numerous teachings which lend themselves to the state. In Islam, religion “is not separate from, but rather organically related to, the state...reflected quite strikingly in the development of Islamic Law.”^{ix} Debates over how to implement Sharia Law obscure the fact that it presupposes the modern state. In many parts of the world, Islam introduced advanced forms of political organization, as in the southern Philippines or Central Asia. Islam might also provide a strong foundation for ‘progressive’ politics, as many

Muslim thinkers find inspiration in Islam for feminism, multiculturalism, anti-corruption, deliberation, and redistribution of wealth.^x Second, a sense of national identity is generally considered necessary for a strong state, and religious identity is a central component of this. The ideal of the Ummah is that it unites all Muslims, but “the reality of Islamic history often departed from the ideological.”^{xi} Islam frequently becomes part of national identity, providing unity, symbols, and legitimacy, and becoming what Robert Hefner refers to as “the moral basis of the nation.”^{xii} Islam is one of the few sources of common identity in many Arab states fragmented along clan lines. And throughout the world, it has adapted to local cultures. Most Muslim countries include Islamic imagery on their flags, build national Mosques, fund national Islamic research centers, and establish religious bureaucracies. Additionally, many governments have been able to harness Islam and create organizations of loyal, pro-government religious officials. In this ‘clericalization’ of Islam: “the state controls the large *madrasa*, names a mufti or *shaykh al-islam* and tries to give these authorities a monopoly on the nomination of mullahs and judges.”^{xiii} Within authoritarian regimes, Muslim voices are constrained, however “it would be a mistake simply to charge these spokespersons with being toadies or hypocrites.”^{xiv} State Islamic organizations can provide space for the study and preservation of faith in authoritarian environments.

Efforts by Muslim rulers to mobilize Islam have led many regimes to play a dangerous game with Muslim reformers. Demands for greater Muslim solidarity, social piety, or even an Islamic State have led to crises for many Muslim governments, who instead of symbolic nods, must increasingly pursue substantive changes. Muslim states willing to work with Islamists risk punishment from Western allies, Islamists may undermine human security by curtailing individual rights, and regimes may lose power if appeasing to Islamists emboldens

further demands. But working with Islamists also brings potential benefits: following popular will, gaining voice in Islamist movements, taming radicals, and improving state capacity. Not unlike globalization, Muslim states which suppress Islamicization may prove unable to influence the direction it takes. By working with Islamist groups, secular-inclined leaders position themselves to engage reformers and may even reap some benefits. First, Islamic movements may provide allies for ailing governments, as was the case when Suharto turned to Islamic actors for support as his grip on the Indonesian military weakened. Second, Islamic modernists may provide sorely-needed social services such as health, education, and welfare to their communities.^{xv} For developing countries, working against such efforts is bound to cost precious resources as well as popularity, whereas working with such groups can help the state provide for its population.^{xvi}

Escaping the State

A third relationship involves escaping politics. All world religions have elements of transcendence, in which adherents withdraw to focus on spiritual concerns. This tendency is illustrated by Egypt's *Hijara* cave movements or Malaysia's *Darul Arqam* communalists, each closing off from the world to practice purer faith.^{xvii} Muslim escapism is generally associated with Sufism, especially with wandering mystics and *Tariqah* orders. Withdrawing from political affairs and immersing oneself in sacred texts can mean a number of things: meditation, study, coping, biding time, or social reform.^{xviii} Returning to scripture is often a way to cope with authoritarian environments, especially for those hoping to avoid co-optation by state organizations but are unable to mobilize against them.^{xix} There is also support in Islamic teachings for a secular relationship between Islam and the state, creating "Islam without the politics" so that religion is not debased by worldly concerns.^{xx}

Islam, War, and Human Security

These three state-society relations are also evident in times of war. It is widely held that Islam helps mobilize populations for holy war, either for or against the state. Religion can demarcate combatants, help overcome collective action problems, and provide certainty, legitimacy, and alliance. It is not unreasonable to suggest that Islam has greater potential to demarcate and mobilize due to an emphasis on politics and conflict in its teachings, as well as an especially strong sense of transnational identity through the Ummah. This should not lead to determinist or causal assumptions. It is also true that local feuds and self-interest often trump religious solidarity.^{xxi} But counterexamples do not mean that Islam has not been a rallying point for war in some instances. Whether this entails resisting states (such as Israel, the United States, or the Soviet Union) or forming them (Palestine, Pakistan, or Egypt) depends on the case. Either way, the consequences for human welfare can be tragic.

By withdrawing from politics, Islam also has a human security dimension. The roles of community Islamic leaders in times of war are frequently to provide a sense of resilience and healing. Anthropologists have long noted that, in regions with ineffective or illegitimate states, village Muslim leaders are sources of conflict resilience. In his 1959 study of Pakistani borderlands, Frederick Barth noted that while some Imam fought against the British, their predominant role was to settle conflicts. Muslim “saints” acted as mediators for warring parties, their legitimacy based on reputations of “holiness and piety.”^{xxii} In Pathan society, a white turban signified Ulama neutrality, allowing passage between warring parties and making their homes sanctuaries.^{xxiii} Recently, scholars have turned towards religious systems of community conflict resolution, arriving at similar views of Islam as a source of peace.^{xxiv} It is increasingly accepted that religion is central to reconciliation and healing after

conflicts.^{xxv} Islamic activists often note that ‘Islam’ means ‘peace’; Islam is by no stretch inherently peaceful, but clearly contains teachings for escaping war. The question becomes: what makes some Islamic non-state actors go to war (for or against the state) while others prioritize impartiality and healing?

Diversity by Design

Islam, like all world religions, contains examples as well as inspiration for the entire universe of state-society relationships in times of war. At times, Muslim leaders voice opposition to the state or a particular regime, at times they remain loyal, and at times they exit politics altogether; “Islamic values like those of most other religions can be interpreted to support the most varied of political orders.”^{xxvi} A stronger position is also possible, that Islam contains institutional traits which consistently produce all three relationships with the state and war. This is more than saying that all three are possible. Beyond resisting, strengthening, or escaping politics, organizational features predispose Islam to fragmentation.

The Islamic world contains immense political diversity, with Muslim majority states ranging from secular, to Muslim majority, to Islamic. Islamicization movements can be led by monarchs (Saudi Arabia), clerics (Iran), and laypersons (North Africa).^{xxvii} Relationships between Islam and the state vary by country, and this is also the case within them. Even in Iran, where Ulama are highly politicized, one finds the universe of types; “the relationship between the Ulama and the state in Iranian history varied from royal patronage to opposition, depending on the sociopolitical context.”^{xxviii} According to Ann Lambton,

The Ulama formed a numerous but by no means uniform group. On the one hand some of the leading religious figures performed official functions for the government, received stipends and pensions from them,

and were thereby compromised...On the other hand, because of their connection with the religious law and religious learning, the Ulama were held in respect by almost all sections of the population; and had especially close relations with the merchants and the craft guilds.^{xxix}

That even revolutionary Shiism contained so many voices appears somewhat surprising. Diverse Islam-state relations are found throughout the Muslim world. Geertz' comparison of modernization in Morocco and Indonesia concludes that Muslim communities abandon traditional beliefs for foreign ones, modernize beliefs through local nationalism, and purify beliefs by returning to scripture.^{xxx}

That Islam is diverse should not be surprising. This is true of all faiths and cultures. But the exceptional level of political diversity within Islam appears to be hard-wired. The major institutional reason is the lack of an ecclesia class. There are no churches and there are no priests. Without a system of ordainment or certification, there exists a great range of teachings, level of education, outlooks, and affiliations among Islamic figures. Islam lacks popes, patriarchs, Brahmins, or Sangha. But it does contain guides, namely Ulama. Even here, there are no accepted criteria for what makes an Alim.^{xxxi} Many states have sought standardization, but the result is at best a patchwork. One becomes an Alim by securing support from senior Ulama, certification by Islamic organizations, recognition from state bodies, or by reputation. Ulama vary by their assigned texts, schools of jurisprudence, political outlook, and levels of education. Because Islam lacks priests, and its gatekeepers are highly decentralized, Islam seems predisposed towards the range of state-religion relationships.

STATE-ISLAM RELATIONS IN THE ACEH CONFLICT

What is the relationship between Islam and the state in times of war? Under what conditions does Islam lend itself to strengthening the state, escaping from it, or resisting it? Given the institutional features of Islam, should we expect to find all three relationships? What are the implications for human security? I turn to the recent separatist conflict in Aceh, Indonesia. My goal is both to understand the role of religion in this largely non-religious conflict, as well as to help answer the above questions. First though, I discuss the historical relationship between Aceh's religious leaders and the state in times of war. The story told is that historical conflicts featured highly politicized, organized, and popular Acehnese Ulama, making Aceh a likely case for cohesive Islamic non-state actors becoming a party to rebellion against the Indonesian state.

Islam and Historical Conflicts

The origins of the Acehnese state are largely in a religious response to aggressive Portuguese colonialism. In 1511, Portugal sacked Malacca, forcing Muslim traders to ports throughout Southeast Asia.^{xxxii} A series of ports on the tip of nearby Sumatra proved an ideal refuge: they had already converted to Islam, represented an earlier stop for Eastward travellers along the Malacca Straits, provided access to the secondary Sunda Straits route, and were suited to spice cultivation. The influx of Muslim officials and a war against Portugal led the ports to establish a Sultanate behind the chief of Aceh. A century later, Sultan Iskandar Muda (r. 1607-1636) reigned over what is commonly referred to as Aceh's Golden Age, a state "more reminiscent of a Middle-Eastern state than the more patriarchal style of Indonesian sultanates."^{xxxiii} Muda launched continuous attacks on Malacca, in which

Islam provided “an ideological basis for the Muslim struggle against the Portuguese.”^{xxxiv} In this era, Islamic frames served to undermine human security and support tyranny.

Acehnese Islam evolved considerably over the next two centuries, with a more peaceful side evolving under scholars such as al-Raniri and al-Singkili.^{xxxv} Aceh’s capital quickly became a regional centre of Islamic learning, its trade flourishing.^{xxxvi} With the Dutch invasion in 1873, the authority of Aceh’s Ulama spread from the capital to the countryside. When the Sultan surrendered, leadership of anti-Dutch forces shifted to the Ulama, who united Aceh through the frame of Holy War. The Ulama penned the *Hikayat Prang Sabil* (Epic of the Holy War), which detailed the glory of martyrdom and declared anti-Dutch resistance to be obligatory for all Muslims, in essence legitimizing a just war.^{xxxvii} In a sense, Islam provided a frame for a just war, threatening human security in many ways, but also resisting a brutal invader. Through decades of war, the Ulama cemented their presence in Acehnese politics and society. In the 1930s, Muslim leaders throughout the Indies were swept up in a wave of modern organizations. Instead of joining Indonesian religious non-state actors, Acehnese Ulama formed their own, led by a charismatic Ulama.^{xxxviii} After World War II, the Ulama carried out a social revolution, massacring Dutch allies and amassing considerable power.^{xxxix} Aceh’s Ulama government supported Sukarno’s Republic with the expectation that the country would become an Islamic state.^{xl} But, like other post-colonial rulers, Sukarno was a secular nationalist, determined to centralize political power. The province of Aceh was merged into (largely Christian) North Sumatra, and calls for Islamic law were rejected. The Darul Islam Rebellion began in West Java in 1949. Aceh’s joined in 1953, gaining public support “because of the respect [the Ulama] enjoyed among the Acehnese and because of their Islamic values and goals.”^{xli} Acehnese soldiers frequently

chanted prayers in battle, referring to Muslim Javanese as unbelievers.^{xlii} The conflict was slowly overcome through a series of negotiations in the 1960s, with Aceh regaining its provincial status and the autonomy to implement Islamic law. Islam was again a source of mobilization for war, this time against an insufficiently Muslim Republic.

The Suharto era began with the massacre of hundreds of thousands of suspected communists. In Aceh, the cull started early, carried out by Muslim student organizations with the endorsement of ranking Ulama, an instance of Islamic actors contributing intense, wanton violence.^{xliii} Unlike Sukarno, Suharto spoke favourably of political Islam, seeking to harness it through corporatist bodies, in effect domesticating Islam within the New Order.^{xliv} A decade into the New Order, the autonomy promised to Aceh had been rescinded. But the previously rebellious Ulama were conspicuously silent. Aceh's Ulama were preoccupied with New Order corporatist Muslim bodies such as a state-sanctioned Muslim political party,^{xlv} the new state Islamic University, and the Ulama Consultative Assembly.^{xlvi} The Ulama were also weak for internal reasons. Enrollment at traditional Islamic boarding schools had fallen considerably due to competition from modern *Madrasah*.^{xlvii} Another problem was that, due to decades of conflict, teaching a new generation of Ulama had been neglected.^{xlviii} Aceh's previously rebellious Ulama were now largely co-opted by the state, leaving few Islamic leaders capable of voicing resistance as the primary source of insecurity became the state itself.

The Separatist Conflict

In 1974, a liquid natural gas contract was awarded to a consortium of Suharto loyalists, the military, and Mobil Oil. Excluded was a group of Acehnese businessman, who created the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, GAM). The GAM was defeated, but

returned in 1989. This is when the conflict began. A vaguely defined martial law resulted in military control of Aceh's economy and severe human rights abuses. By the mid-1990s, public support had shifted to the GAM, based largely in opposition to state brutality. When Suharto fell in 1998, Aceh was in full rebellion, with the Indonesian Military (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, TNI) attacking Acehnese rebels and civilians, while the GAM attacked Javanese minorities. The December 2004 Tsunami provided a critical juncture, killing hundreds of thousands, but also bringing Aceh into the global spotlight, deepening war fatigue, providing some renewed goodwill towards Indonesia, and accelerating the peace process revived by a newly elected Presidential team. The 2005 Helsinki Peace Agreement has since held, with former GAM officials winning the Governor and district posts in 2006, and the rebel's *Partai Aceh* dominating the 2009 legislative elections.

It is commonly accepted that the conflict lacked religious dimensions, though it is rarely discussed. GAM leaders avoided references to Islam, speaking solely to Western states and constructing an ethnic nationalist discourse partially cleansed of Islamic elements. It was the Indonesian Government which steered the conflict towards Islam, enacting Sharia Law despite GAM protests and facilitating the arrival of Islamic militants after the Tsunami. What happened to Aceh's unruly Ulama? Jacques Bertrand writes that after years of human rights abuses, "the objectives of creating an Islamic state had long given way to disillusion and, now, disgust with the treatment of the Acehnese."^{xlix} It is unclear, however, why human rights abuses would lead to a decrease in religious sentiment. A century earlier, Dutch abuses had the opposite effect. Ed Aspinall explains the absence of Islam by the fact that Islam cannot be mobilized for separatism when the enemy is also Muslim.¹ Although Aspinall's argument is not without merit, he affords insufficient attention to Islam mobilizing

Acehnese against Indonesia during the Darul Islam Rebellion, the belief among Acehnese that Javanese are not ‘true’ Muslims, and that GAM leaders lack religious credentials.^{li}

As this section has shown, Islam in Aceh has been used to support violence, but also to resist injustice and support the state. In the 1960s, Aceh would have been a most likely case for united Ulama resisting an abusive state. During the separatist conflict, Islamic leaders were somewhere between neutral and pro-state.^{lii} Despite this, GAM rank and file, civil society, and Acehnese in general remained pious Muslims and held Ulama in high esteem. This suggests a need to look beyond elite levels and towards micro-level actors to understand the position of popular Islam in relation to the state. During the recent separatist conflict, did community Muslim leaders support the state, escape from it, or resist it? Did Acehnese Ulama become parties to the conflict, or did they protect their communities from abuse?

ULAMA AND THE ACEH CONFLICT

Findings

My data were collected during several trips to Aceh between 2005 and 2009, including two months living Saree mountainous village, a region contested by both sides during the conflict. I also spent two weeks each in two rebel strongholds (outside of Bireuen and Tapak Tuan) and two state strongholds (outside of Banda and Kutacane).

It is useful to begin with a brief look at Muslim and village leaders in Aceh. Ulama are heads of religious schools, either traditional *Dayah* or *Pesantren* boarding schools, or more modern *Madrasah*. Approximately one third of Acehnese villages are home to an Ulama, though their prestige and education vary considerably. Elementary instruction is carried out by *Imam*; while they do not carry the same prestige as Ulama, Imam remain important

figures in every village. Imam and Ulama are generally referred to as the mother of the village (*Ibu Kampong*), with the village chief (*Keucik*) as the father of the village (*Bapak Kampong*). I found that Aceh's chiefs played remarkably consistent roles during the conflict, remaining neutral in defense of their villages and villagers. Though many chiefs are corrupt and undemocratic, all shared in acting as village diplomats and lawyers when interacting with combatants. Chiefs were consistent and neutral. Meanwhile, facing the same conditions, Ulama tended to be fragmented and partial.

Initially, most community religious leaders tried to avoid involvement in the conflict, but were pulled in when carrying out religious duties. As teachers, Ulama came into conflict with combatants when their students included enemy kin. Just outside of Banda, the Sibreh pesantren was frequently visited by TNI trying to track GAM families, the Ulama routinely intimidated.^{liii} A second issue was burials, the responsibility of Imam. After battles, fallen soldiers would be left by the winning side, and Imam felt a strong obligation to give all soldiers a proper burial. One Imam explained that after a firefight in Aceh Besar, five rebels were killed and their bodies dumped. Despite TNI instructions to leave them, he found the bodies, cleaned them, and provided a proper burial. The TNI discovered this and confined the Imam to his village for the remainder of the conflict.^{liv} A third way Islamic leaders were pulled into the conflict was when individuals claimed sanctuary within mosques or schools.^{lv} One leading Ulama noted that boarding schools acted as safe havens for suspected GAM as well as young women harassed by soldiers. Soldiers were blocked from these grounds. On rare occasions, they attacked the school, but for the most part, felt obliged to back down.^{lvi}

Even though all religious leaders were pulled into the conflict, this led to different forms of mobilization. As expected, I found that the responses of Muslim leaders varied, with

individual Ulama supporting, escaping, and resisting the state. What was more surprising was that the mobilization of religious leaders followed zones of combatant control so closely. Ulama in areas controlled by the Indonesian state tended to support the government, Ulama in contested areas tended to avoid the conflict and focus on spiritual matters, and Ulama in rebel-dominated areas frequently joined the GAM. The historically cohesive, mobilized Ulama were all pulled into the conflict, but demonstrated diverse reactions conditioned by material conflict dynamics.

During the conflict, Banda, Sabang, parts of Aceh Besar, and the mountainous interior were largely controlled by the Indonesian government. Areas such as Banda and Sabang saw little conflict beyond sporadic raids, whereas the highlands witnessed frequent GAM violence, usually against Javanese minorities. Pro-government Ulama can be separated into career (earning a living through state organizations) and Madrasah Ulama (active teachers). Career Ulama clearly supported the state, comprising provincial officials, university professors, and members of state religious bodies. Indonesian authorities frequently called upon them to support their policies and speak out against the GAM. Many career Ulama were corrupt, overlooked human rights abuses, and were not responsive to Acehnese opinion. By providing legitimacy and information to abusive state forces, government Ulama contributed to state violence. But it is important not to totally dismiss statist groups.^{lvii} Many Ulama had good reasons to resist the GAM. The Vice President of the MPU, who was a member of the mission organized by the Indonesian Government to pressure the GAM during peace talks, voiced concerns against GAM abuses of Javanese minorities, citing the Koran on transcending tribalism and supporting Indonesian multiculturalism.^{lviii} Many active teachers also supported the state. Ulama from ethnic minority groups, especially the

Javanese, had to resist the GAM, despite not being on the payroll. In Kutacane, many Ulama from the Alas group provided info for the army, many “Alas people are tired of being Aceh’s hill tribes.”^{lix} Even ethnic Acehnese Ulama in Indonesian strongholds supported the state, critical of the GAM for not being sufficiently Islamic and unconvinced their struggle was justified in terms of Islam.^{lx} This was especially the case for traditionalist Dayah Ulama, who unlike reformist Ulama, have a history of conservatism and support for the state.^{lxi} By challenging the GAM’s religious credentials and condemning GAM ethnic violence, statist Ulama were able to couch their criticisms in religious doctrine.

In areas which were contested between the state and the rebels, Ulama largely remained neutral, either avoiding politics or criticizing both sides. Passive neutrality characterized many remote regions early in the conflict, as it was unclear who ruled. In South Aceh, Ulama began neutral, but with time and abuse from the TNI, came to support the increasingly dominant rebels.^{lxii} A number of activists I spoke to had never considered enlisting Ulama to help them, agreeing that they should focus on spiritual education.^{lxiii} Other Ulama displayed a form of active neutrality, mobilizing against both sides. Such Ulama tended to be found in regions where each side was relatively weak, but still present. In Saree, both the retired and current Ulama, though differing a great deal in their religious backgrounds and community roles, spoke out against both sides and their war. The retired Ulama described both sides as “rotten fruit”, praying that all combatants would return to Islam.^{lxiv} The new Ulama, whom locals label *fanatik*, echoed these thoughts but was more authoritative, arguing that the conflict should not interest “real Muslims”.^{lxv} In contested areas, both passive and active neutrality were defined in terms of Islam, namely that neither side was Islamic.

The story was very different in areas dominated by the GAM. Nearly every Ulama I spoke to around Bireuen and South Aceh supported the rebels, sometimes joining them as advisors or judges. According to one GAM Commander, Muslim teachers increasingly supported his unit as the conflict continued.^{lxvi} In Kuala Batee, near Tapak Tuan, several Ulama helped GAM by hiding weapons in their *Pesantren*.^{lxvii} The reasons for supporting GAM were given quite clearly by the two ranking GAM Ulama. One explained that after the TNI torched his Madrasah for teaching GAM families, he fled to the jungle, outraged by TNI abuses. He explained that he “had to do more than just teach; Islam is a religion of living justice.”^{lxviii} The ranking GAM Ulama, an advisor to Governor Irwandi, explained that only through the GAM he has been able to deepen Islam. Many Ulama have joined GAM courts, which began in 2000 as a way to discipline soldiers, but expanded to include a variety of societal offenses. Rebel courts were run by sympathetic Ulama who took the opportunity to establish Sharia Law, though resisting Indonesia’s brand of Sharia. Since the conflict ended, many Ulama refuse to return to teaching, remaining active in GAM political campaigns and village courts.^{lxix} In a sense, the GAM developed its own career Ulama, taking up political positions in place of traditional instruction.

Analysis

The Aceh separatist conflict was a likely case for cohesive Muslim leaders resisting the state. The recent separatist conflict even had potential religious grievances: the loss of religious autonomy, Suharto’s control of political Islam, and human rights abuses. What was the relationship between Islam, the state, and war during the Acehnese separatist conflict? Despite being a strong case for united resistance, Aceh’s Islamic leaders chose varied paths. As expected, they displayed all three patterns. What was surprising is that the pattern of

support mirrored conflict dynamics so closely. Far more than village chiefs, Ulama were pragmatic, their support followed conflict dynamics.

My research supports claims that Islamic teachings lend themselves to a range of positions and that we should expect a range of relationships between Islamic non-state actors and human security. This said, this does not necessarily support the stronger claim that Islam contains unique institutional elements that predispose followers towards simultaneously supporting, resisting, and escaping the state. It is true that all three positions were evident, and no doubt this was partly due to the decentralized nature of the faith. There was no single Muslim authority to dictate appropriate responses to the conflict. But for an institutional explanation to be the primary one, a variety of positions should be found throughout Aceh's districts. Instead, I found that the relationship between Ulama and the state was heavily conditioned by military power. Conflict dynamics predicted the positions of Ulama more than religious or cultural factors.

Why did Ulama support and join state and rebel forces in respective strongholds, and remain neutral in contested areas? What makes some Islamic non-state actors go to war (for or against the state) while others prioritize impartiality and healing? One way to interpret their actions is that they were saving their own skin, with little concern for the security of their followers. It is safer to side with the dominant army, and as it becomes clear that they will remain dominant for the foreseeable future, join them in hopes of gaining power and prestige. In contested areas, neutrality is the only safe option, as partiality can be disastrous when dynamics shift. Only when it is clear that a region would probably remain neutral did Ulama mobilize against violence. This hypothesis is derived from classical economic thinking, following a narrow sense of self-interest through a strategy of "survival

maximization.”^{lxx} The importance of narrow self-interest appears convincing, especially for career Ulama, and is no doubt a partial factor in explaining collaboration.

But there is an alternative explanation, where instead of being singular rational actors in the tradition of economic thinking, Ulama responses were motivated by a concern for the welfare of their communities. The difference is this: did Aceh’s Ulama mobilize in support of power or in response to abuses? Whereas the above explanation focuses on the power of dominant regional groups to punish, this explanation emphasizes the tendency of the weaker regional army to abuse. Kalyvas has found that the highest rates of civilian abuse in civil wars occur when one side has control and the other is trying to destabilize them, but lacking local support, can do little more than use terror.^{lxxi} As a result, support for the stronger army is defensive, a response to injustice and human rights abuses.

In distinct zones of control, combatants acted like totally different actors. In rebel strongholds, the GAM provided security for locals, but state forces, lacking local support and unable to accomplish their goals, were abusive. Rebel forces were experts in boosting their popularity by provoking state forces to attack civilians, making it easier to find new recruits. Ulama in rebel strongholds witnessed the brutality of the Indonesian state, which pushed them to join the rebels not just for their own security, but in defense of their communities. In contested areas, neither side had reliable control of information or loyalties, so both sides were somewhat abusive, with the only source of security being their own community. In such regions, Ulama condemned both sides, even though it would have been safer to say nothing. In a sense, such Ulama had access to fuller information. Reports from neighbouring zones of control, stories from IDPs fleeing to contested areas, and personal experiences showed that both sides were abusive. Finally, in state strongholds, Indonesia

provided order and had no reason to abuse locals. Here, GAM units were weaker, conducting sporadic raids, attacking Javanese minorities, and kidnapping locals to raise revenue, appearing as largely criminal gangs. And in state strongholds, GAM abuses were more readily publicized. As a consequence, siding with the stronger party is not solely a self-interested survival calculus, but is consistent with defending human security.

This interpretation is favoured by field interviews and temporal comparison. First, Ulama who joined or supported the GAM invariably cited TNI abuse as the catalyst for the mobilization. Clearly, such statements were made after the conflict, and the real reasons for taking a particular side may be different. But it is important that pro-state and pro-rebel Ulama rarely noted the virtues of their own side. I did not meet any Ulama who found GAM or state policies favourable, they focused on the abuses of the enemy, a defensive reaction. Even if human rights frames are purely post-hoc, this betrays the fact that Aceh's rural Ulama feel it important to speak the language of human rights to gain legitimacy.

Second, temporal changes also support the position that Ulama collaboration was in large part motivated by a concern for human security. During the conflict, Ulama supplemented, contested, and supplanted the state. But after the conflict, they have been more unified, leading rehabilitation and reconciliation efforts. In all three regions, Ulama have established special Koran recital classes for those traumatized by the war, focusing on passages related to healing and peace.^{lxxii} Additionally, a traditional ceremony called the *Peusijuek* has been modified to help heal communities. The *Peusijuek* (cooling off) originated as a means to make social changes in village life more gradual, for instance celebrating returns from extended absences such as the Haj. The *Peusijuek* has been adapted autonomously by Ulama across the province to help former combatants and IDPs return to village life. This said, the

procedure differs across districts. In GAM-dominated Bireuen, many Ulama assert that the ceremony is ethnically Acehnese, and is not to be performed for Javanese.^{lxxiii} In the remainder of the province, the *Peusijek* is more likely to be defined openly, as a Muslim ceremony adapted from the *Hijara*.^{lxxiv} Despite Ulama holding diverse positions during the conflict, there remains a strong cultural expectation that they heal their communities—although some define their communities more exclusively than others. Some Ulama have remained with state and rebel forces, each side featuring career Ulama. But most have worked towards peace and healing, suggesting a deep regard for human security.

Did Islamic non-state actors in Aceh become parties to the conflict? Or did they protect their communities from violence? It appears that the two are not mutually exclusive; by protecting their immediate communities, many of Aceh's Ulama became parties to the war. This presents a classic security dilemma, where an actor's concern for security causes insecurity for others, unknowingly perpetuating conflict.

IMPLICATIONS

Several academic implications arise from these findings. Aceh shows that conflicts in devout Muslim regions, even those with a legacy of Islamic conflict, need not develop into religious wars. This provides a corrective for determinist assumptions that Islam is war-like, as well as path-dependent assumptions that new conflicts inherit the traits of old ones. Next, Ulama are frequently considered by students of Islamic politics “as passé, a religious class whose fossilized Islam and cooptation by governments were major causes of the backwardness of the Islamic community.”^{lxxv} Home to the majority of the world's Muslims yet often overlooked by Islamic studies, Asian cases provide reasons to rethink these

assumptions.^{lxxvi} Third, my research emphasizes the importance of the strategies and repertoires of non-combatants. Those seeking to build lasting peace should consider community approaches and recognize traditional village peace systems.

One of the major themes in this paper has been the fragmented nature of Islamic leaders. Within a single case, I found of the entire range of relationships between Ulama and the state. That Islam is not monolithic is not a novel finding. But this fact, especially when supported by careful case studies, remains central to foreign policy. The diversity and internal divisions within the communist world were also known by academics, but largely failed to influence foreign policy, with disastrous implications. Islamic non-state actors were above all pragmatic. Unlike chiefs in Aceh, who largely followed cultural expectations and remained neutral, Ulama responded to what they saw and sided accordingly. Ulama pragmatism should be an antidote for civilizational narratives in the study of Islam and war.

The most important implications stem from an understanding of why Ulama mobilize differently in different zones of control. If Ulama mobilize purely for self-interest, the expansion of conflict may be inevitable. But if Ulama mobilize in defense of their communities, not for personal gain, and believed that security is best achieved through an armed group, the outcome of increased conflict is unintentional, and is easier to intervene. Interestingly, the outcomes predicted by these opposing views are the same; saving one's own skin and protecting the local community each saw Ulama supporting the dominant regional army. No doubt, both narrow self-interest and a sense of social justice motivated Aceh's Ulama. Ulama did not initially support their respective sides, but did so over time, largely in response to abuses from the other side, a finding supported through my interviews

and by comparing Ulama behaviour during and after the conflict. By mobilizing for human security, Ulama in distinct sub-regions mobilized for war.

As with other security dilemmas, this is largely a product of low levels of information regarding dynamics in other regions. Indonesia was horribly abusive, but Ulama in Indonesian strongholds did not witness this firsthand and little information was available during the conflict. The GAM was also guilty of attacking civilians, but mostly in pro-state regions, and usually against Javanese settlements. To Ulama in GAM areas, the rebels were human rights defenders. Third parties can help correct this by increasing the flow of information among sub-regions. This means publicizing state and rebel abuses to their respective religious allies. One option could be to elevate neutral Ulama in contested regions, allowing them share their personal experiences resisting abuse from both sides. For Aceh, Ulama in Aceh Besar and Wets Aceh endured attacks by both sides, making them highly credible local voices against the conflict as a whole. Timely external support might be able to stop, or at least slow, the shift from neutrality to partiality as abuses unfold.

If religious leaders collaborate due to self-interest and fear of the stronger regional party, their behaviour will not change with improved information about their side. But if they are motivated by a defense of their communities and a sense of justice, information about the actions of their preferred armed group being abusive in other regions will convince religious non-state actors to remain neutral, or perhaps to mobilize for peace. Minimally, the relationship between religious non-state actors and human security is variable, a pragmatic response to the behaviour of armed groups.

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- ⁱⁱ On environmental factors, see Mats Berdal and David M. Malone, editors, *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000); Thomas F. Homer Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). On state capacity, see Brian Job, *The (In)Security Dilemma: The National Security of Third World States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992). On combatant organization, see Jeremy Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
- ^{iv} An Ulama is a high ranking religious teacher, often serving as an advisor or judge. In Arabic, 'Ulama' is the plural of 'Alim', but in Acehnese and Indonesian, 'Ulama' is both singular and the plural. The term 'Alim' is refers to an individual concerned with social justice.
- ^v Frederick M. Denny, "Ummah in the Constitution of Medina," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 36:1 (January 1977).
- ^{vi} The flipside of the Ummah transcending cultural divides is that the Ummah itself represents a new divide—between Muslims and non-Muslims. The dichotomization of Dar al-Islam (the abode of Peace) and Dar al-Haq (the abode of war) may serve to reify differences.
- ^{vii} Many researchers find radical pan-Islamic forces wherever they look. For example, authors claim that the goal of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) is to create "an independent Islamic state governed by Sharia." Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 66; Zachary Abuza, "Out of the Woodwork: Islamist Militants in Aceh," *Terrorism Monitor* 3:2 (27 January 2005), 3; Daniel Pipes and Jonathan Schanzer, "Militant Islam's New Strongholds," *New York Post* (22 October 2002); Dana R. Dillon, "Peace in Aceh: What it means for the U.S.," *Heritage Foundation Memo* 806 (27 July 2005).

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- ^{viii} It is often believed that Muslims living under non-Muslim states “seem to be incomplete if not illegitimate”, and have a duty to rebel or emigrate. John O. Voll, “Soviet Central Asia and China: Integration or Isolation of Muslim Societies,” in *Islam in Asia: Religion, Politics, & Society*, edited by John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987) 126.
- ^{ix} Esposito refers to an Indonesian saying: you can no more separate Islam from politics than you can sugar from sweetness. John L. Esposito, “Islam in Asia: An Introduction,” in *Islam in Asia*, 12.
- ^x Islam contains traditions of opposing unjust rule; like a constitution, religious texts provide limitations for rulers, however unlike constitutions, such texts are above the state as well as a regime. In practice Islam has not nurtured liberal regimes, and it contains teachings which speak against such politics. Sana Abed-Kotob, “The Accommodationists Speak: Goals and Strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27 (1995); Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- ^{xi} Esposito, “Islam in Asia: An Introduction,” in *Islam in Asia*, 13
- ^{xii} Robert W. Hefner, “Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia,” in *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia*, edited by Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvath (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 7.
- ^{xiii} Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, translated by Carol Volk (London: I.B Taurus and Co Ltd, 1994), 29.
- ^{xiv} Voll, “Soviet Central Asia and China,” in *Islam in Asia*, 149.
- ^{xv} Azyumardi Azra, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner, “Pesantren and Madrasa: Muslim Schools and National Ideals in Indonesia,” in *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, edited by Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 193; Meredith L. Weiss, “Malaysia: Construction of Counterhegemonic Narratives and Agendas,” in *Civil Society and Political Change in Asia: Expanding and Contracting Democratic Space*, edited by Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).
- ^{xvi} In Malaysia, an Islamic Party (PAS) and an Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) grew considerably by championing social issues, so much so that “the Mahathir government felt obliged to take the initiative in an Islamization process.” David Camroux, “State Responses to Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia: Accommodation, Co-Option, and Confrontation,” *Asian Survey* 36:9 (September 1996), 857.
- ^{xvii} Michael G. Peletz, “Ordinary Muslims and Muslim Resurgence in Contemporary Malaysia: Notes on an Ambivalent Relationship,” in *Islam in an Era of Nation-States*. Such movements attend to be “ambivalent in their attitude to the government. Some have maintained a neutral stance despite obvious tensions over the nature and identity of the Malaysian state and a number of official policies.” Simon Barraclough, “Managing the Challenges of Islamic Revival in Malaysia: A Regime Perspective,” *Asian Survey* 23:8 (August 1983), 959.
- ^{xviii} Returning to Holy texts to escape politics should be distinguished from Islamism, which entails a return to texts, not as a form of retreat, but instead “an intervention in the political system.” Fred Halliday, “Review Article: The Politics of ‘Islam’ – A Second Look,” *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (1995), 400.
- ^{xix} This is exemplified by the Nahdlatul Ulama under Suharto, which abandoned the state-endorsed Muslim party and opted for a non-political role, returning to the organization’s mission of fostering social and economy development. Greg Fealy and Greg Barton, editors, *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia* (Clayton, Australia: Monash Institute, 1996).
- ^{xx} This was the argument of Indonesian academic Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005), who felt that tying Islam to politics had the effect of sacralizing political parties, debasing Islam by elevating the profane. Madjid argued that Muslims should focus on creating a more educated Islamic society. Greg Barton, “Indonesia’s Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid as Intellectual Ulama: the Meeting of Islamic Traditionalism and Modernism in Neo-Modernist Thought,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 8:3 (1997), 331; Robert W. Hefner, “Islamicization and Democratization in Indonesia,” in *Islam in an Era of Nation-States*.
- ^{xxi} James Piscatori, editor, *Islamic Fundamentalism and the Gulf Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Thomas McKenna, *Muslims Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- ^{xxii} Frederik Barth, *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans* (London: Athlone Press, 1959), 100; James A. Wall & Ronda Roberts Callister, “Malaysian Community Mediation,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43:3 (June 1999).
- ^{xxiii} Barth, *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans*, 59.

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- ^{xxiv} Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "Conflict Resolution in an Islamic Context: Some Contextual Questions," *Peace & Change* 21:1 (January 1996); P.H. Gulliver, *Disputes and Negotiations: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1979); George Irani and Nathan Funk, "Rituals of Reconciliation: Arab-Islamic Perspectives," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 20:4 (Fall 1998); John Paul Lederach, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995); Robert LeVine, "Anthropology and the Study of Conflict: An Introduction," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 5:1 (March 1961).
- ^{xxv} Raymond G. Helmick and Rodney Lawrence Petersen, editors, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation* (New York: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001); Daniel Philpott, editor, *The Politics of Past Evil: Religion, Reconciliation, and the Dilemmas of Transitional Justice* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); Robert L. Rothstein, editor, *After the Peace: Resistance and Reconciliation* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999); Ali Wardak, "Building a Post-War Justice System in Afghanistan," *Crime, Law, & Social Change* 41 (2004).
- ^{xxvi} Hefner, "Islamization and Democratization in Indonesia," in *Islam in an Era of Nation-States*, 114.
- ^{xxvii} Halliday, "Review Article: The Politics of 'Islam' – A Second Look," 402.
- ^{xxviii} Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, 106
- ^{xxix} Ann K.S. Lambton, "The Persian Ulama and the Constitutional Reform," in *The Ulama in the Modern Muslim Nation-State*, edited by Abu Bakar A. Bagader (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM), 1983).
- ^{xxx} Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). Esposito makes a similar classification, noting that Islamic communities responded to colonialism through Islamic modernism, Westernization, or withdrawal. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, 51-52.
- ^{xxxi} Nakamura notes that because Ulama lack a clear hierarchy, they are forced to convince in place of command. Mitsuo Nakamura, "The Radical Traditionalism of the Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia: A Personal Account of the 26th National Congress, June 1979, Semarang," in *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam, and Modernity in Indonesia*, 81.
- ^{xxxii} Others settled in Mindanao, accelerating Islamicization in Jolo and Cotabato. M. Hasbri Amiruddin, *The Response of the Ulama Dayah to the Modernization of Islamic Law in Aceh* (Selangor, Malaysia: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2005), 4; Amirul Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra: A Study of Seventeenth Century Aceh* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2004), 239.
- ^{xxxiii} Anthony Reid, "The Turkish Connection," in *An Indonesian Frontier: Acehnese and Other Histories of Sumatra* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2005), 88-89.
- ^{xxxiv} Amirul Hadi, *Islam and State in Sumatra*, 30.
- ^{xxxv} Amiruddin, *The Response of the Ulama Dayah to the Modernization of Islamic Law in Aceh*, 38.
- ^{xxxvi} Islam provided a rich source of cultural learning, but transnational Islamic authority also limited Acehnese sovereignty. After being solicited by Acehnese Ulama in 1699, the Sharif of Mecca proclaimed that Aceh's four consecutive Sultanas were contrary to Islam, forcing the abdication of the Sultana. In this sense, the Ummah directly challenged the Acehnese state. Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle-Eastern Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 79.
- ^{xxxvii} James Siegel, *Shadow and Sound: The Historical Thought of a Sumatran People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979). According to Anthony Reid, "the idiom of Islamic martyrdom was the ingredient needed to inspire courage in the face of overwhelming odds." Anthony Reid, "War, Peace, and the Burden of History in Aceh," *Asian Ethnicity* 5:3 (October 2004), 4.
- ^{xxxviii} Beureueh and PUSA "belonged to the authentic tradition of religious revival," but envisioned "a path that led forward rather than back." Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People: Revolution and the End of Traditional Rule in Northern Sumatra* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979),
- ^{xxxix} Arskal Salim, "Sharia from Below in Aceh (1930s-1960s): Islamic Identity and the Right to Self-Determination with Comparative Reference to the Moro Islamic Liberation Movement (MILF)," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 32:92 (March 2004), 84.
- ^{xl} Syed Serajul Islam, *The Politics of Islamic Identity in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Cengage Learning Asia, 2004), 60; Salim, "Sharia from Below in Aceh," 88.
- ^{xli} Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, 167.

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- ^{xlii} Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *The Republican Revolt: A Study of the Acehese Rebellion* (Singapore: The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), 84.
- ^{xliii} Amiruddin, *The Response of the Ulama Dayah to the Modernization of Islamic Law in Aceh*, 28.
- ^{xliv} Suharto sought to “suppress Muslim politics while encouraging Muslim piety.” Hefner, *Civil Islam*, 59.
- ^{lv} Initially, most Ulama joined the PPP (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, United Development Party), the state-sanctioned Muslim party, but by the late 1980s, many joined Suharto’s GOLKAR Party to reap the rewards of development. Dwight Y. King and M. Ryaas Rasjid, “The Golkar Landslide in the 1987 Indonesian Elections: The Case of Aceh,” *Asian Survey* 28:9 (September 1988).
- ^{lvi} The MPU (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama*) is Aceh’s wing of the Indonesian Ulama Council (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, MUI).
- ^{lvii} The expansion of education serves as a microcosm of Suharto’s rule. State schools brought a new level of education to rural provinces, a model of rapid development. Simultaneously, these schools undermined traditional sources of knowledge and authority, enhancing the power of the state. Typical of the New Order, Suharto’s grandson established a monopoly in which all Indonesian schoolchildren would buy school shoes from his company. Alas, the “national shoe project” was never realized, as Suharto was overthrown before legislation could be passed. *Time Magazine Asia*, “Suharto Inc.,” 24 May 1999.
- ^{lviii} Amiruddin, *The Response of the Ulama Dayah to the Modernization of Islamic Law in Aceh*, 37.
- ^{lix} Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, 173.
- ^l Edward Aspinall, “From Islamism to Nationalism in Aceh, Indonesia,” *Nations and Nationalism* 13:2 (2007).
- ^{li} Shane Joshua Barter, “Resources, Religion, Rebellion: The Sources and Lessons of Acehese Separatism,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19:1 (March 2008).
- ^{lii} The GAM saw many Ulama as “co-opted by the corporatist state, and ending up as a tool for state agendas.” Damien Kingsbury, *Peace in Aceh: A Personal Account of the Aceh Peace Process* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2006), 188.
- ^{liii} Interview with Faisal, Secretary General of the HUDA, Banda Aceh (26 JAN 08).
- ^{liv} Interview with M. Hasjim Usman, Keucik, Lembah Seulawah, Aceh Besar (24 JAN 08).
- ^{lv} Lambton notes that state encroachment on the right of religious sanctuary was one of the issues which led to the mobilization of the Ulama in Iran. Lambton, “The Persian Ulama and the Constitutional Reform,” in *The Ulama in the Modern Muslim Nation-State*, 270.
- ^{lvi} Interview with Faisal, Secretary General of the HUDA, Banda Aceh (26 JAN 08).
- ^{lvii} Siapno notes that the Acehese elites who work with the state, namely Ulama, are widely respected despite Western aversion to duplicity. She explains the concept of *Muslihat*, playing both sides to one’s advantage and using guile to keep allegiances uncertain. Jacqueline Aquino Siapno, *Gender, Islam, and the State in Aceh: The Paradox of Power, Co-optation and Resistance* (London: Routledge-Curzon, 2002).
- ^{lviii} Interview with Abu Ismail Yacoob, Vice President of the MPU, Banda Aceh (26 JAN 08).
- ^{lix} Interview with Ulama Bukhari Husni, Lawe Sumur, Aceh Tenggara (08 APR 2009).
- ^{lx} Interviews in Aceh Besar (OCT 07). This is the response predicted by Edward Aspinall, where Islam cannot be mobilized for separatism against a Muslim government. Aspinall, “From Islamism to Nationalism in Aceh, Indonesia.”
- ^{lxi} The pro-state nature of traditionalist Ulama is detailed in Sjamsuddin, *The Republican Revolt*.
- ^{lxii} Interviews with Ulama Lukman Ramli, Tapak Tuan, Aceh Selatan (17 APR 2009) and Ulama Haji Burhanuddin Ahmad, Pantan Lues, Aceh Selatan (19 APR 2009).
- ^{lxiii} Interview with Keucik, Dusun, and Mukim, Pancah, Aceh Besar (30 JAN 08).
- ^{lxiv} Interview with Teungku Ramli, Saree, Aceh Besar (28 JAN 08).
- ^{lxv} Interview with Ulama Kamaruddin, Saree, Aceh Besar (30 JAN 08).
- ^{lxvi} Interview with Panglima GAM Kowboy Effendi, Aceh Utara (04 FEB 08).
- ^{lxvii} Interview with Ulama Haji Burhanuddin Ahmad, Pantan Lues, Aceh Selatan (19 APR 2009).
- ^{lxviii} Interview with Ulama Yahya Abdullah, GAM advisor and Judge, Bireuen (9 FEB 08).
- ^{lxix} The Wali sees the primary challenge as keeping GAM unified, “avoiding GAM Rambo” giving the rebels a bad name. Interview with Mohammad Wali al-Qalidi, Teunah Meerah, Aceh Utara (5 FEB 08).
- ^{lxx} Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 124.
- ^{lxxi} Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 195-207.
- ^{lxxii} Interview with Javanese IDPs, Saree, Aceh Besar (29 OCT 07); Kontras Aceh, Banda Aceh (25 JAN 08).
- ^{lxxiii} Interview with Mohammad Wali al-Qalidi, Teunah Meerah, Aceh Utara (5 FEB 08).

^{lxxiv} One Ulama noted that the ceremony is not even exclusive to Muslims: “every ethnic group has its own ceremony to welcome people home because it makes warm feelings.” Interview with Teungku Abdullah, Saree, Aceh Besar (28 JAN 08).

^{lxxv} Esposito, *The Islamic Threat*, 133.

^{lxxvi} Hefner, “Islam in an Era of Nation-States,” in *Islam in an Era of Nation-States*.