State, Religion, and the Public Good: An Examination of Nurcholish Madjid in Constructing Civil Religious Pluralism as Political Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues for the relevance of an Islamic voice to Western political philosophy on the issue of the role of religion in society. It addresses the chronic tension between religion and the state by constructing a dialogue between the writings of Nurcholish Madjid and classical political theorists. Framed around the development of the modern nation-state, civil religious pluralism is presented as an important contribution to political philosophy. If the administration of justice is the chief end of the democratic state, then the entire society, including religious communities, is implicitly responsible for contributing towards this goal. Achieving this goal becomes possible when the religious goods held by religious selves, expressed in religious moral orders, are placed in dialogue within civil society. Madjid's understanding of the religious self, the religious moral order as a part of multiple modernities, and the religious pluralism made possible by civil society can support a strong and just state. In this way, public religious goods can inform the articulation of political goods, which in turn informs the state's administration of justice.

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DECLARATIONS

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STATEMENT 1

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In this thesis I aim to contribute to discussions on the role of religion in political philosophy. I engage with this discourse through ideal types which navigate religious and political authority in different ways to create a just society. In an expansive discourse that has endless ways of categorisation, I adopt typological categories which serve to focus on the issue of authority in the political domain. Theocracy emphasises religious authority and elevates a single religious tradition's authority over all others, including political society. Liberalism emphasises civil authority and separates religious traditions as far as possible from political organisation and authority, often marginalising religion's public goods. Civil religion also elevates civil authority over the religious realm but articulates its own version of religion, which is presumed to be acceptable to all citizens.

To contribute to this discussion, I engage with Nurcholish Madjid, an Indonesian Muslim philosopher. Indonesia's modern democracy has addressed the role of religion differently from many modern Western states. Whereas Western democracies broadly align with a liberal approach to religion, Indonesia has incorporated religion into the state's philosophical foundation. In terms of the ideal types described above, Indonesia would largely fit into the category of civil religion. Many democracies in the West, which align with liberalism's separation of religion from the state, have developed under Christian influence while Indonesia's democracy has been influenced by Islam. In this

thesis, I consider how Madjid's ideas can contribute to political and philosophical debates on the role of religion in society and government.

By constructing a dialogue between Madjid and Western political philosophers, I argue for a political philosophy of civil religious pluralism as a way to reimagine a post-liberal state with an integrated approach to justice. If the administration of justice is the chief end of the democratic state, then the entire society, including religious communities, is implicitly responsible for contributing to the understanding and implementation of justice. Religious goods are an inseparable part of religious selves, and religious selves articulate their goods through moral orders, of which there are multiple sets in modern society. These moral orders are best placed in constructive dialogue within civil society, not within the justice system. The outcome of this discussion in civil society can inform the state's political administration of justice.

The philosophical debate on religion's role in public space has historically been between theocratic arrangements which have placed religious authority as supreme and liberal democratic states that have largely removed religion from public space. Civil religion theoretically bridges this gap by incorporating religion into the state. The tradition of civil religion has clearly articulated how authority is handled between religion and the state, with the state having the final say, but this approach has not been widely adopted. Civil religion is the state's generalised version of religion meant to be acceptable to all and while also supporting the state. One reason for this limited acceptance may be that the civil religion tradition proposes a quasi-religion with no true followers. If the theocratic model is untenable for liberals and the liberal model is equally untenable for religious communities, then one possible way forward is to reimagine a post-liberal state

that incorporates the plurality of religions to inform political discourse in public spaces. Civil religious pluralism does this by seeking to include the ends of religious traditions which results in a healthier and stronger state. The West has largely assumed that Islamic societies should adopt liberal democracy; this thesis presents a reverse claim, suggesting that Western political liberalism can learn from a Muslim.

Debates on Religion and State

I need to introduce and clearly define the ideal types of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion as presented in this thesis. Ronald Beiner, in *Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy* (2010), suggests these broad classifications as analytical categories which helpfully encompass the perspectives of a broad range of thinkers. As Beiner constructs a dialogue between prominent political philosophers, his use of the main categories of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion brings the issue of religion to the foreground. He defines the three traditions as follows:

> The civil-religion tradition, principally defined by Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau, seeks to domesticate religion by putting it solidly in the service of politics. The liberal tradition pursues an alternative strategy of domestication by seeking to put as much distance as possible between religion and politics. Modern theocracy is a militant reaction against liberalism, and it reverses the relationship of subordination asserted by civil religion: It puts politics directly in the service of religion. (Beiner, 2010, preface)

These categories provide a helpful framework for discussing the general role of religion in modern democracies, by focusing on the issue of who is ultimately in charge. Tension is inevitable between the authority claimed by religious traditions and that demanded by the state. Since a large proportion of citizens around the world belong to religious traditions, this tension will likely endure. It is simplistic to assume that it can be easily resolved or that any arrangement will satisfy all parties. Those who see no place for

religion in political life might object to the incorporation of religious goods in the state apparatus, just as religionists might object to a state that restricts religious devotion solely to the private sphere or compels behaviour at odds with religious teaching. I will use Beiner's categories to bring focus to the conversation, but with a greater sympathy to religious traditions.

In chapter 2, I present the bulk of my conceptual framework, engaging with classical Western thinkers such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, and Rousseau and their attempts to deal with religion and political authority. I then bring Nurcholish Madjid into dialogue with the Western tradition around four themes: selfhood, moral orders, civil society, and the administration of justice. I view these themes as interrelated, constituent components of civil religious pluralism as political philosophy.

An Indonesian thinker can contribute an insightful perspective on this topic for several reasons. Indonesia is a large country with a broad and diverse citizenship that has some commonalities with Western nations. This southeast Asian archipelago is the world's fourth most populous nation, with a geographical territory wider than the continental United States. The US Census Bureau lists the population at 275 million as of 2021, not far behind the US population of 303 million (US Census Bureau, 2021). Indonesia also has the world's largest Muslim population, far surpassing that of the entire Middle East. Indonesia was founded as a democracy which declared its independence from the Dutch in 1945 and resurfaced as a modern democracy after the resignation of Suharto in 1998. Its governmental structure comprises 34 provinces, a People's Consultative Assembly made of two houses (the People's Representative Council and the Regional Representative Council), a President, and a court system headed by a Supreme

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Court. Indonesia aims for a balance of power amongst executive, legislative, and judiciary branches. The country has incredible linguistic diversity, with over 700 spoken languages and an even larger number of ethnic groups. Indonesia's national motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* means 'unity and diversity'—an understandable emphasis given the complexity of drawing together an extended chain of 17,000 islands. This undertaking resembles the challenge of uniting the US states under a similar motto of *E Pluribus Unum* (from the many, one).

One distinctive feature of Indonesia that differs notably from many modern democracies is the state's philosophical foundation of the five principles of *Pancasila*. I will discuss all five principles later, but the most relevant principle is the first one: belief in one almighty divinity. This principle does not imply a commitment to a single religious tradition, but it signals a different role for religion in the state from what most Western democracies have established. Indonesia has a strong Muslim majority of around 87% of the population, but there are many religious minorities, led by Christianity at around 10%.[1]

Given this context, it is understandable that an Indonesian political philosopher might reflect deeply on religion and politics. Whereas popular discourse often characterises Islam as a political problem and a clear reason for keeping religion separate from government, Indonesia has a tradition of pluralism. Nurcholish Madjid is one of multiple Muslim scholars who have written on integrating Islam within the modern state

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[1] These figures come from the Indonesian information portal: https://www.indonesia.go.id/profil/agama.

(see also Al-Rasheed, 2016; Al-Azami, 2021; Hashemi, 2009; Mujiburrahman, 1999; Najjar, 1980; Soroush, 2000; Tibi, 2008).

Although most of Madjid's writings remain available only in the Indonesian language, he has generated significant interest outside Indonesia. Aspects of Madjid's thought within Islam have been partially addressed (see Burhanudin & Van Dijk, 2013; Kull, 2005; Hanafi, 2006; Hefner, 2005; Mun'im, S., 2007; Saeed, 1997; Wahyudi, 2002), as has his impact in Indonesia (Bakti, 2013; Bruinessen, 2006; Maulana, 2016; Nafis, 2014; Ramage, 1995; Steenbrink, 1993; Urbaningrum, 2004; Van; Howell, 2012). Other aspects of his work have drawn attention, including ideas concerning civil society (Bakti, 2005; Hefner, 1997, p. 112; Kersten, 2006), neo-modernist thought in Indonesia, and his understanding of Islam (Barton, 1997b; Fathimah, 1999; Kersten, 2013). My original contribution is to offer a re-appraisal of Madjid's diverse writings in a way that brings elements of his political thinking into dialogue with Western political theory. In an increasingly globalised world, Madjid's ideas, developed in the fertile ground of a nation hospitable to religion in the public sphere, are relevant to these debates.

Madjid can also serve as a sort of bridge encouraging attention to the impact other Islamic thinkers in Southeast Asia can make. Islam is far from monolithic, and Indonesian thinkers have been underrepresented in the global conversation as the West seeks to develop peaceful political societies that serve the interest of all. But Indonesia has a legitimate Islamic voice, as Adeney-Risakotta has recently argued:

> The center of Islam in the world today is neither Saudi Arabia nor the Middle East. Rather it is Indonesia. Indonesia is the most important country in the world, about which most people know practically nothing. Just as the center of Christianity is no longer in Europe or North America, but has shifted to the Southern hemisphere, so the center of Islamicate civilization has shifted from the Middle East to Asia. Evidence for this change is supported by population

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statistics. Currently, 62% of Muslims live in Asia. Another 32% live in Africa. Relatively few of the world's Muslims live in the Middle East. Indonesia is by far the largest Muslim country on earth, with more Muslims (215 million) than the entire Middle East. (Adeney-Risakotta, 2018, p. 1)

Who Was Nurcholish Madjid?

Nurcholish Madjid was born on 17 March 1939, between the world wars and before the founding of the modern state of Indonesia in 1945, in South Jombang, in the eastern part of the island of Java.[2] This area is known for its many Islamic boarding schools and was reputed to be a centre of Islamic 'traditionalism'[3] and a stronghold of the Nahdlatul Ulama organization. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was formed as a response to Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia and to the 'modernist'[4] Muhammadiyah movement in Indonesia.

Madjid was raised in a religious environment within the Sunni tradition, as was his father, a notable student under a famous *kyai* (a religious teacher also seen as possessing mystical knowledge).[5] Nurcholish, the oldest son in the family, was raised by devout parents and attended their religious school during his elementary years, studying the Islamic sciences (the Qur'an and its interpretation, the Arabic language, logic, ethics, mysticism, and jurisprudence). He also attended a non-religious elementary school, where he learned the secular sciences. For his secondary education, he was sent to a leading

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[2] This background description of Madjid is taken from a previously published book chapter (Wisdom, 2021).

[3] The terms 'traditional' and 'modern' have distinctive uses in Indonesia. 'Traditional' generally refers to Nahdlatul Ulama, or NU (established in 1926), because its teachings are aligned with those of traditional Sunni Islam, including the wide array of Islamic sciences, both formal (such as *fiqh*, or Islamic law) and spiritual (Sufism). NU is also rooted in Indonesia's indigenous cultural environment, embracing its traditions of diversity and inclusion.

[4] In contrast to 'traditional', the term 'modern' is often used to describe the Muhammadiyah organization, established in 1912 by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan. He was strongly influenced by the Egyptian Islamic scholars Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida, who wished to 'purify' Sunni Islam from 'innovations' made subsequent to the life of the prophet and his companions. NU has far more members (a reported 93 million) than its modernist alternative, Muhammadiyah (28 million).

[5] The *kyai* in this case was Kyai Hasyim Asy'ari, co-founder of NU. A blessing from a *kyai* was considered very significant for those who received it. See Lukens-Bull & Dhofier (2000).

school (Darul Ulum) in the nearby village of Rejoso that taught the Islamic sciences but also incorporated secular subjects such as mathematics and physics.

As Nurcholish was approaching his final years of secondary school, a division occurred within his father's political party. His father chose to stay with the Islamist-dominated Masyumi Party rather than joining the emerging NU party. This caused serious problems at school for Nurcholish, as his *pesantren* (an Islamic boarding school) was firmly in the traditionalist camp. After deep discussions between father and son, Nurcholish transferred to a more modernist school (Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor) in Ponorogo. Living and learning in different schools characterized by traditionalist and modernist thought, respectively, exerted a lasting impact on Nurcholish. Gontor had a reputation for strict language education, enabling Nurcholish to develop a solid command of both Arabic and English. His school experiences were formative in preparing him to become a leading Muslim intellectual and to engage with the modern world.[6]

While attending Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic Institute in Jakarta, Madjid became president of Indonesia's largest Muslim student association, Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI), where he began his long 'career of stirring Muslims to undertake reform and adapt Islam to Indonesian needs' (Fathimah, 1999, p. 4). He held the presidency for two terms and became widely known as able to forge links between two Islamic organizations with conflicting ideas about the still-young Indonesian nation-state: HMI (which he led) and the Masyumi political party, with which his father had been

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[6] Madjid is considered the last great Indonesian philosopher who was also a prominent educator (Hooker, M. B. & Hooker, V., 2009; Van Bruinessen, 2006). He is referred to as *guru bangsa* or 'teacher of the nation', employing his affectionate and public nickname 'Cak Nur' (Nafis, 2014).

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affiliated. The primary issue dividing HMI and Masyumi was the question of whether Indonesia should be an Islamic state.

Although Madjid was an effective mediator between these two significant elements within Indonesian society, he developed an unfavourable view of Masyumi's uncompromising political attitude, believing that 'they suffered from inflexibility, dogmatism, and impractical considerations' (Fathimah, 1999, p. 27). In 1960, President Soekarno dissolved Masyumi after senior Masyumi leaders participated in the PRRI-Permesta rebellion against the central government supported by the US Central Intelligence Agency.[7] This personal experience of Islamic political parties left a bitter taste in Madjid's mouth, which would be expressed in his later writings and most clearly in his renowned slogan, 'Islam, Yes; Islamic parties, No'.

Madjid travelled to the United States for further study and was awarded a Ph.D., with highest honours, by the University of Chicago in 1984. He completed his dissertation under the tutelage of Fazlur Rahman, a reform-oriented Islamic scholar born in the Northwest Frontier Province of British India, in what is now Pakistan.[8] By the time Madjid returned from Chicago, he had become an acknowledged expert in both Islamic and secular sciences, thus positioning him to make major contributions to the development of contemporary Islam in Indonesia (Barton, 1997b; Liddle, 1996, pp. 623–625). Following in his mentor's footsteps, Madjid largely succeeded where Fazlur Rahman had failed in Pakistan due to his exile—that is, he developed a reform-oriented

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[7] Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia) was a movement based in Sumatra that joined forces with Piagam Perjuangan Semesta (Charter for Universal Struggle) in Sulawesi to declare their own government due to economic imbalances between the central island of Java and other locations rich in natural resources.

[8] Rahman wrote extensively on Islam as a reformer (Abbas, M., 2017; Rahman, 1966, 1982, 1984, 2008, 2010).

approach to Islamic teachings that became widely accepted in Indonesian society and helped shape the post-Suharto political order (Fathimah, 1999).

Madjid established a non-profit organization called the Paramadina Foundation in 1986 and Paramadina University in 1998. During his long career, he published many books, articles and scholarly essays addressing significant issues related to Indonesia's political life. He passed away on 29 August 2005. His major works have been compiled by the Nurcholish Madjid Society (established in 2008), which published an extensive collection of those works in 2019.[9]

Madjid's horizon is not limited to southeast Asia, as Indonesia has not been isolated from various discourses in the Muslim world. During the last 100 years, advancements in travel, printing, and technology have made global discourse possible. In tracing the exchange of ideas between the Middle East and Indonesia, Meuleman critiques an assumed 'modern world system' characterised by the contrast between a centre and the rest. The modern world system was assumed to be Europe and bled across academic fields, couched in language of 'the cultural, social, or economic field' (Meuleman, 2002, p. 12). His critique underscores the need for global Muslim voices.

The Islamic world had a robust network for sharing ideas. Prejudicial narratives assuming a centre and the rest have unnecessarily minimised the Islamic world as a part of the development of global trade and discourse:

> In attempting to locate Islam in the process, it may be added that, as a religion and a civilization, it is fundamentally in support of globalization and indeed has played a prominent role in globalization processes during earlier periods of history. Therefore, basically it should be capable of accommodating to the contemporary globalization process. Various mechanisms, in particular the haj, the circulation of religious and scholarly texts, education in general, and the

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[9] Nurcholish Madjid's writings are available online at http://nurcholishmadjid.net.

mystical orders, contribute to the global character of Islam, at least within the community of its adherents. (Meuleman, 2002, p. 15)

Given the mechanisms Meuleman raises, it is not surprising that ideas and influence circulated throughout the world, particularly in places where Islam was the majority religion. Indonesia was deeply engaged in this exchange of ideas, and it is important to note the major contributors and influencers involved. Meuleman traces some of this interaction and briefly notes specific ways in which ideas travelled from the so-called centre to the periphery and back.

In the early 17th century, influence on the island archipelago from Mecca and Medina came mainly through travelling scholars and students. This was a part of a reforming trend: 'Returning students or scholars, although they were also Sufi thinkers and shaykhs, implanted a more sharī'ah-oriented Islam in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, which forced the so-called "pantheistic" Sufism to cede ground. This is the beginning of the rise of more scriptural Islam' (Azra, 2002, p. 22). More focused engagement continued through the 18th century, and the 19th century reflected more globalising processes. Broader trade reinforced the idea of a global Islam even as the Muslim faith was intensifying in Indonesia (Ricklefs, 2008, pp. 59–61).

In the 20th century, Indonesia was influenced by more modernist thinkers, including Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Mohammad Abduh and others.[10] This expanded influence came from Egypt instead of from Mecca and Medina, and it coincided with the establishment of the second-largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah in 1912 (Azra, 2002, p. 23). Through the various eras of Indonesian development after

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[10] These are important figures in Jung's (2011) genealogy of essentialist Islam, as further discussed in chapter 3.

international recognition of independence in 1945, Indonesian Islam included various modes of expression.

Madjid, as a representative Indonesian thinker, is described as 'well versed in various streams of both classical and modern, Muslim as well as Western thought, even before he embarked on advanced studies under the late Fazlur Rahman' (Azra, 2002, p. 25). Due to the discourse of the time, Madjid was often categorised as a neo-modernist.[11] Madjid and his group of reformers[12] were opposed by the Dewan Da'wah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII, Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation) and its leaders. This may be why Madjid was so careful to frequently reference the Salafi period while also adopting a modern hermeneutic. Madjid and other Muslim writers sought to integrate Islam with modern ideas, including political arrangements that support the nation-state and resist theocracy.

Madjid and others faced opposition from alternate expressions of Islam that endorsed a narrower scope of interpretation. Azra contends, 'I would argue that the roots of the DDII criticism and opposition lie in its strong religio-intellectual tendencies towards Salafism' (Azra, 2002, p. 27). These roots can be traced back to the Muhammadiyah organisation and DDII-Rabitah al-Alam al-Islami (a Saudi-sponsored Muslim organisation). There are also indications of ideological affiliations with Sayyid Qutb and Maududi (Azra, 2002, p. 26).

After the Iranian revolution, Indonesia saw a wave of new books translated into Indonesian from within the global Islamic world. These came from diverse authors such

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[11] As noted previously, this is largely how he has been categorised in the secondary literature. See (Barton, 1994; Barton, 1995; Saeed, 1997).
[12] He is often linked to Abdurrahman Wahid (the first elected president after Suharto), Djohan Effendi, and Ahmad Wahib within Indonesia (Barton, 1997b; Steenbrink, 1993).

as 'Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Ayatullah Khumaynī, Mawdūdī, Ḥasan al-Bannā, Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, Fazlur Rahman, Islma'īl al-Farūqī, Muḥammad Asad, and Mohammed Arkoun' (Azra, 2002, p. 28). Besides reading these authors on religion, Indonesians took a strong interest in themes of globalization during the 1990s (Meuleman, 2002, p. 16), a time when Madjid was writing prolifically. In summary, Madjid had access to and interacted with many varied streams of wider Islamic thought.

Significance and Relevance

This thesis focuses on politics at the philosophical level. After the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, thinkers in Western European nations began to explore options for the political arrangements by which these societies could negotiate and resolve pressing problems. Conflict arising from various wars of religion spurred discussion on how authority and sovereignty should be delineated. New conceptions of what could bring and hold political society together were explored in social contract theory and various arrangements were proposed, which are presented in chapter 2. Each of these various articulations is based on a certain view of what is good. In this thesis, I follow the view that political philosophy is a discussion of the ends around which society is organised.

> Above all, one must ask oneself why political philosophy exists at all. The answer is: political philosophy exists in order to confront human beings with a range of the most intellectually ambitious accounts of the standard by which to judge what makes a human life consummately human. (Beiner, 2014, p. xxii)

Since the events of September 11, 2011, modern democracies have reawakened to the challenge of radical Islam. For some, this reawakening has fostered a clear affirmation of the liberal vision and of the need to fully separate religion from the state and political society. This modern challenge echoes problems faced during various wars of religion,

where an unhealthy alignment between theological commitments and state authorities contributed to ongoing violence between Protestants and Catholics.[13] Certainly religious convictions played a role in these clashes, but dynastic powers also propelled the conflicts.[14] The Peace of Westphalia is often identified as a watershed moment that ended various wars and prompted serious political reflection (Larkins, 2009).

Committed religious adherents, while sympathetic to liberalism's goal of peaceful tolerance, struggle to completely remove their commitments to religious ends from public space. Religion, for many, is a source for meaning-making, a foundation for ethics, and a key component in the classical quest for the good life. For this reason, religion is not so easily swept to the side when we debate the political ends of society. There are no simple solutions, and I do not claim to provide one. However, this conversation is important and informs my selection of sources.

I aim to contribute to the broader discussion on religion in political philosophy by developing a dialogue between this discourse and Nurcholish Madjid while also locating him within the Islamic tradition. In several thematic chapters, I use concepts from Charles Taylor, who offers his own narrative on the meaning and development of secularism. I apply his notions of selfhood, multiculturalism, social imaginaries, and moral orders. I present important concepts from Madjid on the Islamic self, contextualising Islam, civil society, and Islamic contributions to modern pluralism. These concepts are more fully introduced at the end of this introductory chapter and in chapter 2, which introduces my conceptual framework.

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[13] In France, the battles were between the Catholics and Huguenots. The Thirty Years War took place largely in central Europe and involved the Holy Roman Empire and German Protestants.

[14] The Habsburg dynasty as well as the French House of Bourbon sought European dominance.

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This thesis provides theoretical reflections with relevance for current issues of religiously motivated violence. In the conclusion, I briefly discuss how current Indonesian Muslims and Christians are working together to bring peace. Both groups are countering theocratic impulses in Islam by arguing for the legitimacy of the modern nation-state. They are countering liberal impulses to marginalize religion in the public sphere by insisting on religion's public contribution to the common good. This involves a version of 'civil religion' insofar as the idea of civil religion offers a 'middle way' between theocracy, which fully subordinates the political order to religion, and liberalism, which seeks to exclude religion from the political order.

Research Questions

My primary research question is as follows: To what extent can the writings of Nurcholish Madjid contribute to developing a political philosophy of civil religious pluralism that seeks to reimagine justice for a pluralistic democratic state? Asking this question has led me to read extensively in political philosophy and to explore discussions and debates into which Madjid's sources might fit.

This primary research question generated further questions which align with the content of later chapters. I initially ask what aspects of Madjid's thought fit with the general categories of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion. I address this question in chapter 2, which introduces my conceptual framework. This chapter sets the stage for four subsequent, thematic chapters which pursue my inquiry through different sub-questions.

In chapter 3, I examine selfhood and identity around the question of how the state should engage with the goods of citizens possessing a religious identity. Acknowledging

that individuals exist within a broader society that includes great difference, I address the following question in chapter 4: How does the democratic state, in a context of multiple modernities, move beyond the singular liberal moral order by including the religious moral order and its public goods? Chapter 5 identifies a possible space to support this interaction by considering how the democratic state can create a legitimate space between the state's governance and religious authority that places in dialogue multiple moral orders with a view to identify shared public goods. Finally, in chapter 6, I attempt to bring the thesis back to the chief responsibility of the state by asking how the state's administration of justice can take into account multiple moral orders of its citizens.

Methodology

In this text-based study, I endeavour to answer the above questions by bringing various writings of Nurcholish Madjid into dialogue with Western views on the role of religion in society. I have selected a few key Western thinkers for comparative purposes and have developed an interpretive framework that contains suitable theoretical distinctions and ideal types for an analysis of various views on religion's role in the state. In each analytical chapter, I begin with Western writers and then look for relevant insights from Madjid.

I understand that I am not a detached observer who can objectively describe and have direct access to Madjid's thoughts (Heidegger, 1972). My reading is shaped by my own being in the world (*Dasein*), though I will try to bracket my own ideas as I read (Ricoeur, 1975). Although I am a US native, I have lived in Indonesia for 11 years and have gained strong language proficiency and a reasonably good grasp of the cultural context.

Madjid wrote extensively, mostly in the form of short essays. His larger books have been compiled from various essays, following particular themes. Madjid compiled some of these books personally; others were edited by his students or colleagues. Typically, each chapter stands on its own, although in his books, the chapters overlap and can be understood as mutually informing one another.[15] The collections of essays were generally organised around a particular theme or issue. In this way his work lends itself conveniently to thematic analysis.

Although others have picked up on various aspects of Madjid's writings, they have been touched on in multiple discourses without broad integration. When analysed in the context of Islamic thought, Madjid is typically treated as an example of a neo-modern expression of Islam (See Bakti, 2005; Barton, 1997b; Burhanudin & Van Dijk, 2013; Fathimah, 1999; Hanafi, 2006; Kersten, 2013; Kull, 2005; Mun'im, 2007; Saeed, 1997; Wahyudi, 2002). His ideas concerning civil society have received some scholarly attention, but not in direct engagement with Western philosophical discourse (See Bakti, 2004; Barton, 2014; Kull, 2005; Pohl, 2006; Sirry, 2010; Sukardi, 2010). The secondary literature generally situates Madjid within the interaction between Islam and modernity, which is indeed appropriate and an important part of understanding Madjid's location in the broader world of Islam. However, this approach is less helpful when applied to the whole of Madjid's writings, and there are limitations to categorising him as a neo-modernist. Madjid was relating to and engaging with modernism, but there are important cultural differences. I use the concepts of social imaginaries and multiple modernities to

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[15] This is also how Taylor describes his book *A Secular Age* (Taylor, 2007, p. ix).

bridge and provide contrast with Western modernity. I fill an important research gap through my more comprehensive, thematic engagement with Madjid's texts.

Among many possible ways to approach the place of religion in society, I have focused, as noted above, on the ideal types of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion. These theoretical categories, while admittedly broad, serve to bridge historical and cultural differences by clearly framing the issue of authority in political theory. I view both theocracy and civil religion as too hegemonic for modern pluralistic democracies and argue for a modification of civil religion that addresses the limitations within liberalism. My investigation of political arrangements and theories from Indonesia also contributes to discussions in comparative political theory (See also Dallmayr, 1996, 2010; 2014; 2016; 2020; Park & Jung, 2009).

New insights are always needed as societies deal with a variety of religious traditions in pluralistic contexts. Indonesia is struggling for peace in a Muslim-majority society with significant religious minorities. Based on my personal experience, I do not see an inevitable trajectory towards a clash of civilisations (Huntington, 1996). I see the relevance of ideas and concepts developed in Indonesia for Western nations that also struggle to incorporate multiple religious traditions, although in one sense the situation is reversed (i.e. Western nations have largely Christian or secular societies with significant Muslim minorities). These parallel social situations can best be explored through a dialogue between traditions and cultures (Dallmayr, 2002; Prince, 2017). Much of the discourse on religion and society in the West has been developed in the Christian tradition.[16] Indonesia, meanwhile, has articulated similar values of tolerance and civility,

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[16] This has been strongly critiqued by scholars such as Fitzgerald in *The Ideology of Religious Studies* (2000).

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but in the Islamic tradition and with Islamic intellectual resources. This comparative work aims to describe a pathway by which very different religions and cultures can collaborate to build a peaceful society.

Scope

The writings of Nurcholish Madjid are my primary sources for this study. I travelled to multiple libraries in Indonesia to purchase, scan, and read most of his published works. Since my focus is on Madjid's contribution to political philosophy, I have not covered his Islamic devotional writing or sermons. After I had already collected many of my primary sources, the Nurcholish Madjid Society published a compendium, *Karya Karya Lengkap Nurcholish Madjid* (The Complete Works of Nurcholish Madjid; Madjid, 2019), which contains almost all his books (Madjid, 2019). At over 5,000 pages and including 20 originally separate books, this compendium can be considered canonical.

My research question and choice of ideal types has led me to compare Madjid to the classical Western authors introduced in chapter 2. There is, of course, incredible diversity of political thought and structures in the West. Not all liberal democracies are the same and their current forms each have their own historical antecedents. On issues of religion and state, they have great differences, such as between France's laïcité and the US establishment clause, which a general reference to 'Western liberalism' tends to overlook. In my various thematic chapters, my sources range from liberal philosophers such as John Rawls to critics of liberalism such as Charles Taylor and Muslim political thinkers such as Abdulkarim Soroush.

Positionality of the Researcher

Following insights from philosophical hermeneutics, I agree that knowledge is unavoidably developed in a specific context. The development of knowledge cannot be separated from a particular context in time and space (Heidegger, 1972). This truth has been demonstrated in much of the research on reflexivity and the researcher's influence (Finlay, 2002; Finlay & Gough, 2003; Hertz, 1996). In an attempt to locate my own research in time and space, I will briefly share my context and the influences that shaped the contours of this project.

I began this research while living in Indonesia, where I lived for 11 years, but completed it after returning to the United States. I was fascinated by Indonesia's social, religious, and political environment. As an American Christian in an Islamic-majority context, I was struck by the religious contrasts as well as some political similarities. I experienced Indonesia as a deeply religious country that makes space for multiple religious traditions and is unapologetic about religion as a vital source for meaning-making in the public sphere. This approach struck me as insightful and potentially beneficial for the US as well.

My encounter with the work of Nurcholish Madjid and with various streams of Islam prompted questions about the role of religion in the modern nation-state. As I had already done academic work in the Christian tradition, I wanted to better understand Islam. Of course, it seemed impossible to ignore the impact of Islam in Indonesia, but the version of Islam I encountered there seemed quite different from portrayals of Islam which privilege Arab expressions.

Over the course of my research, I have become increasingly sensitised to nuances and have a greater appreciation for the complexity within Islam. Nevertheless, I still approach the topic as an outsider, with all the limitations and advantages that accompany this position (McCutcheon, 1999). I experienced daily life in Indonesia as a non-Indonesian and non-Muslim. It was a beautiful experience with new tastes, smells, and daily reminders of Islam's presence through the regular calls to prayer (Rasmussen, 2010). This thesis arises from a desire to bring insights to the world from this largely peaceful yet incredibly diverse place.

I have developed my research with sensitivity to post-colonial insights (King, 1999; Said, 1978). For this reason, I do not seek to contribute to Indonesian thought or add insights to the Islamic tradition. Rather, I seek to engage critically with these intellectual streams and bring them into dialogue with Western political theory. Cross-cultural dialogue at the confluence of deep intellectual waters provides a rich context to explore new angles regarding old problems (Dallmayr, 1996, 2017, 2020).

All these experiences have contributed to my selection and use of primary courses. I intuitively felt that Madjid's ideas on political philosophy could benefit Western democracy. My lived experience of Indonesia's pluralistic democracy and academic background in religion prompted the research questions I explore in this thesis.

Overview of the Thesis

In this introductory chapter, I have begun to introduce the overall shape of my project, providing a general overview of the thesis and a brief biographical background of Nurcholish Madjid. I have suggested the significance and relevance of this enquiry. I have stated my primary and secondary research questions, which have informed my

methodology and scope. I have also attempted to reflexively locate my positionality as a researcher, to help the reader understand and evaluate my perspective.

Chapter 2 introduces my conceptual framework and presents more background on key ideas and discussions in which I engage. Using selected classical sources in political philosophy, I discuss how issues of competing authority between religion and the state have been negotiated. I suggest that prior philosophers were primarily interested in exploring governmental arrangements that would support a peaceful society in a largely Christian context. I develop the analytical categories of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion, to show their continuing relevance, and their limitations. These theoretical arrangements are intertwined with the emergence of the modern nation-state. I also show how the Islamic tradition has engaged with modern democracy and faced the challenge of competing authorities. This provides a context in which to introduce Indonesian engagement with democracy and how the engagement connects with these ideal types. I then present Madjid as a resource for addressing these complicated issues. I do so by suggesting a modification of civil religion's middle path. Instead of a homogenized form of civil religion, I propose civil religious pluralism as a framework that invites multiple religious traditions into public dialogue. I then develop this concept through four chapters on themes that are a part of this framework: selfhood, moral orders, civil society, and justice. Civil religious pluralism pushes back against liberalism and suggests an alternative.

In chapter 3, the first of my thematic chapters, I draw on Charles Taylor to critique an abstracted notion of the self. Asserting an inseparable connection between a self's identity and the good, I critique liberalism's seemingly arbitrary distinction between

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public and private goods. To force religious selves to relinquish their commitment to public goods is to privilege a liberal self over a religious self. This is at odds with the discourse on multiculturalism and inclusion which Muslims have used to negotiate space in society. I present Madjid's understanding of the religious self and the resources of *takwa* (piety), *tawakkul* (reliance), and *ikhlas* (sincerity) for contributing to the common good.[17] I conclude that religious selves can also contribute to political goods.

Chapter 4 makes connections between religious goods held by religious selves and moral orders. Using the framework of social imaginaries as a way to discuss moral orders, I present Taylor's analysis of the modern social imaginary as a response to modernity. I then draw on the discourse of multiple modernities to create space for alternate imaginations and different moral orders which are also at work in today's diverse states. Madjid's emphasis on *kontekstualisasi* (contextualization), *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning), and *tawhid* (the absolute oneness of God) are presented as part of a Muslim moral order which is also compatible with modern democracy.

Chapter 5 discusses the space in which religious selves and religious moral orders can engage with one another. Due to the competing claims of authority, a non-state, non-religious space is needed as an equal playing field. Discussion of political goods must take place outside a state-dominated space where liberalism has typically asserted its own neutrality. I present the historical background of civil society and the limitations of civil religion. Some Muslim writers have been suspicious of liberalism's exclusion of religion and have advocated for civil society as a location for discussion. I present Madjid's work

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[17] These terms follow the spellings in the Indonesian language. Given my selection of sources, unless otherwise indicated, I have chosen to follow the Indonesian spelling of Arabic terms.

on *pluralisme* (pluralism), *Pancasila* (five principles), and *masyarakat madani* (civil society) as compatible with democracy and as truly supporting dialogue between traditions outside the state.

Chapter 6 connects these themes and focuses on the state's administration of justice. I show that the responsibility to define and execute justice lies squarely in the domain of the state. Yet a state which completely excludes religious selves and religious moral orders, and which ignores religious goods developed in civil society may define justice poorly. It might also propagate a form of injustice, at least from the perspective of a high percentage of religious citizens. I present Madjid's religious commitments to issues of justice, which were developed in dialogue with societal leaders. A collaborative definition of justice is possible through the rejection of an Islamic nation-state and a commitment to the common good. This shared vision of justice contributes to social cohesion, which forms a stronger state, and it must inform the definition and application of justice over which the state has authority. This argument provides the final component of civil religious pluralism, which promises a more robust answer to the questions of authority than those proposed by theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion.

In chapter 7, I conclude the thesis by reframing the problem and showing how my formulation of civil religious pluralism offers a new way to understand the competition for authority between the state and religion in modern democracies. I summarize my original contribution, present limitations of my work, and briefly consider the practical relevance of this framework by referencing religious projects connected with Indonesia today.

Chapter 2: A Conceptual Framework for Civil Religious Pluralism as Political Philosophy

This chapter will develop the conceptual structure for this thesis and will introduce my framework on the necessary and mutually limiting interactions between religion and the state. I will explore the three analytical categories and further discuss their differences, describing some historical developments along the way.

Starting with classical works of political philosophy, before the modern era of democratic nation-states prompted by revolutions in the United States and France, I show how discussion of the roles of religion and the state developed. These classical thinkers challenged the status quo and the assumed political authority of the Christian religious tradition for all. They represent a positive step in advancing peaceful societies. Innovative reflection on religion and politics was happening just as the modern nation-state and democracies were poised to explode across the world (Anderson, 2016).

The rise of modern nation-states presented a discontinuity with the political past and provided liminal space for some of the radical ideas of classical theorists to take root in democratic political arrangements. In this context, the analytical categories of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion are traced and mapped onto the classical theorists in the previous section, while I also demonstrate internal limitations of these categories.

In the late modern era of the nation-state, I propose civil religion as a more promising starting point, as opposed to theocracy or liberalism. Yet civil religion, as classically espoused by Rousseau, also has persistent flaws. I explore these in an extended genealogy of civil religion before turning to the broader Islamic tradition, which contains incredibly diverse responses to democracy and the role of religion in modern states. Some

Western approaches to Islam falsely assume its incompatibility with democracy despite the variety of viewpoints within this religious tradition.

After engaging the broader Islamic tradition, I look at Indonesia's engagement with religion and political society. Indonesia is a Muslim-majority nation that has taken a unique approach to the role of religion in society while remaining a political democracy.[18] The pluralism found in Indonesia represents an example of a modern nation-state founded with an assumption of multiple religious traditions. Neither theocracy nor liberalism best describes the Indonesian context. Although the theoretical category of civil religion does aptly describe this context, the dominance of Islam in this theoretical alignment can be limiting to other religious traditions or to those with no religious affiliation.

I then introduce what I describe as a modified form of 'civil religious pluralism', to be developed throughout this thesis in dialogue with the writings of Nurcholish Madjid. A political philosophy which borrows lessons from Indonesia's Muslim-majority but pluralistic society offers an opportunity to reconsider frameworks articulated by early theorists who assumed a single religious tradition. I present civil religious pluralism as an attractive political philosophy that overcomes the limitations of civil religion. It as an attempt to move towards a post-liberal state, beyond the liberalism–theocracy divide.

Classical Theorists on Religion and State

Many classical works in political philosophy in the last 500 years focus on issues of authority between the state and religious communities. Who should organise society? What does religion have to do with the state? How do we get along when there are

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[18] Indonesia's complicated democratic history will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Its democratic outlook took several strides forward after the era of 'guided democracy' under Sukarno. Suharto's New Order reinforced the state's philosophy of Pancasila. After the fall of Suharto in 1998, Indonesia experienced considerable changes during its so-called era of reform.

meaningful disagreements between the state and religion? These issues are prominent in the works of Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Baruch Spinoza, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which have had a deep impact on the shape of modern democracies. Their diverse approaches to the problems they observed were shaped by their time and background. All had largely completed their work before the advent of modern democratic states, beginning with the American Declaration of Independence and the French Revolution. A brief introduction to these key thinkers will help to frame relevant points for similar themes in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Machiavelli (1469–1527) treated religion as suspect during Italy's medieval period. His major work, written after his imprisonment by the Medici family, discussed the need for a strong and cunning ruler.[19] Machiavelli was primarily concerned with power, and religion was a tool to be used towards this end (Machiavelli, 2005, p. 76). The prince should adopt a pragmatic approach, standing above religion,[20] while at the same time appearing religious so as to please the people.[21] Religion is something the people believe in, but the ruler does not have the luxury to follow along. In Catholic Italy, religion was a regular and historic part of the various city-states, but the prince held ultimate authority. This issue of authority becomes clearer in his *Discourses on Livy*. Religion is a helpful tool for bringing unity to the state (Machiavelli, 1996, p. 37), but the Christian religion is

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[19] Perhaps this was to ingratiate favour with the Medici family, but more likely it was to defend his political savvy despite his removal from a prominent position (Machiavelli, 2005, p. xviii).

[20] Machiavelli writes, 'One must understand this: a prince, and especially a new prince, cannot observe all those things for which men are considered good, because in order to maintain the state he must often act against his faith, against charity, against humanity, and against religion. And so it is necessary that he should have a mind ready to turn itself according to the way the winds of Fortune and the changing circumstances command him' (2005, p. 61).

[21] He claims, 'He should appear to be all mercy, all faithfulness, all integrity, all humanity, and all religion. And there is nothing more necessary than to seem to possess this last quality' (Machiavelli, 2005, p. 62).

less useful than previous pagan religions, which were easy tools in the hand of Caesar. Machiavelli extols the religion of the Romans while decrying the weakness coming from the church. Christianity does not produce brave soldiers, and the authority of the church, by competing with that of the prince, weakens the state.[22] Machiavelli's writings demonstrate suspicion of religious authority as it has the potential to undermine the state.

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), in his landmark work *Leviathan*, introduced important theoretical concepts that would greatly impact this developing discourse. He wrote during the tumultuous time of the 'wars of religion'. Hobbes asserted what would become a fundamental theoretical category by discussing man's 'state of nature'. This state was defined by conflict because human nature is primarily concerned with self-preservation.[23] Each person wants to secure their own good and these individual goods are in competition, which leads to an inevitable 'state of war'.[24] Due to their capacity to comprehend the inherent danger of this situation, humans can oppose this 'state of war' through discerning 'laws of nature'.[25] These laws restrain people and allow for the ultimate goal of peace and an orderly society.[26]

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[22] Machiavelli writes about the success of a united France and Spain, 'The cause that Italy is not in the same condition and does not have one republic or one prince to govern it is solely the church. For although it has inhabited and held a temporal empire there, it has not been so powerful nor of such virtue as to be able to seize the tyranny of Italy and make itself a prince of it' (1996, p. 38).

[23] After discussing the natural habits of locking doors of houses, locking chests of valuables, and preparing to defend oneself on a journey, Hobbes comments on human nature: 'But neither of us accuse man's nature in it. The desires, and other passions of man, are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions, that proceed from those passions, till they know a law that forbids them' (1998, p. 85).

[24] In chapter 13, Hobbes writes, 'Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man' (1998, p. 84).

[25] Hobbes writes, 'The passions that incline men to peace, are fear of death; desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; and a hope by their industry to obtain them. And reason suggesteth convenient articles of peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement. These articles, are they, which otherwise are called the Laws of Nature' (1998, p. 86).

[26] The laws of nature are articulated at the beginning of chapter 14 before Hobbes discusses contracts (Hobbes, 1998, p. 86).

In the quest for peace, each individual gives up the pursuit of their own good and agrees to abide by a sovereign power. This sovereign power enforces the laws of nature which should lead to peace. This general agreement, which involves surrendering and protecting rights, is described as a contract.[27] The balance between the sovereign's administration of the laws of nature and the individual's consent to give up unrestrained freedom for societal peace ends the state of war and allows for the flourishing of the body politic. The sovereign power is the state, which Hobbes names Leviathan. This power is best centralised in one place where the common rules of good and evil are enforced.[28] Civil laws express the law of nature and become part of the commonwealth through the administration of the sovereign.[29] The sweeping powers granted to the Leviathan by Hobbes seem to avoid the dreaded state of war—an appealing result given the wars England was experiencing at the time. Hobbes states clearly that authority should not be divided between the state and the church. This would lead to competition, thus potentially returning to the previously overcome 'state of nature'.[30] Rather, the state should have ultimate authority, even over ecclesiastical matters.[31] In a state of imminent conflict due

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[27] This language is explored in chapter 14 and made explicit at point 9 (Hobbes, 1998, p. 89).

[28] Hobbes writes, 'The greatest of human powers, is that which is compounded of the powers of most men, united by consent, in one person, natural, or civil, that has the use of all their powers depending on his will' (1998, p. 58).

[29] The connection is expressed in this way: 'That which I have written in this treatise, concerning the moral virtues, and of their necessity, for the procuring, and maintaining peace, though it be evident truth, is not therefore presently law; but because in all commonwealths in the world, it is part of the civil law. For though it be naturally reasonable; yet it is by the sovereign power that it is law' (Hobbes, 1998, p. 183).

[30] Hobbes states, 'It is impossible a commonwealth should stand, where any other than the sovereign, hath a power of giving greater rewards than life, and of inflicting greater punishments than death' (1998, p. 297).

[31] Hobbes explains, 'And because he is a sovereign, he requireth obedience to all his own, that is, to all the civil laws; in which also are contained all the laws of nature, that is, all the laws of God: for besides the laws of nature, and the laws of the Church, which are part of the civil law, (for the Church that can make laws is the commonwealth,) there be no other laws divine' (1998, pp. 400-401).

to Hobbes' state of nature, religion's authority is removed from the public space for the sake of peace.

John Locke (1632–1704), born 44 years after Hobbes, was alive during the same contentious period. He was 10 years old when the English civil war began and was raised by Puritan parents. He too was concerned with the issue of peace and avoiding conflict stemming from religion. His *Letter on Toleration* argues for an inclusive stance toward religion, though this applies only to Protestants.[32] He excludes others, such as Catholics and Muslims[33] because they clearly owe allegiance to another earthly power.[34] While not originally inclusive of Catholics and Muslims, Locke's notion of tolerance has been applied more broadly. Instead of claiming that the sovereign should have control over religion like Hobbes, Locke's state adopts a more neutral stance and remains apart. In this way, the state is acting reasonably by accepting the limits of what it can know. In matters of salvation, no one can make any final determination of who is right or wrong. These questions are up to God and not humans.[35] By not taking a side on theological matters, the state reflects its appropriate boundaries and limitations.

The broadening of Locke's argument comes from his key idea that tolerance happens best when the church is separated from the state.[36] Each party, religion and the

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[32] In his first sentence, Locke frames his letter: 'You ask me for my opinion of mutual toleration among Christians' (Locke, 2010, p. 3).

[33] Locke does acknowledge that they should have civil rights, just like anyone else (Locke, 2010, p. 41) despite naming them as separate religions (pp. 43–44).

[34] The violent treatment of the Huguenots in France would not have comforted an English Protestant concerned with Catholic influence.

[35] Locke writes, 'It will only finally become clear which of the parties to the conflict, the triumphant party or the vanquished party, has the sounder view on these matters, and which one is guilty of schism or heresy, when final judgement is given on the cause of their separation' (2010, p. 4).

[36] Locke claims, 'In order to avoid these things, I believe that we must above all distinguish between political and religious matters, and properly define the boundary between church and commonwealth' (2010, p. 6).

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state, should have their own domain. Civil goods, which are the state's domain, should include 'life, liberty, physical integrity, and freedom from pain as well as external possessions such as land, money, the necessities of everyday life and so on' (Locke, 2010, p. 7). The civil domain is not responsible for religious administration. Even if it were, it cannot force religion on the people, since people make decisions about faith on their own.[37] Religious associations should be concerned with attaining eternal life and should stay out of the business of the state: 'There is and can be no concern in this association with the possession of civil or earthly goods' (Locke, 2010, p. 11). As with Hobbes, this division between the civil and religious domain serves the goal of a peaceful society.[38]

Despite the importance of clear domains for both church and state, Locke acknowledges the importance of religion and morality for civil life and public safety.[39] It is important for the commonwealth, or state, to have citizens with strong moral grounding, yet the state should not trespass the domain of the church. Locke introduces a distinction between public and private opinions on what is good, but he reaffirms the importance of religion, with its ostensibly private opinions: 'These are the bonds of human society, and all these bonds are completely dissolved, once God or the belief in God is removed' (Locke, 2010, p. 37). Locke would not have favoured excising religion from the state.

Locke's articulation of separation between church and state initially concerned the Protestant church and state. Once this is accepted, it is not difficult to grasp a further shift

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[37] Locke states, 'Salvation of souls cannot be any business of the civil ruler. For even granted that the authority of laws and the force of penalties were effective in changing people's minds, yet this would have no effect on the salvation of their souls' (2010, p. 8).

[38] 'It is impossible to build and maintain peace and security, let alone friendship, among men where there is a prevailing belief that dominion is founded in grace and that religion should be spread by force of arms.' (Locke, 2010, p. 15).

[39] 'Good morals, which are a major part of religion and sincere piety, also play a role in civil life; the safety of the commonwealth as well as the salvation of souls depends upon them' (Locke, 2010, p. 31).

to separate religion and state, as has happened in a number of modern democracies. Importantly, Locke supports his argument by reference to Christian theology and texts, although it also hinges on separating public and private ideas of what is good. The style of argument from religious texts is similar to Madjid's writing about political issues and supporting arguments using the Qur'an and hadiths. Locke's context in Protestant England was likely the main reason why he did not include other religious traditions. This sectarian approach has not stopped later thinkers from appropriating and expanding on his ideas, especially with regard to separating church and state.

Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677), born in the same year as Locke, was another influential philosopher, though controversial due to his views on God and religion. He also came of age towards the end of the wars of religion on the continent. Spinoza, raised in a Portuguese Jewish community in Amsterdam, faced accusations of being an atheist, but this is not clear in his writings. Like the other classical theorists, he engages heavily with Christian texts. Spinoza does critique Jewish and Christian thought and is suspicious of those who would use religion to advance their own ends. Spinoza, following Hobbes, sees the importance of the state in avoiding a chaotic state of nature where each man fends for himself in competition (Spinoza, 2007, pp. ix, 272). Religion, or superstition as he also names it, is a powerful force to direct people's lives that can stifle debate and justice. Religion's influence should be restrained to allow greater freedom for individuals and peace in society.[40] Spinoza went further than Locke in his conception of toleration,

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[40] Spinoza summarises, 'Finally, we have proven that not only may this liberty be granted without risk to the peace of the republic and to piety as well as the authority of the sovereign power, but also that to conserve all of this such freedom must be granted' (2007, p. 258).

locating religious freedom within an individual's broader freedom.[41] Although these ideas were not completely new, his method of handling Scripture and Christian texts anticipated future efforts to further limit religion in the public square.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), our final significant thinker, was quite popular in the years leading up to the French Revolution. He is credited with coining the term 'civil religion' and will receive more extended treatment later in this chapter. Susan Dunn, in her introduction to the Yale publication of Rousseau's major works, notes his 'enduring impact on history, not only on the revolution in France but on all modern, democratic movements for political liberation' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 4). As Rousseau composed a picture of what society should look like, he also asserted a 'state of nature',[42] but his description differed from Hobbes's account. For Rousseau, the deficiency brought about by the 'state of nature' was not the violence resulting from competition of man against man, but the lack of sufficient social bonds in human community that kept society from reaching its full potential. Society was not so much competing in conflict as it was not fully linked; people were alone and not in community. Rousseau might have viewed this 'state of nature' differently from Hobbes and Locke because the wars of religion had reduced to a simmer during his lifetime. But Rousseau assumed that conflict would still happen. As people in society developed wealth and compared themselves with their

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[41] Jonathan Israel comments on Spinoza's unique contribution to toleration in his introduction, arguing that it is more important than Locke's: '[This] emphasis derives from Spinoza's tendency to conceive liberty of conscience and worship as something strictly subordinate in importance to freedom of thought and not as something of itself fundamental to the making of a good society and establishing the good life' (Spinoza, 2007, p. xxii).

[42] Rousseau writes, 'The philosophers, who have examined the foundations of society, have all perceived the necessity of tracing it back to a state of nature, but not one of them has ever got there' (2002, p. 88).

neighbours, the resulting competition would eventually lead to chaos.[43] He proposed a renewed social contract as a way to overcome this dark picture of society.

The ideal society, as depicted in Rousseau's social contract, placed more emphasis on the community, not on an individual's personal interest and submission to the sovereign.[44] An individual's sovereignty is unalienable and cannot be relinquished. Since a person cannot grant this characteristic to anyone else, a fair social contract must align with the 'general will' of the collective community, which could be viewed as a recognition of the aggregated sum of each individual's sovereignty. Rousseau allows that the social contract can be broken, but the general will remains; it is 'always constant, unalterable, and pure' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 228). Although the general will can be misused and subordinated to other forces, its destruction goes hand in hand with the ruin of the state. The cohesiveness of this general will, and the power of religion to add to this desirable outcome, leads Rousseau towards articulating his picture of civil religion in his final substantive chapter of *The Social Contract*. The elusive goal of a peaceful society could be better realised through a unified state that was supported and strengthened by civil religion.[45]

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[43] Rousseau writes about the discord in a developed society: 'And from that began to arise, according to their different characters, domination and slavery, or violence and rapine. The rich on their side scarcely began to taste the pleasure of commanding, when they preferred it to every other; and making use of their old slaves to acquire new ones, they no longer thought of anything but subduing and enslaving their neighbours; like those ravenous wolves, who having once tasted human flesh, despise every other food, and thereafter want only men to devour' (2002, p. 123).

[44] Rousseau opens book four in this way: 'As long as a certain number of men consider themselves to be a single body, they have but one will, which relates to the common security and to the general welfare. In such a case all the forces of the State are vigorous and simple, and its principles are clear and luminous; it has no confused and conflicting interests; the common good is everywhere plainly clear and only good sense is required to perceive it' (2002, p. 227).

[45] This follows a reading of Rousseau offered by most commentators, though Beiner disagrees. He does not see Rousseau offering a genuine Christian civil religion, nor advocating a neo-paganism that accepts all religions. The general deism presented in this part of *The Social Contract* does not fully address the problem Rousseau developed so well earlier in his argument. For this reason, scholars continue to contest how to interpret him and his proposed solution.

Rousseau observed that Christianity posed a difficulty to political unity by emphasising both a spiritual kingdom and an earthly kingdom. Jesus' spiritual kingdom separated 'the theological system from the political system', an act which 'destroyed the unity of the State' and created divisions which continue among Christian nations (Rousseau, 2002, p. 247). This fractured peace and led to war. What began as Christianity's initial focus on the spiritual shifted over time to include the political. In his perspective, the spiritual kingdom became 'the most violent despotism in this world' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 248). These different Christian formulations of a heavenly kingdom and an earthly kingdom were unstable because the distinctions between them sowed confusion. This dilemma raised the issue regarding authority with which all these thinkers have been wrestling: 'No one has ever succeeded in understanding whether he was bound to obey the ruler or the priest' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 248). Rousseau even mentions how this problem was initially avoided in Islam, which presented a unified system without a vision of a heavenly kingdom: 'He [Mohammad] thoroughly unified his political system … but [was] subjugated by the barbarians, and then a division between the two powers began again' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 248).

Although Hobbes recognised the problem of authority and tried to restore political unity through uniting the 'two heads of the eagle', Rousseau argues, he failed to take into account the 'domineering spirit of Christianity' that was incompatible with his system (Rousseau, 2002, p. 249). Rousseau seeks a middle path between those who see no religion as useful to the state and those who see Christianity as its strongest support.[46]

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[46] Rousseau addresses each of these points: 'To the first it might be proved that no State was ever founded without religion serving as its basis, and to the second, that the Christian law is more injurious than useful to a firm constitution of the State' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 249).

However, Rousseau's understanding of civil religion contains a lack of clarity, which also pervades modern discussions of tolerance. Some of this problem stems from inconsistencies in his argument, but it is further complicated by the fact that Rousseau and Locke were immersed in the single religious tradition of Christianity. Differences between religious traditions were largely between different Protestant groups or between Protestants and Catholics. While separated by important differences, they all shared a commitment to the authority of Christian Scripture.

Rousseau saw many positive contributions from religion along with its limitations. Christianity, interpreted in a spiritual sense,[47] which he called the religion of man, creates a strong social bond which gives unity to the state. This social bond is important but does not necessarily connect citizens' hearts in support of the state or strengthen its legal commands. Heavenly minded citizens are vulnerable to ignoring important laws due to the influence of a religious manipulator. They also might not retain strong motivation to defend the state against foreign armies. While offering positive bonds for unity, Christianity might not create a strong state on its own.[48]

In promoting civil religion, Rousseau discusses how to capture religion's positive contributions while ensuring a strong state. This happens best when the sovereign's rights over his subjects are limited. There should be clear divisions between the domains of religion and the state. The sovereign should focus on the public domain and should not be concerned with citizens' private opinions. Religion can support morality and personal

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[47] 'Christianity is an entirely spiritual religion, concerned solely with heavenly things; the Christian's country is not of this world' (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 250-251).

[48] Rousseau writes, 'But I am mistaken in speaking of a Christian republic; each of these two words excludes the other' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 251). This view is particularly striking since Rousseau spent significant time in Calvin's Geneva.

responsibility, which benefit the sovereign. Since the sovereign has no compulsion over private affairs or a citizen's theology, he should recommend 'a purely civil profession of faith, the articles of which it is the duty of the sovereign to determine, not exactly as dogmas of religion, but as sentiments of sociability, without which it is impossible to be a good or a faithful subject' (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 252–253). These civil matters fall into his domain for enforcement.

Rousseau's proposed civil religion seeks to promote peace by affirming some general religious dimensions and prohibiting intolerance. Theological intolerance can be linked to civil intolerance. This results in a situation where 'the priests are real masters; the kings are only their officers' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 253). Since no single, exclusive national religion is possible, all religions (mainly diverse forms of Christianity) which tolerate others and do not conflict with a citizen's duties should be allowed. This keeps the state from falling into a theocratic position. Rousseau envisioned a potentially unifying benefit to the state from Christianity even though it also contained possibilities for competition with the state. He emphasised the spiritual nature of Christianity, which made it possible to describe a vaguer civil religion aimed at retaining what was helpful for the state and limiting competition.

However, Rousseau's final paragraph in his *Social Contract* exhibits some crucial contradictions and inconsistencies. His understanding of civil religion, as a single meta-religion aligned with the state, falters when one has to deal with a plurality of religious communities. This becomes clear from his emphasis on the 'general will' or the collective will of all citizens. Rousseau's simplistic assertion that the general will is obvious likely stems from being immersed in a single religious tradition. This may have been more likely

if negotiated purely within the Christian tradition, where there was some agreement on central religious claims. But the presence of multiple religious traditions seems to negate the potential unifying benefit of religion. Competing notions of goodness and justice within these traditions fragment Rousseau's 'general will' and the peaceful society he envisioned.

All the classical thinkers we have reviewed in this section explored different theories in order to advance peaceful societies. They reacted against religious wars and other problems arising from the concatenation of religious and political power in Christendom, arguing instead for various forms of liberalism or civil religion as ways to achieve the goal of a harmonious society. These important theorists identified key components of what developed into modern democracy. I will next discuss how these threads are incorporated into the modern nation-state.

The Rise of the Nation-State

These classic writers had a deep impact on the shape of modern democracy (Wolterstorff, 2012, p. 246). Machiavelli's suspicion of religion, Hobbes' giving of authority to the state to avoid man's state of nature, Locke's separation of church and state, Spinoza's situating of religious freedom within individual freedom, and Rousseau's civil religion all contributed ideas within a context that was exploring new political structures. These philosophers' quests for peace through political theory assumed that Christianity needed to occupy a different space in society and sought to account for political authority not based on God or religion. These assumptions have since been applied to religion in general. Many of these ideas were made manifest in the birth of the United States, with its emphasis on religious freedom, and in the French Revolution, with

the empowering of the people and the nationalising of church property. These ideas were important components in the historical development of the evolving notion of a nation.

The literature and discussion on the development of the modern nation-state is wide and diverse, even if we exclude recent observations on the rise of nationalism (Bieber, 2018), but a few helpful concepts are relevant to our discussion here. The period of time between the theorists detailed in the previous section and more recent works of political philosophy that consider religion was a time of great change. The concept of a nation evolved gradually and in spurts but has become broadly entrenched in political discourse (Smith, 1986, p. 6).

Benedict Anderson's work *Imagined Communities* (2016), among others (See also (Armstrong, 1982; Beiner, 1999; Breuilly, 1993; Gellner, 1983; Hroch, 1985; Smith, 1986), critically describes background processes connected to a shift in mentality that has become taken for granted in modern democracies. Before the rise of the modern nation-state, nations and power were defined by a monarch, often with divine backing. This authority was focused on a central seat of power with diffuse boundaries. The idea of modern nations reversed these ideas. Instead of being defined by their centres, nations are now recognised and defined by their borders. Instead of a single power backed by a higher sovereignty, modern nation-states have an administrative centre backed by a notion of sovereignty dispersed among and arising from the citizens. Anderson recognizes that these concepts of national communities have been difficult to define, yet 'the phenomenon has existed and exists' (Anderson, 2016, p. 3). Anderson described a nation as limited, sovereign, and imagined as a community. This idea of the nation as a community became strong enough to inspire people to die on its behalf, showing the

power of nationalism and the modern nation-state, even if it has weak philosophical roots (Beiner, 1999, pp. 2–3; Smith, 1986, p. 6).

Many modern democratic nations have formed in the last several centuries, while some European government structures evolved into democracies over time. Today, international law assumes a structure of a nation-state and governs relations between them. These political entities have incorporated diverse approaches to the role of religion in democracies. Religion and religious groups contributed to these imagined communities, providing solidarity and continuity.

As the United States was establishing its independence, it needed cohesion to gain and establish its freedom from England. Ideas such as religious freedom and shared beliefs among Christians, though not the only driving factors, were important for this united front. The French Revolution, in a related way, worked to differentiate itself from the *ancien regime* and from the historical conflict between Catholics and Protestants. Both the United States and France took beginning steps toward the modern nation-state. While the American colonies and revolutionaries did not distinguish themselves as followers of a completely different religious tradition, both came to adopt some form of separation from the church and the state, in the broadest terms. This was an important component in their newly formed imagined community.

Anderson helpfully demonstrates the viral global spread of the idea of the modern nation-state, through Europe and eventually to Asia. By the beginning of the 20th century, various long-standing dynasties came to an end: 'By 1922, Habsburgs, Hohenzollerns, Romanovs, and Ottomans were gone' (Anderson, 2016, p. 113). The two world wars

accelerated the formation of new nations as the world experienced tumult and political disruption.

Indonesia was one of several states formed after the Second World War. Like many states, this young nation also worked to establish its new collective identity as different from its Dutch colonial past. Indonesia faced the challenge of bringing unity across an expansive archipelago with separate historical kingdoms. The country sought to forge a sense of national consciousness of incredibly diverse cultures, kingdoms, languages, geography, and religions. Sumatra and Java had histories of strong kingdoms and Muslim cultures; Papua and other eastern islands, along with parts of Kalimantan, had strong Christian communities (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). Areas with more evenly balanced populations between these religious communities experienced conflict and violence. These are all important background considerations for understanding the Indonesian milieu, as I will discuss later. But before I analyse Indonesia in depth, I need to further develop my analytical framework for discussing the role of religion in the modern nation-state.

Developing Analytical Categories in Light of the Modern State

Discourse amongst political philosophers on the issue of authority has been varied and complicated in Western civilisation. Increasing globalisation, a greater variety of religious traditions, and economic interdependence have further complicated this already difficult discussion. Democratic states assert authority primarily through the enforcement of justice as defined by the legal code. Religious traditions make competing claims, to varying degrees, on citizens' use of monetary resources, their primary allegiance, and the nature of what is just. Competition from religious traditions may weaken social cohesion

and solidarity with the state, just as the state's assertion of authority may interfere with religious traditions' practices or clash with their notion of justice. The political discourse on civil religion discusses this theoretical tension.

I have already introduced Beiner's threefold categorisation, but it is important to articulate why this is a compelling framework. In *Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy* (2010), Beiner comments on texts from classical theory with an emphasis on dialogue. These categories offer a unifying way to categorise and promote interaction between important political theorists. The book constructs a 'dialogue between leading figures in the history of modern political philosophy concerning the relationships between politics and religion' (Beiner, 2010, p. x). The categories present clear positions on the role of religion into which various thinkers and texts can be placed.

There are certainly nuances and shades of meaning between these groups. Much like Weber's ideal types (Weber, 2005, p. 56), which are useful in accentuating abstract differences, this clarifying technique can mask important subtleties. Nevertheless, these categories do clarify the tension around the issue of authority between religion and the state. Although Beiner's book frames the issues toward religion as negative from the outset by describing it as a 'problem', its categorical clarity and engagement with the historical sources are illuminating. Beiner has a strong preference for clear theoretical distinctions which comes through his writings. This analytical clarity, while useful for differentiating between positions, does not always do justice to the range of nuance and complexity within his categories.

The most concise description of these categories[49] occurs in the front matter of the book:

> The book examines four important traditions within the history of modern political philosophy and delves into how each of them addresses the problem of religion. Two of these traditions pursue projects of domesticating religion. The civil-religion tradition, principally defined by Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau, seeks to domesticate religion by putting it solidly in the service of politics. The liberal tradition pursues an alternative strategy of domestication by seeking to put as much distance as possible between religion and politics. Modern theocracy is a militant reaction against liberalism, and it reverses the relationship of subordination asserted by civil religion: It puts politics directly in the service of religion. Finally, a fourth tradition is defined by Nietzsche and Heidegger. Aspects of their thought are not just modern but hypermodern, yet they manifest an often-hysterical reaction against liberalism that is fundamentally shared with the theocratic tradition. Together, these four traditions compose a vital dialogue that carries us to the heart of political philosophy itself. (Beiner, 2010)

Theocracy places the state and other religious traditions under the authority of a single religious tradition. Civil religion and liberalism give clear priority to the state and aim to circumscribe religion's authority. Civil religion places religious traditions under the authority of the state but promotes the lowest common denominator of religion to maintain state cohesion. Liberalism also places the state in authority over religious traditions, marginalising them by separating religion as far as possible from the state into a private sphere. Theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion as theoretical perspectives each have unique drawbacks, which are further highlighted by the modern nation-state and its global geopolitical communities.

Many democratic states, with their emphasis on cultural diversity, religious pluralism, and globalisation, layer additional complexity on the enduring questions of

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[49] He mentions a fourth category of modern theocracy as different from traditional theocracy; I do not explore this category thoroughly as this thesis focuses on major religions in the modern state. The fact that Beiner can incorporate Nietzsche and Heidegger into his conceptual category of theocracy demonstrates the power of these types for broad analysis.

authority and justification in political philosophy. In a religiously diverse state, theocratic dominance by a single religious tradition can marginalise minority religions. Liberalism's separation of religion from political discourse can lead to a hegemonic understanding of justice and assumed neutrality, which ignores citizens' diverse goods in the very name of protecting them. Civil religion, by applying a homogenised, watered-down form of religion, fails to sustain the social cohesion it is most eager to protect. It has no true religious communities or established practices. Whereas all three categories fail to satisfactorily negotiate the competing holistic claims of both the state and religious traditions, a political philosophy exploring the role of religion and the state must squarely face these challenges.

Among the theorists discussed earlier in this chapter, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau could be placed in the category of civil religion; the liberal tradition, defined as separating religion and politics, can be seen in Locke and Spinoza. Later in this chapter, we will look more closely at the historical development of civil religion.

Theocracy

At first blush, it might be difficult to conceive of modern theocratic arrangements, with some exceptions in the Muslim world. The notion of hierocracy, or ecclesiastical rule, illustrates the difference between theocracy as an analytical category and theocracy as a political structure. While it might be difficult to claim consistent political leadership by the church in terms of priests holding positions of power, the historic influence of the church in political society can be seen in Christendom. This section is not meant to give comprehensive arguments for or against the theocratic vision, but merely to clarify and illustrate what I mean by theocracy and its desired dominance over the state. Theocracy

as analytical category has a much longer history than liberalism, though there are some examples of Western theocratic visions in the last 500 years.

Calvin's small theocratic state in Geneva impacted Rousseau, who remained a Genevan citizen for some time despite living in France. In Geneva, Christian morality was legislated and influenced governmental decisions. Similar arguments for the church asserting political authority were evident in the history of the formation of the United States. While some groups advocated for theocratic visions, a separation of church and state carried the day (Zakai, 1994).

As noted above, the issue of the role of religion in society came to prominence as a result of religious conflict. Political leaders amidst longstanding theocratic systems began to pursue alternatives to the point where we have a wide range of democracies. The extended European wars of religion,[50] and especially violence committed in the name of religion, prompted reflection on this arrangement and understandably moved the pendulum away from theocracy towards a strong separation of religion and state.[51] The waning interest in religious political power has been discussed in a number of places (Barnes, 1987; Taylor, 2007, p. 160; Tessitore, 2002; Wood, 1984). Similar discussion has developed more recently within Islam (Benard, 2003; Hashemi, 2009; Menchik, 2015; Salvatore & Eickelman, 2004). Indonesia, the largest Muslim-majority democracy, also has a strong tradition of reflection on these issues.

Theocracy's assertion of religious authority also exists outside of Christian-majority Western democracies in the modern era. In the Muslim world, we find more

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[50] The so-called wars of religion in Europe were not completely motivated by religion. Cavanaugh helpfully shows how economics, politics, and culture were also significant contributing factors (2009, p. 124).

recent examples of thinkers calling for clear theocratic regimes[52] in Pakistan and Iran. Similarly, in the ideology of ISIS, certain interpretations of Islamic theology are seen as authoritative over the state. Embedded in their theology are claims to a new global caliphate which must rule over the entire world. For ISIS, any modern nation-state not pursuing this goal is consequently invalid. Of course, this theocratic emphasis has produced its own wars and violence.

It can be easy to stand in judgment over current theocratic political visions. The fact that this has happened in the 21st century makes it feel more shocking to those from Western democracies, but the so-called wars of religion in Europe demonstrate the mixture of violence, religion, economic advancement, and politics in Western history. Some have gone so far to classify violence in the Muslim world and the risks associated with Islamism as similar to this tumultuous time (Owen, 2015). There are a range of responses by Muslims on this issue of violence, and not all of them advocate for theocracy. Although theocracy is not a mainstream position in the West, common assumptions about Islam's alleged inability to separate theology and politics make discussions on theocracy as a political vision relevant today (Jung, 2011). Islamism, political Islam, and Islam in general are often viewed as a threat to democracy or, at best, treated with suspicion.

Liberalism

Liberalism, especially following Beiner's definition of domestication through separating religion and state, was articulated in its earliest form by Locke. Many

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[52] These are clearly theocratic regimes, though at times Beiner's category seems too broad. It helpfully emphasises religions' dominance over the state, but it can miss nuances within religious impulses that are not calling for an outright theocracy.

contemporary theorists align with this category, most notably John Rawls, whose work has drawn tremendous attention and discussion. Beginning with his first book, *A Theory of Justice* (1979), Rawls sees himself carrying forward 'a higher order of abstraction [from] the traditional theory of the social contract as represented by Locke, Rousseau, and Kant' (Rawls, 1999, p. xviii). He sees himself as advancing a superior alternative to utilitarianism (Rawls, 1999, p. xviii). His clear, self-contained style of writing lends itself to engagement, helping to enable his work to draw so much attention and interaction.

Rawls has been selected as a clear representative of this analytical category, but there is diversity within Western democracies. While liberal ideas are clearer in Rawls' writing in the American context, justification for separation between religion and state was not uniform across Europe. This can be seen in the Thomistic tradition's emphasis on natural law and societal organization stemming from human nature. The natural law tradition was further developed in the Dominican tradition and the school of Salamanca. One prominent figure from this school was Francisco de Vitoria who was recently studied for his contributions to International Law (Beneyto & Varela, 2017). This tradition emphasised the division between religious authority in the realm of the supernatural and civil authority in the natural world, a liberal notion justified through theological terms. In political communities which had a state church, it was naturally more common to have religious notions mixed in with state administration. The Dutch approach of Pillarisation, is another example of the breadth and complexity of religion and state arrangements in Western democracy. What began as social groups around religious distinctions largely between Protestants and Catholics (Thung, M. A., Peelen, G. J., & Kingmans, M. C., 1982) became increasingly complex over time (Vink, M. P., 2007). In *The Challenge of*

Pluralism (2009), Monsma and Soper helpfully distinguish between different forms of pluralism in the US, the Netherlands, Australia, England, and Germany. This work offers particular guidance for the American context which has the highest amount of separation between religion and state (p. 213).

The separation of religion from the state, at least in its early appearances in 18th-century America, provided a different background for discerning moral sources. An ordered society which seeks to promote justice, as Rawls seeks to do, must have some understanding of justice. His pursuit of this understanding further raises the question of how a certain understanding of justice and ethics are derived and formulated. The reference point within which justice is understood is critical and will be explored in chapters 3 and 4.

One might assume that once a moral order has been established apart from religion, the liberal state can fulfil its main job of administering and establishing justice on its own. While this idea is commendable, there are limitations to this approach, especially because a shared moral imagination is not always possible. Even if a common moral imagination is attainable, it can become fragmented over time. Citizens with strong religious commitments increasingly find themselves with different understandings of personhood, order, morality, and justice. These interplay between different understandings will be addressed more robustly in chapters 4 and 5, but for now it is enough to see that Rawls fits in the liberal stream which began with Locke.

Civil Religion

Civil religion offers a middle ground as it avoids the extreme dominance of a single religious tradition as in theocracy and the strong separation of religion from public life

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espoused by liberalism. However, civil religion's limitations prevent its acceptance by followers of established religious traditions as well as by non-religious people.

Rousseau's civil religion contains something aspirational for the state, though civil religion's origin and development within Christendom often create conflicts with contemporary religious diversity. These conflicts become especially clear in light of political aspects of the Islamic religious tradition in the modern state. It is important to reevaluate potential Christian assumptions within civil religion. Especially given the resurgence of religions in many places and renewed religious conflict as Islamic scholars engage with democratic ideals in the context of increased globalisation.

To better understand civil religion, including its contemporary uses, I will expand further upon the historical development of the category of civil religion in the next section. This discourse exhibits the ongoing relevance of the term and the issues it represents in political society. The diverse meanings and uses of the term show how it resonates as an analytical category but is pulled in many directions.

Civil Religion and Civil Religious Pluralism

Premodern Uses of Civil Religion

The term 'civil religion', first coined by Rousseau, was intended to resolve tension between the church and state by ascribing ascendency to the state. A number of thinkers can be considered a part of this tradition, including Machiavelli and Hobbes who both wanted to bring religion under the control of the state. Machiavelli thought religion contained dangerous elements but was useful for strengthening society. Hobbes was pessimistic about religion's ability to develop a peaceful society and thought that the state, or Leviathan, would be better positioned to preserve a new social contract.

Rousseau's famous use of the term comes from chapter 8 in book four of *The Social Contract*. He defines civil religion as an advancement from theocracy while creating space for the state. However, religion's connection to the state is essential. In Rousseau's view, 'No state was ever founded without religion serving as its basis' (2002, p. 249). At the same time, 'Christian law is more injurious than useful to a firm constitution of the State' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 249). This leads to his formulation of civil religion:

> There is, therefore, a purely civil profession of faith, the articles of which it is the duty of the sovereign to determine, not exactly as dogmas of religion, but as sentiments of sociability, without which it is impossible to be a good citizen or a faithful subject. … The dogmas of civil religion ought to be simple, few in number, stated with precision, and without explanations or commentaries. The existence of the Deity, powerful, wise, beneficent, prescient, and bountiful, the life to come, the happiness of the just, the punishment of the wicked, the sanctity of the social contract and of the laws; these are the positive dogmas. As for the negative dogmas, I limit them to one only, that is, intolerance; it belongs to the creeds which we have excluded. (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 252–253)

This somewhat generic form of religion is placed directly under the state's control to avoid a theocratic government. Attempting to retain the beneficial, cohesive aspect of religion, civil religion articulates a higher abstraction more amenable to the state than specific religious dogmas. Rousseau's civil religion clearly seeks to place religion under the authority of the state but differs from liberalism's desire to separating it as far as possible. At the same time, this formulation, since it does not resemble any one religious tradition, does not have any body of adherents or current historical organisation. Many within several religious traditions would go along with Rousseau's conception, as they can see that their main beliefs would be protected, but the creation of a singular civil religion does not allow for the pluralism reflected in actual religious traditions or their

followers. Therefore, it also lacks the strong cohesiveness it intends to provide.[53] What civil religion seeks to gain, by establishing some sort of lowest common denominator across religious traditions, it surely loses as those who do not identify with the official civil religion fracture this cohesion by sticking with their own religious tradition. This splintering defies the one negative dogma banned by Rousseau's civil religion: intolerance. The internal tension in Rousseau's formulation coupled with the attractiveness of religion's power has hampered the practical usefulness of Rousseau's idea of civil religion throughout the last 250 years.

Modern Use of Civil Religion

The analytical use of civil religion returned to scholarly discourse in the midst of a new, emerging democracy. As the American experiment developed, including its separation of church and state, other scholars visited and studied this phenomenon. One in particular, Alexis de Tocqueville, made a notable contribution through his two volumes on American democracy (Tocqueville, 2012a, 2012b). His background as a French aristocrat as well as a social scientist positioned him to offer a unique perspective on the young democracy. The publication of his work in France would have likely promoted ideals of freedom and equality as the nation transitioned from its history of the monarch's powerful position. Among his observations, Tocqueville discussed the combination of 'liberal sentiment and religious sentiment, both working simultaneously to animate and restrain souls' (Tocqueville, 1985, p. 295). Rousseau claims that no state has been

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[53] This is where Beiner diverges from a more common reading of Rousseau. Rather than advocating for a true civil religion, Beiner sees Rousseau as highlighting the nature of the problem. This is a part of Beiner's initial framing of the internal tension in Rousseau's social contract.

founded without religion as its base, Tocqueville sees a state based on two foundational

ideals: the spirit of freedom and the spirit of religion.

Enlightenment ideas and Protestant biblical reflection contributed to the American

ethos. Here, Christianity followed a different path from Europe and opened further

options for religion in society (Tessitore, 2002, p. 1144). Tocqueville's commentary on

democracy in America attributed the success of democracy to its religious underpinnings.

This was not the civil religion described by Rousseau, but it was also quite different from

the relationship between religion and power in Europe.

This complex mix of Christian religious beliefs and a more religiously neutral state

was later explored by Will Herberg and Robert Bellah. Herberg's (1960) work on religion

in America identified early trends of increased church attendance as well as increased

secularist ideas (p. 1). He asserted a broader sociological concept similar to civil religion,

American Religion, as the emerging category which explained the complicated situation:

> It is this secularism of a religious people, this religiousness in a secular
> framework, that constitutes the problem posed by the contemporary religious
> situation in America. … American religion and American society would seem to
> be so closely interrelated as to make it virtually impossible to understand either
> without reference to the other. (Herberg, 1960, p. 3)

Herberg's word clearly asserted religious roots of American democracy in a way

that was differentiated from Christianity. This broader category of American religion was

another step closer to the reintroduction of Rousseau's type of civil religion.

Much of modern discourse on civil religion has been shaped by Robert Bellah

(1967, 1976). Intentionally borrowing from Rousseau, Bellah introduced the term

'American civil religion'. Bellah analysed political speeches and activity while noting

their frequent religious elements: 'This public religious dimension is expressed in a set of

beliefs, symbols, and rituals that I am calling American civil religion' (1967, p. 4). As

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Bellah examines religious-like expressions in the political realm, he notes that American civil religion is connected to but distinct from Christianity: 'This religion—there seems no other word for it—while not antithetical to and indeed sharing much in common with Christianity, was neither sectarian nor in any specific sense Christian' (1967, p. 8). In the early days of American history, this civil religion was part of the social fabric but remained in the background. Through speeches from George Washington in the fight for independence and Lincoln during the Civil War, repeated references to God and the American way of life became embedded in this version of civil religion:

> The American civil religion was never anticlerical or militantly secular. On the contrary, it borrowed selectively from the religious tradition in such a way that the average American saw no conflict between the two. In this way the civil religion was able to build up, without any struggle with the church, powerful symbols of national solidarity and to mobilize deep levels of personal motivation for the attainment of national goals. (Bellah, 1967, p. 13)

For Bellah, this blending of deistic, inclusive Christianity and national society did not have to be restricted to the United States. He saw civil religion as having the potential to contribute to the 'third time of trial' (Bellah, 1967, p. 16). The first time of trial was around America's struggle for independence. The second time of trial was around the issue of slavery. The third trial was concerned with responsible action by nation-states after the Second World War to promote freedom and counter tyranny around the world. Given the historical context, it is likely that communism was the unnamed foe. Civil religion offered a potentially unifying mindset that supported peace. Bellah saw possibilities for an expansion of a global civil religion in the emerging United Nations:

> Fortunately, since the American civil religion is not the worship of the American nation but an understanding of the American experience in the light of ultimate and universal reality, the reorganization entailed by such a new situation need not disrupt the American civil religion's continuity. A world civil religion could be accepted as a fulfillment and not a denial of American civil religion. (Bellah, 1967, p. 18)

In a follow-up article nine years after his initial publication on American civil religion, Bellah further clarified the value of civil religion for society and the common good. He distinguished between special civil religion (or American civil religion) and general civil religion (Bellah, 1976, p. 237). General civil religion is more akin to religion as a lowest common denominator, characterized by 'belief in God, in the afterlife and in divine punishments' (Bellah, 1976, p. 237). This general civil religion was an indispensable prerequisite for government as it upheld virtue and the common good:

> If we can see the connection between general civil religion and virtue defined as concern for the common good, we can begin to see the connections between general civil religion and special civil religion, for special civil religion defines the norms in terms of which the common good is conceived. (Bellah, 1976, p. 241)

Bellah established the trajectory for subsequent discussion of civil religion. Much of the subsequent engagement, whether agreeing or disagreeing, demonstrates the conceptual value of civil religion or American civil religion. In the next section I briefly survey this term's current widespread use, including some cross-cultural analysis.

Contemporary Discourse on Civil Religion

The edited volume *Civil Religion in Political Thought: Its Perennial Questions and Enduring Relevance in North America* (Weed & von Heyking, 2010) demonstrates the history of reflection on these issues. This volume describes civil religion in two ways. The first view is as 'an acknowledged set of beliefs, drawing on familiar religious symbols and language, that sustains and reinforces a society's moral-political beliefs' (Weed & von Heyking, 2010, p. 2). The authors identify this understanding with Locke and Rousseau. The second view of civil religion 'ascribes more significant theological motivations, though it garners power by political means and maintains itself in political forms' (Weed & von Heyking, 2010, p. 2). This version of civil religion is identified with

ancient Roman thinkers, Machiavelli, Hegel, and other American Puritan writers. It depends on more profound 'overlapping theological consensus within society' that accompanies a 'stronger bond with God and his providence' and has often featured a sense of national destiny (p. 2).

In the first definition, civil religion sustains the moral and political life of society without making claims for other societies, whereas the second definition shades toward an imperial or universal understanding. Both definitions point to this term's enduring tension. From a political perspective, there are opportunities to cultivate power through spirituality. From a religionist's perspective, there are opportunities to interpret political acts with spiritual lenses and direct the political sphere into its envisioned theological destiny. Civil religion, in some form, does not seem to go away: 'the enduring need for the divine continues to give rise to civil religion, though the forms in which it occurs have changed as some of its political and theological contexts have changed' (Weed & von Heyking, 2010, p. 3).

Enlightenment hopes for a universal rationality, somewhat embedded in accounts of secularity, have engendered negative reactions from religious communities. Purely secular articulations have not been satisfactory. The desire to unify through a secular-oriented common denominator has also not materialised. This is observed in Weed and Heyking's introductory chapter: 'The failure of secular society, with mass rationality, to satisfy fully its citizens' desire for meaningful community produces a crisis in citizenship … that in turn produces a crisis of political unity' (2010, p. 7). Contrary to expectations that civil religion might wane in the light of modern science, 'The scope and magnitude of secularization in the West has compounded a need for the divine and has fueled

manifestations of civil religion in these new forms, especially as its older forms lose currency and viability in the culture' (Weed & von Heyking, 2010, p. 7). What began as a watering down of civil religion moves from morals rooted in Christianity to a broad morality that is compatible with the state.[54]

This domestication of religion is further explored in the book's chapter on Rousseau. The Swiss philosopher was concerned with unity in the state while allowing the governing power to minimise intolerance as it surfaced (Weed, 2010, p. 146). This arrangement is supported through an emphasis on the authenticity of religious practitioners as a way to internalise their religious devotion. But tension in this structure was inevitable, as Weed points out: 'an authenticity oriented religion becomes a greater instrument of intolerance because its increasingly interiorized solutions to intolerance actually create more dynamic opportunities for intolerance' (Weed, 2010, p. 148).

Within the discipline of sociology, Marcela Cristi helpfully distinguishes between what Bellah called American civil religion and political religion. She concludes that the term 'remains ambiguous and ill defined' (Cristi, 2001, p. 3). This ambiguity causes the concept to appear in a variety of forms: 'public religion, public philosophy, public theology, political religion, republican religion, civic faith and so on' (Cristi, 2001, p. 3). For her, this concept does not carry over well into other contexts or academic fields, especially outside American culture. Her critique of the civil religion discussion shows the limitations of the American-dominated discussion and demonstrates the need for clearer definition.

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[54] This can be seen in Travis Smith's chapter with the subtitle 'Hobbes and the Establishment of the Non sectarian State church' (Smith, 2010, p. 93).

Cristi also emphasises the importance of understanding Rousseau well. Much of her literature review points to how Bellah and other sociologists have relied too heavily on Durkheim (Cristi, 2001, p. 8). This leads to an overly favourable impression of the role of civil religion as a unifying force but does not recognise its darker side: 'Civil religion, as an ideological and political tool, rather than being a permanent legitimator of power and authority in the polity, may be seen as an "episodic" phenomenon emerging during unsettled political times in response to crises of legitimation, both national and international' (Cristi, 2001, p. 10). She proposes a continuum with two ideal types anchoring either side. On one side is Durkheim's spontaneous civil religion with strong cultural elements. On the other side is Rousseau's civil religion, designed by leaders to control citizens (Cristi, 2001, p. 12).

While Cristi's approach provides important clarifications, some problems remain. Civil religion continues to be difficult to define since there are not clear boundaries or clear adherents. Those using the term are trying to clarify complicated dynamics, but it remains too rooted in a single religious tradition (some form of Christianity) or wanders too far into sociological or normative categories where civil religion adherents are difficult to identify and might be surprised that others have labeled them as civil religionists without their knowledge or affirmation.

In *The Politics of the Sacred in America,* Squiers (2018) proposes a more specific understanding of American civil religion. He offers two different sociological analyses. One, following Weber, suggests that Christianity has been marginalised and moved to the periphery in modern society. Both pluralisation and secularisation 'undermine the idea that a coherent system of meaning can be found in modern societies as is thought by

proponents of the theory of the American civil religion' (Squiers, 2018, p. 27). An alternative approach, drawing on Durkheim, presents American civil religion as having a societal function similar to Christianity. Due to the separation of church and state, no single church can provide a unifying force. American civil religion fills this vacuum and has social resonance (Squiers, 2018, p. 29).

These two conceptualisations are not compatible. One side sees religion breaking down with technological advancements, while the other side sees collective belief and a shared framework as evidence that American civil religion exists. 'The Weberians see the untangling of a common meaning structure with the advent of modern societies … on the other hand…the fact that diverse particular interest groups feel compelled to use them suggest that the Durkheimians are correct that a common framework of social meaning exists' (Squiers, 2018, p. 29).

Squiers then draws on linguistic theory and semiotics to move beyond this impasse and locate meaning. Competing understandings of civil religion, and not a unified agreement, demonstrates a substructure upon which the referents of these religious signs draw (Squiers, 2018, p. 30). The degree to which these signs are used in political discourse shows that universal aspects of language signs are important for legitimacy (Squiers, 2018, p. 35). Civil religion language (typified by the phrase 'God bless America' or other generic references to God) is frequently in use during communal rituals, such as reciting the Pledge of Allegiance or the ubiquity of the American flag, or in key moments of public discourse, such as presidential inaugurations or important speeches.

Squiers' work demonstrates both the lack of contemporary agreement on the meaning of civil religion (or American civil religion) and the ongoing resonance of civil

religion as a theoretical category. The complexity of his analysis and the variety of commentary on civil religion point to the limitations of constructing an American civil religion. The US separation between religion and state has certainly impacted public discourse. Yet, given the specific expressions of American civil religion, it does not offer sufficient conceptual clarity to analyse civil religion in other countries. American civil religion also has decreasing relevance in the fracturing US context where conservative Christians feel that civil religion does not go far enough to represent Christianity, and those from other religious traditions or nonbelief feel American civil religion is too Christian.

Despite these complications, the frequent use of the term for political analysis demonstrates its attraction. The prevalence of religious language in political discourse suggests the ongoing relevance for religious traditions.

The interplay between state and religion, the development of modern democracy, and the continued reflection on these topics deserves scholarly attention. We are seeing the rise of religion around the world in many places, not its universal decline as was predicted by secularism.

We find ourselves in a situation in which both adherents to religious traditions and those who are agnostic or atheists, frame their positions as distinct from one another by naming themselves as the ones with the proper vision for society. Each is convinced they are the ones who have escaped Plato's cave and have seen the light. Those with a negative view of religion see it as a crutch needed by those who cannot bravely face the facts and acknowledge the materiality of existence. The ostensible courage of secularists to embrace an immanent existence allows them to throw off the shackles and restrictions of

religion to escape the cave of shadows and clearly describe reality in the light of the sun. This account, which has been more prevalent since the Enlightenment, treats religious adherents as captives who need to be freed.

But religious adherents can fall into a similar pitfall. They can treat others as missing out on the richness of a life lived in the sun of revelation. Those who ignore God, or access to transcendence, deny obvious signs in the natural world, in our own cultural history, and miss what is accepted by a majority of people in the world across numerous cultures. It is also too easy to consider oneself as enlightened and the other position as trapped in the cave of shadows, but this does not advance the discussion. Civil religion is a compromise that satisfies neither side yet attempts to resolve real issues.

Rousseau gave the clearest articulation of civil religion and its necessary support of the state. He articulated positive dogmas which offer a deistic form of religion compatible with Catholicism and Protestantism, while prohibiting intolerance. Herbert and Bellah recognised something in American life that was similar to Rousseau's proposal, but distinct enough to be honoured with a new term. The americanising of civil religion proved successful for social analysis but added the idea of analysing political activities as religious in its own right. This additional idea of mixing religious fervor with political expression and action confused the idea of American civil religion and could be better termed political religion.

Squiers does not distinguish between civil religion and political religion. Despite his desire to use the term civil religion, he ends up with such an American version of civil religion that his analysis would not work outside the US. Cristi brought greater focus by distinguishing between civil religion and political religion. Her continuum, which

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excluded political religion, clarified how civil religion can focus on cultural phenomena at one end or political instrumentalisation of religion by those in power on the other. Widespread cultural phenomena within the phrases like 'God bless America' point to something very much like Rousseau's dogmas of civil religion and are vague. The political instrumentalisation of religion focuses on the societal benefits religion can provide. Both ends of the continuum point to the difficulty of concretely defining civil religion, but this thesis is focused on Cristi's politically focused definition of civil religion which treats religion in the broadest terms as an instrument of the state and most closely follows Rousseau's early formulation.

Civil Religious Pluralism

I will now propose an alternative: civil religious pluralism. I am employing this term within the analytical category of civil religion with specific reference to how religion is treated and used in the political sphere. Civil religious pluralism remains under the authority of the state, thus avoiding the pitfalls of theocracy, without eschewing religion's potential benefits. Also, rather than accepting liberalisms' rejection of religion in political space, civil religious pluralism follows civil religion in affirming the positive value religion can have for social cohesion, moral development, and contributing to a shared vision of justice. The key difference is the intentional promotion of pluralism, by which I mean the inclusion of people of all faiths and no faith, not a homogenised form of religion. Each religious tradition can be faithful to its tenets. Affirming pluralism creates space for those with no religious affiliation. In this formulation, the state no longer defines what is religiously acceptable and must also intentionally promote and engage discussion among and between religious traditions.

The term 'civil religion' was originally articulated in a thoroughly Christian context. Expressions of democracy in America and its formulation of the separation of church and state reflect this Christian influence. Locke's notion of separation assumes a Christian church, but Western societies' alignment with Christianity has shifted over time. The discussion continues in the 21st century with a broadening of the idea to go beyond Christianity to the point where it might be fair to call it a separation between religion and the state. The more discussion has moved in this direction, the easier it is to see the problem 'civil religion' has by not having true religious adherents to what is called 'civil religion'. As has been noted in the section above the blandness of civil religion, its lack of committed followers, and the resulting diffusion of the concept highlights the limitations of this conceptual category.

Instead of either liberalism's filtering out of religious traditions or a state-defined civil religion, I will argue that, with civil religious pluralism, the state should actively promote and create the conditions for multiple religious traditions to present themselves and inform public space. Although this may sound like a form of liberalism, the state would better serve its citizens if it would renounce its so-called neutral position and draw on civil religious pluralism for its understanding and implementing of justice. This is distinct from civil religion's unitary promotion of the state's understanding of religion, which is more of an instrumentalisation of a religion made in the state's own image. It is also distinct from liberalism as it allows for and actively promotes discussion of religious traditions' contribution to political society.

Civil religious pluralism as a political theory must take into account other religious traditions. Rousseau articulated his original civil religion within the Christian milieu, as

did Bellah in his tributary of American civil religion. Academic disciplines, such as religious studies, have critiqued embedded Christian assumptions in their discipline (See King, 1999; Fitzgerald, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2007). These critiques have created space for alternative voices and exploration. The overt Christian context in which civil religion captured so much attention rightly creates suspicion from those following other religious traditions regarding possible promotion of religion in the guise of politics. This fear may have initially bolstered the liberal approach of separating religious traditions as far as possible from political theory, but it also inserted an assumption of neutrality (Beiner, 1992, p. 8). Adding depth to this discourse by introducing voices from the Islamic tradition can go a long way towards enriching this discussion.

It is hard to imagine achieving strong social cohesion without incorporating the perspectives of established religious traditions. While there are numerous differences around the world within and between religious traditions, Islam and Christianity make up a large percent of the global population. Islam includes around 1.86 billion people, or 24.19% of the population (World Data, 2021). Christianity includes 2.51 billion people, or 32.3% of the global population (Johnson, 2020). While it is important not to marginalise smaller religious traditions, a civil religious pluralism approach must consider these two dominant religious traditions which account for 56% of the global population.

The Islamic tradition sheds light on limitations in the discourse above. While the Christian tradition has been more amenable to aspects of civil religion, which prompted Nietzsche's critique, segments of the Islamic tradition demonstrate even greater resistance to marginalisation and homogenisation. We will turn to Islamic engagement

with democracy and the Indonesian context before returning to civil religious pluralism in the final section.

Islam and Modern Democracy

Islam has engaged with the political world in multiple ways. Relying on popular representations in the news, one would think that Islam is most ideologically compatible with theocracy. This may be due to Islam's historical emphasis on theocracy and its suspicions of a liberal-secular arrangement of society. Political struggles around creating space for some notion of Islamic law, Sharia, and its implementation as a legal code underscore the challenges of negotiating religious and state authority.

The most frequently articulated but overly simplified perspective sees Islam as inextricably linked with politics. As I will discuss further in chapter 4 on the modern moral order, a multiple modernities framework (Burchardt & Mathias, 2015) presents a path forward for viewing Islamic writers' contribution beyond a caricature (Al-Azmeh, 2009; Asad, 2003, 2008, 2018). As narratives defining some forms of Salafism as the face of Islam are challenged (Jung, 2011), more nuanced views find space for articulation. The growth of the global sphere makes it important for Western debates related to religion and society to begin to incorporate reflection from the Islamic world. This has been happening from work by Islamic authors, but without enough integration into the entire discourse. Taylor's historical work on secularism has opened the door for transcendence as a category and religious communities need to find ways to meaningfully engage in this discussion (2007).

In the Muslim world, some thinkers have called for more theocratic regimes: Maududi in Pakistan, the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, and Sayyid Qutb, a significant

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member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (Schirrmacher, 2020, p. 58). Promotion of theocratic political alignment is commonly complemented by a call for the implementation of specific Islamic law under the term Sharia. ISIS offer another example of Islamic theology claiming authority over the state (Cockburn, 2015). Despite this clear theocratic stream, there are also Islamic voices for democracy.

Mohsen Kadivar and Abdolkarim Soroush, both born in Iran, have published on the compatibility between Islam and democracy. Kadivar (2020), currently teaching at Duke University in the US, has significantly critiqued the Iranian theocratic regime and Ayatollah Khomeini's supporting ideology: 'The theory of the absolute appointive guardianship of the jurist is absolutely wrong theoretically and practically.' Distinguishing between a passive secular state and an assertive one, Kadivar suggests that '[the] majority of the Iranian citizens including believers who practice Islam will not vote for this naïve theory [appointive guardianship] … a passive secular state that recognizes the right to freedom of religious practicing in both personal and public domains without any monopoly for one tradition' (Kadivar, 2020). These strong views led to some prison time for Kadivar in Iran. In a different article, Kadivar advocates for compatibility between Islam and democracy based on ethics: 'According to ethical-based Sharia, democracy is the best available means for serving the moral purposes of Islam' (Kadivar, 2020, p. 1).

Abdolkarim Soroush, another Iranian living outside his birth country, has also suggested compatibility between democracy and Islam. His arguments are based on religion but create space for human rights and civil liberties apart from traditional Sharia legal categories. By distinguishing between eternal truths of religion, which do not

change, and human contingency, which is historically conditioned, Soroush is able to read sections of the Qur'an as historically contingent. Reason, he says, allows for the incorporation of modern democracy, though such a polity should still be religiously grounded. It is important for citizens to have a genuine opportunity for faith without coercion. Religion and government are not separated, as the liberal-secular paradigm suggests, but intertwined. In this way, they support one another. Soroush writes, 'A sober and willing—not fearful and compulsory—practice of religion is the hallmark of a religious society. It is only from such a society that the religious government is born. Such religiosity guarantees both the religious and the democratic character of the government. Democracy needs not only sobriety and rationality but liberty and willing participation' (Soroush, 2000, p. 133).

These writers locate themselves firmly within the Islamic tradition while advocating for modern democracy. Although their writings are substantial, they do not have a substantial following or position in their countries of birth. Their advancement of democracy, while still quite different from Western liberal assumptions, put them in unfavourable positions in their home countries. This pressure points to the difficulty of establishing a serious path between theocracy and liberalism in Islamic-majority states.

Outside the domain of Islamic theology, a number of other writers have demonstrated the relevance of reflecting on Islam's integration with democracy. Bassam Tibi (2012) has written about cultural conflict between Islamic-majority nations and Western democracies stemming from Islamist reactions to secularism. The rise of politicised Islamic ideology 'indicates the failure of the secularization process in the contemporary Islamic civilization' (Tibi, 2012, p. 19). Tibi (2012, p. 18) helpfully

critiques universal claims about Islam that come from Islamist movements themselves. Conflict and civilisational differences are far deeper than the Islamists' rhetoric. Tibi argues that a humanistic and rational form of Islam can overcome inter-civilisational conflict by bridging efforts aimed at creating a 'secular-liberal Euro-Islam' (Tibi, 2012, p. 113). His Euro-Islam is free of Sharia and free from jihad, with the possibility of contextualizing Islamic teaching to its environment, much like Senegal (Tibi, 2012, pp. 115, 118). His reflections, as a Muslim in Europe, on the necessity of reform within Islam are helpful as he advocates for democracy, pluralism, tolerance, and civil society. His laudable goals have not been implemented or received broad acceptance, but similar ideas are at work in Indonesia.

Abdullah Saeed has edited a volume on human rights and Islam that works through conceptual components in Islamic theology which might contribute to the human rights conversation. He mentions a group of scholars who are 'working to overcome the idea of "incompatibility" of Islam and international human rights' (Saeed, 2018, p. 2). Saeed notes the tension and sense of conflict for a faithful Muslim asked to submit to an authority other than divine law. This is why it is important for the Muslim community to be involved. Saeed, citing Muslim human rights scholar Abdallahi An-Na'im, writes, 'If adherents of religions (including Islam) are excluded from the human rights conversation, they are unlikely to accept the universal applicability of human rights' (Saeed, 2018, p. 2). This supports my argument that the liberal-secular approach of separating religion and government as far as possible has limitations for religious communities and the justice which the state is meant to administer.

Richard Park has made a case for religious communities' contribution to political theory. Park critiques the so-called neutral perspective required for engagement in the public sphere and its secularising history. The resulting decline in civility can be countered by dialogue and engagement from religious communities (Park, 2017, p. 52).

Park has incorporated Muslim and Christian theologies of human goods from the southern Philippines, another area with a Muslim majority. Commending its form of 'moral cosmopolitanism', Park shows how this Southeast Asian nation could lead the way (2017, pp. 191–192). This study is another example of bringing insights from Southeast Asia, and Muslim communities in particular, into political discourse in the West. In the next section, I will show how Indonesia's historical and political context is particularly applicable.

Indonesian Islam and Democracy

Democracy, especially one entrenched in secularism, is often thought of as untenable for Islamic communities. Yet we have just looked at Muslim authors who have explored avenues for democracy. What pathways forward are possible for Islamic communities? What models are present in the world today? How might these models present learning opportunities for other pluralistic and religious democracies? Indonesia presents an intriguing mix of democracy, Islam, and openness to civil society (Barton, 2010). Understanding more about the development of Islam and politics in this country suggests pathways for Western nations to further develop citizens' engagement with society within the category of civil religion, though in a modified form (Rozak, Budimansyah, Sumantri, & Winataputra, 2015).

When Indonesia was established as a modern nation in the 20th century, its founders had the opportunity to observe other modern nation-states as well as to assess the Dutch colonial influence. The philosophical preamble to Indonesia's constitution states the five major principles of *Pancasila*: belief in the almighty God, a just and civilised humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by wise deliberation amongst representatives, and social justice for all the people of Indonesia. These early principles were put forward by Sukarno, the nation's first head of state, but were contested in the country's early years. Some groups pushed for the implementation of Sharia law, but Pancasila won the day and survived successive reforms (Burhanudin & Van Dijk, 2013, pp. 7–10). Gradually, Pancasila became a part of national culture, despite some resistance, and has become relatively accepted today (Ismail, 1995).

Although Indonesia and its various ethnic groups with their historic kingdoms have a rich and diverse history which pre-date the modern state, many accept three main historical eras since the founding of the modern nation. It began with a guided democracy under Sukarno until 1965. The country experienced a period of violence that led to the installation of a new leader, Suharto, whose regime is often called the *Orde Baru* (New Order). This lasted until 1998 and was followed by an era of *Reformasi* or Reform (Ricklefs, 2008). The New Order and Reform periods were a time of great reflection and writing, with much creative exploration.

Pancasila has given Indonesia the freedom to creatively explore political ideas. A number of writers have engaged with this Indonesian discourse (Barton, 1994, 1997a, 1997b; Kersten, 2009; Saeed, 1997). Not surprisingly, this unique cultural context, the liminal space of different eras, and the establishment of a modern democracy have yielded

profound thoughts. One prominent author, Nurcholish Madjid, overlapped the New Order and Reform eras. His writings contribute to a pluralistic paradigm which I offer as an adaptation to civil religion.

Madjid Provides Resources for Constructing Civil Religious Pluralism

We see in Madjid's work strong support for toleration and plurality, which he seeks to ground in the Islamic tradition. Religious communities can and should contribute to the public space where religious values can be discussed and negotiated. Peaceful interaction between religious traditions is of increasing importance as globalisation continues. Mediating spaces, such as civil society, allow for a rich form of pluralism in which a variety of religious traditions can contribute to a common good. Indonesia's context allows for religion in public discourse in a way that is quite different from the liberal position dominant in Western nations. It would be unusual to exclude these traditions which define the broad understanding of virtues necessary for Indonesian society, including conceptions of justice.

Madjid's style of argumentation parallels that of the classical writers we reviewed early in this chapter and who argued for their principles based on religious texts. Both Hobbes and Locke, while articulating different perspectives, made frequent use of the Christian Bible. This has not stopped them from being regarded as important theorists nor has it excluded their insights from broad acceptance. It is time for this discussion to continue across religious traditions. Given the religious nature of many countries and our interconnectedness due to globalisation, civil religious pluralism deserves attention. Madjid's own articulation might be more akin to an Islamic civil religion, but adaptations in the West must include multiple religious traditions and people with no religious

affiliation. Just as classical theorists in the West contributed to greater peace within the Christian tradition, so also must modern democratic polities include multiple religious traditions to reduce tension and violent conflict. Civil religious pluralism is an effort to contribute to this discussion.

In the next four chapters, I will develop four themes that contribute to civil religious pluralism: selfhood and identity, moral orders, civil society, and justice. All are vital and interrelated components for understanding this reimagination of political philosophy. Discussion of the first two themes offers some comparisons between alternative views of the person and the moral orders within which they contribute to political life. The final two themes address the necessary interaction between citizens toward the outcome of sustaining a just society.

These themes will be explored through a dialogue between political theory in the West and Nurcholish Madjid's writings. Civil religious pluralism denies both a theocratic approach with religion in control and a liberal-secular approach that excludes religion *a priori*.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown ongoing tensions with religion in political philosophy. These were presented through the ideal types of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion. I discussed how classical theorists fit within these debates and the limitations of each type. Taking civil religion as a starting point, I described the development of the term, highlighting both its vitality and its limitations. I then discussed Muslim authors who favoured democracy while remaining dissatisfied with the treatment of religion in secular-dominated contexts, and I explained briefly why Indonesia can contribute to this

discussion. I introduced four themes I will use, based on Madjid's sources for my modification of civil religion. These themes are explored in subsequent chapters, each of which develops interconnected concepts for civil religious pluralism. I begin with selfhood and identity in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Selfhood, Identity and the Good

Discussions regarding the political organisation of society overlap with related discussions of the self, identity, and various rights, all of which draw upon our understanding of the nature of a person. I contend that an understanding of the self is inextricably linked to identity and a particular view of the good. The state is composed of individuals who are citizens. Differences between what is emphasised in a more individualistic or more collective view of society have a great impact on its political organisation and the values which are elevated and promoted. An emphasis on the individual or on a collective does not diminish the value of either, but it does point to the importance accorded to each person.

A liberal view of society, which has privatised religious goods, has an abstracted view of the self. This view of the self uncritically universalises its view of the individual and thereby insinuates its own understanding of identity, selfhood and the good. I will call this abstracted individual the liberal self, and I will critique it using Charles Taylor's work on selfhood and the modern identity.

I then turn to some Islamic writers who have constructed their own vision of the self and its connection to the common good. This view of the self resists a simple public or private description of goods. I argue against John Rawls' claim that adherents of comprehensive doctrines should know better than to put private notions forward into public space. Drawing on Taylor's use of multiculturalism, I show how all identities possess public goods though they are rooted in different contexts.

Nurcholish Madjid, writing within his Indonesian context, demonstrates how a religiously constructed self has its own vision of the good, which is not neatly

compartmentalised as private. I set Madjid's example within Indonesia's modern democracy, where religion is not excluded from public space. The religious self, alongside the liberal self, can equally contribute to the public good. This requires a broader, public, religious space where religious selves and their notions of the good can contribute to political discourse on important societal issues.

Selfhood and Identity as Fundamental Categories

Charles Taylor on Selfhood and Identity

It is important to clarify a distinction between the self and identity, though I will discuss both concepts in this chapter. I will use 'self' to refer to aspects of being, consistent with Heidegger's understanding of the self as connected to *Dasein* (Escudero, 2014; Grove, 2004; Heidegger, 1972). The self is connected to self-understanding but is focused on ontology.

Taylor identifies language of the self which is historically conditioned. This is underscored in his investigation of modern identity in his book *Sources of the Self* (1989). Taylor affirms the important distinction between the self and identity: 'There is a sense of the term where we speak of people as selves, meaning that they are beings of the requisite depth and complexity to have an identity' (1989, p. 32). Identity is a layered abstraction different from the self, but deeply connected to it. A self is necessarily connected to other selves who are conversation partners for achieving self-definition; no selves are formed alone. Thus, selfhood is formed through 'webs of interlocution' (Taylor, 1989, p. 36). There are few real world stories of a self growing up without the presence of other selves, but a connection with others is an important component for child development and an assumed part of society (Koss et al., 2014). The inextricable link

between the self and identity is frequently ignored or diminished in the individualism of what Taylor terms North Atlantic ethical discourse.

Meanwhile, 'identity' refers to self-understanding and ways in which the self considers itself. It includes narrative structures among other features, and humans' need to form and live with an identity. When I critique the liberal self, I use Taylor's argument for the making of a modern identity and developed through history. The four interrelated aspects of identity he describes are (a) the sense of identity which comes from how one self relates to the good, (b) the understanding of the self embedded in language and self-understanding, (c) the place of the self in the narrative of the individual's life, and (d) how one sees oneself in a larger society or their place among other selves in community (Taylor, 1989, p. 105). These identities do not appear from nowhere, they are developed with in communities and religious traditions. Clearly, selfhood and identity are intertwined, but identity builds on selfhood and provides for a more nuanced self-understanding.

The Self in Theocracy, Liberalism, and Civil Religion

In a theocratic approach to organising the polity, a single religious tradition defines the highest good. This single religious tradition defines and enforces what is good and its interpretation trumps all others. Taylor refers to a higher notion of a good that interprets and governs a broader moral framework as a 'hypergood'. A good on this level implies that not all goods can be equal. Moreover, one's identity is deeply connected to an alignment with a specific good.

> Even those of us who are not committed in so single-minded a way recognize higher goods. That is, we acknowledge second-order qualitative distinctions which define higher goods, on the basis of which we discriminate among other goods, attribute differential worth or importance to them, or determine when and

if to follow them. Let me call higher-order goods of this 'hypergoods', i.e., goods which not only are incomparably more important than others but provide the standpoint from which these must be weighed, judged, decided about. (Taylor, 1989, p. 63)

Theocratic societies exclusively assert their definition of what is a 'hypergood' and which higher-level goods should govern and interpret the moral order for society. This may result in different emphases depending on the religious tradition. Minority groups in society that that do not hold views consistent with the dominant religious tradition are often marginalised or persecuted.[55]

Liberalism recognised the challenge posed by theocracy and the dominance of a single religious tradition. In an effort to reduce violence and establish a more just and fair society, religion was relegated to the margins and defined as a private matter with limited relevance to public space. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, liberalism fails to fully incorporate the fully holistic goods of some communities. By privatising religious goods, liberalism presumes to decide which goods are ultimate. Often, an individual's freedom is the highest good. The assumption that the liberal state is positioned to arbitrate fairly between public goods stems from an assumption of neutrality—specifically, that the state exists outside of any tradition and is grounded in neutral space. Jeffery Stout has thoughtfully challenged this view by asserting that democracy is also a tradition and should be treated as such:

Democracy, I shall argue, is a tradition. It inculcates certain habits of reasoning, certain attitudes toward deference and authority in political discussion, and love for certain goods and virtues, as well as a disposition to respond to certain types of actions, events, or persons with admiration, pity, or horror. This tradition is anything but empty. Its ethical substance, however, is more a matter of enduring attitudes, concerns, dispositions, and patterns of conduct than it is a matter of agreement on a conception of justice in Rawls's sense. The notion of state

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[55] This could be the imposition of Sharia law in an Islamic theocracy as done by the Taliban if Afghanistan, or an enforcement of church discipline by a Christian theocracy as in Calvin's Geneva.

neutrality and the reason tradition dichotomy should not be seen as its defining marks. Rawlsian liberalism should not be seen as its official mouthpiece. (Stout, 2004, p. 3)

When liberalism's views of neutrality are critiqued, additional assumptions by liberalism regarding the individual should also be re-evaluated.

Civil religion has a positive view concerning ultimate goods needed to bring cohesion to society. The state's assertion of its own type of religion assumes the positive impact of its beliefs. In Rousseau's formulation, civil religion sees the state as regaining control over the priest by means of a state-propagated and state-defended civil religion. The positive view of ultimate goods in some form of religion is also recognised by the stream of American civil religion. Something must bind the people together with a common thread and Bellah proposes religious themes in the background of secular America accomplishing this end. God is invoked in the public sphere, but in a sufficiently generic way to achieve resonance amidst differences (Bellah, 1967, p. 3). Religious undercurrents named by Bellah in the categories of beliefs, symbols and rituals are indeed significant for public life (1967, p. 4). Yet without actual religious communities and their concomitant stabilising traditions, there is no sustaining power. This is the failure of civil religion. The lack of agreement on those same beliefs, symbols and rituals in the civil religion discourse demonstrates the insufficiency of this category (see also Danielson, 2019). It also points to the contributions of religious traditions themselves. Religious communities do make important moral claims which are connected to their constituent individuals and their sense of self.

I assert that the liberal democratic development of the nation-state has over-emphasised the individual. This atomism or hyper-individualism has been critiqued by a number of scholars (Ricoeur, 1994; Siedentop, 2014; Taylor, 1989) and can be contrasted

with collectivist cultures. Nurcholish Madjid illustrates how a contrasting, collective emphasis on family and community that is rooted in a different social imaginary and developed in an alternative expression of modernity counters individualistic assumptions.[56] Imaginations of society and justice inevitably centre on some notion of what is good and right.

I focus on selfhood and identity in this chapter since it is a critical category in societal organisation as well as religious traditions. Not all members of democratic societies will be religious, but large portions of America still are (Berger, 1999; Davie, 2010; Thuswaldner, 2014). Religious traditions makes holistic claims which are an integral part of their followers' identity and selfhood. This sense of identity correlates with in Taylor's first aspect of identity: an individual's relation to the good. People's identity and self-understanding are connected to knowing where one stands: 'My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good…in other words it is the horizon within which I am capable of making a stand' (Taylor, 1989, p. 27).

This facet of identity is reinforced through theological language and a community's terminology, which aligns with Taylor's second aspect of identity. As mentioned previously, this is where the self is inextricable from other selves as it exists within 'webs of interlocution' (Taylor, 1989, p. 36).

Religious experience and rituals are a core part of a religious person's life narrative, which connects to Taylor's third aspect of identity: 'This is to state another basic condition of making sense of ourselves, that we grasp our lives in a narrative' (Taylor,

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[56] I will return to this point in the next chapter, on modern moral orders and multiple modernities.

1989, p. 47). These might include religious birth celebrations, coming-of-age rituals, marriage, or death and burial rites.

Various religious traditions also circumscribe a community of people that may be local, regional, national, or transnational. This practice connects with Taylor's fourth aspect of selfhood and identity, the way a self considers itself in relationship to other selves. We see and understand our self as selves in relationship with other selves (Taylor, 1989, p. 51).

The Liberal Self Has Universalised Its Goods

Liberalism Promotes an Abstracted Self

A particular view of the individual has been classically important to political theory ever since Plato's *Republic*, as Plato's organisation of society and his vision for the larger community were also based on his idea of the individual.[57] The 'body politic' was considered the individual writ large with the organisation of the base populace, the higher auxiliaries, and the chief guardians ruling (Plato, 2000, p. 163). This organisation mirrored the body, desire and the will. To live a good life, the will needed to overcome desire and pursue virtue. Similarly, the general public, the auxiliaries and the chief guardians, ordered correctly, established a just city (Pappas, 1995, p. 58). Plato's early philosophical connection between the individual and the community demonstrates how one's conception of the individual is part of the discourse on political organisation. If this is true, we must examine the liberal view of the individual. I argue that an individualistic

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[57] 'Take the example of someone hurting their finger it is the whole community extending through the body and connecting with the soul, the soul being the ruling element that organises the community into a single system — this entire community notices the hurt and together feels the pain of the part that hurts' (Plato, 2000, p. 161).

approach to society, as seen in John Rawls' theory, is challenged by nation-states and communities which are not already inclined towards an individualistic viewpoint.

Political discussion as seen in the liberal-communitarian debates, largely driven by North American authors, also demonstrates the importance of conceptions of the self.[58] John Rawls presents an example of this individualistic view of the self in his early work *A Theory of Justice* (1971). Rawls presents justice as fairness, by which he means that every individual ought to have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. This prime component of justice should lead to a meritocratic society (Rawls, 1999, p. 86). As Rawls develops his argument, he presents the challenge of determining justice from first principles. All individuals should be on equal footing, free to challenge one another, and equally self-interested. One person's religious interest can freely come into conflict with another's self-interest; therefore, religion or religious ideals cannot be a basis for judgement. 'The spiritual ideals of saints and heroes can be as irreconcilably opposed as any other interests. Conflicts in pursuit of these ideals are the most tragic of all. Thus justice is the virtue of practices where there are competing interests and where persons feel entitled to press their rights on each other' (Rawls, 1999, p. 112).

With commitments to transcendence deemed unacceptable or problematic as a basis for justice, Rawls develops his work in contrast to classic utilitarian ethics. He presents Henry Sidgwick's articulation of utilitarianism as his point of divergence and feels that certain gaps must be filled: 'My aim is to work out a theory of justice that represents an alternative to utilitarian thought generally and so to all of these different versions of it' (Rawls, 1999, p. 20). As Rawls fills out his argument, he addresses a serious problem

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[58] Rawls (1996, p. 31) uses identity and the self interchangeably.

with the classical utilitarian approach which is not concerned with how the good of society as a whole is fairly distributed.[59] If the rational choices of the individual choosing what he or she determines is best for themselves are applied to society, utilitarianism has no problem with all the resulting societal goods being concentrated on a few at the top and not distributed to the rest of society (Rawls, 1999, pp. 23–24).

This argument leads Rawls to suggest the concept of an 'original position' as a supplement to common sense and intuition. The original position presents a theoretical space where an individual is not yet born and, like all those not yet born, has equal status with everyone. All have an equal opportunity for a good life. Behind a 'veil of ignorance', these individuals not yet born do not know the circumstances into which they will be brought. They may land in a wealthy family with privilege, or they may be born to a poor family without means or possibility of advancement. In this original position, one is prepared to consider how to distribute the societal goods so that they are not only in the hands of a few. Being behind the veil of ignorance should help one to imagine a fair organisation of society, such that all people may have the best opportunity for a good life, since they have an equal chance of being born to a family with or without opportunity. This original position behind the veil of ignorance relies on the unborn person's self-interest to determine what is objectively fair. It is assumed that an idealistic person will work towards their own self-interest and intuitively choose what is fair, which will ultimately distribute goods broadly and in a just manner. The person in the original position might want to give themselves an advantage of greater resources, but because

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[59] Rawls explains his project: 'What I have attempted to do is to generalize and carry to a higher order of abstraction the traditional theory of the social contract as represented by Locke, Rousseau, and Kant' (Rawls, 1999, p. xviii).

they might not benefit from that advantage—it might go to their enemy—it is assumed that they will not do so. This hypothetical thought experiment is meant to highlight the importance of distributing societal goods.

In this deontological ethical framework, justice no longer is derived teleologically. There are no ultimate ends which contribute to defining justice. Instead, fairness or equal opportunity for all defines justice. Everyone should have a shot at obtaining and determining their best life. This leads Rawls to assert his claim that 'in justice as fairness the concept of right is prior to that of the good' (1999, p. 28). Individuals have a right based not on any sort of ultimate good, but on their intuitive sense of what is fair. These unborn persons assume their right to pursue a good life, which is asserted before any notion of the good.

Whatever might be said about Rawls' original position as an illustrative thought experiment or Rawls divergence from utilitarianism, the individual qua individual is prominent as a fundamental starting point. The entire construct of the original position and the veil of ignorance presents an abstracted view of the person as disconnected from all other people and historical location as the necessary theoretical space to fill in gaps of deontological ethics. This imagined view of the person as theoretically disconnected from wealth or poverty is intended to present someone with a truly neutral perspective, but this is questionable. Rawls' proposed neutral person is just as open to critique as is his theoretical neutrality of the state.

The Abstracted Self in Comparative Context

Much of Rawls' reasoning assumes a shared imagination, one that focuses on an individual and relies on a notion of justice illustrated through people's own self-interest

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and sense of what is right. This might even be stated as a form of the Golden Rule, which is present in many religious traditions. The person in the original position should do for everyone that which they would want someone to do for them. This is asserted as part of the notion of fairness inherent in rational individuals. This intuitive sense of fairness in the original position is universalised without justification or explanation of its source. It is important to interrogate these intuitions and imaginations.

Taylor (2004), in his work on social imaginaries, has demonstrated critical components of North Atlantic societies which are part and parcel of modern democracies. Taylor defines social imaginaries as 'the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations' (Taylor, 2004, p. 23). A social imaginary is different from a theory since it focuses on ordinary people, not theorists, and is a common understanding that 'makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy' (Taylor, 2004, p. 23).

One fundamental social imaginary related to an overly abstracted view of the individual is the idea of popular sovereignty. This independent view of the individual is like Rousseau's 'general will' and is the fusion of self-love and sympathy in the rational individual which forms a love of the common good (Taylor, 2004, p. 118). This social imaginary is embedded in what Taylor calls the modern moral order, formed in the Enlightenment and a significant component of modernity.[60]

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[60] The category of modernity and moral orders will be explored in the next chapter.

In Indonesian society, as contrasted with a stereotypical American, there is a greater emphasis on collective understandings of the self in the context of one's community. Not surprisingly, Madjid's writings offer relevant insights in this regard. Adeney-Risakotta (2018), in his book on Indonesian Islam, describes a contrasting social imagination. Adeney-Risakotta explicitly uses Taylor's category of social imaginaries to describe Indonesian values as confirmed through his empirical research. He presents 'fifteen interlocking ideas embedded in modern western social imaginaries' (Adeney-Risakotta, 2018, p. 47). His contrast[61] between Western and Indonesian conceptions is striking:

> Modern western societies imagine themselves as having been formed by individuals. Individuals are the basic unit of society. … The basic unit of society [in Indonesia] is the family not the individual. Families, clans, villages, tribes, ethnic groups, and provinces are all more significant than individuals. (Adeney-Risakotta, 2018, pp. 47, 49)

When one considers the overall picture of foundations for society and attempts to negotiate ways for diverse peoples and religions to live together, complications abound. There are numerous entry points into the discussion—different approaches, philosophical positions and disciplinary lenses, all of which have different origin stories.

In the next section, I use Taylor's narrative on the development of the modern identity to explore and question the abstracted liberal self. The progression towards understanding selfhood and identity as coming from within describes a clear context within which we can imagine the abstracted self to have developed. This discussion frames the tensions within multiculturalism as reflected in the so-called liberal-communitarian debates. These debates show the relevance of identity and selfhood in

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[61] Although illustrative, a strong contrast should not be over generalised. There are a number of ways in which Indonesians will speak or act with an individualistic emphasis just as Americans will think and act in consideration of their communities.

contemporary political discussion and the challenges of neatly dividing between public and private spaces. The hyper-individualism of the modern democratic state, which has roots in a social contract between individuals, has negative consequences when we consider a more robust framework for identity and selfhood.

Taylor's Critique of the Liberal Self

Charles Taylor's writing on the issue of identify is diffused throughout his works but is most definitively developed in his monograph *The Sources of the Self* (1989). This work contains important background information for his term the 'buffered self', a later iteration which features prominently in *A Secular Age* (Taylor, 2007). This term and the analysis behind it disclose a key difference between previous views of the self and modern ones. The prominence of the buffered self, as opposed to the porous self, is a hallmark for Taylor's modern sense of disenchantment:

> A new sense of the self and its place in the cosmos [emerged]: not open and porous and vulnerable to a world of spirits and powers, but what I want to call 'buffered'. But it took more than disenchantment to produce the buffered self; it was also necessary to have confidence in our own powers of moral ordering. (Taylor, 2007, p. 27)

Disenchantment, a key term for Taylor's contextual framing, goes back to Weber who spoke of this tendency as a hallmark of modern times (Weber, 1946, pp. 51, 139). This notion of disenchantment refers to a situation in which the individual is separated from the physical world and imagines himself or herself as existing mainly in the mind. For Weber, this increasingly internalised sense of self dawned with the rise of science which has begun to replace, but not fully eclipse, religion as a way to make sense of the world. This dependence on science is in contrast with living in an enchanted world where spirits or other objects, either good or evil, can directly influence someone and

transcendence is assumed.[62] In an era marked by disenchantment, the scientific mind no longer needs to resort to magic and myth; instead, it dwells in facts and the scientific method.

Other scholars have commented on this feature of disenchantment. Gauchet's entire monograph on disenchantment offers further analysis of the connection to the religious and political (1997). Whereas Weber attributed the rise of disenchantment to the rise of secularism, Taylor names this account a subtraction story which assumes that the more science provides different answers to questions that religion had previously addressed, the more religion fades and its utility is diminished. Challenging this subtraction narrative is one of the main points in *A Secular Age* (Taylor, 2007, p. 26). The buffered self is a part of Taylor's investigation into secularism, but it is sufficient to note for the theme of this chapter that this 'new sense of self' (Taylor, 2007, p. 27) required an increased confidence in humanity's moral powers. Taylor calls this 'exclusive humanism' and says it developed through a series of phases, which he sees as emerging from Christian forms (Taylor, 2007, p. 28).

This idea of the buffered self is significant when we consider similarities and differences between Taylor in the West and Madjid in Indonesia. It is also deeply linked to the imagination at work in assumptions of how the world works. Rather than simply describing differences between a buffered self and living in an enchanted world, Taylor (1989) interrogates the development of the modern self and identity in hope of clarifying the discussion. Taylor sees four interconnected ideas which form the modern identity, of which the understanding of self is just one piece. As articulated earlier in the chapter,

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[62] This alternative is a legitimate starting place, and its relation to Weber is explored in a recent monograph on Indonesian Islam (Adeney-Risakotta, 2018).

these four ideas are the self's determination by its connection with an orientation to the good, the understanding of self, identity and the self resulting from the narrative in which we make sense of our lives, and the conceptions of the self is it relates with other selves in society. These four components are interlinked in modern identity.

In looking at this historical development of the self and the modern identity, Taylor highlights several threads. He begins with a turn towards inwardness in self-understanding through representative thinkers: Plato, Augustine, Descartes and Locke. This inward turn clarifies the location of where one pursues the good life and self-mastery. Taylor, aware of the critiques of idealism, is not trying to give an exhaustive history of shifts in understanding of the self. Rather, he is selecting key figures which best illustrate important transitions.

The Inward Turn

Plato is set as the beginning point (Taylor, 1989, p. 115). As one of the early recorded philosophers, he argued for reason or thought to be elevated over desire. As one focuses on the good, life should be framed by that direction. This cannot be obtained without habits and practices where reason is cultivated to overcome desires which might be opposed to the good observed in the natural world. A person was understood as rational and able to discern order in the cosmos within the world of ideas. Reason provided a key source for morality in making judgements and choosing the good over desire.

A notable turn towards interiority occurred with Augustine's *Confessions*. Although deeply shaped by Platonic thought, Augustine focused on excavating his inward reasons for not following God. He developed ways of talking related to the inner and outer roads. The inward road leads to God but must be accompanied by grace. The gift of

grace which illumined the Christian's internal understanding also became the light by which he could recognise truth on the outer roads in the rest of life.[63] *Confessions* began a reflexive tradition of examining oneself and delving inside for understanding. This focus on interiority was an important part of connecting to the grace of God, which was necessary to truly engage with all external ideas. Grace enlightened the mind.

In perhaps a more radical step of internalisation, Taylor arrives at Descartes. In his cogito, we see a greater autonomy given to the self. This moves beyond the reflexivity of Augustine to the point where, for Descartes, understanding itself is grounded in selfhood, which is located in the mind (Taylor, 1989, p. 143). Descartes developed a true disengaged subject who was separated from everything outside of his mind. He spoke of the need and ability to step outside oneself and reflect upon oneself from that position. Descartes' ultimate ground of knowing is self-sufficient reason, which is also autonomous. This added an element of the mind's instrumental control. The body is a tool controlled by the brain and should be mastered by the mind towards good. This disembodied view of the self is increasingly abstract and results in a view of the person that is disconnected. This view of the self is more like the liberal self we see in John Rawls.

From Descartes, we move to John Locke. In him we see a procedural rationality and the 'growing idea of a human agent who is able to remake himself by methodical and disciplined action' (Taylor, 1989, p. 159). This is an Enlightenment intensification and articulation of Plato's use of reason to overcome desire. Taylor calls this emerging picture

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[63] 'We might say that where for Plato the eye already has the capacity to see, for Augustine it has *lost* this capacity. This must be restored by grace. And what grace does it open the inward man to God, which makes us able to see that the eye's vaunted power is really God's' (Taylor, 1989, p. 139).

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of a person the punctual self, that is, a self who is disengaged from the world and exists on his own. Locke's path forward to gain control and moral mastery comes through disengagement and neutrality. One must reconceptualise knowledge so that all judgements are set aside and so that true facts can be built sequentially into a sturdy edifice of truth.

The disengaged subject from the Enlightenment bears a similarity to streams of positivism and essentialism in how knowledge is constructed. It represents an atomised view of selfhood, which Taylor sees as a distinctive modern development. The modern aspect is even more clear when contrasted with previous ideas of the world, which include a great chain of being based on the foundation of God. In that conception of the world, everything was interconnected and reflects the greater world of ideas. The king in his castle represented kingship in the same way one would view the lion as the king of beasts, or the eagle as the king of the skies. Both represent a higher good which can be observed in nature.

For Taylor, this trajectory of inwardness demonstrates significant movement in how one conceives of knowledge, the self, and an orientation to the good. These are all interrelated for his understanding of identity. Understanding the self and identity is connected to the good one should pursue, which can be accomplished through reason. This fits with Taylor's other two components of identity: a narrative structure which helps an individual to make sense of their lives and an idea of how one person relates with others in society— how one agent relates with other agents.

The isolated view of the individual as inherently disconnected from others is foundational for how Taylor views the development of the social contract. Not only is

there a shift in understandings of the self with a move to an individualist mindset, but the resources for morality also lie within. The interior focus described in Taylor's inward trajectory introduced new sources for morality which were far more grounded in nature and reason than in revelation from God or a sense of knowing grounded in community. Affirming the ordinary nature of daily life reinforced a move away from dependence on God for morality. The moral sources found in the natural world were also joined to expressivism in the art world as explained in the next section.

The Ordinary, Nature, and Expressivism

As he continues his narrative on the development of the modern notion of selfhood, Taylor interprets the growing affirmation of the ordinary life in societies. At this stage of Taylor's historical evaluation, the resources for pursuing the good, which add to a strengthened identity, begin to be found in nature. The scientific revolution placed a procedural approach to knowledge front and centre. An Enlightenment approach gained dominance over previous religious or metaphysical approaches.[64] Knowledge generated through the scientific method was regarded as having a stronger claim on truth, whereas in the past philosophers and theories guided the search of knowledge. In the modern age this hierarchy is reversed (Taylor, 1989, p. 213). The natural world becomes a source of moral knowledge. Taylor sees this shift as rooted in the Puritan theology of work and the emphasis on an ordinary life which, in turn, is reflected in the writings of Francis Bacon in the scientific sphere.[65] This sets the stage for deism and a natural world that functions on its own apart from its creator.

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[64] For a critique of this understanding of knowledge, see Bernstein (1983); Kuhn (1996); Polanyi, (1962).

[65] Certainly, the Puritans would have denied any intent to contribute the deistic frame, but Taylor claims that they nevertheless did so.

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With the rise of the industrial revolution and material science, the world advanced swiftly through scientific discoveries. Western culture changed rapidly, and is still changing, through the increased emphasis on the economy, production, and functional differentiation. An increased abstraction of the person and emphasis on the independent individual could also be found outside theorists and academics. The rise of the modern novel increased the number of archetypes and new narrative possibilities for understanding one's own story. Marriage came to be seen in a more sentimental way; it was less an office given by God and more of a connection of two independent persons held together by mutual affection (Taylor, 1989, p. 291). Through the rise of the novel and popular literature, Taylor describes a sense of a 'moral consecration of sentiment' where feelings become a legitimate source for morality (1989, p. 294).

From these developments, Taylor summarises, an individualist culture arose that impacts political space. This emerging culture 'prizes autonomy; it gives an important place to self-exploration, in particular of feeling; and its visions of the good life generally involve personal commitment. As a consequence, in its political language, it formulates the immunities due people in terms of subjective rights. Because of its egalitarian bent, it conceives of these rights as universal' (Taylor, 1989, p. 305).

The sense of an individual's internal moral capabilities, combined with a discourse on rights, moved further towards a certain sort of expressivism. This is where natural inclinations understood as internal feelings were viewed as a valid source for morality.[66] Each individual has an internal voice which needs to be articulated to fully express the

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[66] In *Multiculturalism*, Taylor attributes further developments within expressivism to Herder (Taylor, 1992, p. 30).

truth found in the internal world of the subject, and in this way 'expressive individuation has become one of the cornerstones of modern culture' (Taylor, 1989, p. 376). This historical sketch helps to depict the layers of development in the modern identity:

> Only in this way was it possible to show the connections between the modern moral outlook and its multiple sources, on one hand, and the different evolving conceptions of the self and its characteristic powers, on the other; and to show also how these concepts of the self are connected with certain notions of inwardness, which are thus peculiarly modern and are themselves interwoven with the moral outlook. And I hope some light has been cast as well on the relation between these concepts and certain modes of narration of biography and history, as well as certain conceptions of how we hang together in society. It is this whole complex I want to call the modern identity. (Taylor, 1989, p. 498)

A robust understanding of modern identity's development is important because it is connected to a modern social imaginary that shapes opinion on how society should be governed and the values that uphold it. Those in the West will recognise certain articulations which are current in much thinking today.

> But what I hope emerges from this lengthy account of the growth of the modern identity is how all-pervasive it is, how much it envelops us, and how deeply we are implicated in it: in a sense of self defined by the powers of disengaged reason as well as of the creative imagination, in the characteristically modern understandings of freedom and dignity and rights, in the ideals of self-fulfilment and expression, and in the demands of universal benevolence and justice. (Taylor, 1989, p. 503)

Taylor's genealogy of the modern identity has identified conditions in which an abstracted view of the person emerged. This discourse creates helpful language to critique the abstracted view of identity and the self as found in John Rawls.

The original position behind the veil of ignorance anticipates rhetorical leverage to secure a fair distribution of societal goods through a hyper-individualistic outlook. Rawls' thought experiment is meant to intuitively resonate with the reader as an expression of fairness. The premise of a single person's motivation to distribute goods fairly presents the imagined self as disconnected from any other person or community. This

individualistic outlook prioritises the right to self-actualise before the good. The original position assumes the priority of right as a good, before a context in which goods are collectively shaped in society. This articulation of the good life pushes contributions from religious traditions to the side. The liberal self is then justified by removing religion's contribution to defining the good from public life.

Not surprisingly, religious communities and other cultures have challenged this view of an abstracted and independent individual. This aligns with some of the core assertions Taylor makes about the constituent components of selfhood and identity. Religions have a clear definition of the good that may differ somewhat between their traditions, but it is a core part of the religious self's identity. Together with the religious self's orientation to the good, religiously constructed goods also provide a view of the self's relation to other selves in society, and the narratives in which a self creates meaning in life.

The Religious Self Cannot Be Relegated to a Private Sphere

Rawls' Arbitrary Public and Private Distinctions

A further argument put forward on behalf of the liberal self is the acknowledgement of the religious self's commitment to the good, but with the emphasis that this good should remain in the private realm. This is because one religious commitment or comprehensive doctrine, to use Rawls' language, will inevitably clash with a different religious commitment, with no one to judge between them. This dilemma led Rawls to put the right before the good, which is contested by Taylor's connecting of selfhood to hypergoods.

In Rawls' later book *Political Liberalism* (1993), he responds to critiques and makes adjustments to his notion of justice. A key difference between the two books is the distinction between justice as fairness as a moral doctrine and the specific implementation of justice within political philosophy:

> The aims of [*A*] *Theory* [*of Justice*] were to generalize and carry to a higher order of abstraction the traditional doctrine of the social contract … and to develop it as an alternative systematic account of justice that is superior to utilitarianism. I thought this alternative conception was, of the traditional moral conceptions, the best approximation to our considered convictions of justice and constituted the most appropriate basis for the institutions of a democratic society. The aims of these lectures are quite different. … In *Theory* a moral doctrine of justice general in scope is not distinguished from a strictly political conception of justice. Nothing is made of the contrast between comprehensive philosophical and moral doctrines and conceptions limited to the domain of the political. In the lectures in this volume, however, these distinctions and related ideas are fundamental. (Rawls, 1996, p. xv)

As Rawls is responding to critiques of his conception of justice as fairness, he is here distinguishing the political context in which justice as fairness is appropriate. The state is responsible for administering and upholding the law and so it must be positioned to make judgements about right and wrong, which happens in political space. For fair judgements to be made about issues in political space, this space needs to be defined, and doing so is a key part of Rawls' argument.

Within political space, Rawls discusses the challenge of making legitimate judgements and acknowledging certain comprehensive doctrines. A comprehensive doctrine is defined by three features: it is an exercise in theoretical reason in a consistent manner, its values express an intelligible view of the world, and it draws on a tradition of thought and doctrine (Rawls, 1996, p. 59).[67] At this point, Rawls talks about how

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[67] Rawls (1996, p. 59) does admit that this definition is reasonably loose on purpose so as not to unnecessarily exclude some.

'reasonable persons will think it unreasonable to use political power, should they possess it, to repress comprehensive views that are not unreasonable, though different from their own' (1996, p. 60). This is asserted as a fact because 'a public and shared basis of justification that applies to comprehensive doctrines is lacking in the public culture of a democratic society' (Rawls, 1996, p. 61).

Rawls' position places incredible weight on a shared conception of what is reasonable, though he acknowledges that this can be expected only for public reason.[68] The ideal of democratic citizenship 'includes what free and equal citizens as reasonable can require of each other with respect to their reasonable comprehensive views. In this case they cannot require anything contrary to what the parties as their representatives in the original position could grant' (Rawls, 1996, p. 62). In this argument, Rawls makes a strong appeal to reason, which he assumes to be self-evident. He also assumes that reasonable people will be able to clearly distinguish between aspects of their own comprehensive doctrines which are reasonable, and thus fit for public space, and those which are unreasonable and should be kept private. Private claims are not a legitimate part of public reason.

Rawls' frequent appeal to reason, while seeking to make a place for 'comprehensive doctrines' that would include religion, is admirable. Yet this line of argument assumes a sort of universal rationality regarding what will be publicly reasonable to most citizens. This assumption builds on a certain modern understanding of moral order and reason that does not fully appreciate the deep connections between the religious self and the good.

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[68] 'Rather, it is part of the political ideal of democratic citizenship that includes the idea of public reason' (Rawls, 1996, p. 62).

As we will see when we turn to Madjid's view of the person, Islam refused to make neat distinctions between what is public and what is private. To use Rawls' language, it is unreasonable to expect religious selves to deny core commitments in public life when the state itself has privileged its position by authoritatively defining what is reasonable and what is not, or what is a comprehensive doctrine and what is not. This claim may be all the more objectionable when the religious self hears it put forward under the guise of neutrality.

Multiculturalism and the Public Good

The discourse on multiculturalism underscores the complexity of privatising aspects of the good in liberalism. This discourse, which came out of the communitarian critique of liberalism, continues themes similar to Rawls' discussions of the unequal distribution of goods in society. Charles Taylor engages this discourse on identity and concludes that a better resolution of the issues raised in multiculturalism is found in Gadamer's fusion of horizons. A fusion of horizons is strikingly similar to the overlapping consensus advocated by Rawls, but there are important differences which underscore the importance of Madjid's approach to how the good is determined in society. Gadamer's fusion of horizons requires a dialogue of traditions for shared understanding. Overlapping consensus does not require dialogue nor an understanding of an alternate comprehensive doctrine. The multiculturalism discourse also illustrates the limits of Rawls' assumptions of collective reason and what can reasonably be agreed upon as issues which are clearly public or private.

Taylor (1992, p. 25) contributes an important chapter on the politics of recognition in an edited volume on multiculturalism. In recognising emerging trends towards

globalisation and increasing diversity in Western societies, various groups, often minorities or subaltern people (Taylor, 1992, p. 25), are demanding public recognition by the state.[69] This demand is linked to identity:

> The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *mis*recognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (Taylor, 1992, p. 25)

Two common approaches are given. The politics of dignity is one approach, where each person should be treated in the same way. The impulse of democracy has been to recognise equal rights for every individual. For equal treatment of all people, justice should be blind. The second approach, which developed subsequently, can be called the politics of recognition where minority or subaltern groups should receive special recognition. Advocates for the politics of recognition claim that attempts to treat everyone the same simply do not work; the powerful are able to ignore minorities and their needs are marginalised. Thus, subaltern people demand recognition for their group and their identity should be recognized. This recognition is the only way for them to receive fair and equal treatment, as should be the impulse of democracy. Both approaches advocate their position based on the desire for a just society, and the politics of recognition include the dimension of identity as a critical component for justice to be carried out.[70]

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[69] These trends have only continued to progress since Taylor's volume was originally published in 1992. The themes in this work have strong contemporary relevance to discussions of race, gender, and immigration in the United States.

[70] Although there are personal components in what Taylor calls 'the intimate sphere', he is primarily concerned with the public sphere (Taylor, 1992, p. 37).

Taylor engages in an extended genealogy of this discourse to see how recognition and identity came to be so closely linked and how developments in modernity turned asserting one's perceived identity into a moral right. Current discourse around the LGBTQ movement shows how significant and lasting these shifts have proven to be (Hazri, 2012). In pre-modern times, most people understood their place in society through the established social hierarchy. With the collapse of this social order,[71] general human dignity became paramount and was compatible with democracy.[72] Taylor briefly mentions important historical figures here,[73] but he frequently refers back to his extended work in *The Sources of the Self*, as discussed in the previous section. Taylor claims that the collapse of social hierarchy places greater weight on dialogical relationships (Taylor, 1992, p. 32) which emphasise the importance of recognition on the intimate plane in relationships and on the social plane in political discourse (Taylor, 1992, pp. 36–37). The two developments Taylor mentions in the politics of dignity and the politics of difference contributed to ongoing political tension directly related to selfhood and identity.

Rousseau's politics of dignity was set within an understanding of society which supported hierarchies within a framework of honour. Equal dignity and reciprocity were foundational for his social contract, which in turn equalized the balance of sovereignty between sovereign people and a sovereign state controlled by people. Reciprocity combined with a unity of purpose or a 'common self' (Taylor, 1992, p. 48)[74] would

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[71] Perhaps the clearest example of this would be the changes that spread beginning with the French Revolution.

[72] 'Democracy has ushered in a politics of equal recognition, which has taken various forms over the years, and has now returned in the form of demands for the equal status of cultures and of genders' (Taylor, 1992, p. 27; see also p. 31; Berger, 1970)..

[73] Taylor (1992, pp. 28–30) mentions Lionel Trilling, Francis Hutcheson, Augustine, Rousseau, and Herder.

[74] This language points back to common political themes dating back to Plato's *Republic*, where the city and its organisation are likened to one body (Plato, 2000, p. 163).

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establish Rousseau's equal society and democracy. Society's common purpose could indeed bind society together, but this tight common purpose, while ideologically important, is difficult to find in history, even considering the strong bonds of reciprocity in Hegel's master/slave dialectic.[75] The emphasis on equal rights was a significant political development, whereas the aristocratic history might have led to first- and second-class citizens.

Despite the positive desire for equal dignity and the related discourse of universal rights, Taylor critiques Rousseau and this difference-blind strand of liberalism. An impulse granting universal dignity, though perhaps unintended, can result in homogenising society. Minority groups are not given special recognition or allowed to pursue their own ends. A common purpose for all in society moves beyond the master/slave dynamic, but it can only get one so far. With or without a common purpose, there are no internal resources to recognise difference, specifically regarding minorities. Treating everyone the same leads to homogenization, where each person is fit into the same mould and minority or suppressed cultures are made to look like the majority. This negates an individual or group identity in such a way that being difference-blind can suppress identity and discriminate against differences. This perspective is grounded in the universal potential for creating identity in an individual or culture.

Thus, this strand of liberalism, described in other places as the politics of equal respect, turns out to be guilty of homogenisation. Taylor could make a stronger case by pointing out the implications of an individualistic social imaginary versus a more

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[75] Taylor mentions the Jacobins and other totalitarian regimes as examples of equalising movements that failed to bestow dignity uniformly.

communal or familial one. He clearly agrees with this idea since throughout this text he makes frequent reference to how a self's identity cannot and is not formed in isolation from other selves (Taylor, 1992, pp. 38, 42). If a preference is indicated between individual goods and group goods, however, this form of liberalism focuses on the individual over a group.[76]

Within human rights discourse all are worthy of respect. Following Kant, this discourse asserts that humans are rational agents with universal potential and deserve to have these rights equally applied to them. This procedural approach in liberalism is concerned with protecting rights and the autonomy of individuals, 'that is, in the ability of each person to determine for himself or herself a view of the good life … a liberal society must remain neutral on the good life, and restrict itself to ensuring that however they see things, citizens deal fairly with each other and that the state deals equally with all' (Taylor, 1992, p. 57).

This procedural stream of liberalism, like Rawls' framing of the issue, has problems when one attempts to negotiate collective goods. Taylor uses as an illustration Canada's charter of rights and the province of Québec's collective desire to sustain the French language and culture. Canada began with a schedule of rights like that of the US but had trouble in applying universal rights to French Canadians and First Nations people. These groups within the democracy wanted to pursue their own goals of sustaining a French-speaking society or their traditional values. To do so, the French Canadians in Québec

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[76] This point reminds me of my conversation with an Indonesian Muslim scholar who graduated from Al-Azhar University. He said that Middle Eastern Muslim scholars are separated from the people and divorced from the common man. In contrast, Indonesian *Ulema* are mixed in with and more sensitive to the common people, and therefore their scholarship is more relevant with regard to adapting Islam to modern times. This comment represents an emphasis on group thinking, which is a vastly different starting point from a different social imaginary and a solid counterbalance to Western assumptions of individualism.

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passed laws that required the use of the French language in a variety of ways. Non-Québec citizens with limited French language capacity who moved to this area felt discriminated against and claimed that their individual rights were violated. As this conflict became part of the national dialogue, it raised the issue of collective goals. How democratic are the goals of the nation-state? The government desires to treat every individual in the same way, but this goal was at odds with language enforcement and various protections needed to preserve aspects of Québec's local culture and 'bespoke a rejection of the model of liberalism on which this society was founded' (Taylor, 1992, p. 60). This clear clash of values illustrates the second stream Taylor addresses, namely, the need for collective goals to be protected in the politics of difference.

The application of rights to everyone, following Kant, is seen in the American version of procedural liberalism, which places individual rights over and above group identities. The state does not adopt a collective view of ends but protects the context within which individuals are free to pursue them on their own. This safeguarding leads to a procedural state focused on the commitment to deal 'fairly and equally with each other' (Taylor, 1992, p. 56). This vision is rooted in Kant and advocated by Ronald Dworkin, Bruce Ackerman, and most notably Rawls. Each person must determine what is good in life and this is not the role for the government. If the government took this role, the majority could force their sense of virtue on the minority and violate an individual's rights.

This emphasis on the individual is popular in the US and results in a liberal society where no public stance can be taken on the good, despite the need to enforce justice. This differs from the politics of difference, where Québec's French culture was supported in

their pursuit of collective goods.[77] The two forms of liberalism are incompatible with each other and guilty of homogenising in different ways.

Taylor hints that one pathway offers greater opportunity for negotiation. Part of the nature of pursuing any good, such as the collective goal of justice and fair treatment for all, is that it must be a part of common life and public policy (Taylor, 1992, p. 59). This must be negotiated with sensitivity to minorities and readiness to accommodate differences. Sensitivity to minorities more easily aligns with prioritising a group's right to pursue their own collective goals. Having mechanisms for incorporating differences while upholding human rights requires more than a procedural republic that removes collective goods, such as the ones religious communities possess, from the public discussion. Neither the politics of dignity nor the politics of recognition can fulfil their assumed-to-be neutral position despite their clear goals.

> They are thus in the end not procedural models of liberalism, but are grounded very much on judgments about what makes a good life—judgments in which the integrity of cultures has a place … more and more societies today are turning out to be multi-cultural, in the sense of including more than one cultural community that wants to survive. The rigidities of procedural liberalism may rapidly become impractical in tomorrow's world. (Taylor, 1992, p. 61)

Difference-blind liberalism claims to offer a neutral ground for all cultures to meet. This happens through public/private distinctions where religion is relegated to the private sphere. Taylor claims this approach is inconsistent because 'liberalism is also a fighting creed' and could be accused of the same imposition of values on minorities (Taylor, 1992, p. 62). This issue features prominently today in discussions related to critical race theory, where questions are raised about the neutrality of the state.

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[77] This is not to suggest that all conflicts are resolved. In larger societies with clear majorities and multiple minorities, these dynamics never disappear.

The increasingly multicultural world Taylor spoke of in 1992 is already here. Drawing on the work of Kant and Rousseau, advanced this discussion, making possible the various requests for state recognition in Canada. The multiculturalism discourse has continued to move into popular discussions and has demonstrated the limitations of defining certain goods as obviously public and others as private.

Rawls turns to overlapping consensus for a theoretical way to give stability to society. In a procedural republic, the state sets certain conditions, and these can be justified differently according to various groups' beliefs, including religious ones. At the end of his chapter Taylor argues for an alternative way for societal goods to be negotiated. This must happen through dialogue and is unavoidable when the state is not automatically given its so-called neutral position. Taylor, consistent with his view of the dialogical self, points to Gadamer's fusion of horizons.

This is much more in line with what I am proposing in this thesis and creates space for collective goods to inform public discourse regarding the good. It also offers greater opportunity for social cohesion. A theoretical challenge arising from overlapping consensus is the reduced need for interaction around the reasons for adopting certain political ends. Over time, this potentially fractures the shared public reason relied upon to negotiate comprehensive doctrines. This may also contribute to an unnoticed widening of gaps between positions until the distance becomes too great and political discourse is marked more by polarization than shared reason.

This problem was effectively addressed by Madjid, who makes the case for a vital connection between the Muslim self and the good. Madjid wrote within the Indonesian context of Pancasila, where, along with the public embrace of transcendence, another

principle requires dialogue, or a fusion of horizons where the religious self and religious selves in community are to contribute to the public good.

Madjid's Islamic Self Cannot Be Divorced from Its Goods

If conceptions of the self and morality in the West are largely developed in a disenchanted world, as Taylor contends, much of Indonesian society and religion is steeped in a sacred cosmos. This creates space for a more porous sense of self and identity. In Indonesia, and elsewhere in the majority world, this different way of imagining the universe has broad effects. Adeney-Risakotta (2018, chap. 2), who published an extended qualitative research project exploring aspects of the social imagination in Indonesia, labeled Indonesia a semi-enchanted context, which offers a different starting point from Taylor's 'buffered self' as to how the self is imagined and identity is constructed.

Adeney-Risakotta discusses three ideal types of 'those fully living in a sacred cosmos (first naïveté), those who half believe and continue the practices (second naïveté), and those who don't believe in unseen powers other than God' (2018, p. 104). He concludes that Islamic modernism[78] is indeed having an effect on an enchanted view of the world, but that beliefs in the unseen world are not disappearing. They are instead couched in religious language (Adeney-Risakotta, 2018, p. 128). This openness to metaphysical reality creates space for a porous self which, by definition, is far more connected to and embedded within family, community, government, and the world.[79]

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[78] Adeney-Risakotta (2018, p. 106) saw Islamic modernism as aligned with the Indonesian organisation Muhammadiyah, which was founded out of concern to reform and purify Islam.

[79] Adeney-Risakotta (2018, pp. 50–51) makes an interesting comparison between an individualised imagination and one which emphasises community. One interesting implication he mentions is that the government can be seen as a sort of parent rather than a disconnected entity.

Although Madjid's writings do not explicitly refer to an unseen sacred cosmos, his sense of the self and the self's identity is clearly connected to God. His commitment to mysticism likely places him in Adeney-Risakotta's second ideal type.[80] For Madjid, as for many religious people, selfhood and identity are inextricable from a definition of the good. In this next section, I work through selected essays by Madjid on notions of the person and their place in society, seen through the lens of his Islamic tradition. He also works from the starting point of a person's faith in God, which is foundational for him and for Indonesian society, and connects it with implications for democracy.

Internal Virtues and Society

A few key ideas demonstrate important aspects of Madjid's notions of the self and identity. As a strongly committed Muslim, he grounds these ideas in the teachings of the Qur'an without many references to social theory, though he does engage with some Western theorists.[81] The components of the ideal person about which he speaks can be clearly seen in Taylor's fourfold framework of the components of identity. His religious tradition remains central in all his thinking. Narrating an identity without including transcendence is not an option.

In one chapter of a major collection of his writings, *Islam Doktrin dan Perabadan* (*Islam: Doctrine and Civilization*) (2005), Madjid looks at three Islamic terms related to his view of the person: *takwa*, *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas*.[82] These terms, which I will describe below, form an important part of his framework of an ideal person in modern Indonesia. They also form the background of his argument for a pluralist society, one which goes

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[80] For references to mysticism as an important aspect of Madjid's political thought, see Wisdom (2021).

[81] Theorists with whom Madjid interacts include Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Emile Durkheim, Martin Heidegger, and Talcott Parsons.

[82] I am following Indonesian spellings of Arabic terms, not transliterations.

beyond the religious claims of a single religious tradition. These characteristics are an important component of what lies behind Islam as a religion. Madjid writes, 'As components of individual religion, the qualities of *takwa*, *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas* are important parts of shaping a true attitude of surrender toward God at the personal level' (Madjid, 2005, p. 42). He supports this by quoting from the Qur'an 3:85.[83]

The Indonesian word *takwa* has a broad range of meanings. It can refer to piety, fearing God, or being a devout and religious person (Lewisohn, 2012a). Madjid sees an inner sense of devotion to God and meaning behind many religious practices, even non-Islamic ones. This is possible due to a difference between the inner intention and the outer practice. The outer practice may be flawed, but the inner intention counts for piety. Madjid justifies this claim by relating a story in the Qur'an about the prophet Mohammad's decision to change the direction of prayer.

When the religious community was based in Mecca, the direction of prayer towards the Ka'ba was in the same direction as the temple in Jerusalem, simply because of its geographic alignment. The subsequent move to Medina required a choice between possible directions in which to pray. Would they face the Ka'ba or the famous mosque in Jerusalem? The prophet changed the direction to face the Ka'ba, upsetting the community, the Jewish people, and some Arabs. Madjid sees in Allah's spoken response to this problem a principle of the religion. He quotes extensively from the Qur'an 2:177, which points to the importance of inner intention for following Allah.[84] This verse also

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[83] 'And whoso seeketh as religion other than the Surrender (to Allah) it will not be accepted from him, and he will be a loser in the Hereafter.'

[84] 'Godliness and virtue is not that you should turn your faces in the direction of the east and west; but he is godly and virtuous who believes in God and the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the Prophets, and gives away of his property with pleasure, although he loves it, to relatives, orphans, the destitute, the wayfarer, and those who have to beg (or who need a loan), and for the liberation of slaves, and establishes

includes a substantial list of outer practices: believing in Allah and the final judgement, the Qur'an, giving to those in need, observing prayer practices, and being patient in times of stress.

This verse in the Qur'an defines and enumerates the people of truth and is centred on the notion of piety or devotion (*takwa*) (Madjid, 2005, p. 44). It highlights an internal aspect to be upheld: 'The text clearly teaches that essential reality (*ḥaḳīḳa*)[85] should be searched for, and found, behind the symbols and outward forms' (Madjid, 2005, p. 44). This internal aspect cannot be fulfilled merely by external obedience; it requires an internal quality. This view of the ideal self includes a piety and devotion to God, which must go beyond outward forms. The emphasis on piety necessarily contributes to the importance of a self's spiritual nature, but leaves the door open for a general spirituality.

Madjid's next related term, *tawakkul*, focuses on an internal trusting or entrusting oneself to someone else (Lewisohn, 2012b). Madjid sees this as a reference to a faith that is active and not passive. It includes consciousness of God, which Madjid sees throughout human history,[86] but is more than assent to metaphysical reality. *Tawakkul* requires moral courage both to act and to accept the limits of what humanity can do alone as opposed to what humanity must do with assistance. Many times, God's help is required (Madjid, 2005, p. 46). Madjid finds this quality of reliance (*tawakkul*) throughout the Qur'an. It is

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the Prayer and pays the Prescribed Purifying Alms. And those (are godly and virtuous) who fulfil their covenant when they have engaged in a covenant, and who are patient and persevering in misfortune, hardship, and disease, and at the time of stress (such as a battle between truth and falsehood). Those are they who are true (in their faith), and those are they who have achieved righteousness, piety, and due reverence for God.'

[85] This complex Islamic term can refer to ontological reality; both the thing in itself and the verification of that which is true (Gardet, 2012a).

[86] Because of his focus on the essence behind these symbols, Madjid is willing to recognise how other religions reflect this same truth. He sees this inter-faith recognition as confirmed in positive statements about other 'people of the book'.

an important framing term which people looking to please Allah should embody: 'If *takwa* is founded on the awareness of doing good works for approval, then *tawakkul* is the source of strength in the soul and perseverance in the heart to overcome a life full of challenges which cannot be fully understood, especially in the struggle for the approval of Allah' (Madjid, 2005, p. 48). Again, we see in Madjid's ideal type a critical dependence upon a transcendent being as necessary for individuals to reach their highest potential. Not only is this important for the religious self, but it necessarily involves action in public space.

Madjid's third term, *ikhlas*, denotes another internal state and refers to the quality of sincerity, or truly devoting oneself to something (Gardet, 2012b). The perfection of someone's adherence to God is measured by a level of purity in this internal state as well as by acting rightly. This is a significant term among Sufis, and Madjid quotes from Ibn 'Ibad al-Randi to explicate the meaning. It is the inner quality of purity which adds to good deeds such that they would be useless without it: 'Without *ikhlas* the meaning of charity dies; those actions would be like a doll without a spirit or a picture with no meaning. It's said by the experts, "Straighten your charity with purity and straighten your purity by freeing yourself from power and ability"' (Madjid, 2005, p. 50). Although on the outside it might be difficult to tell, Madjid claims, there are different levels of purity in obedience. This is part of the core of obedience of Allah's followers. Separating outward action from internal motivation is no simple matter.

These terms help to make Madjid's Islamic framing of the ideal person come into focus. *Takwa*, *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas* are all connected to someone's internal makeup,

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which is difficult to perceive from the outside.[87] Madjid justifies the importance of these internal qualities from the Qur'an. These virtues are of critical importance for the religious self. Indeed, they are part of the basis on which one will be judged. Furthermore, Madjid makes a connection between the religious self and society:

> So, even though we look at the aspects of *takwa*, *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas* which are qualities of personal religion, they have direct and strong implications for society. As the social dimensions of human life are the sum total of personalities in society, then *takwa*, *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas* of those individuals impact the makeup of society and influence the strengths and weaknesses and the height and depth of the quality of the community. (Madjid, 2005, p. 42)

Although Madjid begins with the individual, who has an inextricable tie to the good, this is part of laying the groundwork for his vision of society and democracy, which intuitively follows all of Taylor's components of selfhood and identity. First, we see an orientation to the good—in this case, piety and sincerity towards God. Second, the religious self understands itself to be a creaturely self, one which needs to be properly oriented to God. Third, the self has narratives in which it seeks to make sense of the world as the religious self follows revelation in the Qur'an. Fourth, with the move to speaking of society and democracy, Madjid refers to the relationship a religious self has with other selves in society. The religious self has fundamental links to societal organisation which are compatible with a pluralistic society. We will look at how he advances this argument in the next section.

The Islamic Self and the Community

In different essays published within the same volume, *Islam Doktrin dan Perabadan*, Madjid speaks about the importance of faith for political organisation: 'Faith

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[87] Indonesians often speak of internal and external aspects of actions. This is clearly seen in the common phrase during the holy month of Ramadan, *Mohon maaf lahir dan batin*, which entails asking for forgiveness for both the outside and the inside.

in the one God, Allah the one and only, works to shape a community which is just, open, and democratic' (2005, p. 112). When looking at models for proper social order, Madjid turns to the first generations who lived with the prophet and after his death. They are significant because they are guaranteed to enter heaven. Their successful passing through judgement makes their example significant, as their admittance to heaven is proof that their lives are worth emulating. These narratives are a living expression of the will of God, and they are an example of 'a view of religion that radiates in its social order justice, openness, and democracy' (Madjid, 2005, p. 113). This view of the religious self is not divorced from a certain understanding of the good, and it is connected to a vision for society.

Madjid justifies his claim that Islam is compatible with the democratic tradition by quoting extensively from Robert Bellah's (1991) chapter 'Islamic Traditions and Problems of Modernization'. The extended quotation discusses political innovations by early Islam and the dramatic advances they brought to the Arab people. The innovations and advancements could be seen as 'providing a better model for modern national community building than might be imagined … [it was] a very type of equalitarian nationalism' (Bellah, 1991, pp. 150–151). Madjid's quoting of Bellah, used in several of his essays, is an example of his subtle pointing to the need for flexibility and modernisation in the Islamic world. Muslim society, at one point, was the pinnacle of political advancement and could become so again.

In describing a democracy compatible with the Islamic self, Madjid turns to the critical role of the state in defining and administering justice. In these important matters of social organisation, Madjid underscores the importance of religion by discussing the

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relationship between faith and justice. The idea of justice in the Qur'an is connected to philosophical ideas about the good but without any supposed sterility: 'Justice based on faith demanded something warmer and more human than the formal concept of justice in the Roman legal system, even going so far as to penetrate the complicated boundaries of understanding justice in Greek philosophical speculation' (Madjid, 2005, p. 115).

Justice is connected to faith in the sense that it is closely related to *ihsan*, doing what is excellent (Burton, 2012), and to 'fair dealing, the spirit of moderation and tolerance, and the middle way' (Madjid, 2005, p. 115). It must avoid two extremes of humanity: indulgence and asceticism. A just society is based on living out the commands of Allah before others and enforcing justice, but the focus must be kept on Allah alone. Madjid links justice with the more important Islamic doctrine of *tawhid*, commitment to one God: 'The depth of meaning of justice based on faith can also be seen from its mandate … especially the mandate regarding the power to govern … the power that is proper and must be obeyed is solely what comes from the people and reflects justice because it is carrying out God's mandate' (Madjid, 2005, p. 116). Although fidelity to Allah is important in informing justice, Madjid's formulation does not require a theocratic arrangement as one might initially assume. This idea runs throughout his subsequent discussion of openness and democracy.

Madjid makes an interesting connection between faith and openness, which is characteristic of his writing. The doctrine of *tawhid* means that God alone is the one and only absolute. Allah exists in a completely different category from everything else. This might be conceptualised as an elevated transcendent plane which contains only Allah. Therefore, it is wrong to elevate anything else to this transcendent space, whether it be a

created thing or an ideological construct. To include other ideas or creatures at this level creates the dangerous possibility of committing *shirk*, or associating anything other than Allah with Allah: 'The absoluteness of God relativises everything other than him; indeed, a mark of faith is an attitude which doesn't absolutise other humans or any other creature (this is under *shirk*)' (Madjid, 2005, p. 117). This conceptual distinction protects God's status as the sole absolute, and it means that everything else necessarily requires a different level of commitment and safeguarding. This creates opportunities for openness in the Islamic self.

Not only should an Islamic self be open, but he or she should critically question absolute judgements. To accept certain ideas as inviolate or untouchable could be risking the possibility of *shirk*: 'Thus, for the sake of our responsibility, a person should only follow something if he understands it through critical examination' (Madjid, 2005, p. 117). Indeed, faith and proper commitment to *tawhid* require that other thoughts and systems should be consistent with thoughtful reasoning and not simply given special status: 'The process of following God means that the pattern of life is dynamic; it requires man to work together in the soul of godliness and goodness. Humanity must work in the spirit of finding what is true and labouring together under the burden of moving towards truth' (Madjid, 2005, p. 118). The relationship between faith, justice, and openness leads to faith and democracy: 'Now we can see the relationship between these two values and democracy, namely, the arrangement of social order on the foundation of humanity, specifically willing things together' (Madjid, 2005, p. 118).

Nothing can be made absolute or on the same level as Allah—including dogmatic ideas about government. As an historical example of moving away from God's oneness

through idolatry, Madjid, somewhat subversively, chooses the Holy Roman Empire. He describes this errant case as a Christian theocratic society. It was wrong because it absolutised certain decisions and societal forms. Raising such theocratic forms to the level of certainty rivalled the certainty of God, who alone is to be regarded as absolute. Therefore, it was *shirk*. Madjid, presumably to avoid critiquing aspects of the Islamic tradition, selects a Christian theocratic society as his example, showing how politics and religion could be combined in theocratic ways that violate *tawhid*. It is not difficult to extend this argument to Muslim states with theocratic arrangements.

Madjid, alternatively, proposes a different basis for decision making. This basis does not ignore religious goods, which are inextricable from the Islamic self, but creates space for engagement, even at the highest levels of government. If there is no theocratic society and we all must critically reflect on how to organise society, then this requires deliberation and discussion. 'A description of a society of faith like a community which dialogues together in this way is confirmation of being Muslims, which is also confirmed in the surah about deliberation' (Madjid, 2005, p. 119). Madjid sees Surah 42:38–43 as confirming this foundation for a society which honours Allah. The passage supports a life of godliness with community decision making, social justice, and fighting against idolatry, which consists of making anything other than Allah on the same level as him.[88]

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[88] Surah 42.38. And those who answer the call of their Lord and obey Him (in His orders and prohibitions), and establish the Prayer in conformity with its conditions; and whose affairs are by consultation among themselves; and who spend out of what We provide for them (to provide sustenance for the needy, and in God's cause);

42.39. And those who, when an unjust aggression is inflicted on (any or all of) them, defend themselves and one another (to end the aggression).

42.40. The recompense of an evil deed can only be an evil equal to it; but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from God. Surely He does not love the wrongdoers.

42.41. But whoever defends himself and restores his right (in the lawful way) after he has been wronged—against such there is no route (of blame and retaliation).

Madjid presents foundational aspects of Islam which were seen in the first three generations of Muslims and are therefore important for the religious self. These ideas form background ideas important to the ideal religious self. In Madjid's view, these ideas should be brought to the forefront in Indonesia. In this way, the country will be faithful to the Islamic tradition and compatible with democracy so as to develop fruitfully alongside other nations.

In suggesting an open and democratic state, Madjid does not contradict his commitment to piety for the religious self. Madjid's religiously constructed identity is deeply connected to transcendence. Allah is above all, but this requires a flattening of everyone below him and emphasises the need for dialogue and working together. The elevation of God to a transcendent plane allows for different interpretations and societal structures on the creaturely plane. This distinction moves Madjid from a theocratic commitment to one that is much closer to civil religion and compatible with a democratic society.

This conception does not fully achieve civil religious pluralism as it leaves little space for those with no commitment to transcendence. However, it does demonstrate the problem of arbitrarily deciding that some goods are validated by public reason and others should be private. Reading Madjid's writings as an expression of one religious tradition can be relevant for the West, as they illuminate alternative views of society from a different social imagination. Madjid's view of society relates to his view of the person,

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42.42. The route (of blame and retaliation) is only against those who wrong people and behave rebelliously on earth, offending against all right. For such there is a painful punishment.

42.43. But, indeed, whoever shows patience and forgives (the wrong done to him), surely that is among meritorious things requiring great resolution to fulfil.

which is rooted in Islam.[89] Muslims cannot escape having their identity connected to a notion of the good as defined by their religious tradition.

Religious Selves Have Their Respective Vision of the Public Good

Madjid in Context with Other Muslim scholars

Nurcholish Madjid is not alone in his understanding of the religious self. Other Muslim scholars have worked along similar lines to further integrate Islamic teaching with democracy.[90] They often face an uphill battle to be heard due to common misunderstandings of Islam as a monolithic religious entity with little variation. However, those who have travelled to multiple Muslim-majority nations will see diversity in theology, general approach, and political arrangements. Much of the uphill battle can be attributed to misunderstandings of Muslim theological positions that are not readily apparent to non-specialists. Undoubtedly, terrorist acts and the rhetoric surrounding them attract more media and global attention, which influences a general understanding of Islam. However, it is also important to recognise ways in which the academic discourse around Islam has contributed to this reified picture.

Although it is impossible to fully trace the global transmission and development of ideas, it is important to recognise trends and ways in which ideas spread. The development of modernity and its influence on religious traditions are very broad topics and have received only a meandering analysis. This is largely because modernity is so complicated. As I will develop in my next chapter, a framework of multiple modernities adds depth to a modern moral order and is a better framework for approaching diverse

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[89] This issue of identity in Islamic nations in Southeast Asia arises in several chapters of an edited volume from a conference on Islam and the social construction of identity (Hefner & Horvatich, 1997).

[90] See also Achiloy (2010); Hashemi (2009); Kadivar (2020); Menchik (2015); Salvatore & Eickelman (2004); Soroush (2000); Tibi (2008).

views. Jung (2011), who presents thoughtful analysis of Islamic discourse, argues that a network of scholars[91] emerged early on and influenced Western academic engagement with Islam. This small cluster and their ideas caused the next generation of scholars[92] to be predisposed to an orientalist outlook. These scholars shaped a central approach to Islamic studies 'as a scholarly problem, [where] Islam has to be addressed as a cultural whole from its religiously determined starting point' (Jung, 2011, p. 157). They had a broad influence on how Islam was perceived in colonial settings. With their philological training and religious interests, these scholars were best positioned to engage with Islam and were relied on by state powers.

Not only did these scholars have a significant hand in shaping colonial powers, but they also interacted with Muslim scholars in key parts of the world.[93] Jung argues that this led to a reaction among key Islamic writers who were engaging with Western modernity and were in dialogue with Western orientalist scholars. Among those analysed are Sayiid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Iqbal, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, Abu al-Ala Mawdudi, and Sayyid Qutb (Jung, 2011, pp. 221–262). This emerging Islamic-Western discourse needed time and thoughtfulness to develop and appreciate nuanced positions, but the global colonial context was changing rapidly as competing powers looked for an edge in their economic quests. In this context, Jung claims, the developing discourse on Islam was reified into an essentialist image that

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[91] These were European intellectuals such as Ernest Renan, Emile Durkheim, Robertson Smith, Julius Wellhausen, and Max Weber (Jung, 2011, pp. 101–153).

[92] Significant figures in this group are Ignaz Goldziher, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (Dutch scholar of Indonesian Islam), Martin Hartmann, and Carl Becker (Jung, 2011, pp. 170–205).

[93] Goldziher, in his works, engaged with with al Afghani, Tahir al-Jazairi, Muhammad Abduh, and Muhammad Iqbal (Jung, 2011, p. 159). The latter two did not meet him personally but acknowledged that they travelled in the same circles.

lacked necessary complexity. This then became a default lens for popular views on Islam that have been difficult to overturn (Jung, 2011, p. 5). This essentialist image understood Islam as a fusion of religion and politics with limited flexibility to adapt or change.

Some more vocal proponents during this time shaped the modern Islamist movement, specifically Sayyid Qutb,[94] who 'constructs Islam as an ideal and all-encompassing socio-religious system. Qutb, who is often seen as the intellectual mastermind behind the ideologies of contemporary Islamist militancy, provides an image of Islam that reminds us closely of some of the Western constructions … in line with Ignaz Goldhizer' (Jung, 2011, p. 215). For many scholars without technical expertise in understanding the global discourse of Islam and framing political engagement, this essentialist image remains dominant. 'It is this essentialist image that to a large extent informs the global public discourse on Islam, and it is without any doubt the predominant idea voiced on both Western and Muslim sides in the contemporary debate about Islam and the West' (Jung, 2011, p. 5). Jung's bold claim does not apply to all the scholarly work completed in the last 10 years since his work was published, but this popular view still appears. For instance, this image surfaces in Taylor's work on the politics of recognition.[95]

Though the popular global discourse on Islam is reflected in this essentialist image, engaging other voices within the Islamic tradition leads to a richer exchange of ideas. An accurate critique of this essentialist image makes way for a 'change of perspective' where

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[94] Sayyid Qutb, a prominent Egyptian member of the Muslim Brotherhood, was considered a key thought leader in calling for Jihad. Qutb's thought and contributions have been analysed and shared in the popular book *The Islamist* (Husain, 2009). See also Hairgrove (2011).

[95] Taylor comments, 'For mainstream Islam, there is no question of separating politics and religion the way we have come to expect in Western liberal society' (1992, p. 62).

new narratives can come forward (Jung, 2011, p. 7). Deconstructing this essentialist image is vital for political discourse, especially given that those in power are often not motivated to look beyond Islamist representations.[96] Indonesia's separation from the Arab peninsula, both geographically and culturally, provides helpful distance and context for reflection.

The Minority Religious Self

Other Islamic authors have also discussed issues of identity and politics, bringing together previous ideas from multiculturalism and an Islamic self as an expression of dissatisfaction with an abstracted view of the liberal self.

Meer's (2010) work on identity amongst British Muslims engages with Charles Taylor, specifically around the issue of representation and recognition. Meer represents a minority perspective as a Muslim in the UK, but his argumentation follows the lines I have been developing in this chapter. Writing from within the Islamic tradition, he shows sophisticated engagement with identity theorists such as Du Bois, Parekh, Taylor, and others (Meer, 2010, p. 32).

Meer explores the politics of recognition in minority-majority processes, following the master/slave dialectic in Hegel. In situations where mutual recognition does not take place, recognition can be grasped through struggle. The slave, representing the minority, might struggle for recognition and acceptance from the master, or the majority. Although this struggle might appear to be resolved when one side achieves victory, the sense of identity won in the struggle—by the Muslim minority in this instance—actually depend upon the loser recognising the victor. In this way, both those in the majority and the

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[96] Significant discussion has both supported and challenged this view since Huntington's *Clash of Civilisations* (1996).

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minority depend upon each other's recognition for their identity. The master occupies the position of power, but only as long as the slave recognises this power. Similarly, the slave might fight to gain recognition, but the recognition comes from a master whose opinion might not be valued.

> Self-consciousness exists here 'only by being acknowledged or recognised'. Thus, like the master and the slave, each of us derives our sense of self through an interaction with others, through coming to view our individual selves as others see us, such that the refusal of others to acknowledge our humanity, our existence or our faculty to contribute something meaningful underscores a sense of alienation. (Meer, 2010, p. 41)

This master/slave dialectic can be seen in Jung's exploration of the development of the essential image of Islam. Islamic scholars reacted negatively to discourses from Western thinkers. Mutually strong reactions to the other trapped the two groups in a master slave dialectic where both sides were trapped and interdependent. The discourse is limited by the majority-minority dynamic, where the minority voice is stunted and religious selves struggle to contribute meaningfully.

In Meer's treatment of Taylor, he raises an important point about group identity and the group's own vision of the public good. Taylor, in a way similar to Du Bois, recognises the ways in which people form their identities through engagement with the other. This happens in dialogue where identity is 'always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us' (Taylor, 1992, p. 33). This dialogue is important and should be protected, especially to prevent the outcome characterized by 'an internalisation by a minority of the contempt a majority holds for them' (Meer, 2010, p. 52).

Public dialogue is not always possible within Western liberalism due to the historical development of this particular version of secularism: 'As many Muslims are

well aware, Western liberalism is not so much an expression of the secular post-religious outlook that happens to be popular amongst liberal intellectuals as a more organic outgrowth of Christianity' (Taylor, 1992, p. 62). Meer agrees with this critique, even if Taylor fails to move beyond an essentialist image of Islam. Muslim minorities in the West have their own vision for society and the public good and are upset when their religious aspects are marginalised. They activate the discourse around the politics of recognition as a means to critique liberalism's neutrality and seek to move beyond polemics to make their contribution.

In contrast, Madjid, with his focus on returning to Islamic sources and writing mainly within a Muslim-majority country, avoids the pitfalls surrounding the master/slave dialectic. Since he is part of a strong religious majority, he does not write defensively. Madjid supports the rights of Christian minorities in Indonesia to worship and be a part of the national community. His advocacy for other religious minorities in Indonesia around Pancasila was supported by his use of the Qur'anic term 'the people of the book'.[97] Madjid is critiqued by other Muslim scholars for his inclusive interpretation of who should be included as people of the book: 'Relying to some extent on 'Alī b. Abī Tālib's (the fourth caliph) view that Zoroastrians could also be considered People of the Book, Nurcholish is willing to include the Hindus, Buddhists, Confucians and Taoists, in fact any religion which has a Scripture' (Saeed, 1997, p. 291). Coming from this position

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[97] Madjid quotes from Surah 6.82, which praises all monotheists who do not associate God with another (Madjid, 2019, p. 666).

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of strength, Madjid's advocacy for pluralism within civil society that includes religious minorities could be seen as unexpected.[98]

Conclusion

This chapter explored diverse imaginations of the self and identity, particularly as they relate to reimagining a vision for society. The liberal political organisation of society in the context of the modern nation-state assumes an abstracted view of the individual. I presented this liberal view of the self through John Rawls. His application of the original position behind the veil of ignorance demonstrates tendencies which universalise specific goods and embed them within a particular view of society. The abstracted self assumes the possibility of a disconnected, abstracted viewpoint that supports justice as fairness.

I critiqued this perspective by using Taylor's historical investigation of the modern identity. Applying Taylor's four interconnected markers of modern identity, we find that the abstracted, liberal self is not as free or buffered as it believes itself to be. This more richly textured view of the individual necessarily includes religious commitments, which also have connections to these related aspects of selfhood and identity.

Rawls updated his theory in *Political Liberalism* to allow for comprehensive doctrines, provided that they remain in the private sphere. His abstracted, universalised commitment did not question the assumed neutrality of reason and privatisation of religious goods, much less the real possibility of destroying a shared sense of public reason by emphasising overlapping consensus. I presented a fusion of horizons where

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[98] For instance, the Muslim scholar Abdullah Saeed records his reaction to Madjid and others: 'For someone who is coming into contact with neo-Modernist Islam in Indonesia, it is amazing to hear the liberal views of these leading Indonesian scholars on the issue of religious pluralism' (Saeed, 1997, p. 291).

societal goods are negotiated over time, resulting in a similar outcome of Rawls' overlapping consensus, but with an emphasis on mutual engagement.

Madjid is presented as a Muslim writer who describes a religious self that cannot arbitrarily separate its religious commitments in public space. Madjid's religious self can strengthen the modern citizen and can provide its own moral resources to meaningfully contribute to the fusion of horizons needed in a pluralistic democracy.

Madjid is not alone in his articulation of the importance of religion for the public good. Like other Muslim reformers, he seeks to integrate Islam with modern democracy. Minority Muslim voices within Western democracies reflect similar concerns with how religion is often relegated to the private space. Instead of being privatised, religious selves expect to contribute equally to public discourse. The self constructed by religion has an implicit notion of the good that can critically influence the state's understanding of the public good. This religious self does not exist on its own but is part of a larger moral order. This moral order is investigated in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Moral Orders, Social Imaginaries, and Political Society

This chapter addresses the issue of moral orders and their relationship to the political arrangement of society. The transition from the religious medieval world, with its power structures, to the Enlightenment and its power structures introduced changes in society's moral order. Much of this change had the wars of religion as their backdrop and potential driving motivation, as discussed in chapter 2. Exciting developments in science and technology also accelerated changes in society and provided a liminal space for a shift in the moral order. The modern nation-state, given the time of its historical development, contains elements of Enlightenment thinking.[99] The state has its own understanding of justice, its own sense of right and wrong. This sense is connected to some notion of a moral order, but one that is often opaque.

I contend that new political arrangements of authority required different sources of order that did not assume the ends traditionally posted by religious communities. This shift in justification led to an articulation of political society as composed of individual selves who are connected in various ways for mutual benefit, including an implicit social contract. I discuss this understanding briefly in the next section, on the formation of political society from selves.

After that discussion, I pay particular attention to shifts in the moral order of modernity through Taylor's (2004) category of modern social imaginaries (see also Adams, 2012; Kelly, 2011; Miller & Ahluwalia, 2011). This emerging modernity was quite different from the medieval imagination and natural law. Taylor calls this 'the long

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[99] The Enlightenment's quest to discover universal laws in the world of physics and science led to assumptions regarding a universal rationality, or even a universal approach to modernity. These assumptions have long been problematised by philosophers and its universal rationality has been heavily critiqued (Bernsteain, 1983; Heidegger, 1972; MacIntyre, 1988).

march' that moved towards conceiving a society based on mutual benefit that transformed Western societies and became identified with democracy (Taylor, 2004, p. 30). The long march towards a liberal moral order led to the creation of three new social imaginaries: the economy, the public sphere, and individual sovereignty. These ideas and practices, combined with global trade and advancements in transportation, helped to spread the idea of the nation-state.

Given shared democratic structures and shared aspects of modernity, universalising tendencies of modernity can go unchecked. As various nations around the world defended their own geopolitical boundaries, they grappled with rapid changes. Many nations appreciated the advancements and progress of modernity but were suspicious of elements of Western democracy, often for good reasons.[100] As modernity spread to Islamic societies, many Muslim authors addressed these issues from within their religious traditions. Muslim thinkers' response to modernity was variegated. Some immediately rejected democracy and its assumptions about God in public life. Other Muslim thinkers struggled to incorporate democracy into public life, albeit without liberal assumptions. I question the assumption of a uniform modernity by drawing on the discourse on multiple modernities, and I include relevant thoughts by Muslim authors.

I then present Madjid's political context and how some secondary sources have interacted with his work as offering a religious moral order. This moral order articulates religious ends which inform political goods. After that, I present Madjid's foundational ideas for an Islamic moral order compatible with democracy.

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[100] Many of these suspicions came from intimate experience with their former colonial masters (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007; King, 1999; Schwarz & Ray, 2005).

Appreciating insights from the multiple modernities discourse should enable us to create space for multiple moral orders. As the goods of the religious self are expressed in multiple moral orders, a post-liberal society can facilitate a dialogue between moral orders where the goods of the religious imagination inform political society.

Formation of Political Society from Selves

Ever since Plato and Aristotle, it has long been observed that human individuals naturally form a society. For Plato, this was the *polis* which required order and structure to properly administer justice.[101] Aristotle famously observed that 'man is a political animal' in addition to being a creature of reason, and that living in the *polis* is a part of the good life.[102] Within the *polis*, individuals bring their own orientations to the good. Precisely how these goods are negotiated and how the city should be organised are deeply contested, even between these great thinkers, but both acknowledge the need for organisation, political authority, and the administration of justice. These ideas are couched in a certain view of the person and the ends of the *polis* as a whole.

As societies developed, religious communities in the West integrated Greek thought with their religious convictions. The increase of Christians in the Roman Empire took on new meaning with the public conversion of Constantine. At this time, the Christian religious tradition became wedded to power in a new way, though its expressions were quite varied over time. Many have analysed this development through the term 'Christendom', though it is incredibly variegated (Ferrarotti, 1990; McLeod & Ustorf, 2003; Tyerman, 2004). For an extended time period, Christianity's religious claims about

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[101] Discussion of these topics is features around Plato's Callipolis, the city of beauty (Plato, 2000).
[102] (Aristotle, 1950, p. 11)

the good and religious ends influenced political expression. Religious authority and political power were intertwined in multiple and diverse kingdoms, though there was still competition for power within the broader Christian tradition.[103]

For many in the Christian West, their religious tradition provided the moral background around which society was organised. Of course, this was not universal or without problems, but it was difficult to separate their main source of meaning-making from societal organisation. Religious authority asserted its political power with growing dissension. The Protestant movement's success in Germany and parts of Europe contributed to clashes with the Hapsburg Empire and rebellion against the political authority wielded by the Catholic Church. The Protestant Reformation led to the Catholic Counter-Reformation and an extended conflict between political powers that involved, among other things, religious disagreement.[104]

During this revolutionary period after the Protestant Reformation, this extended conflict continued across Europe in what has been labelled the wars of religion (Jeffery, 2006, p. 12). This historical context frames the problems Locke and other theorists were addressing, as was introduced in chapter 2. For this chapter, we must keep in mind that the moral order of the Christian religious tradition largely formed the background of society. However, the deep conflicts that arose within this moral order prompted so many Enlightenment thinkers to re-evaluate existing political structures and propose alternatives, including the social contract.

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[103] One example of competing claims is illustrated by the rival popes in the 14th century.

[104] This is an extremely complicated time in history, with its own broad collection of primary and secondary sources. I briefly mention it mainly to give a context for political developments surrounding Locke and the changing political structure of the West.

As political theorists sought alternatives to the divine right of kings granted by God, beginning with Hobbes (1588–1679), they began to imagine a different basis for authority and political structure. Hugo Grotius (1538–1645), followed by Locke (1632–1704), are frequently credited with inspiring a discourse on human rights and authority which was not directly based on God. Both Grotius and Locke were committed to religious toleration and looked for resources with which to prevent conflict stemming from many of the schisms and fractures of the Roman church (Jeffery, 2006, p. 8). Both men were Christians but articulated their theories in line with what they observed to be natural law[105] and human nature.

Natural law assumed God's intentional creation as a backdrop but focused on natural rights which persons possess by being human. These rights could not be surrendered to the state for the sake of security and peace because they are inherent to the individual. The state did not grant human rights to the people; rather, they 'come to the state from private individuals … the power of the state is the result of collective agreement' (Grotius, 2005, p. xxxi). Locke later argued that these inalienable rights continued with the people and remained apart from the state, even to the point of supporting citizens' rebellion against the government in order to re-establish a just state.[106] These developments reversed the presumed order of authority. Instead of the state possessing authority as granted by God, the state received authority as it was conferred by the people, who were created in God's image. Tuck summarises this radical new idea in his introduction to Grotius' three-volume work *The Rights of War and Peace*:

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[105] Thomas Aquinas, a seminal Christian thinker for natural law theory, demonstrated this approach in his *Summa Theologica* (Aquinas, 1952).

[106] This contribution to the idea of the state arising from the people is one reason why Locke is considered foundational for American democracy.

'Individuals agree to pool their rights of self-preservation, and in addition to help their fellow citizens in ways that they would not think of doing in the state of nature' (Grotius, 2005, p. xxxi).

For Locke and Grotius, human beings are rational agents who should collaborate for peace in order to mutually benefit from one another. Individuals consent to being governed and give limited authority to the state to guarantee safety and order. This focus on natural rights of individuals and society existing for the mutual benefit of its members still resonates in international law and, as I will develop in the next section, has become a part of the modern moral background (Taylor, 2004, p. 3).

This perception of the roots of society stands out when compared to imaginaries of a previous age. Compare the modern moral order, with its egalitarian tendencies, to medieval thinking based on hierarchies of kings, priests, labourers, and knights. This medieval imagination, rather than being rooted in the individual's ability to reason, was informed by an assumption of a great chain of being which reflects the natural hierarchy of the world. Everyone and everything had a unique position in the world, and the positions were connected like links in a chain, from God down through king and priest to the labourer, animals, and the like. The moral shift here moves from a hierarchical structure reflecting the order of the world to a much more egalitarian ideal with mutual respect and service grounded in reason and natural law.

The political rearrangement of society and this shifting of moral orders were remarkable, as they describe a move away from explicitly religious goods towards social goods with mutual benefit. This modern ordering for mutual benefit was held together by an implicit, and sometimes explicit, social contract. Some sort of moral order was

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necessary, as legislation has limited capacity to regulate society. Before this separation of religious ends from society's goods, moral order largely came from religious traditions. The move away from this tradition was understandable given the history of wars, violence, and corruption among Christians, but it is important to note its historical context.

The Birth of the Liberal Moral Order

The decided shift described in the previous section and the intentional move away from theocracy meant that the previous moral order expressed in the Christian religious tradition could no longer provide the political ends for society. As Taylor begins developing his picture of the liberal moral order, he looks at some of the ideas put forward by a few social elites. He also notes that initial openness to these new ideas was due to the wars of religion in Europe (Owen, 2015).[107] These ideas caught on over time and helped to create the context in which this new vision for moral order could develop. Taylor (2004, p. 9) acknowledges that the process began with Hugo Grotius and John Locke as early key theorists.

The birth of the liberal moral order happened slowly over time, but the space created by marginalising religion allowed for new imaginations of how society should be run. Taylor points out that this social evolution did not happen simply through theorists writing and convincing others of their ideas but, rather, was worked out through new practices and actions that supported and developed these ideas in social space. This intertwining of ideas and practices is described in Taylor's social imaginaries. As Taylor

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[107] The 1965 Indonesian military coup seems to present a parallel of sorts to the wars of religion in Europe. It might also have given Madjid an openness to new ideas.

introduces his notion of social imaginaries, he points out new ways of conceiving the foundation for a moral order of society:

> My basic hypothesis is that central to Western modernity is a new conception of the moral order of society. This was at first just an idea in the minds of some influential thinkers, but it later came to shape the social imaginary of large strata, and then eventually whole societies. It has now become so self-evident to us that we have trouble seeing it as one possible conception among others. The mutation of this view of moral order into our social imaginary is the coming to be of certain social forms, which are those essentially characterizing Western modernity: the market economy, the public sphere, and the self-governing people, among others. (Taylor, 2004, p. 2)

Taylor is interested in implications from social contract theory but rather than simply describing the theory, he looks at how it developed. Grotius' picture of political society assumes that human beings are rational agents who should work towards peace for mutual benefit (Taylor, 2004, p. 3). As individuals work together, they form a political entity which naturally has a collective interest. Individuals have a moral obligation to look to the benefit of themselves as well as others as part of a social contract. According to Taylor, John Locke used this view of a social contract to further argue for limited government and restriction of power. This was because the political authority was rooted in a view of individuals as creatures of reason and intertwined with their collective efforts. The notion of politics rooted in reason and individual consent also contributed to the assumption that individuals possess natural rights and the intrinsic ability for individuals to pursue their own happiness. For Locke, individuals need to give their consent, at least theoretically, to the overall governmental structures. Logically, the state also has a burden to protect these rights (Taylor, 2004, p. 4).

The liberal moral order has coalesced around several shifts concomitant with Western modernity. The moral order is grounded in individuals first, including their rights and consent to be ruled. Society and specifically politics function to help individuals work

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and serve each other. Life, production, and individual happiness are the goals. This creates an ethic of mutual benefit where individuals serve society and society in turn protects their rights equally (Taylor, 2004, pp. 21–22). The liberal focus on the individual as an abstracted self carries through the liberal moral order and can be seen in the social imaginaries that Taylor sketches: the market economy, the public sphere, and individual sovereignty.

As production increased and society developed greater functional differentiation, this reinforced the importance of mutual benefit. In this formulation, the ends of society have been reduced to security and prosperity. This is quite different from Plato's hierarchical organisation where each stratum of society functioned within its limits for the common good. It is also quite different from Aristotle's description of man as achieving his highest potential through the city, where each individual can do what they are best at and contribute to the well-being of the entire polity. Security and prosperity are important components for society, but they articulate their own form of the good life, which focuses on increased wealth and a stable environment for individuals to pursue their own happiness and ends.

The social imaginary of the economy took the metaphor of the market and spread it beyond the community's location of trade to multiple cities. Today our idea of the market has spread through the world, where we speak of a global economy and disruptions in one part of the world can impact production in another.[108] A belief in something unseen, such as the economy, presupposes some sort of order, like natural law,

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[108] The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly illustrated this interdependence as interrelated 'supply chain' issues have made many products disappear or cost more.

that is expressed in trade. Adam Smith's invisible hand in *The Wealth of Nations* describes abstract economic principles well and fits with the deistic Protestantism of his time. The focus on efficient production, so-called laws of supply and demand, and regulation all aim to regulate and describe the market. The economy as a social imaginary is interested in profit generation and exchanges of goods on micro and macro levels for mutual benefit.

There are significant limitations to an economic focus as an ultimate end of society. An economic imaginary is not intrinsically concerned with protecting the earth unless it may damage a long-term ability to produce. Yet the increase of wealth and higher standards of living is a benefit to society that many nations around the world have wanted to obtain.

The second of Taylor's social imaginaries, the public sphere, is 'a common space in which the members of society are deemed to meet through a variety of media: print, electronic, and also face to face encounters; to discuss matters of common interest; and thus to be able to form a common mind about these' (Taylor, 2004, p. 83). The expansion of public discussion on issues through social media landscape with examples such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram present modes of contemporary engagement so ubiquitous that it is hard to imagine the lack of something like the public sphere. The development of the public sphere created an abstract space separate from the geographical public square in the polity, in the same way discussions around the economy were an abstraction from the physical marketplace. In the liberal moral order of society, with legitimacy coming directly from the people in an implicit contract, the social space in which common opinions can be formed takes on increased significance. With the public

sphere, the expressions and will of the people were developed in a conceptual space outside the political structures.

The third social imaginary Taylor describes is that of individual sovereignty. Historically, states justified their existence and power through military might or by being around so long that it was hard to imagine anything different. The American Revolution produced one of the first modern democracies and established itself politically by justifying itself through an appeal to natural law and societal order. Certain truths were held to be self-evident, and a nation of people constituting a new democracy could legitimately call a new nation into being based on their own authority. Taylor describes this process as follows:

> The revolutionary forces were mobilized largely on the basis of the old, backward-looking legitimacy idea. This will later be seen as the exercise of a power inherent in a sovereign people. The proof of its existence and legitimacy lies in the new polity it has erected. But popular sovereignty would have been incapable of doing this job if it had entered the scene too soon. The predecessor idea, invoking the traditional rights of a people defined by their ancient constitution, had to do the original heavy lifting, mobilizing the colonists for the struggle, before being relegated to oblivion with the pitiless ingratitude toward the past that defines modern revolutions. (Taylor, 2004, p. 112)

These social imaginaries represent developments and background processes which became part of what I am calling the liberal moral order. These three examples became an intrinsic part of Western democracies and are part of modernity. Certainly, there are different political expressions of democracy, but an economy, the public sphere, and individual sovereignty are closely identified with and embedded within modern democracy as it has spread around the world. As some modern democracies advanced in technology, wealth, and standard of living, other nations borrowed elements of these imaginaries, yet their nation-states developed in quite different ways. This is why many authors outside the West have challenged the idea of a single modernity.

Taylor himself suggests that a singular way of looking at modernity has limits: 'Do we need to speak of "multiple modernities", the plural reflecting the fact that other non-Western cultures have modernized in their own way and cannot properly be understood if we try to grasp them in a general theory that was designed originally with the Western case in mind?' (2004, p. 13). Taylor is clearly limiting himself to Western modernity and has acknowledged the lens of multiple modernities (Taylor & Lee, n.d; Taylor, 2004, p. 1). He has not extended his work to other societies, but he expressed the hope that 'some closer definition of the Western specificity may help us see more clearly what is common among the different paths of contemporary modernization' (Taylor, 2004, p. 2). Having expressed the limitations of his own work, Taylor encouraged similar work to be done in alternate contexts.

In this section, we've briefly seen the birth of the liberal moral order through the lens of Taylor's social imaginary. This moral order can be contrasted with alternative developments of modernity and modern democracies. As democratic ideals and the imagined communities of the modern nation-state are implemented around the world, different expressions come to light.

A clear understanding of the shift described in the liberal moral order can shed light on the challenge of simply importing democratic systems and ideals into other countries. The rapid governmental takeover by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2021 illustrates the challenges of affixing political structures onto a different culture with a different moral order. Aspects of liberal democracy were welcomed by some, but many societies have significant religious elements that a liberal moral order is not well suited to address. Individual freedom of expression and economic advancement are not the highest goods

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in other countries, and becoming sensitised to how modernity has developed in other parts of the world is important for reimagining a discourse between multiple moral orders.

The importance of understanding multiple moral orders is developed in the next section as liberal political democracy, expressed through multiple modernities, interacts with non-liberal states rooted in an Islamic imagination.

The Challenge of the Liberal Moral Order in Non-Liberal States

Charles Taylor clearly sees himself as describing a set of modern social imaginaries in the West (2002, 2007), but this conceptual frame has space to recognise differences in the West and beyond. Although there are broad commonalities among Western countries, there are strong differences in political systems and societal organisations. As modern ideas and practices have spread to other parts of the world,[109] it can be easy to assume that shared political forms have resulted from parallel social developments. Taylor acknowledges this: 'Modern social imaginaries have been differently refracted in the divergent media of the respective national histories, even in the West. This warns us against expecting a simple repetition of Western forms when these imaginaries are imposed on or adopted in other civilizations' (2004, p. 154).

That ideas and practices around the economy, public sphere, and individual sovereignty have spread to many countries around the world is clear. Yet, the imaginaries at work behind them require investigation. Others have picked up on Taylor's notion of social imaginaries and used them in looking at the Muslim world. Sajoo, in the introduction to his edited volume *Muslim Modernities*, states that he sets out to explore

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[109] Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (2016) is highly descriptive of how broadly certain modern ideas have spread.

the Muslim civil imagination (2008, p. ix). After deconstructing an essentialist[110] understanding of a universal modernity, Sajoo cites observations from economics, philosophy, anthropology, and Islamic studies showing how diverse modernity can be. He claims, 'Only if we subscribe to a singular modernity are we trapped in a lifeworld that pivots exclusively on the hegemony of United States power, conspicuous as it may be' (2008, p. 5). He proposes that modernity be thought of as contextually situated, though consisting of main themes. These themes take on various vernaculars in different places, but there are commonalities which can be fruitfully explored. Marshall Hodgson offers similar insights in his multi-volume *The Venture of Islam*: 'Modernity has been not simply rational emancipation from custom, nor has it been simply the further unfolding of a bent for progress peculiar to the Western tradition; it has been a cultural transformation sui generis' (Hodgson, 1977, p. 375).

The notion of multiple modernities is an area of debate. Throughout the literature, a whole host of terms have been used to describe the phenomenon of modernity: modernisation, globalisation, modernity, and multiple modernities. The changing terms in academic discourse show how researchers in multiple fields are grasping with language to describe a very complicated but identifiable phenomenon. It is notable that there is an emerging discussion with a number of scholars proposing benefits from the diverse lens of multiple modernities (Bowman, 2015; Burchardt, 2015; Chung, 2017; Ichijo, 2013; Preyer & Sussman, 2016), especially in Muslim societies (Arjomand, 2011; Hefner, 1998; Jung, Petersen, & Sparre, 2014; Jung, 2017; Salvatore, 2009;).

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[110] See the discussion of essentialist frameworks (which have been critiqued by several Muslim authors) in chapter 3.

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Sajoo's articulation of multiple modernities[111] accepts distinct changes over the last several centuries alongside common themes while also allowing for diverse cultural expressions. This diversity is important for the investigation of modern social imaginaries outside the West. Although social imaginaries in Indonesia will be distinct from those in Germany, there is a comparable set of ideas and historical developments, that have impacted countries in different ways. To speak about multiple modernities and moral orders, it is important to first have some understanding of common themes of modernity.

Rationalism is the first of Sajoo's themes, following on Weber and Marx's work. The sociological compartmentalisation of economy, religion and society and Weber and Marx's observations on this cultural and social change, were highly formative for Western modernity. Sajoo points to Habermas as the chief proponent of rationalism. The second theme is secularism. Sajoo sees secularism arising from the creation of the public sphere, with its delineation of boundaries between church and state, and Durkheim as the 'chief chronicler of the new doctrine and its ramifications' (2008, p. 6). Anomie resulted from the rapid changes in production that came from the functional divisions of labour. The third theme concerns individualism and human rights. With increasing power, the state needed ethical legitimacy. The individual is vulnerable and in need of protection, and the state could offer this protection in the form of rights. Sajoo's fourth theme moves from the individual to the corporate level with democratic governance. The power imbalance of the modern nation-state can be a threat to the individual, but the theme of democratic governance highlights the ways in which sovereign states are held accountable to their

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[111] Sajoo is an example of a Muslim engaging with multiple modernities, though Eisenstadt began using this term in 2002, as discussed below.

citizens. This is a core component of legitimacy along with democratic components of constitutionalism and the rule of law. Sajoo's final theme is globalism. This began in the colonial era and has captured more of societies' imagination through advancements in technology and transportation. As communities imagine themselves as global, they become disembedded from the local, which has implications for how people understand themselves (Giddens, 1990, 1991).

Amidst the commonalities that have emerged through technological advancements and societal developments, important, fundamental differences can be overlooked. Exploration of differences through multiple modernities aims to address this risk (Taylor & Lee, n.d.). Taylor speaks of modernity in two ways. The first entails the progression of older traditional societies into newer ones. Specifically, 'We can look on the difference between present day society and, say, that of mediaeval Europe as analogous to the difference between mediaeval Europe and China or India' (Taylor & Lee, n.d.). The first way looks at the relative development within each civilisation. Taylor's second sense of modernity is less rooted in local culture, but 'conceives of modernity as the growth of reason defined in various ways: e.g. as the growth of scientific consciousness or the development of a secular outlook, or the rise of instrumental rationality' (Taylor & Lee, n.d.). The second sense of modernity is challenged by multiple modernities. The first lens on modernity is considered 'cultural' whereas the second is considered 'acultural'. These distinctions are helpful when we talk about various aspects of modernity (Wittrock, 2000).

Although many argue for multiple forms of modernity, we should not assume that cross-cultural influence is a one-way street from the West to the rest. Western modernity includes influences from countries from the East,

> most particularly from China, India and the Muslim world. … From the physical and natural sciences to architecture, art, commerce and social thought, Western accomplishment is inextricably linked to those Others, unpalatable though this may be to the "clash of civilisations" warriors. Still, the [scientific, industrial and political] revolutions were impelled (and were set off) by economic, techno-scientific and civic modernity occurred in the West. (Sajoo, 2008, pp. 8–9)

This global inter-reliance and co-construction make modernity so difficult to conceptualise. That is why it is such a contested term. Given the amount of discussion it has generated and the significance of the term, the fact that we still have not seen the literature settle on accepted terminology points to the need for continued exploration.

Much of the discussion concerning modernity, as it relates to moral order, relates to Taylor's acultural form of modernity, mentioned earlier, which includes aspects such as industrialisation, globalisation, transnational social movements, and diaspora peoples. Increased discussion around these terms in the context of modernity was part of the development of multiple modernities over against theories dominated by terms such as modernisation and civilisation (Arnason, 2003; Eisenstadt, 2000; Eisenstadt, 2003, p. 1). In discussing aspects of modernity, scholars sought to describe the differences between locations and cultures: 'The idea of multiple modernities presumes that the best way to understand the contemporary world—indeed to explain the history of modernity—is to see it as a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of cultural programs' (Eisenstadt, 2000, p. 2). Multiple modernities makes a distinction between Westernisation and modernity and arose out of theories of civilisation (Salvatore, 2009). This is significant, particularly for this thesis, as it gave space to talk about modernity without

the spectre of secularism (Eickelman, 2000; Wittrock, 2000, p. 57). It also avoids an implicit assumption that the more various societies become 'modern', the more they will look alike, until they all become the same (Taylor & Lee, n.d.). The language of multiple modernities better captures and describes differences and similarities between democracies around the world.

Jose Casanova was another scholar who challenged the secularization thesis and its necessary alignment with modernity. His work *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994) not only countered many of the assumptions of the secularization theorists but also talked about public contributions from religion by looking at case studies where the Catholic or Protestant traditions made important contributions in political space. This important work also challenged the assumptions of a universal modernity.

Muslims Clash with the Liberal Moral Order

Adding to the dilemma of a single modernity is the confluence of modernity and Islam. A deep history of Oriental scholarship exists which has not dealt well with the complexities of Muslims in a modern framework. It is part of the legacy of how Islamic studies has been approached from the West (Hughes, 2007; Said, 1978; Smith, 1977). Yet, one must be careful not to overly distance the Islamic other:

> Moreover, in its search for differences rather than similarities between Western and Muslim social experiences, recent scholarship on Islamic modernities still builds often on the assumption of a fundamental dichotomy between Western and Islamic societies, representing Muslims as being engaged with modernity as an external and colonising force. Consequently, both social theory and Islamic studies tend to reinforce the idea of an, in principle, mutual exclusiveness between Western and Islamic ways of life. (Jung, Petersen, & Sparre, 2014, p. 2)

This quote suggests that using conceptual tools from the West to analyse modern Islamic writings shows some promise. Jung and others notice that many social theorists

in the West assume that their social tools are not as significant outside the West. Jung

disputes this assumption and argues for their relevance:

> Social theorists such as Michel Foucault, Anthony Giddens, or Charles Taylor
> often assume that their respective concepts only have analytical relevance with
> regard to 'Western' or 'developed' societies. In applying a novel analytical
> framework based on selective choice from contemporary social theory, our
> analysis of the politics of modern Muslim subjectivities aims at showing the
> flaws in these assumptions that are grounded in the idea of the specificity and
> exclusiveness of Western modernity. Contrary to the aforementioned theorists,
> we contend that a critical application of their concepts can tell us something
> about ongoing social transformations in Muslim societies. (Jung, Petersen, &
> Sparre, 2014, p. 1)

Viewed with this lens, it is clear that the conceptual frameworks in the West do

have something to offer when it comes to looking into Muslim societies and Muslim

writers, through the lens of modernity. The rise of modernity, including the expansion of

democracy and new political structures, creates enough commonality for comparison and

analysis. Of course, the usefulness of these tools for looking at Muslim societies means

that Muslim writers, in their context, can also contribute to social theorists in the West

(Arkoun, 1994, p. 6).

Issues of modernity have been explored with relation to Muslim societies in a

number of disciplines (Berry, 1990; Eickelman, 2000, 2002; Zaidi, 2007). One of the

sticking points in negotiating modernity among Muslims has been the characteristic

attribute of secularism. In many ways, specific forms of the secularisation thesis as an

essential component of modernism have been strongly challenged (Berger, 1999; Taylor,

2007; Thuswaldner, 2014). This broader discussion has been influenced by seeing some

aspects of so-called modernity at work in Islamic societies without the commensurate

trend toward secularisation.[112] This dynamic in the Muslim world makes it an exception, if there is indeed a deep linkage between modernity and secularisation (Gellner, 1982, p. 4). Hefner (1998, p. 152) also points to Indonesia as a clear example of this 'great exception'.[113]

Muslim modernities also struggle to work out the role of religion in society. Secularism, with its positive emphases on democracy, human rights, and civil society, is appealing. Yet secularism as an orienting framework is suspect due to its non-religious pedigree. Lawrence states this point clearly:

> There are actually two troublesome words that confront those who want to make sense of Muslim modernities. One is shari'a, the other is secularism. Each is used to complicate and also regulate the other. To paraphrase from Wittgenstein's exemplar, Leo Tolstoy, shari'a without secularism is a religious tyranny, or theocracy, while secularism without shari'a is social anomie, or moral anarchy. Both shari'a and secularism are needed for collective well being or public good (maslaha) in the contemporary Muslims world, yet neither is the natural, or easeful, companion of the other. (Lawrence, 2008, p. 25)[114]

Secularism wants to include everyone in society, which is a strength. Yet 'its shallowness resides in the hubris of its distinction between private faith and public reason' (Connolly, 2005, p. 50). This debate is happening in the Muslim world to the degree that Eickelman (2002, pp. 101–103) can write about an emerging public sphere in those societies.

As modernity has developed in different historical ways, multiple modernities leaves space for religion.

> In all these modernity does have an impact on religion and traditional patterns by imposing new forms and languages. Yet by no means does it presume the end

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[112] David Martin was an early challenger to the secularisation thesis in his book *A General Theory of Secularization* (1978).

[113] Following this line of thinking, Grace Davie (2010) argues that the European trend of secularism is the exceptional one.

[114] Sharia does not always mean codified Islamic law; it can also refer to moral principles rooted in God.

of religiosity, or replacing religious beliefs and experience. Modernity as civilization asks for new attitudes that can be equally derived from different if not divergent, worldviews. … This means that modernity may penetrate societies and transform them without detaching them abruptly from their traditional cultures. This also means that modernity itself assumes different forms in different contexts. (Eickelman, 2002, p. 6)

Given the openness to religion in the multiple modernities camp, it is unsurprising that the concept of multiple modernities is picked up by many writing on the Muslim world. Salvatore (2009, p. 23) argues that multiple modernities provide a better framework to account for the transnational Islamic public sphere.[115] Robinson (2008, p. 281) argues for multiple modernities as he looks at the efforts of Islamic reform in South Asia. A single modernity is in danger of running roughshod over the other: 'A single hegemonic modernity subjugates (to recall Foucault) the social imaginaries of those outside its privileged narratives and many within them. In effect, this amounts to colonialism by other means' (Sajoo, 2008, pp. 12–13). Accepting multiple modernities offers analytic flexibility for looking at issues of modernity as it is expressed in various forms of political organisation. A commitment to a singular modernity may unintentionally advocate for a single, liberal moral order. Many beneficial aspects of this moral order have been adopted and implemented in heterogeneous democracies. At first glance, a single, liberal moral order appears to be the only option to avoid the dangers of theocracy. Yet certain religious communities, including religious citizens in the liberal West, resist relegating their moral order to private space.

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[115] He bases this claim on the work of Habermas and the Islamic notion of *Maslaha*, meaning the common good or public interest.

Reforming Islamic Political Society in the Modern Era

As modernity continued to progress and spread, Muslim thinkers sought to apply their tradition to modern times, seeking to integrate Islam with modern advances. Mohammad Abduh (1849–1905), an Egyptian scholar, is one modern figure within Islam who struggled with modernism (Adams, 1968). He was followed by his student Rashid Rida (1865–1935) as they engaged with the role of religion in politics. Abduh was looking for a doctrine of Islamic society outside tradition. He recognised dual contributions of religion and reason within the same public sphere, with no conflict between them (Kerr, 1966, p. 107).

Mohammad Iqbal (1877–1938) also wrote about religion in the modern age. Called the father of modern Pakistan, he wanted to protect religion's place in society but feared the foundations of secularism within modernity (Noorani, 2014). More recent Islamic thinkers from Iran and Pakistan, Abdolkarim Soroush (1945-) and Fazlur Rahman (1919–1988), explored ways in which Islam could be reinterpreted in the modern frame (Abbas, 2017; Aliabadi, 2006; Rahman, 1980, 1981).

Fazlur Rahman has been influential in Indonesia as well. He supervised Nurcholish Madjid's PhD work at the University of Chicago (Barton, 1995; Bektovic, 2016, p. 172; Kersten, C., 2009). Rahman saw a progression of reformist movements happening within Islam and divided them into stages, starting with Islamic revivalism, which can be seen in Wahhabis and Sanusis (Bektovic, 2016, p. 169). This is followed by classical modernism (Rahman, 1980, p. 243; Rahman, 1982, pp. 50–51) and then by neo-revivalism or neo-fundamentalism (Rahman, 1980, p. 244), the latter being a reaction to the former. The fourth and final movement, according to Rahman, is neo-modernism

(Garton, 1995, p. 6; Rahman, 1980, p. 246; Saleh, 2001, p. 243). It is defined by a return to early modernism but combined with classical Islamic scholarship. Rahman's final stage is consistently applied to Nurcholish Madjid.[116] It is interesting to note the parallels between Fazlur Rahman and Nurcholish Madjid, as both were trained as classical Islamic scholars but also had broad exposure to different educational systems. Rahman had a difficult tenure at a research centre in Pakistan because of his close connection to Western education (Abbas, 2017, p. 23).

Muslim reform efforts have not developed in a vacuum. Much of the Muslim world was facing rapid changes in the last 200 years. With Muslims' long reputation for trade, Hodgson notes implications of the 'large scale technical specialization and of a consequent world interdependence on a mass level' (1974, p. 417). Technological advances and global commerce led to the disruption of traditions and radical change in social structures. This change was often coupled with colonialism, which brought its own version of modernity cloaked in power differences (Cooper, 2005, pp. 142–148). As these Islamic societies engaged with these changes, various methods of reform and engagement were employed (Ali, 2016; Bektovic, 2016; Cooper, Nettler, & Mahmoud, 1998; Lepori, 2012; Eickelman, 2000; Eickelman, 2002;).

Indonesia is one such Muslim-majority nation with its own historical understanding of Islam. The country's moral order as expressed in Pancasila included a notion of the divine in its political organisation but did not make explicit Islamic claims. This created

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[116] Neo-modernism is also recognized by Kersten (2013, p. 137), who sees this as a distinct movement, yet also sees a successive movement of post-traditionalism.

space for to a robust and religiously informed civil society and political discourse that acknowledged contributions from Islam.

In looking at the Islamic roots of civil society in the Indonesian context, Feener (1999, p. xiv) observes that much of the reform influence in Indonesia can rightly be traced back to Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida, but has seen further development since then. Noting that many have written about at so-called 'new intellectuals',[117] Feener says that observers of Indonesian Islam need to remember the political context of Indonesia: 'There, a heavy-handed government attempt at the de-politicization of organized Islam has led Muslim thinkers to channel their energies into areas other than that of party politics' (Feener, 1999, p. xvi). Feener notes that reformist thinking in Indonesia and the integration of these ideas have moved beyond the legal discourse, combining law, traditional Muslim learning, and modern social science. Indeed, the conversation in Indonesia is quite broad, and Feener conceptually lumps the reformist thinking beyond legal discourse under the category of contextualisation (Feener, 1999, p. xvi). The French-Algerian scholar Mohammed Arkoun (2008) also advocates for a civil society while emphasising the need to locate its arrangement in the specific Islamic context. He specifically calls out the weakness of how Islam is often approached: 'The social and political imaginary as well as the collective memory of society's constituent groups are ignored by those who address what is sweepingly and generically called "Islam"' (Arkoun, 2002, p. 37).

Commentators on Madjid have rightly pointed out the historical precedents in Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida (Barton, 1997b, p. 345). These scholars,

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[117] This is a reference to Roy's book on Political Islam (Roy & Volk, 1994).

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perhaps fitting well with Rahman's modernist scheme mentioned above, proposed a different negotiation of religion with society where classical viewpoints can be reevaluated in light of the modern world (Kerr, 1966). These reformers were working with the resources of their own religious traditions to articulate alternatives between theocracy and the liberal moral order.

In the next section, I locate Madjid in his immediate political context and then work through elements of his moral order.

Religious Moral Orders in the Democratic State

Nurcholish Madjid is one of four Indonesians with their own entry in the *Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*, where he is named one of 'Indonesia's most daring theologians' (Woodward, 2018, p. 1). Madjid's works influenced the country over an extended, politically sensitive period of time (Hooker & Hooker, 2009). Madjid was a part of Islamic contributions to Indonesian democracy and towards a civil society during critical periods (Barton, 2010).

The early years of the Indonesian state and its authoritarian leaders significantly shaped Madjid's context. The modern Indonesian state was founded after the Second World War with Sukarno as its first president (Hannigan, 2015, p. 195). It was initially established along the lines of a Western democracy, but Sukarno later moved to what he called a guided democracy in which he held considerable authority (Vickers, 2013, p. 144). In 1965, a failed coup and the killing of several army generals brought significant upheaval to society and violence against the PKI (communist) political party. There was strong backlash throughout the country as PKI party members and supporters were slaughtered.

In the midst of this unrest, General Suharto came to power, beginning the era of the New Order (Hannigan, 2015, p. 233). The New Order used differences within Indonesian Islam for its own political ends. The Iranian revolution and the Muslim Brotherhood offered strong pan-Islam calls and decried nations and nationalism. A large-scale riot in Indonesia in 1984 was used to justify a long crackdown on radical Islam. The government was concerned with elements of Islam on the extreme right and communism on the extreme left (Vickers, 2013, p. 184). Some Islamic groups chose to resist while others, including Nahdlatul Ulama, chose to pull out of political parties and focus on social efforts in civil society.

The tenuous relationship between Islam and Indonesia in the New Order Era[118] has been well documented (Hefner, 1997, 2000; Hooker, 1996; Ricklefs, 2008). Madjid is mentioned with others as a group of young intellectuals who chose to cooperate with the New Order and try to bring change from within (Hefner, 1997, p. 80). Some see Madjid engaging in a specific strategy to bring revitalisation, though without the use of the military (Hefner, 1997, p. 82). This emphasis on cultural Islam also eschewed the integration of Islamic political parties. In trying to separate Islam from an entrenched political process, Madjid coined the slogan for which he became famous: 'Islam Yes, Islamic Parties No' (Riddell, 2010).[119]

Suharto's authoritarian leadership brought economic development, but there was strong social unrest with Aceh and Papua demonstrating and calling for their own

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[118] This is the common name given to the period of President Suharto's long presidency from 1966-1998 (Karsono, 2013; Sukardi, 2010).

[119] In the New Order era of Indonesian politics, Suharto had clamped down on political Islam even as it was flourishing in the cultural and social sphere. Madjid can be seen as creating space for the Islamic voice outside of politics.

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independence. Madjid was a student during the 1960s and active in leadership roles through this tumultuous period of Indonesia's history. He established a non-profit foundation, Paramadina, in 1986 and served as the founder and rector of Paramadina University in 1998 (Wisdom, 2021, p. 93). Madjid developed a national reputation for his work and was mentioned as highly influential in the transition from Suharto's long stay in power (Barton, 2001; Barton, 2010, pp. 473, 486; Kersten, 2009). Madjid passed away in 2005, well into the era of reform after Suharto. He contributed to the national discussion during very formative times in the establishment of the young nation-state and through multiple, sensitive transitions of power.

Some scholars have observed a trend of new intellectuals with Islam's response to modernity, with Madjid as a frequent example in Indonesia. Kersten (2006, p. 1) compares Mohammed Arkoun, Hasan Ḥanafi, and Nurcholish Madjid and their contributions to the discourse on civil society. Kersten sees these developments coming from significant events in the 1960s where Islam was facing some social pressure or crisis and these modern intellectuals turned toward resources from their Western academic training to promote new ways of conceiving society. Hefner and Kersten suggested new terms dealing with this issue in Indonesia: 'new Muslim intellectuals' (Hefner, 1998; Kersten, 2009) and 'cosmopolitan Muslims' (Kersten, 2011).

Madjid sought to shape and define Indonesia's own appropriation of modernity. Hefner argues that Madjid is the prime example of this undertaking in Indonesia as he argued for a version of secularisation which did not deny Islam. Rather than denying Islam, Madjid interpreted Islam as being consistent with a non-religious state (Hefner, 1998, p. 159).

Madjid's location within the wider Islamic world is important for understanding his moral order. Whereas much of the secondary literature on Madjid analyses his contributions to Islam and theology, I believe his significance to Indonesian political theory is also substantial.

As mentioned earlier with respect to Fazlur Rahman, many secondary sources have focused on Madjid's ideas within the context of neo-modern Islam (Bakti, 2005; Barton, 1997b; Howell, 2012, p. 5; Kull, 2005; Saeed, 1997; Steenbrink, 1993). Barton, an Australian scholar of Indonesia, chose Madjid and one of his contemporaries as the leading examples of neo-modern scholars. He places Madjid at the centre of neo-modern development in the Indonesian context (Barton, 1994, 1997b). Barton (1997a) describes neo-modernism as ultimately progressive in its approach to modernity and growth. Neo-modernism is interested in engagement with the West, though not uncritically. Neo-modern thinkers also wish to preserve a separation between the state and sectarian religious interests, as outlined in Indonesia's constitution. Their perspective is more open and accepting of other ideas, stressing the ideas of tolerance and harmony: 'Moreover this new movement of thought represents a genuine attempt to combine progressive liberal ideals with deep religious faith' (Barton, 1995, p. 5).

This neo-modern framework within Islam has implications beyond Indonesia. Barton writes, 'If it passes the test then Indonesian neo-Modernism may indeed point the way to Islamic renaissance in the new century' (Barton, 1997b, p. 345). Neo-modernism is one significant lens through which to interpret Madjid's work, and yet it does not bring in other aspects of his writing beyond Islam. His pursuit of renewal within Islam is

significant, but it minimises his contributions to democracy. Madjid did not eschew his religious moral order but sought to integrate it with modern democratic forms.

Focusing on Madjid only within the context of Islam helps to explain how he was, in scholarship at the end of the 20th century, constantly referred to as a neo-modernist (Barton, 1995; Saeed, 1997). The lens of neo-modernism emphasises Madjid's engagement with the modern age, yet reflecting on Madjid's writings through multiple modernities provides a better framework for making comparisons outside of religious categories. Accepting an alternative modernity, that emphasizes the religious in public life, can be difficult for a liberal moral order. Especially given its focus on the immanent frame (Taylor, 2007, p. 540). As will be shown in the section of Madjid's moral order, his social imaginary does not exclude the transcendent from the mundane.

Working to integrate Islam with the modern nation-state required Madjid to rely on religious tools for innovation. One important tool was the methodology of *ijtihad* (an Islamic term referring to the use of individual reasoning in reading sacred texts). This hermeneutic for interpreting classical Islamic texts opened a new way for modern thinking in the Islamic tradition. Within Islam, this process is contested. Fauzan Saleh deals with extensively with Madjid's thought and influence in his book on modern Islamic discourse in Indonesia (Saleh, 2001). Saleh discusses Madjid's place as a neo-modernist but also thoroughly examines the neo-modernists' hermeneutical approach to classic texts: 'Though they use a new approach, their *ijtihad*, or hermeneutics, is indeed an extension of the one exercised by earlier modernists. In their new and unfettered approach to *ijtihad*, they combine both classical Islamic scholarship with modern or Western analytical methods' (Saleh, 2001, p. 244). This use of *ijtihad* provided the context for new

conceptions of plurality, tolerance, and civil society (Barton, 1995, p. 7; Saleh, 2001, p. 244).

Not surprisingly, this approach was sternly critiqued. Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and others were accused of stretching *ijtihad* further than it was meant to go (Saeed, 1997). Originally developed to guide the Islamic community in matters not addressed by the Qur'an and Sunna, their *ijtihad* was close to an innovation (*bid'a*) and provoked a negative reaction (Saeed, 1997, p. 294). This new form of *ijtihad* put forward by Madjid and others calls for taking into consideration both the environment of the original text, whether it is from the Qur'an, Sunna, or Hadith, and the current time in which the foundational texts are interpreted (Barton, 1995, p. 7; Barton, 1997b; Saeed, 1997). Saeed writes, 'Nurcholish does not believe that one can interpret the Qur'an simply by looking at its texts. He feels that such an approach would be very dangerous and that it would be "interpretation according to one's wishes". In any interpretative effort, the whole cultural context of the Qur'an should be considered and kept in mind' (1997, p. 286).[120]

Hooker and Hooker (2009, pp. 5–6) see Madjid as making a significant contribution to Islamic philosophy with his distinction between the eternal truth in the Qur'an and the later sayings and traditions. Madjid based this distinction on the Islamic doctrine of *tawhid*, God's absolute oneness whereby he is distinct from everything. This example of creative argumentation prompted one commentator to note, 'Madjid's style of argument

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[120] Perhaps aware of the radical nature of these changes, Madjid and others strongly emphasised the importance of a thorough and close reading of classical Islamic texts (Saeed, 1997, p. 292) and emphasised that the fundamentals of Islam should not be touched (Saeed, 1997, p. 289).

in these presentations was a complex mix of theology, political analysis, and academically informed historical sociology' (Hefner, 1997, p. 82).

Ann Kull (2005), in her anthropological thesis looking at Madjid's life, highlights his integrity and consistent faith and his vision for Indonesia. She places Madjid's thought in the category of civil society. Kull deals with much of Madjid's writings extensively, including conducting interviews with him, but does not thoroughly locate those ideas within the Islamic context. The basis for Madjid's civil society, according to Kull, goes back to the early Arab community and its openness to new ideas (Kull, 2005, p. 120). This meant that all legal structures and ideologies for society needed to be held loosely. Some felt that this flexibility was in line with the Islamic tradition (Hefner, 1997, p. 83), while others criticised it (Bakti, 2005).

Bakti (2005, p. 499) sees Madjid's civil society as problematic, stating that these ideas go beyond simple tolerance in society. He argues that Madjid held to tolerant ideas about how other non-Muslim members of society would be viewed by God.[121] This, for Bakti, means that Madjid's ideal of tolerance is another step towards 'liberal Islam' and should be handled carefully. The danger is that 'if pluralism and tolerance are meant to place all religions on par with Islam, however, then it is offensive for many, in particular for "fundamentalists," who believe Islam to be the best, the highest belief and the only religion acceptable to God in the hereafter' (Bakti, 2005, p. 493). Suspicion of Madjid's views on tolerance and his emphasis on culture leads Bakti to conclude that Madjid's approach will lead to a 'new crystallization of Islamic ideas, bringing Islam to a standstill'

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[121] 'He also quotes the Mithaq al-Madina (the Constitution of Madina) and Qur'anic verses (2:62; 5:69) according to which believers, including Jews, Christians, and Sabians, will be rewarded equally in the hereafter' (Bakti, 2005, p. 493).

(2005, p. 495). This is because Madjid's ideas are more in line with Indonesian nationalism and '*masyarakat madani*' (civil society) is basically an islamic (lower case "i", which means submission to God) community rather than one subject to natural laws' (Bakti, 2005, p. 495). Representing this society as Muslim, at least for Bakti, makes Islam into the shape of a local culture, eventually resulting in Islam being crystallised in Indonesian form (Bakti, 2005, p. 497). This argument for Islam becoming crystallised seems unfair, as Madjid's understanding of *ijtihad* is intended to be contextualized in an ongoing way.[122]

Madjid was using the tools and texts of his Islamic tradition to support the Indonesian state. As we can see from this brief look at one of his critics within the Islamic tradition, some of his ideas are contested as Muslims continue to respond to modernity and new political structures in a heterogeneous way. No Muslim-majority countries have developed as open a democracy as Indonesia. Madjid is best viewed as engaging with modernity and politics from within his moral order. Key components of his ideas have been discussed in the secondary literature: civil society, neo-modernism, political ideology, and reformation within Islam. Arguably, none of these pieces of research have tried to integrate political themes from across Madjid's writings. His efforts to retain his religious moral order while appropriating aspects of the liberal moral order with its unique social imaginaries support an investigation of his writings for insights as to how a liberal order might be diversified to better include multiple moral orders and proactively engage the political religious ends.

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[122] This will be demonstrated further in the next section.

Madjid's Religious Moral Order Also Informs Political Goods

In this section I will review some of Madjid's foundational ideas that underlie his moral order and inform his conception of political goods. Madjid's writings begin with religious premises and texts while also firmly addressing issues of his time. In this way, much of his writing reads like the classical theorists introduced in chapter 2, where we saw that Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, and Rousseau all quoted from the Christian Bible as they developed their political theories.

Madjid was interested in the contextualisation of Islam in Indonesia.[123] He saw this as important for Indonesia to advance as a nation while also remaining true to Pancasila's commitment to divinity. Madjid attempted to integrate his ideas in three ways: first by re-examining Islam in the context of Indonesia; secondly by promoting *ijtihad* (individual reasoning) as a critical tool for re-reading sacred texts; and thirdly by exploring the doctrine of *tawhid* (the absolute oneness of God) as the clearest religious end within Islam. *Tawhid* is an inviolable part of the Muslim moral order, and Madjid's articulates its political goods by clearly delineating the transcendent as separate from this world. I aim to present Madjid's religious moral order first by looking at these three foundational aspects of Madjid's writing. This moral order, as rooted in the Islamic imagination, remains hospitable to democracy without advocating for theocracy and rejects liberalism's marginalisation of religion from political society.

A direct mapping of Madjid's ideas onto Taylor's imaginaries in the West is not envisaged here, though a close reading of Madjid will illustrate how an alternate form of

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[123] Of course, Muslims in many other contexts have also adapted to the local culture. For examples of Muslim contextualisation in China, see Lee (2014).

democracy pursues national development and advancement without letting go of their religious framework. Madjid is not so much trying to articulate a historical trajectory of shifting imaginaries as articulating his vision for reform of society as a whole, including Islam in the Indonesian context.[124] Madjid saw himself as working within the Islamic tradition (as I will further demonstrate below in the section on *ijtihad*), and he was interested in bringing real reform to Islam in Indonesia in a way similar to Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), a respected Sunni reformer, (Madjid, 1984a, p. 234) that necessarily involved the common good.[125] Being able to imagine a different path is critical for reformers.

Contextualised Islam

Madjid discusses the need to understand historical and cultural expressions of Islam with appropriate application for today. Commenting on the need to update classical modernism inherited from Muhammad Abduh, Madjid writes about the need to rightly engage the Islamic tradition while facing the West:

> This does not end the possibility that new sources of elan vital will emerge, possibly this time to learn much from the mistakes of 'modernists' in their attitude toward the traditional intellectual wealth. This would make possible the revival of a proper appreciation of the wealth of intellectual tradition, which could then be utilized to enrich the new Islamic intellectual outlook. If this proposition proves correct, this new generation, both in the Islamic world in general and possibly in Indonesia as well, must truly prepare itself to greet the challenges to come to the fore once more to 'write a brilliant chapter in the history of Islamic thought' in the not too distant future. (Madjid, 2003b, p. 214)

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[124] This can be seen in the titles of some of his books: *Tradisi Islam: Peran dan Fungsinya dalam Pembangunan di Indonesia* (Tradition of Islam: Role and Function in Indonesia; 1997); *Indonesia Kita* (Our Indonesia; 2004); *Islam dan Toleransi di Indonesia* (2008) (Islam and Tolerance in Indonesia); or *Islam, Kemodernan, dan Keindonesiaan* (Islam, Modernity, and Indonesianness; 2008).

[125] Madjid studied Ibn Taymiyya in his PhD work at the University of Chicago under Fazlur Rahman. He quotes Taymiyya extensively in his writings concerning renewal within Islam.

The popular, essentialist image of Islam imagined a monolithic view of the religious tradition, with little sensitivity to differences in local expressions. Indonesia, being far from the so-called centres of Islam, often gets lumped in with dominant narratives of Islam in the Middle East. This essentialist image of Islam began to be critiqued in post-colonial studies and particularly in the writings of Edward Said (1978). Interestingly, the role of the imagination and the non-reflexive way these Orientalists conceived of the other was problematic for Muslims reading Orientalist accounts (Said, 1978, pp. 49, 55).

Madjid stressed that Islam in Indonesia should be viewed on its own terms, apart from the prejudice of the West which was aligned with colonial interests and sought to use Islam for its own ends. In his paper titled '*Akar Prasangka Barat Kepada Islam dan Orientalisme*' (Islam in the Eyes of the Orientalists), he stated, 'The aim of colonial Orientalists was to devalue the significance of the presence of Islam, spread misinformation, and develop different theories that were in contradiction of reality' (Madjid, 1993). In Madjid's analysis, this lack of respect for Islam arose from confrontations between Christianity and Islam in medieval times which brought antipathy into Orientalist scholarship: 'Furthermore, as the West has had a long history of confrontation and animosity with Muslim societies, these feelings of hatred frequently cannot be concealed' (Madjid, 1993). Moving beyond these monolithic expressions of Islam is important to better appreciate the Indonesian context. A contextualised, Indonesian form of Islam was an important aspect of his moral order.

Indonesian Islam, for Madjid, is frequently overlooked. The facts that Arabic is not frequently used, that the local Islamic discourse is in the Indonesian or Malay language, and the distance from Mecca have all contributed to this problem. Madjid writes, 'Many

scholars, notable anthropologists and sociologists, tend to overlook the importance of Islam in Indonesia, and stress the prominence of local cultures' (2003b, p. 4). This distinction between Islam and local cultures led to minimising Islam's true influence in Indonesia. This tendency is reflected in the writings of Geertz (1960), a notable anthropologist, who has been critiqued by more recent scholars (Ricklefs, 2006; Throop, 2009; Woodward, 1996). Those critiquing Geertz asserted that Islam was not a largely Arabian articulation of theology and practices that was separate from Indonesian culture. Local practices and Indonesian religious cultural expressions are not un-Islamic simply because they are Indonesian.

Madjid, as is his habit, grounds his argument in classical sources. He claims that according to the Qur'an, Muhammad's teaching is in line with the rest of the prophets who came before him[126] and that these prophets were sent throughout the world.[127] They had one message, that there is but one God to be worshiped. Madjid writes, 'It is therefore theologically correct to argue that all nations have the same potential for being rightly guided indigenously, a reality that prepares a nation for the acceptance, and at the same time adaptation, of the more solid and more universally commended symbolism and belief systems' (Madjid, 1993, p. 4).

Madjid also supports contextualisation by distinguishing what he calls universal Islam and specific Islam:

> Universal Islam is the religion of the prophets and apostles who were sent to all peoples in every place and every time … specific Islam was brought by the prophet Mohammad, the final apostle. Because specific Islam is consistent with and a continuation of this universal Islam, this teaching from God further shaped humanity through its completed and perfected teaching. (Madjid, 2003b, p. xiv)

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[126] Qur'an 42:13.
[127] Qur'an 16:36.

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Madjid argues for this distinction by going back to the linguistic meaning of the word Islam and positing that general submission to God is a natural form of existence (Madjid, 2005, p. 427). Madjid quotes frequently from Ibn Taymiyya in support of his ideas. Specific Islam, as revealed by Mohammad, has not been as established as general islam (submission and surrender to God), which was spread around the world through various prophets. Therefore, people should not be expected to fully understand specific Islam, though they might use similar terms such as 'surrender' or 'submission'. This is the reason why other religions are praised at times in the Qur'an (Madjid, 2005, p. 427). This also creates conceptual space for other religious traditions as acceptable members of political society.

Although contextualised expressions[128] of Islam are contested by Islamists, these notions are important for Madjid and relevant for society as a whole. The challenge was to translate this teaching in a way that was relevant and contextualised in Indonesia in Madjid's time. For this reason, he wrote *Islam Agama Kemanusiaan: Membangun Tradisi dan Visi Baru Islam Indonesia* (Islam a Religion for Humanity: Building a New Tradition and Vision for Indonesian Islam; 2003). Making a distinction between universal and specific aspects of Islam was a reformational step in appreciating flexible aspects of the tradition. Madjid claims that if we can understand universal Islam, we can derive insights as to how it can be fitted to the modern world.

As Madjid reflects on contextualised Islam in Indonesia, he makes comparisons to the wider Muslim world. He describes the more dominant expression of neo-

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[128] Madjid references examples of this type of thinking in the work of Iwanami Shoten, Frithjof Schuon, Martin Lings, and Roger Garuady. He also mentions Shaykh Muhammad al-Tahir ibn Ashur as an example of not imposing Arab culture through distinguishing between Islam and national customs.

fundamentalism as weak because it is inflexible (Madjid, 2003b, p. 210). This neo-fundamentalism is a reaction to modernist Muslims who were 'inheritors of ideologies from Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 210). Madjid sees their methodologies as inconsistent and apologetic about aspects of Islamic history. This feature left early reformers such as Abduh 'vulnerable to the accusation of being "agents" of Western culture' (Madjid, 2003, p. 211). This was a stiff charge in a post-colonial context. For Madjid, this neo-fundamentalism as a reaction could not be the future. A new group of scholars should improve on classical modernism.

> This does not end the possibility that new sources of élan vital will emerge, possibly this time to learn much from the mistakes of "modernists" in their attitude towards the traditional intellectual wealth. This would make possible the revival of a proper appreciation of the wealth of intellectual tradition, which could then be utilised to enrich the new Islamic intellectual outlook. (Madjid, 2003b, p. 214)

These neo-fundamentalists, according to Madjid, do not have the resources to adapt to changes in the world.[129] Following his doctoral supervisor (Rahman, 1981), Madjid sees neo-modernism as a better response. He writes, 'The ever-increasing demands of the age can be met only if there is intellectual development of Islam in two branches: an Islamic intellectualism that takes its inspiration from the rich and flexible classical treasure of Islam, and an attempt to develop the ability to provide quick answers to the ever-increasing demands of the age' (Madjid, 1984b; see also Rahman, 1980). Here we see Madjid's confidence in the Islamic tradition to adapt. It contains its own internal resources for change. The tradition simply needs to be examined with fresh eyes. While

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[129] 'Due to their tendency not to adequately appreciate the classical intellectual heritage, the "neo-fundamentalists" will experience an increasing intellectual poverty. Their alternatives are very limited, and their intellectually poor concepts will not be capable of sustaining the ever-increasing demands of the age' (Madjid, 1984b).

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Madjid uses the language of neo-modernism, he is arguing for a shift in this foundational frame that is more flexible and forward-looking.

Not only should Indonesia have a local expression of Islam, but Madjid sees a contribution to the global discourse in light of the potential 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington, 1993). Madjid writes about the mediating opportunities presented by Indonesia's pluralistic context: 'Indonesia has a potential role in assisting with the balance of power between the East and the West, on the condition that all parties among Indonesians themselves adopt a modest and sincere attitude rather than opposing each other' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 77). Madjid felt that Indonesia has something important to offer to the world and that contextualising Islam is an important part of strengthening Indonesian society.

This vision for reshaping Islam in Indonesia and expressing its potential contribution to other societies reflects the scope of Madjid's imagination. His argument for contextualised Islam is part of his religious imaginary and moral order. It supports many of his ideas around tolerance, a pluralistic society, an appreciation for human rights and dialogue with other religions. In the next section, we will see how his contextualization of Islam retains a connection with the Qur'an.

Ijtihad as a Tool for Renewal

Another foundational idea for Madjid is his commitment to *ijtihad*, or independent legal reasoning. This is conceptually related to the previous section as it represents a way to bring openness to the tradition. *Ijtihad* is often contrasted with the Arabic term *taḵlīd* (to follow or obey, often characterized as blindly following or obeying without questioning), which uncritically receives and follows previous traditions. As Islam deals

with its main text, the Qur'an, the interpretive tradition recorded in the Hadiths is quite significant. The Hadiths, of which there are various collections, contain reported sayings of the prophet and his actions.[130] In many ways, these collected sayings guide the practices within Islam. Madjid himself has a negative view of *taḳlīd* and views it as blindly following what has come before. *Ijtihad* revisits the text and seeks to understand what was written in light of its historical context. Madjid relies on this important tool as he works within his tradition to articulate a vision for the future.

Madjid closely studied the works of Ibn Taymiyya, a notable reformer in Islamic history. Taymiyya's work was the focus of his doctoral thesis and some of his foundations for *ijtihad* can be traced back to this study. Madjid has an interesting way of reading and critiquing Taymiyya that seem to strategically fit the need for reform within Islam in Indonesia. Taymiyya influenced the writings of Muhamad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, who is often claimed by extremist Muslim groups. Madjid's use of Taymiyya takes the person who is often identified as the father of the Wahhabi tradition and fundamentalism as a basis for his arguments for reform. This is quite counter to popular expectations regarding Taymiyya, who is known for his polemical style and strong language. Madjid sees Taymiyya, when freed from this type of language, as quite helpful and as bringing insights which are 'very relevant for the current age including universalism, tolerance, openness, inclusivism, and internal relativity facing Muslims' (2003b, p. xiv).

Madjid, in the preface to his PhD thesis, describes Ibn Taymiyya as a heroic fighter who 'made strenuous, incessant efforts to liberate the Muslims of his time from the yoke

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[130] There is even a significant discipline of sorting through the sayings to determine who is reporting it and assessing the likelihood that it is authentic. This is called tracing the chains of *isnād*. Given this discipline, some sayings and collections are disputed. Various traditions align with specific collections. Ibn Taymiyya often refers to the collections by Al-Bukhari and Muslim. Madjid takes issue with this at times.

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of uncritical adherence (*taklīd*) to the religious establishments, and of bringing back Islam to its pristine, noble, simplicity' (1984a, p. ii). He presents Taymiyya's work as a reformer: 'The main purpose here is to seek a better understanding of the nature of his reform, especially as implied in his efforts to dismantle Islamic Hellenism, as represented by *kalam* and *falsafa*' (1984a, p. ii). Madjid purports to 'present a more rounded view of Ibn Taymiyya, by systematically uncovering his methodology and exposing his critique of *kalam* and *falsafa*' (1984a, p. iii).

Taymiyya's reform was based on a rejection of the accepted, contemporary notion of *ijma*[131] (unanimous agreement of religious authorities). Instead, the 'only binding *ijma* was that which had been done by the first three generations of Muslims—the Salaf. The basis for this argument was that those generations of Muslims had been the only ones that the Holy Book mentions as having been pleasing to God and meriting the promise of Paradise' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 54). Taymiyya was a scripturalist who saw weaknesses in Islamic practice, particularly Sufi practices, which needed to be brought back in line with the sacred text. Taymiyya was not well received in his time and was imprisoned at various times until he died.

Madjid sees the importance of limiting the binding tradition, but he endorses greater flexibility than Taymiyya in the reading of sources. While Taymiyya sees the first three generations and their tradition as binding, this is not absolute dogma for Madjid. Madjid acknowledges the legitimacy of some of the traditions that have been collected in some of the Sunna, yet he questions the uncritical acceptance of all of them. The Hadith were compiled two or three centuries after the prophet. Madjid draws attention to the historical

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[131] To reiterate the pattern I have been following, this is the Indonesian spelling of the Arabic *idjmā.*

context in which these texts were compiled: 'Conscientious Muslims should be fully aware of the historical background of those codifications. Following Hadith reports uncritically could result in following the early ninth century's conception of the example of Muhammad, and therefore the early ninth century's values' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 234).

In building his case to go beyond prescribed tradition in the Hadiths, Madjid focuses on Taymiyya's acceptance of a certain type of reasoning by analogy (*qiyas*). This was different from the rational proofs and Hellenistic reasoning which had become part of the kind of Islamic reasoning that Taymiyya was trying to remove. Reasoning by analogy, considered sound logic by Taymiyya, is significant as it is a viable source for religious understanding when wanting to go beyond the Qur'an, Sunna, and Salafi tradition. According to Madjid, 'the "pivot of judgment" of all religious teachings is man's welfare in this world and his happiness in the hereafter' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 226). Like a set of scales, sound analogy requires a pivot of judgement as well as some sort of middle term or similar value between the two terms. As society changes, humans must make more regular enquiry into how to bring religious principles into current times. This happens through *ijtihad* and 'is impossible without analogical reasoning. It is the indispensability of the *qiyas* for *ijtihad* that makes it a valid method of making judgments and source of religious understanding, supplementary to the Holy Book and the Tradition' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 227).

Ijtihad, dependent as it is on human reasoning, has limits and is relative and fallible, especially since it considers current social situations within a given community. Despite this weakness, Madjid writes, 'If the program of Islam to create human welfare is to be materialized, *ijtihad* is indispensable. A true *ijtihad*, which is a creative task—despite its

defects—is still better than *taqlīd* because *taqlīd*, which is an uncreative method of judgment, can be irrelevant to the real demands of society' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 228). *Ijtihad* should be first performed by authorities, perhaps even governmental ones, and aim at helping individuals find freedom and happiness in this life and the next.

Madjid favourably sees Taymiyya's reform as bringing Islam back to a more original and pristine sense, not relying on a static tradition. Madjid energetically supports this simplicity: 'If they want to participate successfully in this complicated world, contemporary Muslims need the simple but sensibly principled understanding of their religion' (1984a, p. 232). Muslims could have been the ones to bring about modernity instead of Europe, but they did not. Referencing Hodgson's *Venture of Islam*, Madjid contends that Muslims were too concerned with the minutiae of life and the legal code. This caused them to be behind in certain fields necessary to a breakthrough to modernity. He writes, 'The exhaustive, hair-splitting elaborations of religious arguments, as represented, for example, by works in *fiqh* law, have not only blurred much more basic principles and orientations of the religion, but have been time—consuming and energy—consuming … viewed from such a perspective, Ibn Taymiyya's reform six centuries ago should be a great contribution to modern Muslims' (Madjid, 1984a, pp. 232–233).

Madjid critiques Taymiyya's system as having a negative attitude towards science. There are some glimpses of Taymiyya's openness to non-religious science, but Madjid regards him as 'only a little more than neutral' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 235). Openness to science could have been fundamental in enabling Muslims to be the ones to bring about modernity rather than Europe. If Taymiyya's reforms had been fully carried out, this aspect would have further hindered movement toward modernity. This is why Madjid

focuses on Taymiyya's methodology, not his conclusions. Madjid, relying on Watt (1985), sees Taymiyya's methodology as escaping rigid scholastic methods and adapting Islamic truth to contemporary life, an aspect largely ignored by Wahhabites (Madjid, 1984a, p. 43). He even asserts that 'a proper understanding of Ibn Taymiyya's refutation of *kalam* and *falsafa* would smooth the way for Muslims to adopt a more principled attitude towards modern science' (Madjid, 1984a, p. 236).

Thus, *ijtihad* is a key means of moving beyond debates between the primacy of reason or revelation. After Taymiyya's death, and the specific polemics faded, his ideas were given greater attention (Madjid, 2003a, p. xvi).

> Ibn Taymiyya realized that most of the community's practices were rooted in doctrines of scholastic theology, *kalam* and the pseudo-Islamic Hellenism, *falsafa*. These doctrines claimed that reason is needed to understand religious principles, implying that reason is superior to revelation, since reason has the right, if not the duty to interpret the revelation's ambiguities. Ibn Taymiyya's program was centred around the task of disproving such a claim, advocating the superiority of revelation to reason, since divine teachings are supra-rational. His recurrent theme was that there can be no antagonism between faith and intellect, that faith is always logical, or that *naṣṣ* (scriptural text) and *'aql* (human reason) are different aspects of the same truth. (Madjid, 1984a, p. 56)

An emphasis on *ijtihad* demonstrates Madjid's commitment to a moral order reflected in his religious tradition as well as his openness to embracing the modern age. Reason and revelation, faith and intellect can work together for the good of humanity, and Muslims have just as much a claim as other traditions to be world leaders. Madjid's high view of the Qur'an, God, and tradition all are fundamental for his modern moral order. Because he views these texts and traditions so highly, *ijtihad* must continue. A strong emphasis on God's otherness and transcendence above creatures and creation means that interpretation is critical. This will be further clarified in the next section where we will look at his emphasis on transcendence.

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Tawhid, Transcendence, and Adaptation

Along with contextualising Islam and opening the gates of *ijtihad*, I see Madjid's notion of *tawhid* (the absolute oneness of God) as an additional component in the foundation of Madjid's imaginative vision, his modern moral order. *Tawhid* forms a fundamental distinction between God, including the Qur'an by extension, and everything else. This was a critical facet that provided the context for the renewal Madjid envisioned: 'Renewal has to start with two closely related actions, that is, freeing oneself from traditional values and seeking values which are future oriented. Excessive nostalgia has to be replaced by a forward-looking attitude' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 228).

In an early speech as a student, before beginning his PhD journey in the West, Madjid talked about the need for desacralisation, based on the Islamic doctrine of *tawhid*. Madjid was harshly critiqued for using certain terms, particularly secularisation and desacralisation. But he was careful to qualify his use of the terms: 'Secularization does not mean the application of secularism, because secularism is the name for an ideology, a new closed world view which functions very much like a new religion. What is meant here is any form of liberating development' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 229). In this quotation, Madjid critiques the liberal moral order as expressing a closed ideology but functioning very much like a religion.[132]

This speech, preserved as a chapter in one of his books, was initially a private address to a Muslim group that was leaked to the media and provoked strong reactions.

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[132] See Jeffery Stout's work *Democracy and Tradition* (2004), referenced in chapter 3, for a similar argument.

This speech clearly articulates reformist ideas which were viewed as controversial. The backlash prompted him to share his ideas with more nuance.

Tawhid as a ground of secularisation and desacralisation were clearly important for Madjid and his agenda. The Islamic tradition emphasises God's utter uniqueness and unity. God is on a different level, a transcendent plane. To compare anything else to him would be an unholy elevation in the category of *shirk* (associating other things with God). Making sure God was on a transcendent level and different from everything else offered a way to subvert the reification of tradition by using classical theological categories. Many of the accepted traditions of Islam in Indonesia were sacred cows and prevented adaptation and growth. By moving forward, Islam in Indonesia could become less reactionary to modern advancements (Madjid, 2008b, p. 229).

> But what has happened not is that Muslims have lost their creativity in life to the extent that they have seemingly decided to do nothing or have just remained silent. In other words, they have lost the spirit of *ijtihad* (the exercise of independent judgment). In fact, as a logical consequence of *tawhid* (belief in the absolute oneness of God), Muslims should automatically possess realistic and appropriate views of the world and its problems. The fact that absolute transcendence belongs solely to God should actually result in desacralization of everything other than God, that is, the world its problems and relevant values. It is so because to sanctify anything other than God is essentially *shirk*, that is ascribing divinity to anything besides God, which is the opposite of *tawhid*. Therefore, secularization now acquires its concrete meaning, that is, desacralization of everything other than those things which truly possess divine attributes, namely this world. (Madjid, 2008b, pp. 230–231)

Madjid's view distinguished between God who exists on a separate, transcendent plane and local expressions which are contextualised in time and space (Madjid, 2005, p. 428). Madjid writes, 'Secularization does not mean to apply secularism or to transform Muslims into secularists. What is intended is to temporalize values which are in fact temporal and to free Muslims from the tendency to spiritualize these values' (2008b, pp. 229–230). Distinctions between the sacredness of God and the rest of creation should

create space for Islam to interact with modernity in a host of different ways. It is precisely because of this understanding of Islam that Indonesians could resist moving towards Islamic structures of government and instead engage in the work of re-interpretation and re-contextualisation. These religious commitments allow for democratic structures, but without a liberal moral order which wants to relegate religion to the margins.

Other Muslim scholars have also picked up on this language of desacralisation and its relationship to politics (Al-Azmeh, 2009, pp. 22–24).[133] This language gave Madjid ways to talk about other religions and their real experiences with God (Madjid, 1995, 2008a). It also formed a part of his understanding of Islamic universalism where he draws more on the linguistic meaning of the term 'Islam' and its meaning of submission to God (Madjid, 2005, pp. 426–435).

While distinguishing between God's elevated status and rest of the world might seem like a relatively easy distinction to make, it creates a strong conceptual foundation for Madjid to engage with several different ideas. It was the basis for his argument against Indonesian people's sense of obligation to vote for Islamic political parties. Desacralisation, instead of removing religion entirely from the public sphere, offers flexibility for religion to take a seat at the table and inspire dimensions of obedience which warm the heart: 'Those dimensions can arise only from a system linked to questions of the most profound meaning of life, which, in general, is offered by systems of religious conviction' (Madjid, 1984b).

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[133] This language can also be traced to Robert Bellah and his studies on religion. Madjid quotes at times from *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in the Post-Traditional World* (Bellah, 1991).

Conclusion

The modern nation-state has been incredibly effective in harnessing technological advancements for creating wealth and raising our standard of living. In practical terms, most people's quality of life has dramatically improved relative to medieval times. Liberalism took an important step away from tyrannical forms of theocracy by establishing space for a common good outside of a single religious tradition. Taylor articulates the development of social imaginaries that came into being during this time. These imaginaries were an important part of what I am calling the birth of a liberal moral order and aided societal advancements. The theoretical focus provided by understanding the wider economy as a market improved the standard of living. The public sphere created a non-religious space for societal norms to be discussed. This enabled non-Christian traditions to bring their goods to the polity. The idea of individual sovereignty created a mechanism to stand against unjust leaders and ostensibly protected minorities who could otherwise be mistreated.

Despite all these positive contributions, however, the liberal moral order struggles to fully incorporate the religious ends of multiple traditions. In the name of development, the liberal moral order heavily restricts the religious imagination and its idea of the public good. A reduced set of political ends—security, prosperity, and property—marginalised political goods which can come from a religious moral order. The idea of an afterlife as a motivation for personal sacrifice is one example of an ethical value which could act as a resource encouraging peace, care of God's creation, or an enduring commitment to the good of others. This is not to say that these commitments necessarily follow from adopting a transcendent frame—part of the reason liberalism was so appealing was due

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to religious conflict—but illustrates one potential loss we may suffer without a religious moral order.

Democracies outside North America desire to incorporate the benefits of modern democracy without privatising their religious goods. Muslim thinkers outside the historically Christian West are interested in developing their societies, but with a different moral imagination. The lens of multiple modernities demonstrates how similar issues are addressed under different circumstances. Political similarities with different developmental trajectories allow for comparison and an opportunity for the liberal moral order to learn from and be influenced by a religious moral order, especially when both moral orders are interested in a peaceful society.

Indonesia's democratic context allows for different arrangements of the relationship between religion and the state without the West's largely Christian context. Madjid's commitment to contextualising Islam, his support for *ijtihad*, and his allegiance to *tawhid* create conditions for a civil religious space between theocracy and liberalism. The religious moral order need not be removed from political discourse because these religious ends can support the common good.

It is because of this emphasis on transcendence that religion should have a place in political society, though not an exclusive place. When God is differentiated from tradition and local, temporal expressions, there is freedom to adapt and find different ways to express faith. This perspective allowed Madjid to advocate for a civil society with multiple moral orders. Madjid asserted that religion is a critical piece for bringing society together. In view of this emphasis, it is not surprising that Madjid advocated for a robust civil society, to which we turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Civil Society, Pluralism, and Tolerance

Introduction

In chapter 3, I argued that religious selves have an inseparable connection to religious goods. If a political vision is concerned with the good, and if all religious selves have an understanding of the good, then religious selves also can contribute to the public good of society. In chapter 4, I moved from individuals to the wider society in which various goods are expressed in moral orders. With the birth of the liberal moral order, political society embraced a limited set of public goods. These goods, as expressed in social imaginaries, were embedded in the spread of democracy. The liberal moral order focused on the limited goods of private property, prosperity, and freedom. It universalised these goods and minimised religious goods in political society, often based on disagreement with the state's definition of what is reasonable.

Given these competing moral orders and religious goods, a non-state space is a necessary condition for reimagining a post-liberal political philosophy. In this chapter, I propose the category of civil society as the primary location for civil religious pluralism in modern democracy. The state is responsible for the administration of justice and defines moral boundaries through enforcing a legal code, as I will discuss in chapter 6. This is not a neutral activity but is informed by the liberal moral order. The state is the clear sovereign in the political domain. In the religious domain, some sort of higher set of principles, or God, is sovereign. Religious moral orders inform the religious domain with leadership roles and practices. The political and religious domains overlap in civil society, a non-state space that can be informed by the discourse between multiple moral orders.

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The notion of civil society is not novel but has a rich discourse around it. I present the ways in which this civil society is used today while also referencing the historical significance of non-state discourse in the early days of political philosophy. In Greek and Roman society, the state asserted power over religion. This arrangement was reversed over time with the establishment of Christendom. I discuss civil society's limitations in theocracy and liberalism.

As this thesis is concerned with the positive role religion can play, I give greater attention to Rousseau's civil religion as an attempt to resolve issues of significant religious goods in political society without theocratic enforcement or removal of religion's cohesive benefits. Although this form of civil religion and American civil religion have many admirable traits, they ultimately fail by being too homogenised to be accepted by everyone, especially Muslims.

I then look at dissatisfaction concerning secularism, especially by Muslim writers, to set the stage for Madjid's work. In Madjid, we find someone reimagining an Islamic civil religion. Madjid's valuation of civil society shows promise for integrating multiple religious traditions within political discourse towards the development of a legal code.

Civil society is a necessary condition, along with religious selves and multiple moral orders, for civil religious pluralism as a political philosophy. The state should both promote and develop public discourse for a vibrant dialogue of religious ends and public goods. This dialogue can then inform the state.

Civil Society within Political Theory

Civil society remains an important space between the state and religious communities while not being dominated by either. This interstitial space allows for the

negotiation of multiple moral orders without a threat of penal retribution, which may occur if this negotiation takes place in the midst of the legal code and justice system. Civil society also allows for dialogue and the negotiation of goods which is not dominated or monopolised by a single religious tradition, as might happen in a single religious space. A robust civil society allows for a greater integration of diverse communities into the broader political community.

When the state ignores civil society or fails to proactively develop robust conversations around political goods, input from citizens' various moral orders is unnecessarily limited. Incorporating broad viewpoints and discourse from religious communities, which make up a substantial part of the population, strengthens the state and its leaders' ability to govern and implement justice. Just as the state ignores civil society to its own peril, a singular religious tradition's move into areas of state authority also causes serious problems, as has been evident in Western history. A religious tradition with state authority poses a threat to other religious traditions that have different views and competing truth claims.

Civil society is a slippery term and concept, used in a variety of ways. Michael Edwards helpfully suggests three uses of the term which bring clarity to the conversation and explain the term's complexity. Edwards explores 'three different theoretical positions, each useful and legitimate but also incomplete: analytical models of civil society (the forms of associational life); normative models of civil society (the kind of society they are supposed to generate); and civil society as the "public sphere"' (Edwards, 2004, p. vii). The reduced influence of communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s prompted much of the recent revisiting of civil society as many nations reexamined

democratic structures and possibilities. There was dissatisfaction in both the state's and the wider market's ability to positively regulate society, and civil society was explored as a potential 'missing link in the success of social democracy' (Edwards, 2004, p. 2).

The roots of civility and civil society go back as far as Greek and Roman societies (Ehrenberg, 2011, p. 15). Aristotle worked with a view of society that highlighted the different spheres of life, though he focused on moral development and political stability. The *polis* of Aristotle was the broadest association of human relationships but was also a super-set of smaller spheres of associations. Citizens contributed by being civil and cooperating with the state, and there was little distinction between civil society and the state (Edwards, 2004, p. 6). This understanding of the polity as a collection of competing visions of the good moved away from Plato's single, unifying framework for moral action and pursuing the good. Political discourse was the place for exploring moral action and the good life, but it was composed of different families, classes, and professions. The insight that diversity and linkage of associations with subordinate spheres and mixed constitution would enhance citizenship remains a salient point today. 'Aristotle's preference for a mixed constitution expressed his recognition that plurality was the foundation of unity. He was sure that a state whose structure took account of subordinate spheres would enhance the deliberative life of citizenship conditioned life in subordinate spheres' (Ehrenberg, 2011, p. 16). Strong bonds of unity in the midst of diversity had long been a value for stable societies.

In later Greece and Rome, the city-state gave way to larger associations and an empire where religion was subordinated to the political order. After Constantine, the Christian church gained power and influence, despite its attempted distinction between

its authority and the state's authority to administer the city of man. Christendom's power grew to the point that it provided legitimacy to state structures and political authority. This separation of the spiritual kingdom of God and the earthly kingdoms of men collapsed at various times as local state powers, stronger kings, and increasing diversity tempted the church to focus on its own sovereignty during the Middle Ages. The locus of political authority would meander back and forth in different kingdoms to the point where 'by the end of the Middle Ages, a more secular conception of politics was beginning to develop, accompanied by the notion of civil society that was now understood in economic terms' (Ehrenberg, 2011, p. 18).

Late medieval thought continued to equate civil society with the state as the idea of a politically organised commonwealth developed. The state protected and made civil society possible by protecting the associations of the citizens to avoid Hobbes' 'state of nature'. With the American and French revolutions and their fracture of traditional political authority, a number of thinkers talked about reversing this position so that citizens in civil society needed to be protected from the state and tyrants. Tocqueville wrote about the America's robust associations in society as a way to 'maintain the balance between the center and the periphery by being a counterweight to democracy's natural tendency to create large central governments' (Brinton, 2010). A thriving civil society was a theoretical space to make government work and support human flourishing in a way the state alone could not maintain.

Civil society on its own was not universally accepted as a panacea to work for the good of all. Hegel and Marx critiqued civil society as a tool for those in power. These notable German philosophers highlighted the dangers of Smith's assumed invisible hand.

A focus on economic self-interest as supporting civil society caused problems as well. Other moral philosophers were concerned about society's moral foundation beyond economic relationships. Kant's universal ethic fell back on law-based coercion and obedience. Hegel demonstrated the limits of this universalism by showing how the family, civil society, and the state provide different structures of ethical development (Ehrenberg, 2011, p. 21). These discussions demonstrated interest in moral and ethical structures.

The increasing power of the nation-state prompted reflections on how to sustain balance in political society. Gramsci (1891–1937), concerned with embedded power relations, framed civil society as a private mediating space, distinct from that dominated by the state and 'expressed in the formula "state = political society + civil society"' (Anheier & Toepler, 2009, p. 172). His analytic focus on structures is clear in his articulation of three elements of society: political society, civil society, and the economic sphere (Katz, 2010). John Dewey (1859–1952) expanded on civil society as a middle space and developed a 'theory of the "public sphere" as an essential component of democracy' (Edwards, 2004, p. 9).

More recently, the notion of civil society has been an attractive idea for social thinkers as a place for the synthesis of public and private goods: 'The idea of civil society thus embodies for many an ethical ideal of the social order, one that, if not overcomes, at least harmonizes, the conflicting demands of individual interest and social good' (Seligman, 1995, p. 9). The United Nations' website acknowledges the importance of civil society and has its own integrated civil society organisations system. The website defines it as the 'third sector of society along with government and business' (United Nations, 2022).

Towards the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, civil society as a concept offered a way to talk about democracy in creative ways in the face of perceived challenges with communism and military dictatorships (Cohen & Arato, 1992, p. vii; Edwards, 2011, p. 4). Cohen and Arato understand civil society 'as a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication' (1992, p. ix). This definition clearly distinguishes civil society from state control, though the authors stress the need for the state to actively support civil society through laws which allow for institutionalisation and independence. This agrees with Edwards' (2004) interrelated aspects of civil society mentioned at the beginning of this section.

Cohen and Arato go on to note three distinctions for a balanced understanding of civil society. First, civil society should be distinguished from political parties and organisations as well as from economic society. This distinction and interplay between civil society and the state shows the limitation of the state in certain situations, especially in the realm of religion, but also the need for state engagement and support. The state cannot simply adopt a laissez-faire attitude and see what happens. Civil society provides the mediating space for discussion and democratic associations in the broader public sphere. Second, civil society is not a catch-all category, encompassing everything except economic and political society. This is better described as social life in general. Civil society more explicitly refers to structures of socialisation that have institutional representation or are in process. Third, civil society should not be viewed as hostile to the economy and state by definition. It is a part of the broader socio-cultural milieu that can

influence the economy and political process. In fact, all three parties help to mediate the broader good, and these antagonisms arise when the process breaks down (Cohen & Arato, 1992, pp. ix–xi).

Though some seek to exclude civil society from the political realm, its interdependent analytical components are indispensable when one is considering the goods around which society should be organised. Indeed, civil society is a necessary category for citizens to be heard when representative forms of democracy fail and when the state is tempted to ignore protests (Edwards, 2011, p. 6). Civil society offers a public space where discussion, debate, and reasoning can occur among community associations that can contribute to establishment of societal norms.

Civil society, in its more historical articulations, has developed as a necessary expression to peacefully moderate various claims of authority. As described in chapter 2, within Western political philosophy there are multiple ways of approaching the competing authority between religion and the state from a theoretical point of view. Both the state and religious communities make claims for the goods around which society should be oriented. In terms of ultimate authority over citizens, competing claims have been resolved in multiple ways. A brief review will aid the consideration of civil society and authority.

Theocracy seeks to domesticate the state under the authority of religion and is distinct from civil religion.[134] Liberalism and civil religion both place religion under the authority of the state. Liberalism looks to separate religion as far as possible from the

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[134] "True theocracy is not a civil religion. In light of Hobbes, one could even say that theocracy is the opposite of civil religion, for civil religion seeks to instrumentalize religion on behalf of political purposes, whereas true theocracy subordinates politics to religious ends" (Beiner, 2010, p. 309).

state. Civil religion acknowledges the state's authority, and seeks to work within this framework, while retaining some form of a political implementation of religious goods. These categories translate into societal organisation and inevitably include claims about justice and who is privileged in deciding its meaning. These are highly important issues, and this discourse underscores the importance of re-examining and evaluating the underlying principles.

Civil Society in Theocracy

In modern times, theocratic societal organisation is usually associated with political Islam. However, theocratic approaches have also been advocated by Christians at various times,[135] even after the Reformation's emphasis on empowering lay individuals to read sacred texts for themselves. This structure left little space for anything like civil society (Fasenfest, 2009). The extended wars of religion in Europe and violence executed in the name of the church are commonly cited as reasons for the decline of religious political power and a parallel waning of interest in theocracy in the West (Taylor, 2007, p. 160; see also Barnes, 1987; Tessitore, 2002; Wood, 1984).

Islamic-majority states around the world often see civil society as a negative Western concept. Arkoun cites Afghanistan's Taliban, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan as examples of rejecting civil society through a strict application of Sharia law (Hanafi, 2002). Sajoo, writing about the post-Taliban era in Afghanistan and before the departure of the US army in 2021, describes emergent aspects of civil society, including the involvement of women in the news media (2002, p. 25). These advances are seemingly

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[135] Calvin's form of theocracy was quite influential after the reformation (Parker, 1993).

being reversed with the Taliban's recent retaking of the country and represent one popular example of the struggle amongst certain streams of Islam to embrace civil society.

Although the US Christian Right is often accused of pushing for a modern theocracy (Douthat, 2006), perhaps with marginal legitimacy (Davidson & Harris, 2006), it is a minority position. The existing strength of civil society, in all its forms in Western democracies, and the inherent opposition to civil society in theocracy militate against broad acceptance of theocracy.

Civil Society within Liberalism

Liberalism is primarily interested in separating religious authority from the state.[136] This model is dominant in the United States where a Lockean separation was a part of the founding (Fish, 1997). Given this framework, civil society becomes a necessary category in which to place religious communities. Liberalism naturally supports civil society in the sense of the public sphere as this creates space for the removal of religion from the political sphere. In the last 70 years, with respect to changing societal norms, liberalism increasingly divides religious goods from public goods based on its own categories. Advancing goods such as prosperity, freedom and security is deemed acceptable according to public reason, while other norms, like a sexual ethic, must be worked out in private. Current discussions on gender, identity, and marriage highlight the challenge of separating public and private realms.

Locke's solution to the tension between religion and the state was to separate them. He does this through separating the outward things governed by the state,[137] and the inner

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[136] 'What to do about religion? This is an inescapable problem of politics, and therefore it is a perennial question for political philosophy' (Beiner, 2010, p. 2).

[137] "A commonwealth appears to me to be an association of people constituted solely for the purpose of preserving and promoting civil goods" (Locke, 2010, p. 6).

world of the soul related to salvation.[138] Interestingly, Locke's boundaries for civil rulers are not established in the name of a solid political foundation; rather, they are justified through Christian theology: 'The civil ruler has no more mandate than others have for the care of souls. He has no mandate from God, for it nowhere appears that God has granted men authority over other men, to compel them to adopt their own religion' (Locke, 2010, p. 7).

Going back to first principles, in his *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke conceives of the government as asserting political power to regulate the state of nature.[139] Political authority, when legitimately appointed, is positioned to adjudicate between equal parties who have their own natural rights. This authority, however, is limited to public disputes and must be distinguished from matters of private salvation. Locke illustrates this with a thought experiment where two Christian churches disagree in the context of Muslim Turkey. Both the Christian parties in the conflict see themselves as right in their own eyes and are at an impasse. The non-Christian ruler in this case would not be able to adjudicate the conflict,[140] since a final verdict on these matters belongs to God. For Locke, this same outcome would apply in a Christian nation as well: a ruler cannot give more authority to a church than it already has from God. The church's rulings may be questioned, but it is more a theological matter than one for a Christian prince to solve (Locke, 2010, p. 14).

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[138] 'This then I say: the civil power should not use the civil law to prescribe articles of faith … salvation of souls cannot be any business of the civil ruler. For even granted that the authority of laws and the force of penalties were effective in changing people's minds, yet this would have no effect on the salvation of their souls.' (Locke, 2010, p. 8).

[139] Locke's state of nature is different from that of Hobbes who correlates this with a state of war.

[140] 'An infidel cannot on his own authority punish Christians in matters of faith, and therefore he cannot in any way impart that authority to any Christian association; he cannot give a right which he does not have' (Locke, 2010, p. 14).

In terms of the relation of Locke's ideas to civil society, the ideological separation of the state and church is supported by social norms of the time and relies on a pre-liberal moral order. Even Locke's thought experiment relies on a Christian theological justification for the separation of civil authority and religious authority. Political authority is free to separate from the social norms of civil society because it can rely on their normative power. As this liberal moral order developed over time and separated from its Christian past, societal norms in civil society have become more inclusive of its citizens. This has been a positive development.

The growth of inclusivity, however, also increases tension within civil society as the diversity of views is multiplied. Not all contentious issues are limited to Christian theology. Neither are important issues mainly individualistic in nature.[141] Some issues, which may have nothing to do with salvation, could alter the nature of the conflict where public and private boundaries, or clear categories of state and church, no longer resolve the issue. Issues such as a woman's right to end a pregnancy or same-sex marriage move beyond the public/private binary and have been sources of long-standing tension in the United States, where Locke's ideas have been implemented.

For this reason, the unitary aspect of liberalism's civil society has its own limitations. Liberalism, expressed in the liberal moral order, proposes a circumscribed set of goods: security, freedom, and prosperity. These are applied to citizens through legislation. However, the state must regulate some social goods and cannot simply rely on undefined social norms. Religious communities, even if limited to Muslims and

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[141] 'The bedrock of Locke's liberalism (as is true of any thoroughgoing liberalism) is the notion of the conscientious individual given space to come to his or her own conscientious judgments' (Beiner, 2010, p. 153).

Christians, account for a huge swath of citizens in democracies and struggle to accept the privatisation of all their religious goods. This is where the civil religion tradition sought to bring together a political implementation of religious goods and a hospitality to multiple religious traditions. I will turn to this tradition in the next section.

Civil Religion's Unsuccessful Middle Path

As introduced in chapter 2, the civil religion tradition values religious contributions to the state. For this reason, it is important to understand the contours of religion's role in the polity to assess the theoretical contribution of civil society.

Rousseau claims that 'no state was ever founded without religion serving as its basis' (2002, p. 249). The unifying aspects of religion benefit the state, especially given Rousseau's interest in the general will of the people. At the same time, the Christian religion, with the long-standing political conflict between Protestants and Catholics, had its own problems: 'Christian law is more injurious than useful to a firm constitution of the State' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 249). When viewed through the lens of ideal types, Rousseau is interested in state-level infusion of religion over and against liberalism. Yet, he acknowledges the danger of legislated Christianity, thereby expressing a tacit rejection of theocracy. The philosopher is wrestling with the proper administration of justice within 'the complex dialectic implicit in the confrontation between politics and religion' (Griswold, 2015, p. 273). Rousseau's project is inspired by a quest for justice, as he writes in his introductory note to *The Social Contract*:

> I want to inquire whether, taking men as they are and laws as they can be made to be, it is possible to establish some just and reliable rule of administration in civil affairs. In this investigation I shall always strive to reconcile what right permits with what interest prescribes, so that justice and utility may not be at variance. (Rousseau, 2002, p. 155)

Rousseau begins to build his case for civil religion in book VIII of *The Social Contract* by pointing to the strong history of theocracy.[142] Each nation's god would conflict with that of a neighbouring nation, resulting in ongoing conflict.[143] Rome suffered internal conflict as her territory grew to encompass other gods and followers, which evened the playing field and led to a generic paganism (Rousseau, 2002, p. 247). In this context, Jesus came to announce a spiritual kingdom, separated from earthly politics. Pagan rulers, suspicious of false submission, persecuted Christians. According to Rousseau, 'humble Christians' eventually took power, and with this, power conflict surfaced within Christianity.[144] Tension between the kingdom of this world and the spiritual kingdom created 'a perpetual conflict of jurisdiction [which] has resulted from this double power, which has rendered any good polity impossible in Christian states; and no one has ever succeeded in understanding whether he was bound to obey the ruler or the priest' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 248). Rousseau also gives a brief example of developments under the leadership of Mohammad, who is praised for having a unified political system until it became divided in future generations.[145] Rousseau asserts that the state will run smoothly when it unites again these 'two heads of the eagle and restore political unity, without which no State or government will ever been well constituted' (2002, p. 249). Rousseau praises Hobbes as acknowledging the problem but says he underestimated the

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[142] 'Men at first had no kings except the gods and no government but a theocracy' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 245).

[143] In this way 'political warfare was also theological; the regions of the gods were … fixed by the limits of the nations' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 246).

[144] 'The humble Christians altered their tone, and soon this supposed kingdom of the other world became, under a visible leader, the most violent despotism in this world' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 248).

[145] 'Muhammad had very sound views; he thoroughly unified his political system; and so long as his form of government survived under his successors, the caliphs, the government was quite unified and in that respect good. But the Arabs having become flourishing, learned, cultivated, lax, and cowardly, were subjugated by the barbarians, and then the division between the two powers began again' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 248).

domineering spirit of Christianity: 'The interest of the priest would always be stronger than that of the State' (2002, p. 249). Having completed his thought experiment as to what a society of 'pure Christians' would be like, he concludes that it would not work.[146]

Rousseau (2002, p. 253) proposes a more domesticated form of religion where the sovereign circumscribes the civil aspects of faith required for a good citizen. This form is strengthened by the sovereign's ability to banish those unwilling to accept the sacrifice necessary for sociability. The civil religion should be simple and precisely articulated, with the only prohibition being intolerance:

> There is, therefore, a purely civil profession of faith, the articles of which it is the duty of the sovereign to determine, not exactly as dogmas of religion, but as sentiments of sociability, without which it is impossible to be a good citizen or a faithful subject…The dogmas of civil religion ought to be simple, few in number, stated with precision, and without explanations or commentaries. The existence of the Deity, powerful, wise, beneficent, prescient, and bountiful, the life to come, the happiness of the just, the punishment of the wicked, the sanctity of the social contract and of the laws; these are the positive dogmas. As for the negative dogmas, I limit them to one only, that is, intolerance; it belongs to the creeds which we have excluded. (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 252–253)

This initially sounds like a positive compromise, but the rejection of intolerance is quite forceful. Rousseau abruptly ends this section by reasserting the need for the state to hold power over the church and not tolerate other claims on citizens' lives.[147] The legal enforcement of this civil religion is difficult to reconcile with the dogmas about intolerance. Immediately before his articulation of civil religion, Rousseau mentions its enforcement: 'But if any one, after publicly acknowledging these dogmas, behaves like

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[146] 'But I am mistaken in speaking of a Christian republic; each of these two words excludes the other. Christianity preaches only servitude and dependence. Its spirit is too favorable to tyranny for the latter not to profit by it always' (Rousseau, 2002, pp. 251–252).

[147] ' But whosoever dares to say: "Outside the Church no salvation", ought to be driven from the State, unless the State be the Church and the Prince be the pontiff' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 253).

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an unbeliever in them, he should be punished with death; he has committed the greatest of crimes, he has lied before the laws' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 253).

There is ironic tension when the state must intolerantly enforce tolerance in this way on its citizens. Certainly, the dogmas of civil religion are more limited than Christianity or Islam. This may be one reason many have noted the internal tension within Rousseau's *Social Contract* (Beiner, 1993; Karant, 2015), even though his fierce writing style and clear identification of competing authority have made his work a source of inspiration for many writing on religion and politics (McCormick, 2017; Watson, 2019).

The strict application of Rousseau's civil religion might appear to support civil society following the three aspects mentioned by Edwards in the previous section. The social contract supported by civil religion would offer various forms of associations in life. Civil religion would go a long way to support a baseline ethic necessary for establishing the types of social norms desired in a civilised political society. There is also possibility for public discourse around these issues in the public sphere. Yet, in each of these three variants of civil society, civil religion offers more restriction than openness. Civil associations in life are acceptable, so long as they are not atheistic or against the state's social contract. Civil religion appears to support desirable social norms, but upon deeper evaluation, it offers no real resources or texts to support these norms. It relies on a religious moral order and texts while repudiating their exclusivism. There may even be space for a public sphere, but it might struggle to develop as religious traditions have little room to express their full convictions and discourse could easily collapse into the state's version of religion.

The limitations on religious expressions in civil society could be why liberalism's counter to theocracy won out in the United States. Liberalism, while removing religion from political life, created space for religious traditions in a way that civil religion, in terms of Rousseau's political suggestion, did not. America's thriving civil society assumed a Christian moral order and seemed to provide a rich context for nonviolent mixtures of both Protestant and Catholic expressions. Civil society thrived while the United States remained a Christian majority society, even to the point of Bellah describing an American civil religion.

Bellah (1967) makes salient points about the presence of something like Rousseau's civil religion, though it is distinct enough to warrant a new term. Multiple US presidents espoused the tenets of a wise, powerful, beneficent deity. They called on Americans to serve their country, implicitly aligning national interests with God's blessing. These powerful arguments captivated academics, as seen in the subsequent resurgence of publishing on civil religion (Bortolini, 2012; Gardella, 2013; Weed & von Heyking, 2010). This discourse mainly described what was seen as a sociological construction of something like civil religion but did not go so far as to propose its political implementation.

I agree with Beiner's use of Rousseau in the opening of his theoretical work on civil religion. He claims, 'The idea of civil religion can open up to us not only the unique political thought-world of Rousseau's work as a whole but also the unique thought-worlds of all major figures in the tradition of modern political philosophy' (Beiner, 2011, p. 11). It may be that this problem of the ruler versus the priest is irresolvable and Rousseau is merely pointing that out, as Beiner claims (Rousseau, 2002, p. 4). The civil religion I am

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describing and critiquing is more of a failed tradition, but one that underscores the political tension between competing authorities.

Part of the failure of civil religion follows from the difficulty of some religious traditions in relinquishing authority in matters it shares with the state. Civil religion seems most able to bring together Protestants and Catholics who already share a commitment to Rousseau's prescribed dogmas. Certainly, some Christian communities have been able to bifurcate their allegiance. Their public lives on earth are lived within the authority of the state, with minor exceptions. Their private lives are under the authority of God and dedicated to the spiritual kingdom which is yet to come.

Although this splitting of authority has worked within some Christian communities, it is severely challenged by certain streams of Islam. Without the Christian message of a spiritual kingdom, negotiations of how to live in ways that honour Allah happen in the political sphere. Therefore, Sharia is negotiated into the legal system and salvation is on the line when citizens ignore the basic teaching of Islam to 'enjoin equity and forbid evil'.[148] When a vision for a Muslim nation built on Islamic law is the only legitimate view that Muslims can hold, Rousseau's vision of a union between the cleric (or priest) and the sovereign holds, but not in a way that avoids theocracy.

This widespread attitude within Islam illustrates how some sort of watered-down version of religion is unacceptable to certain religions. Civil religion admirably articulates a lowest common denominator in hopes of finding agreement, but it is too low to gain traction with some religious communities. It is mainly an imagined possibility for

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[148] Surah 3:104; 3:110; 9:71; 9:112; 31:17

integrating Christians. But civil religion conflicts with other monotheistic traditions, not to mention Buddhists, Hindus, or non-theists.

Civil religion also fails as a possible model because it lacks an imaginative space where multiple religious traditions and moral orders authentically present themselves. This anemic vision for civil society may be why liberalism caught on as a prevalent response to theocracy.

Muslims, coming from their own tradition and quite separate from Christian thinkers in the modern West, offer a critique and insight into both projects of domesticating religion. Ideas about the role of religions in society are of increasing importance as religious communities in Western nations change through migration. Western nations which previously could rely on their residual Christian moral orders as a backdrop for society must now contend with Muslim minorities and Sharia law. These are challenging issues. The struggle with some notions of secularism embedded in democratic forms is explored in the next section.

Islamic Interest in Democracy without Secularism

Liberalism and civil religion are united in their attempts to move away from theocracy. The Enlightenment's elevation of and belief in the power of reason, combined with resources from the Christian tradition, aided the development of democracy. Liberalism has arguably been more successful than civil religion, and nothing shows its success more than the rise of secularism. There has, however, been an unnecessary linkage between modernity, liberalism, and secularism. Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* critiques particular narratives that assume religion will fade away and be replaced with secularism:

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According to a conception widely canvassed in the Enlightenment and since, what powers the movement along this continuum, either to its half-way mark or all the way, is reason itself. We discover that certain of the features of the original view are untenable, and we end up adopting what remains after the unacceptable elements have been peeled off, be this some kind of Deism, or world-soul, or cosmic force, or blank atheism. Each variant has its designated end-point; that of Voltaire is not that of today's scientific materialists. But whatever end-point a variant enshrines is seen as the truth, the residual kernel of fact underlying the husk of invention or superstition which used to surround it. We're dealing with the classic subtraction story. I want to contest this. Not that it doesn't contain important elements of truth; but rather because it is too crude and global. (Taylor, 2007, p. 270)

Taylor's critique of secularism's wrongful fusion with modernity and democracy is echoed by Muslim thinkers' interest in democracy but rejection of secularism. A simple separation between religion and the state is not possible in the minds of many Muslims. After all, rescue from final judgement for Muslims is not based solely on one's private faith, but is a result of faithful actions over a lifetime.[149] With this much weight on the line, it is no wonder that Muslim communities in the West experience tension in political society and desire to implement Sharia in various ways (McGoldrick, 2009, 2019; Nash, 2017; Schirrmacher, 2011).

As mentioned in chapter 4, a multiple modernities framework (Burchardt & Mathias, 2015) makes sense of Islamic writers' contributions (Al-Azmeh, 2009; Asad, 2003, 2008, 2018). As narratives assuming Salafism as the face of Islam are challenged (Jung, 2011), more nuanced views find space for articulation. The growth of a global sphere makes it important for Western debates related to religion and society to begin to incorporate discussion in the Islamic world. Discussion has mainly happened among

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[149] Surah 2:62: 'Indeed, those who believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabeans [before Prophet Muhammad]—those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness—will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.'

Islamic authors, with limited integration. Taylor's critique of a monolithic, inevitable secularism has opened the door for transcendence and religious communities to engage in this discussion.

There is an entire continuum within the Islamic tradition, from theocratic positions to moderate versions more acceptable in the West. These voices are important to reflect on as they also resonate with religious minorities in Western democracies. It might seem convenient to avoid theocratic thinkers in Muslim-majority countries, yet ideas travel and have proven disruptive (Armajani, 2012, p. 2; Rabasa et al., 2010, p. 191). These ideas show up most prominently in splinter groups and smaller, radicalised groups of people (Husain, 2009). Although the far end of the spectrum should not be ignored, it is unlikely to gain dominance in any Western democracy. These radical voices do have a following and some exposure can sensitise the non-Muslim reader to the environment in which Muslim reformers operate (Al-Azami, 2021; Tibi, 2008).

More radical Islamism is a touchstone for the unease Muslims have with Western political schemes and highlights the importance of understanding their objections. As briefly referenced earlier, Maududi objects to state sovereignty as usurping the sovereignty of God. The laws of the state should reflect the laws of God, he argues, and a political apparatus is to enforce God's law. Maududi grounds his ideas in Islamic theological language and interpretations (Singh, 2000, pp. 130–131). Although his views are of course not universally accepted, coherent answers to these points from within the Islamic tradition could strengthen Islamic minorities' participation in Western democracy and may have application to other religious communities. Maududi and certainly Qutb (Hairgrove, 2011, p. 8) point to dissatisfaction with the liberal position. They are not

supportive of a civil religious position either, but there is more space for religiously determined goods to be a part of ethical discussions.

Other Muslim thinkers see space within Islam for alternatives to theocracy. Abdulkarim Soroush is an Iranian Muslim appointed by the Ayatollah Khomeini as one of the seven members of the cultural revolution committee. His influences from studying abroad may have contributed to his wider perspective of Islam. Soroush is often called an Islamic revivalist advocating a project of Islamic reconstruction as a paradigm shift in Islam (Aliabadi, 2006). Soroush distinguishes between religion and one's understanding of religion. This distinction allows for differences in interpretation, application to the present, and avoids essentialist understandings of Islam. Allowing for differences also softens assumptions of a universal rationality in strict readings of Islam's holy books.

Noting Soroush as an important Islamic figure for democracy, Wright quotes Soroush: 'Islam and democracy are not only compatible, their association is inevitable. In a Muslim society, one without the other is not perfect' (Wright, 1996, p. 68). The fact that Soroush's views were developed under a theocratic regime points to lingering dissatisfaction with fully religious political authority. In a time of functional differentiation in modern society, it is difficult to expect political powers to promote education, economic development, accessible healthcare, and the military while also filtering advancements through a strict theological filter.

Despite Soroush's support of democracy, he is unable to move towards a society rooted in nonreligious ethics. Soroush, reflecting on the modern separation of religion and government in the liberal moral order, questions two assumptions embedded in the removal of religious goods to support societal norms.

One may think of two possible motivations for secularism's insistence on the separation of religion and government: the belief in the fundamental falsehood of religion, coupled with the fear of its deleterious effects on politics, or the belief in the fundamental truth of religion coupled with concern over its contamination and profanation by political concerns. In any case, secularism succeeded in banishing religion from the realm of politics and placing the right of legislation and government in people's hands. (Soroush, 2000, p. 57)

This suspicion of religion's unscientific claims or vulnerability to contamination leads to the hegemony of metaphysical denial and materialist rationality. Soroush advocates for a religious democracy which avoids theocracy at one end and secularism at the other. His religious democratic government has three principles: 'to reconcile people's satisfaction with God's approval; to strike a balance between the religious and the nonreligious; and to do right by both the people and by God, acknowledging at once the integrity of human beings and religion' (Soroush, 2000, p. 122). These three principles have some alignment with democratic principles, but liberals and civil religionists alike would have questions about knowing what constitutes God's approval and how to adopt God's perspective. While this proposal does not break any impasse, especially in the West, it demonstrates an Islamic critique of liberalism based on dissatisfaction with secularism.

Talal Asad, who was born in Medina but has lived in the United States for the last 30 years, critiques the dominant narratives of secularism embedded in Western societies in *Formations of the Secular* (2003). Asad, using an anthropological methodology, identifies public and private distinctions as a core part of the construct of modernity. Although working within a different framework, he applies his critique to the liberal tradition beginning with Locke and moving forward. Proponents of liberalism and secularism have made assumptions about the neutrality of the secular state. Asad rightly highlights how this claim can often cloud the discussion. While acknowledging the

violent past which led to the rise of secular ideas, he rightly questions whether things are actually better under a secular regime: 'Can secularism then guarantee the peace it allegedly ensured in Euro-Americans' early history—by shifting the violence of religious wars into the violence of national and colonial wars?' (Asad, 2003, pp. 6–7). Much of the tolerance promised by secularism is missing.

Secularism's private-public bifurcation begs the question of the place of religion in general. Religion is moved from secular space and into the realm of private reasoning, yet it is not clear which justifications for public actions are religious and which secular. Rawls attempts to address this through his concept of 'overlapping consensus' (1996, p. 134), which Taylor accepts (2007, p. 701) and Asad critiques (2003, p. 6).

A simplistic answer could be that motivations or actions which are justified by religious texts are religious, while other motivations fall in the catch-all category of the secular. Yet this criterion is often unfairly applied across religions. Perhaps due to the tendency to view enemies as evil, narratives about Islamic roots for violence play up the Qur'anic basis. This betrays an assumption that Muslims are forced to follow the Qur'an, though Christians and Jews are free to determine their own interpretation of their texts (Asad, 2003, p. 11).

Attributing religious violence to the Qur'an ignores both the fact that plenty of Muslims read their texts without the impulse to commit violence and the fact that 'in Islam as in Christianity there is a complicated history of shifting interpretations, and the distinction is recognized between the divine text and human approaches to it' (Asad, 2003, p. 11). Simple categories of public and private as well as determining 'religious' or 'secular' motivations for public actions are not as clear to Asad.

Democracy, especially secular democracy, is often viewed as untenable for Islamic communities, especially given the challenges we have seen articulated along the spectrum from theocracy to more moderate expressions. Yet we find other Muslim authors exploring avenues for democracy. Political reflection developed outside of a Western rationality offers learning opportunities for established plural and religious democracies. Indonesia presents an intriguing mix of democracy, Islam, and openness to civil society (Barton, 2010). Understanding more about the development of Islam and politics in this country may offer pathways for Western nations to further develop religious citizens' engagement with society, though in a modified form (Rozak et al., 2015).

Religious communities may allow themselves to be domesticated in the sense that they operate under the state's authority, but they will all have limits as to what they can accept. Concepts such as overlapping consensus or a fusion of horizons might offer a way forward, but religious goods need to be negotiated, and civil society is the best space for these discussions to take place. Muslims and Christians can be a part of the ethical discussion, and their voices and metaphysical rationales should not be excluded a priori. Non-religious supporters, or those with different religious convictions, can make their case for public goods to support a strong democracy.

Madjid's exploration of the Islamic roots of pluralism is one such rationale, to be explored in the next section. His vision and desire for participation in civil society provide a potential mediating space where overlapping consensus can be negotiated, and these goods can feed back into the state to inform the legal code applied to all.

Madjid's Islamic Sources for Pluralism

Indonesia presents a unique context for exploring the issue of civil society in relation to theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion. As a Muslim-majority democracy Indonesia has clearly chosen a different path from theocracy. The priority of religious commitment in the country, even at the level of the constitution, is certainly different from the liberalism of John Locke found in American democracy. Indonesia best fits the theoretical category of civil religion, where the state has affirmed religious commitments in Pancasila as detailed below. In Indonesia, we see a developing democracy, but without secularism (Menchik, 2018). The category of civil society has been important for this development. Instead of a space in which to move religion away from political life, Indonesia benefited from civil society as way to counter an authoritarian state:

> The idea of civil society refers to the sphere of action and interests between the level of the household and the institutions of the state, one that in certain circumstances can work to counter balance the state's monopoly of ideological and coercive power. By itself such an intermediary domain guarantees neither democracy, justice, nor pluralist tolerance. It becomes a vital support for all three, however, if and when it serves to strengthen the presence of two other elusive social arrangements: extra governmental associations that act as counterweights to the state's monopoly of power and a social pluralism that helps to legitimate the idea that people have a right to their own ideas and actions. (Hefner & Horvatich, 1997, p. 112)

In Madjid's writings, we see a clear concern for how his country could negotiate the late modern era and develop along with other nations.[150] He wrote about Islamic sources which could be drawn upon to support newer democratic nation-states with a Muslim majority population. Madjid argued that religious concerns and motivations need to be kept in mind as the nation-state pursues its agenda of nation building. This is an

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[150] As noted in the previous section, he is not alone in his concern. Mohammed Arkoun is an example (Arkoun, 1994; Kersten, 2011), as are other Indonesian figures such as Abdurrahman Wahid, Djohan Effendi, and Dawam Rahardjo (Kersten, 2009, p. 976).

important part of national unity and overall growth. Religion and religious communities are an integral part of Indonesia's makeup and political philosophy. Given this context, civil society as a space between the state and religious traditions is important in the region. Sajoo notes, 'My own earliest exposure to debates on civil society came not in the West but rather during field visits to Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore in the early 1990s' (2002, p. 26).

Civil society is an important concept in addressing the challenges of democracy without secularism. It is all well and good to assume broad agreement on a political end like justice, but these important political concepts need grounding in some rationality or sources. Liberal secularism asserts its own neutrality, then on that basis declares religious goods as problematic in political philosophy. As discussed in chapters 3 and 4, Charles Taylor and others have pointed to the limits of a liberal-secular order as a limited order around which an entire polity can rally. Religious traditions and their sometimes conflicting moral orders illustrate the limitations of 'pure reason'. At the very least, claims rooted in public reason have not been universally accepted.[151] Taylor's foot in the door against a totalising secularism gives space for the transcendent.[152] This goes against the so-called secularisation thesis, or subtraction stories,[153] proposed by sociologists

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[151] This frequently is pointed out in responses to John Rawls, and this debate remains ongoing. A cursory search of the Oxford Bodleian Library shows hundreds of journal articles and book-length responses to Rawls' work: http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/primo-explore/search?query=any,contains,response%20to%20john%20rawls&tab=local&search_scope=LSCOP _ALL&vid=SOLO&lang=en_US&offset=0.

[152] This is what Taylor argues as secularism 3: 'The shift to secularity in this sense consists, among other things, of a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace' (Taylor, 2007, p. 3).

[153] 'I will be making a continuing polemic against what I call "subtraction stories". Concisely put, I mean by this stories of modernity in general, and secularity in particular, which explain them by human beings having lost, or sloughed off, or liberated themselves from certain earlier, confining horizons, or illusions, or limitations of knowledge' (Taylor, 2007, p. 22).

including Parsons (1960), Martin (1978), and Berger (1967).[154] In many liberal democracies, studies show the persistence of religious adherents, with parts of Europe being an exception rather than the rule.[155]

Adopting a perspective beyond the secularization thesis highlights how figures like Madjid can be profitably read, and where we can expect insights. Madjid frequently quotes and dialogues with Parsons (Parsons, 1966). Ideas travel and find responses in far-flung places. Parsons might not have been aware of Madjid's responses to him, since he mainly wrote in the Indonesian language. Yet Madjid's engagement comes from a different imagination which was developed in Indonesia, a unique place with a commitment to transcendence in the philosophical foundation of the state.

Madjid makes explicit reference to categories of civil society.[156] This conceptual space offers a theoretical option which both civil religion and liberalism can support. Both Madjid and Taylor make a case for pluralistic societies from their respective religious traditions. Madjid's voice as a Muslim philosopher in a democracy with a clear Muslim majority offers insights for sustaining a robust civil religious space. He adds a unique Islamic imagination to the discussion.

Islamic Roots for Pluralism

One of Madjid's most important texts is his journal article 'Islamic Roots for Modern Pluralism' (1994). In this text, we can see an expression of themes of his religious moral order: contextualisation of Islam, *ijtihad* as an interpretative framework for reading

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[154] Berger (1999) changed his mind regarding this secularisation narrative before Taylor's work and wrote on the resurgence of religion.

[155] Davie (2000, pp. 13–14) studies this issue while also pointing to the growing significance of Islam on the European continent.

[156] I will further develop this point later in the chapter, under the heading 'Civil Society as an Interstitial Space'.

Islamic sources, and a focus on *tawhid*. In this article, Madjid grounded his ideas of modern pluralism within the history of Islam as it has historically, and necessarily, been contextualised in Indonesia. He advanced his argument through five main sections: (1) Indonesia is a modern nation-state with a special commitment to religion and society, as expressed in the preamble to its constitution, which identifies five key principles called Pancasila; (2) Indonesian society is dominated by non-Arab expressions of Islam, the distinctive aspects of which are important to understand; (3) this distinctive Indonesian context fosters tolerance, which is fully compatible with the Qur'an and the message of the prophet Muhammad; (4) tolerance is a vital component of modern nation-states and integral to Indonesia's own cultural heritage; and (5) Indonesia's unique blend of democracy and religion is both theologically legitimate and compatible with Islamic history.

Madjid introduces and provides an English translation for Indonesia's Pancasila, five foundational principles which undergird the constitution: 'Belief in One Supreme God or Monotheism, Just and Civilized Humanism, the Unity of Indonesia, Democracy, and Social Justice' (Madjid, 1994, p. 57). The first principle, an affirmation of belief in God, makes a distinctive point about the young nation-state. The wording carefully navigates between Islamic convictions of God's oneness without making absolute claims about Allah. In the Indonesian language, the wording is '*ketuhanan yang maha esa*'. *Tuhan* is often a less specific word for God. It is different from the word *Allah* and is used by both Christians and Muslims. The prefix and suffix used in *ketuhanan* change the word to add ambiguity and broaden the meaning. This distinction displays the complicated religious milieu of Indonesia. Belief in a supreme God was essential for making this

founding document acceptable to Muslims, therefore bringing cohesion to a diverse state. The first principle of Pancasila, affirming that Indonesians share a belief in the existence of God, underlies and animates the modern Indonesian nation-state.

Ever since the founding of modern Indonesia, Islamists have contested Pancasila, both politically and, at times, through armed rebellion. However, during the course of President Suharto's 32-year rule, nearly all major civil society institutions acknowledged and accepted Pancasila as the sole and final "ideological basis for Indonesia as a nation, a state, and a society" (Madjid, 1994, p. 58). The commitment to this principle is reflected in the fact that every Indonesian citizen must choose one of six religions and have that affiliation noted on their government-issued identification. An option to choose a traditional religion that is officially recognised by the state became viable in 2017 (Marshall, 2018, p. 87). Expression of some type of belief in God is included in the legal code. Although Madjid supported this practice, I do not consider it a viable part of civil religious pluralism for other countries.

Having established that Indonesia is committed to being a religious nation, one that is mostly Islamic in composition,[157] Madjid points out that it is 'the least Arabized of the major Islamic countries' (1994, p. 59). This is because Islamisation in Indonesia occurred primarily through trade and not by the sword, and this peaceful process allowed for a longer and deeper engagement with those who brought Islam to the archipelago. Some have labelled the result of this process as syncretism, but Madjid contested this view. The peaceful process allowed for a longer and deeper engagement with those bringing Islam, which some positively labelled hybridity (Bhabha, 1994). Madjid contested this view by

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[157] Madjid (1994, pp. 66–67) noted that the population was 90% Muslim at that time.

engaging with the famous anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Madjid acknowledges that the book *Religion of Java* (Geertz, 1960) interprets Indonesian Islam in this light. Madjid argues that Geertz's writings reflected an over-reliance on modernist sources and a shallow and colonial bias. Madjid supports his critique by drawing on Islamic scholars such as Marshall Hodgson (1977), Robert Hefner (1985), and Mark Woodward.

Madjid argues that Indonesia has a contextualised understanding of Islam, practised with the predominant Islamic language in the region, Malay. There is a crucial difference between contextualisation and syncretism. Indonesia's contextualisation is reflected in the decision by the early Javanese leaders to use the Malay-based Indonesian language. It is full of Islamic terminology, has a heavy Arabic influence, and was chosen over Javanese, spoken by the majority of the people, with its Indic Sanskrit influence. Madjid believed that this decision reflects Indonesia's genuine Islamic heritage while also exhibiting distinct cultural variations from Arab societies in the Middle East: 'Islam is not to be identified with any particular culture or language, not even with Arabic ones. However, the fact that Arabic language is the main vehicle for taking Islam and Islamic culture around the world, it is quite expected that language borrowed from Arabic more or less implies the acceptance of Islamic values' (Madjid, 1994, p. 63).

After defining Indonesia as both religious and Islamic in its own right, Madjid defends the national ideas of Pancasila from the Qur'an. This is where he moves to the heart of his case. Modern pluralism not only fits within Indonesia's diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious milieu; it has its very roots in the Qur'an and Islamic thinking in history. Madjid wrote, 'For many Muslims, Pancasila is, from the Qur'anic perspective, a common term between different religious factions that God commands to seek and find'

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(1994, p. 65). Pancasila is consistent with the beliefs of the 'People of the Book'[158] and thus 'becomes a firm basis for the development of religious tolerance and pluralism in Indonesia' (Madjid, 1994, p. 68). An organised community broader than a purely Islamic polity is also part of Islamic history. Madjid sees a parallel between Pancasila and the constitution of Medina, which created one nation from all factions (including Jews) and conferred on everyone the 'same rights and duties as Muslims' (Madjid, 1994, p. 64). Therefore, Muslims who exclude and subjugate other 'People of the Book' do so without the support of the Qur'an or an understanding of the prophet's charter of Medina.

Madjid highlights this positive aspect of Islamic history, but many Islamic majority rulers have not consistently applied it. There are numerous examples of Muslim states treating non-Muslims as second-class citizens, often levying a special tax, *jizya*, for their alternative beliefs.[159] Madjid acknowledges the difficulty amongst many Muslims of constantly maintaining an open attitude: 'It is stated that the fact that one Revelation should name others as authentic is an extraordinary event in the history of religions. However, it is almost too much to ask that a man holds other people's religion as equal to his own' (Madjid, 1994, p. 65). Madjid supports this claim with a quotation from another reformer: 'Ibn Taymiyyah argues that the previous holy books still contain divine wisdom, and that this wisdom is still binding to the followers of those books themselves and Muslims' (Madjid, 1994, p. 75). Despite the historical expressions, Madjid's support

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[158] Here he quotes from Surah 3:64: 'Say: O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you; that we worship none but God; that we associate not partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons, other than God.'

[159] This was a special tax applied to *dhimmi*, or non-Muslims living in a Muslim state (Yeʾor, 1996, p. 77).

of pluralism through Islamic roots is his core argument and is carried forward through the rest of the article.

Madjid goes on to grant that robust and tolerant civilisations have not been fully developed in Muslim communities. In commenting on this, he quotes from Bernard Lewis: 'For Christians and Muslims alike, tolerance is a new virtue, and intolerance a new crime' (Lewis, 1984, pp. 3–4). Notwithstanding the difficulties in some modern Muslim communities, Islam has a great history of tolerance. Madjid points to Spain in the 8th century as a prime example of Christians, Muslims, and Jews living together under Islamic rulers. The problem today is not Islam itself, but 'how Muslims adapt themselves to the modern age' (Madjid, 1994, p. 67). Indeed, in closing themselves off, Muslims in Madjid's era are losing their strengths from the classic Islamic age.[160]

Madjid further develops his positive outlook towards other religions and the insights they may offer through the concepts of *fitrah* '(natural disposition and men's inborn, intuitive abilities to discern between right and wrong, true and false)' and *hanifiyyah* 'therefore has a natural inclination toward the good, the true, and the sacred (*hanifiyyah*)' (1994, p. 67). *Fitrah* and *hanifiyyah* are common to all humanity, but weakness often tempts men and women to pursue their short-term interests and/or self-gratification to the exclusion of justice and morality. Herein lie the seeds of tyranny, responsible for many of the world's problems. Yet a robust understanding of human nature, which incorporates the Islamic concepts of *fitrah* and *hanifiyyah*, will naturally

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[160] 'From the positive perspective, it is always possible that the classical Muslims fully internalized such a positive and optimistic conception of humanity, a conception which then made them such a cosmopolitan and universalist community that they were ready to learn and adopt anything valuable from the experiences of other communities. Thus, the role of early Muslims as one of the first communities to internationalize sciences' (Madjid, 1994, p. 68).

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encourage Muslims to respect those of noble character, who exhibit pure thoughts, intentions, and actions, even if they are not Muslims. Islamic doctrine itself acknowledges the 'original oneness of humanity and the basic equality of all people' (Madjid, 1994, p. 68).

Madjid's argument gains further momentum through the need to adapt the eternal truths of the Qur'an to different cultural and historical environments (Madjid, 1994, p. 70). This is possible because the Qur'an speaks of eternal ahistorical truths but must communicate these truths in space and time: 'All human experience in history is subject to the operation of the Sunnat Allah (the Law of God) which is immutable and objective, independent of human wishes. Therefore, a certainty of historical relativism is needed here, a value that leads people to a readiness for change in a positive and constructive way' (Madjid, 1994, p. 71). He asserts that Islam has both the capacity to adapt to modern culture and the need to do so: 'A modernization of Islam, that is, its adaptation to the environment of the modern age, should occur without disturbing its genuineness and authenticity as a revealed religion' (Madjid, 1994, p. 72).

Madjid concludes that Islam has the innate capacity to adapt to modern culture and that Muslims have an urgent duty to facilitate the 'modernization of Islam, that is, its adaptation to the environment of the modern age, [which] should occur without disturbing its genuineness and authenticity as a revealed religion' (1994, p. 72). Both the Qur'anic view of human nature and Islamic history provide justification for the creation of a pluralistic democracy. Madjid believed that Indonesia's multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-linguistic environment positions it to make a unique contribution to the world, for its own heritage parallels the era of Islamic tolerance in Spain. 'Being the largest among

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Muslim nations, Indonesia could offer itself as a laboratory for developing modern religious tolerance and pluralism' (Madjid, 1994, p. 76).

Civil Society as an Interstitial Space

From Pluralism to Civil Society

Pluralism and civil society have not always thrived since Indonesia gained independence. The nation's political history has included authoritarian leaders as well as abrupt swings in how the state interacts with religion. Religious traditions have often been instruments for political purposes.

Sukarno, independent Indonesia's first leader, was determined to turn 17,000 islands and more than 700 ethnolinguistic groups into a cohesive political entity. His sense of a nation transcended ethnic and religious limitations. From the beginning of his tenure, he argued that 'separating Islam from state … would liberate Islam from the tutelage of corrupt rulers and unleash its progressive potentialities' (Hefner, 2000, p. 39). This thinking was contested by some Muslims, who pushed for greater integration between Islam and the state. An ostensible compromise was agreed on, called the Jakarta charter. This proposed amendment to Pancasila and the constitution followed the belief in one God with an additional statement that it is obligatory for Muslims to follow Sharia (Ricklefs, 1981, p. 197). However, Sukarno, perhaps in a move to retain power, ultimately rejected the Jakarta charter's legality in 1959[161] and established his 'guided democracy', which extended through the attempted coup in 1965 (Ricklefs, 1981, p. 254).

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[161] The dissolving of the revised constitution, which included the Jakarta charter, was upheld by the court during Suharto's New Order. The reasoning was that 'because the Constitution of 1950 was based on liberal, parliamentary democracy that was said to be in conflict with Indonesian values and Pancasila' (Ramage, 1995, p. 11).

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Suharto's military-backed overthrow of Sukarno included a wave of violence against Indonesia's communist political party. The violence and killings of 1965 have been recorded and widely analysed (Boland, 1982; Feith & Castles, 1970; Hefner, 2000; Ramage, 1995; Ricklefs, 1981). Suharto's New Order consolidated power and heavily pushed the national ideology of Pancasila. The communist party was perceived as contrary to Indonesian values, as atheism violated the first principle of belief in God. This application of Pancasila, in the early years of the New Order, also rejected liberal democracy as a deviation, while delegitimising political Islam at the same time (Ramage, 1995, p. 12). Throughout Suharto's tenure, his position would change and he would court conservative Muslims when choosing that path would solidify his power (Hefner, 2000, p. 71). The president often pitted different religious communities against one another to weaken potential opposition. The swings between religion's political vitality and perceived threat, along with the competing visions for Islam's political engagement, helped create conditions for an interest in civil society. When the state was shifting unpredictably between friend and enemy (Hefner, 2000, p. 167), a non-state space became a more hospitable place for discussion. In the midst of this extended turmoil, Nahdlatul Ulama withdrew some of its political influence and some activists agreed with Madjid's alternative focus on social and educational development (Hefner, 2000, p. 168).

The New Order's focus on development encouraged space for civil or cultural Islam. Madjid was part of this development as head of the largest Muslim student organisation. In this same time period, Madjid travelled to America and the Middle East, where he was exposed to secularisation theories and different Islamic ideologies (Kersten, 2011, p. 54). He also developed a relationship with Abdurrahman Wahid, a future

president of Indonesia, who was studying Arabic literature in Baghdad. Their friendship and cooperation would eventually last over 40 years as both men attained national prominence (Barton, 1997b). Their early encounter and long friendship were crucial in strengthening support for civil society amongst Muslims in Indonesia.

Madjid's life as a public intellectual established the foundation for his engagement with streams of Islamic revival and renewal. Indonesia's location in Southeast Asia, the nation's engagement with the global spread of ideas in the Ummah, and its post-colonial context created a fertile environment for creative thinking. The establishment of the two largest Islamic organisations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, in the early 20th century demonstrates Indonesia's engagement with various reform movements happening within Islam.[162] These movements existed prior to Indonesia's modern state and played a prominent role as Indonesian Muslims negotiated their colonial context. The Dutch colonial administration's introduction of secular state schooling prompted an educational reaction by Muslims in promoting traditional Islamic *pesantrens* and *pondoks*, or teaching centres. The contention related to the Jakarta Charter in the early founding of the country demonstrates the tensions between Islamic groups and President Sukarno, who admired the Turkish model of a secular state. Instead of moving towards an Islamic-focused state, Indonesia navigated a middle path, trying to hold together a broad archipelago with different ethnicities and religious commitments. Pancasila's commitment to divinity, without a corresponding commitment to Islam, created an open space where 'the country could neither be regarded as "an Islamic state according to

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[162] Kersten (2011, p. 46) makes a connection to Al-Afghani, Abduh, and Rida in Egypt.

orthodox Islamic conceptions," nor "a secular state which would consider religion merely a private matter"' (Kersten, 2011, p. 49).

Towards the end of the New Order and the era of reform, civil society was growing in importance. Hefner discusses Wahid and Madjid's associated vision:

> Each man had dedicated himself to a long-term strategy of democratization premised on civic organizations and a middle class capable of counterbalancing the power of the state. The slogan 'civil society' or, as it is known among Southeast Asian Muslim scholars, *masyarakat madani*, had captured the imagination of Muslim democrats frustrated by the reversals of 1994 but hoping to avoid a slippery slide into violence. The idea of civil society seemed to offer a kinder and gentler road to democracy, one that avoided confrontation with the state by emphasizing an incremental expansion in civic power. (Hefner, 2000, p. 189)

The political machinations during this period were intense, with Suharto sowing dissent to hold on to power, various Muslim groups advancing their own agenda, and a struggling economy after the financial crisis in 1998. Through Madjid's leadership, the wider Muslim community urged Suharto to step down and begin peaceful reform (Hefner, 2000, p. 207). His departure began a transition to a more stable democracy, with civil society being an important component.

Madjid's early writing on the place of religion in contemporary Muslim society places great emphasis on embracing modernisation without the perceived dangers of Westernisation. These dangers include secularist ideologies of humanism, rationalism, liberalism, and communism (Kersten, 2011, p. 55). Moving into the modern age does not have to include travelling a similar pathway to Europe or North America. Neither did Madjid opt for an Islamic state option. With his declaration of 'Islam Yes, Islamic Party No!' he parted ways with 'classical modernists and their conflation of state and religion' (Kersten, 2011, p. 56).

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Madjid is a part of the new Muslim intellectualism which has been evolving over the last 50 years. His approach of reading Islamic sources along with resources from Western scholarship shaped his attitude, which 'was translated into a shift away from overtly political Islamic agendas towards and appreciation for Islamic values as the moral compass guiding the development of a civil society under the continued guidance of Nurcholish Madjid and NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid' (Kersten, 2012, p. 124).

Civil Society as Mediating Space

Madjid recognised that civil society was a new idea for Muslims that had conceptual relevance in light of the modern state. Yet, as he often did, Madjid looked back into Islamic history for roots and justification for modern concepts. As explained in chapter 4 in the section on Madjid's religious moral order, *ijtihad* creates possibilities for reappraising Islamic sources in light of current needs. Madjid advocated for the mediating space of civil society as a historical outworking of Islamic principles in the modern nation-state.

Madjid uses the English term 'civil society' in some of his writings as well as the Indonesian terms *masyarakat sipil* (civil community) or *masyarakat madani* (community like Medina). The second term, *masyarakat madani*, is used far more often and was introduced by Malaysian scholar Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, though some scholars recognise that Madjid popularised the term in Indonesia (Bakti, 2005, p. 491). Madjid's use of the term is relevant to this thesis, as the Indonesian word *madani* in Islamic thought is often compared with the Greek word *polis* (Bakti, 2005, p. 491). Madjid sought to justify a non-state space for religion to the Muslim community by showing its roots in Islamic history.

To return to the three aspects of civil society introduced at the beginning of the chapter, a thriving network of associations and voluntary connections helps to strengthen the state. Madjid consciously recognized this fact:

> First, by definition, civil society is non-governmental associations, not only non-governmental organisations (NGOs), but also independent foundations, agencies, research institutions, and so on. Therefore, civil society or civil society [*masyarakat madani*] is usually a buffer between the government and society. Because of this, the attitude is to protect the people, but sometimes it also becomes the spokesperson for the government to the people (Madjid, 2019, p. 3439).[163]

Protecting society from the government was important, given Indonesia's experience of two authoritarian leaders, Sukarno and Suharto. Participation in free elections was indeed foundational for democracy, but to truly have a strong society, a network of associations should be developed:

> But democracy does not 'stay' in elections. If democracy—as understood in developed countries—must have a 'home', then the house is civil society or 'civil society' (*masyarakat madani*), where there are various kinds of associations; clubs, guilds, syndicates, federations, unions, political parties and groups combine to become a shield between the state and the citizens. Although the concept of civil society cannot be analysed precisely, the functioning of civil society is clearly and unequivocally at the core of political systems that open up public participation. (Madjid, 2019, p. 3952)[164]

Another important function for civil society is the development of norms for moral life and civility. This cannot be taken for granted but must be proactively developed. In this regard, religious traditions have much to offer. Without this component of civil society, a nation will not be able to overcome disagreements. A certain amount of civility is needed for the development of social norms. In situations which call for the

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[163] This specific reference comes from the compilation of Madjid's works, more specifically from *Open Dialogue*.

[164] This reference comes from Madjid's book *Islamic Political Ideals* in the compilation of Madjid's work.

development of civility, the limits of the liberal approach of asserting negative freedom become clear:

> Civil society is more than a mixture of various forms of association. The notion of civil society also refers to the quality of civility, without which the social environment would only consist of factions, cliques, and secret unions that attack each other. Civility implies tolerance, the willingness of individuals to accept various kinds of political views and social behavior; also a willingness to accept the all-important view that there is not always a right answer to a problem. And it is very important to pay attention to the presence or absence of civility in the existing unions, apart from the relationship between the various unions with one another. Ironically, groups that fight for democracy and other commendable values often do not reflect these values within themselves or the personalities of their leaders. Unfortunately, civility is a quality that is missing in many developing countries. (Madjid, 2019, p. 3954)

In the case of Indonesia when Madjid was writing, civil society had an important function of protecting the people as well as allowing the people to inform the government. While underscoring the importance of civil society, however, Madjid is aware that it is not a golden key:

> Civil society is more of a beneficiary than a destructive force. Moreover, civil society is often idealized as a perfect good. Like all social phenomena, civil society can, and often does, have its downsides. Selfishness, prejudice and hatred often go hand in hand with altruism, fairness and courtesy. The role of civil society that is free and unfettered is not an idea that should be warmly welcomed, but a truly terrifying thought. (Madjid, 2019, p. 3953)

The importance of the third aspect of civil society, the public sphere, is less clear in Madjid's writing, but this likely reflects the context in Indonesia. Much of the press apparatus was supervised by the state, with Suharto interfering with the media when he was criticised. As mentioned above regarding the importance of civility, subtlety in communication and gradual change provide greater possibilities for a strong Indonesian democracy. Madjid frequently wrote on Indonesian values and cultural strengths, the upholding of which was important for the growing nation to develop a truly Indonesian

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democracy. All citizens should participate and contribute to this sense of wholeness, which is an expression of a unifying communicative space.

> The existence of civil society or civil society implies a shared identity, at least through indirect agreement on the outlines of the boundaries of political institutions. In other words, citizenship, with its rights and responsibilities, is an integral part of the notion of civil society. Citizenship provides the foundation for civil society. Because being part of the whole is a prerequisite for the whole to become a society. Otherwise, society has no wholeness, becoming just like a vessel full of separate parts. Therefore, individuals in civil society have their human rights recognized by the state, but, in return, they are required to fulfil their obligations to the state. (Madjid, 2019, pp. 3953–3954)

In a journal article on civil society, Madjid (2001) gives three reasons for the Islamic community to embrace civil society: an historical rationale, sociological reasons, and the importance of applying classic teachings in modernity. Expressions of civil society are justified from the Islamic tradition and can be applied beyond only Muslim citizens based on the affirmation of our shared humanity.

Historically, the notion of a civil society was already described in early Muslim political documents. 'Thus the Holy Prophet Muhammad laid down the foundation of the establishment of law-abiding citizenship in "Virtuous City", a community of people that the moderns now would call, in Arabic "*al-mujtama' al-madani*", an idea that resembles very much such a currently held idea of "civil society" or, more aptly, "civilized society"' (Madjid, 2001, p. 109). Quoting Robert Bellah, Madjid emphasises the ways in which the community and order established by Mohammad were politically ahead of their time. The community's political ideals stretched the cultural and social structures too much, with high community involvement and non-hereditary leadership succession. Madjid acknowledges that this early community failed, but it failed by 'relapsing into pre-Islamic principles of social organization' (2001, p. 110). These classical Muslim ideas make even more sense today in the modern nation-state. When properly understood, this early

example of the Muslim community supports 'such modern ideas as human rights and, by direct implication, civil society' (Madjid, 2001, p. 111).

As classic Islamic teachings should be properly contextualised in modernity, Madjid argues that the modern notion of civil society fits within the Muslim world because of teachings on our common humanity. He justifies this by citing an Italian philosopher, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.[165] This Italian philosopher refers to Muslim thinkers in his famous oration on the dignity of man. Citing a famous commentary on the Qur'an,[166] Madjid quotes it extensively on the subject of man's creation in a mould which reflects Allah. The term *taqwim* refers to man's ability to do good or evil and is created with the capacity to find the right path (Madjid, 2001, p. 101). This is akin to the Christian term 'image of God', where man in his natural state can choose good or evil. Given this state of creation, as well as man's '*fitrah* (primordial, pristine nature)' (Madjid, 2001, p. 101), humanity is capable of great wisdom and finding the right path.[167] This is part of the vicegerency given to humanity, where people set up systems of organisation in the right ways. Democratic structures paired with civil society would easily fit with proper leading of the polity, as Mohammad confirmed in his farewell speech.[168]

As Madjid looks at sociological reasons for civil society, it is surprising, given how other Muslim writers critiqued the United States, that his principles drawn from Islam are deemed consistent with American founding documents: 'Just as the holy prophet insisted on the sacredness of "*Life, Property and Honour*", now we find the echo of the principles

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[165] Madjid calls Pico della Mirandola 'the most influential Renaissance philosopher of men' (2001, p. 99).

[166] Madjid cites Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Bakr Ibn Faraj al-Ansari al-Qurtubi

[167] Madjid also quotes a modern interpreter of the Qur'an, Yusuf Ali.

[168] Madjid notes that this speech is preserved in several 'authentic Hadiths' (Madjid, 2001, p. 106).

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in modern documents like the American Declaration of Independence'. The values of life, property and honor are seen in parallel with 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness' (Madjid, 2001, p. 106). He also points to a similar phrase at the end of the Declaration: 'With a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our *lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor*.' Individual freedom can survive only under a system of law by which both the ruler and the ruled are obliged. Such a system of fundamental laws, whether written or embodied in tradition, is known as a constitution (Madjid, 2019, p. 107).[169]

For Madjid, the commonality between the values of life, property, and honour, as well as the general support and freedom for societal structures, is reflected in the so-called constitution of Medina (Lecker, 2014). This early constitution was formed between Mohammed and non-Muslim peoples of the city to resolve conflict. It is described as akin to an embodied tradition, or a constitution (Madjid, 2001, p. 107). This becomes an important point regarding how to conceptualise society: 'Therefore, madinah conceptually means "a place where people live together in a settled community, obeying the rule of law", that is "state", "polity"' (Madjid, 2001, p. 107). Madjid's frequent references to the ideal setting of the constitution of Medina, however, do not properly account for how *dhimmi* people came to be treated in later Muslim communities.

As he argues that civil society is supported by the Islamic tradition, Madjid describes its potential function as a mediating space. This notion of a holy city fits with civil society as providing a balance between unjust rulers and unruly people. Madjid is describing a non-state space where norms can be negotiated and socialised. Given the

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[169] The emphases in the quotations in this paragraph come from Madjid.

commitment to Islam, despite allowances for other religious traditions, Madjid's civil society aligns more with an Islamic civil religion, albeit one with roots in the community as well as in the state.

I see a fit, with some modifications, between Madjid's description of civil society and the three main theoretical points about civil society presented at beginning of this chapter: forms of associational life, generating norms of civil life, and the public sphere. Madjid is a Muslim scholar who envisioned space for social connections, the negotiation of goods, and public discourse in a modern democracy. The application of his thinking is more limited as the Indonesian context is not hospitable to unbelief, and thus his ideas would not find an immediate home in Western liberal democracies. Yet they demonstrate how religious traditions can contribute to the negotiation of goods without asserting the dominance of a single religious tradition. In Madjid's context, he is moving away from theocracy, and thus his formulation tends to sound more like civil religion.

The Islamic tradition failed to protect civil society and develop democracy. The idea was, according to Madjid's use of Bellah, 'before its time'. Society collapsed into Islamic dynasties 'and did not know how to have leaders through election until the introduction of the idea of modern democracy with its universal suffrage' (Madjid, 2001, p. 110). Madjid upholds the early positive example in Medina while condemning monarchies and authoritarian political structures. Indonesia's political environment for so many years was hostile towards any criticism and often democratic in name only. One might imagine the importance of a civil society space in light of an untrustworthy government, as in the main argument of Hefner's *Civil Islam* (2000).

Through Indonesia's transitions from a guided democracy to the New Order, to the era of Reform, Madjid was a voice for democracy sustained by active civil society. His work in establishing the Paramadina Foundation and Paramadina University were part of his contributions to civil society.[170] As the reform era began around the turn of the century, Indonesia was able to recover one of its cultural resources. The Malay archipelago had a long history of integrating the strengths of various civilisations around it. Religious and cultural values from Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim civilisations found a home in Indonesia, and this mix provided resources for a resilient pluralism that adapted to modern democracy with strong civil society.[171]

We see in Madjid something more like civil religion than liberalism, but it comes with a political vision that embraces the need for civil society to counterbalance the state. Although some aspects of Madjid's version of civil religion would not be welcome in Western democracies today, his emphasis on civil society should be appreciated. He makes a case for the benefits religion can bring to society. A proactively developed civil society as the space between government and citizen frees the state to be primarily concerned with negative freedom, while allowing religions to bolster positive freedom.[172]

> Civil society is an organic part of democracy, and it is by its own definition the opposite of absolutist regimes. But worrying that civil society will be able to overthrow the government is naive. In fact, the mutual relationship between the government and civil society is more often defined in terms of cooperation

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[170] Bakti credits Madjid's wide influence: 'During the Soeharto regime, Madjid, leader of Paramadina, emerged as he led peaceful demonstrations while mediating between demonstrators, civil society organizations, and Soeharto himself' (2005, p. 487).

[171] 'Since the beginning of the common era, island Southeast Asia had assimilated Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese commercial technologies, Islamic mysticism and political philosophy, and a host of other influences. In the modern era the region was further transformed by colonial capitalism, state bureaucracies, print culture, intra-Asian diasporas, Islamic reform, and national liberation movements. If any region of the world seemed well suited for the new issues of hybridity and globality, it was Southeast Asia' (Hefner, 2000, p. xvii).

[172] In his *Essays on Liberty*, Berlin (2002, pp. 170, 183, 185) discusses positive freedom and engages with Rousseau's work.

rather than conflict. Therefore, in countries with undemocratic power structures, we need subtle strategies. We need a framework that gives citizens the opportunity to tie the knot with the government at one time, and at other times it may loosen or even release the bond, but with responsibility. But we also need space for ties between the state and civil society, both when they agree and are at crossroads with the government. (Madjid, 2019, p. 3956)

Madjid promoted civil society as a necessary buffer between the state and its citizens. Civil society can also help to develop and regulate social norms which can inform the state. His conception of civil society supports my main point that a civil religious space is a necessary component for a post-liberal political society.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have engaged with the category of civil society, arguing that civil society is the primary location for civil religious space in modern democracy. In a society with both religious and liberal selves and multiple moral orders, civil society offers a truly neutral, non-state space that is crucial for working out the political implications of multiple moral orders. A defined and enforced legal code is not the best place to negotiate important goods which the state values.

In the definition of goods, tension remains between religion and the state. In the introduction to this chapter, we observed limitations in how this tension is addressed through theocracy, liberalism, or civil religion. The Islamic world wrestled with issues of competing authority as democracies were established in Islamic-majority nations. Theocracy was accepted by some states, though not all, and liberalism was rejected as it offered little room for significant religious goods. Many Muslim writers critiqued liberalism's assertion of its own rationality over and against all others. This discourse exposes assumptions of a universal rationality.

Nurcholish Madjid also struggled with these ideas. In his work, we see religious support for a public space, like civil society, where political goods can be discussed and negotiated. This space is of increasing importance as globalisation and migration continue.[173] Accordingly, Madjid was a chief developer and main proponent of the idea of civil society in Southeast Asia. Since Indonesia is certainly not a theocracy overseen by a single religious tradition and Pancasila does not provide a friendly home for liberalism, Madjid's articulation aligns most closely with civil religion. While bolstering religion's contribution to political society, his application of theistic ideals would likely be untenable for the non-religious in Western societies.

Despite the various proposals by liberalism for organising a just and fair society through distancing religious claims to various goods, religious adherents are interested in justifying these goods by their religious traditions. This makes the liberal approach a non-starter when goods promoted by the liberal state come into conflict with goods desired by religious communities. Those in the liberal tradition who do not subscribe to these religiously defined goods are also unwilling to relinquish their values and understanding of justice. This has often led to an impasse and culture wars over how societal goods are determined.

The mediating space of civil society offers a non-state, pluralistic space for the negotiation of goods to which the state should pay attention as it develops and enforces a

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[173] Madjid emphasises civil societies contribution to social cohesion. 'In the way of making a conclusion, we would remind ourselves that in an increasingly interdependent and interpenetrating global community, any human rights and civil orientation that does not genuinely support the widest possible shaping and sharing of all values among all human beings is likely to provoke widespread skepticism' (2001, p. 111). His reference to genuine support is critical here. This is why Madjid continually argues for democratic ideas such as civil society from Islamic sources.

legal code upon all citizens. The dialogue of traditions in civil society should inform the

state's understanding and application of justice, which is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 6: The Administration of Justice

One of the hallmarks of liberal democracy is its rejection of tyranny and promotion of justice for all. The distribution of power among the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government is intended to protect against one branch or leader enforcing their will on everyone. The state, with all its various branches, is responsible for protecting its citizens and ensuring justice. This is one of the chief responsibilities of the state. Justice, in the sense of rightness, includes defining what is right and wrong. This is worked out in the legal code and includes enforcing laws through police or security forces, judging cases, and handling appeals in the court system.

In this chapter, I argue that the moral dialogue happening in civil society results in a better shared vision of justice which, as it includes the contributions of religious communities, legitimately informs the state's administration of justice. This requires the state's support and proactive involvement to ensure this diverse moral dialogue is taking place. A focus on justice resulting from this arrangement recognises religions' public goods and better navigates the pitfalls of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion in a post-liberal state.

Whatever historical events or moral traditions have influenced the legal code, the modern state does not allow anyone other than itself to carry out justice. Neither Christians in the US nor Muslims in Indonesia are allowed to enforce their religious teaching or theology in public space, no matter how clearly their religious goods overlap with political ends.

The liberal democratic state introduced structural changes to rescue justice from the threat of tyranny under theocratic regimes and thereby better define and enforce

justice for all citizens, even those without a religious tradition. I am concerned with justice as the chief political good of the state, enforced through the legal code. I develop this thought by looking at historical developments in how justice is treated by the modern state. Liberalism sought to rescue justice from theocracy, but this rescue resulted in its own failures.

Some advocates of classical liberalism, like John Rawls, in their efforts to avoid the tyranny of a single religious tradition, present their notions of justice in a purely political and not a metaphysical framework (Warner, 2022). As this framework does not appeal to transcendence for validation, it is assumed to be acceptable to all. In this sense, it is similar to the civil religion tradition, which also seeks a common framework acceptable to all. Yet it fails to secure justice because it excludes religious goods. As I argued in chapters 3 and 4, religious goods are inseparable from religious selves and embedded in a moral order. The liberal tradition fails at times to secure justice because it assumes its goods to be truly neutral, whereas they too lie within a tradition. As I argued in chapter 5, the liberal tradition is one among many and should participate in a dialogue of goods, which best occurs in civil society. The moral dialogue about public goods in civil society moves towards defining justice. In this space a true fusion of horizons can take place. Incorporating these religious traditions contributes towards a more robust picture of justice.

I present and interact with Madjid's sources under three headings, which respectively articulate how a shared vision of justice, a dialogue of moral orders, and resulting social cohesion are necessary for a strong and vibrant state. In the context of a democratic state, this shared vision of justice must inform the state's administration of

justice. This arrangement best accounts for the inherent goals of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion and is the final conceptual component of civil religious pluralism.

The Democratic State Administers Justice

A theocratic political arrangement overly concentrates power within a single tradition with a narrow definition of justice. It frequently leads to tyranny. Liberalism, by separating religion from political power, sought to rescue justice from theocracy. A single religious tradition is too focused on its own beliefs and cannot judge those outside the tradition equitably. Liberalism assumed its own neutrality even as it helpfully critiqued theocracy's form of justice and potential for tyranny. To comply with its own rationality, liberalism sought to bracket transcendence away from public space. As discussed in chapter 4 and as evidenced by Rawls, this created a liberal moral order. Within this frame, no transcendent reference was needed to declare right and wrong. Reason was assumed sufficient to both define and carry out justice. But this stance assumes a universal rationality intuitively accepted by all reasonable people.

The idea of a universal rationality is certainly appealing, but it is undermined by the discourse on multiple modernities and undercut by liberalism's own value of multiculturalism. The state cannot assume its own rationality and notion of justice while imposing liberal values on all its citizens without recognising that it has excluded transcendent goods. This betrays liberalism's own democratic values.

In chapter 5, I argued that civil society is an important non-state space where a dialogue of traditions can take place. Democratic states have implemented a legal code which has borrowed its political goods from religious moral orders. The early theorists of liberalism, such as Locke, established liberal ideals by appealing to Christian religious

texts and theological assertions. Indonesia, while allowing for elements of Sharia in the province of Aceh, supports democratic pluralism. Similar to Locke, Madjid and other Muslim philosophers supported their arguments for political goods from Islamic religious texts and theology.

The discourse on justice and political society has been necessary as long as people within society have disagreed on what is right. Plato describes justice in the city as corresponding to a rightly ordered soul—i.e., all parts of the city functioning according to their natural strengths with discipline and in proper arrangement with each other. In a rightly ordered city, justice exists after wisdom, courage, and self-discipline have been established. Justice occurs when each level of society 'does one's own job' (Plato, 2000, p. 127) and contributes to the city's harmony and flourishing. In Aristotle's writing, justice is a key virtue which helps man separate himself from animals and live in an ordered society: 'Justice on the other hand is an element of the state; for judicial procedure, which means the decision of what is just, is the regulation of the political partnership' (Aristotle, 1950, p. 13). Justice is implemented through the state's rules or code, 'for the law is a principle of justice' (Aristotle, 1950, p. 25). The definition of justice and the extent to which legal principles are enforced may be debated, but something outside an individual's opinion or desire is required to regulate conflict and preserve order in society. Both Plato and Aristotle observed that without an idea of justice, applied in a trustworthy justice system, the strong would get their way and would trample the weak.

The need for a comprehensive system of justice, administered by the state, was observed by the political theorists introduced in chapter 2. Although justice has contested definitions, most of the theorists presented earlier drew on a religious tradition.

Machiavelli is the exception in this list and his antipathy to religion in politics has been noted. He was far more interested in the security of the state than in abstract principles of justice. Also, he was not concerned about overriding the desires of the weak. Yet he also recognised justice as an important quality for the prince to ensure ongoing loyalty from citizens and uphold the state (Machiavelli, 2005, p. 80). Poorly defined rules, inconsistently applied, subvert a strong state.

Hobbes' state of nature was a frightening picture of violence and struggle that demonstrated a concern for the potential tyranny of the powerful. In this state, 'notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law; where no law, no injustice' (Hobbes, 1998, p. 85). A powerful state is necessary. In this context, Hobbes offers his sense of justice: 'When a covenant is made, then to break it is unjust: and the definition of injustice is no other than the not performance of a covenant. And whatsoever is not unjust, is just' (Hobbes, 1998, p. 95). For Hobbes, justice is asserted as a fundamental law of nature discernible through reason and conscience. Although these laws are purportedly discoverable by reason, Hobbes also refers to the moral framework of Christian scripture.[174]

Locke's state of nature, the starting point in his second treatise, is far more peaceful than that of Hobbes. Man exists in a state of equality and liberty until he gives his consent, or tacit consent, to the state to protect the common good and create conditions for prosperity.[175] This good of society is resourced by both a 'natural inclination, whereby all men desire sociable life and fellowship' and 'the law of the commonweal, the very soul

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[174] 'But yet if we consider the same theorems, as delivered in the word of God, that by right commandeth all things; then they are properly called laws' (Hobbes, 1998, p. 106).

[175] In his second treatise, Locke writes, 'Government has no other end but the peace, safety, and public good of the people' (2003, p. 157).

of a politic body, the parts whereof are by law animated, held together, and set on work in such actions as the common good requireth' (Locke, 2003, p. 159). A strong moral foundation, assumed to be a part of natural law, is asserted as a critical part of the common good that the state should protect. When this natural inclination is not enough, the state must step in to protect and enforce laws for the good of all.

Spinoza appeals to universal law, which he deduces from nature and Christian scripture,[176] and which requires authority structures and legal codes to shape the common good. The 'government of nature' (Spinoza, 2007, p. 196) alone is insufficient to overcome man's desire which leads to conflict. Collective agreement to achieve good for all, based on reason, leads to the formation of a state. In this way, 'the contract can be preserved … only if every person transfers all the power they possess to society, and society alone retains the supreme natural right over all things … the right of such a society is called democracy' (Spinoza, 2007, p. 200). Sovereignty is assigned to this society which can establish laws and uphold justice.[177] The state administers justice, and justice is the right application of the law, which is derived from natural and religious sources.

Rousseau differs from Locke in that he does not see the state emerging naturally from a state of nature. The state plays an important role in enforcing laws fairly, but he is especially concerned for articulating the legitimate use of force. Here agreement to a social contract makes enforcement of the contract legitimate to the extent that each citizen agrees to come 'under the supreme direction of the general will' and becomes an

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[176] 'We therefore conclude unreservedly that the entire divine universal law which Scripture teaches has come into our hands unadulterated' (Spinoza, 2007, p. 171).

[177] 'Justice is a fixed intention to assign to each person what belongs to them in accordance with civil law. Injustice is to take away from someone, on a pretext of right, what belongs to them by a correct interpretation of the laws' (Spinoza, 2007, p. 203).

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'indivisible part of the whole' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 164). A well-ordered society aligns the wills of the individual and the collective into a composite body politic. This ideal is to be pursued, though these wills are expected to come into conflict. This is why legislators and law are important for ordering and upholding a just state. Though justice is connected to the general will, Rousseau also acknowledges that all justice comes from God and is partly discernible through reason. The state faces the challenge of applying a fair system to all (Rousseau, 2002, p. 178).

These various theorists, while diverging on important points, agreed on the need for the state to administer justice through laws or a legal system. Humanity, when left on its own and observed through history, can easily devolve into tyrannical rule by force. Disagreements about the scope within which the state enforces its laws do not diminish the shared value of justice and its administration. Another commonality shared by these theorists is their frequent use of religious traditions to articulate a shared sense of right and wrong to be administered by the state. Agreement that the state should both define and enforce justice emerged along with dissatisfaction with the administration of justice by a single religious tradition.

Liberalism Sought to Rescue Justice from Theocracy

Liberalism sought to resolve issues of authority between religion and the state by separating the two as far as possible so as to fairly meet the needs of everyone in society, not only religious communities. Tension between the needs of the city and the demands placed on city dwellers by religion goes as far back as Augustine, who famously wrote about the city of God and the city of man (Beiner, 2011). After the Protestant Reformation, a cluster of thinkers, many of whom are represented in the previous section,

began to articulate solutions to the tension between the needs of the city and the authority of religion in ways which minimised religion's influence. Also during this period, the Catholic Church's authority and ability to inform justice were more deeply questioned. Theocratic arrangements between religion and society severely declined with the end of the Byzantine Empire and increasing questioning of the church's hierocracy. There was greater alignment between political and religious power due to the large religious majority in Europe under the Catholic Church. Protestants' break with this authority over an extended period of time created conditions for change. The fracture of power led to a multiplication of allegiances, and the European continent experienced a number of clashes in the so-called wars of religion. Conflict escalated and prompted new articulations of the place of religion in society. Perhaps, many thought, justice could be better served outside of the church and religious power.

In seeking to address this conflict, certain writers proposed that the state assert itself as the neutral party to protect citizens and restrain violence. Locke, arguably the most prominent, wrote that God established laws which are observable. God's creatures, or humanity, should be protected (Locke, 2003, p. 102). This entails rights to life, liberty, health, and property, all natural rights that exist in a state of nature and apply to everyone equally, following the natural law (Locke, 2003, p. 103). If these laws are observable in nature and discerned by reason, a government and authority outside the church could better administer justice. Since natural law and rights in the state of nature are vulnerable, they should be protected by civil government acting on behalf of its people. Legitimate government is validated through a social contract with those being governed. The state needs to protect its citizens in order to uphold consistent freedom for all. People's freedom

should encompass their choices about how to pursue salvation, and religion should retain its authority only in this sphere. Spiritual matters should not be coerced by state force, and 'the magistrate ought not to forbid the preaching or professing of any speculative opinions in any church, because they have no manner of relation to the civil rights of the subjects' (Locke, 2003, p. 240). The state should have clear authority over the civil sphere, and the church should have clear authority over spiritual matters. This notion of a separation of powers and delineated authority began to catalyse the liberal tradition.

Not all liberal thinkers were as hospitable to religion as Locke, who implicitly depended on Christianity for an ethical and moral framework. Others moved away from religious foundations for morality. David Hume's reflections on moral philosophy critiqued Locke and others for serving 'popular superstition' (Hume, 2007, p. 7). Hume claimed that sympathy for others was foundational for proper ethics. Members of society should follow their personal experiences. Inferring the potential for others' pain from their own experience, members of society should anticipate the pain of another and guard against it. This ethical basis would make possible a well-functioning and harmonious society. Administering justice protects society and is the proper place of the state. For Hume, following Spinoza, ethics is grounded not in God but in human self-interest to avoid pain and pursue pleasure (Cassidy, 1979, p. 192). These accounts of an ethical basis of justice and the role of government further separate religion from the state.

Adam Smith disagreed with Locke's notion that morality can be reduced to a set of laws and with a classic utilitarian formation of ethics. This was a departure from his teacher, Francis Hutcheson, an early utilitarian thinker for whom morality meant producing the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Smith's emphasis on

sympathy is like Hume's, but his focus on virtue ethics is more in line with Aristotle (Smith, 2002, p. 315). As Smith developed his economic theories, he claimed that the state is not responsible for creating moral character and should focus on protecting liberties, administering justice, and promoting prosperity (Smith, 2002, p. 95). The state should encourage science, which 'is the great antidote to the poison of enthusiasm and superstition' (Smith, 2007, p. 515), and regulate the market, which is guided by an invisible hand (Smith, 2007, p. 293). Religion can be useful for developing virtue, but the state should have minimal involvement and restrictions. In Smith's view, the church, in previous eras, was protected by the state and encouraged enthusiastic and superstitious allegiance that threatened the authority of civil government. Religion could produce more potent fear than the state, thereby interfering with a free market (Smith, 2007, p. 516). Rather than coerce through fear, the free market best utilises an individual's self-interest to create prosperity. Smith's economic emphasis moves the common good further away from the domain of religion.

Alexis de Tocqueville, considering how democracy in America differed from the aristocracies in Europe, saw a danger that democracy could be coopted by despotic leaders and a tyranny of the majority. Although a professing Catholic, Tocqueville saw religion, particularly the 'reformed religion', as a source of conflict and intolerance which produced misery (Tocqueville, 1985, p. 53). His position on separating religion from the state is clear: 'I honor the priest in church, but I will always put him outside of government … that is a maxim that I preached quite loudly in my book' (Tocqueville, 1985, p. 132).

These various thinkers argued on distancing the state from religion. This democratisation of society was grounded in a high view of reason during the

Enlightenment. Everyone was thought to have access to reason and should be free to express it (Siedentop, 2014, p. 238). This view emphasises people's negative freedom, i.e., the idea that people should not be restrained from following their desire (Berlin, 2002, p. 166). By explicitly rejecting religious traditions as a clear source of morality and ethics in reaction to the corruption present within theocracy, these thinkers fell back on an immanent frame. Although some, like Locke and Rousseau, implicitly relied on religious traditions for moral categories, others sought to further integrate utilitarianism as a basis for justice.

This trajectory continued two centuries later with John Rawls, perhaps the clearest and most prominent recent scholar to articulate the liberal tradition. Rawls also saw liberalism as originating with the religious wars in Europe. Religious traditions represent 'comprehensive doctrines' which can be incompatible with each other. A modern democratic society should be hospitable to a wide variety of comprehensive doctrines and fair towards all of society, without privileging one person over another. Political liberalism's role is 'to work out a conception of political justice for a constitutional democratic regime that the plurality of reasonable doctrines—always a feature of the culture of a free democratic regime—might endorse' (Rawls, 1996, p. xviii). This endorsement can happen for different reasons. Each 'comprehensive doctrine' could justify its endorsement of a position on justice differently, but the liberal articulation is concerned with protecting a well-ordered society of fairness. Rawls' term 'overlapping consensus', which first appears in *Political Liberalism*, describes this concept as a necessary update to *A Theory of Justice*.

Rawls posits certain thought experiments such as his 'original position' to illustrate how fairness does not automatically happen through the market alone. One succinct articulation of the main principles of liberalism is as follows: 'the commitment to the freedom of the individual embodied in the standard liberal support for civil liberties, and that belief in equality of opportunity and a more egalitarian distribution of resources than would result from the market alone which leads to support for a redistributive welfare state' (Mulhall & Swift, 1996, p. xvi). This is indeed an updating of the originators of the liberal tradition such as Adam Smith.

Liberalism's Failure To Achieve Justice

The publication of Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (1971) prompted many responses from a variety of philosophers who would eventually be categorised as communitarians. This conversation developed over the 1990s and became known as the communitarian/liberal debate (Mulhall & Swift, 1996). Just as other liberals became involved in this debate along with Rawls, there were also multiple participants of communitarian leanings, amongst whom the most prominent have been Michael Sandel, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Charles Taylor.

Sandel, in *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (1982), begins with a critique of Rawls' view of a person as dislocated from time and space. This deontological view, similar to Kant, ignores the rootedness and attachments a self has by its nature. The assumptions embedded in this view of the world and its articulated vision of justice are inconsistent (Sandel, 1982, p. 178). Individuals do not stand alone, conceptually or morally. Our moral existence is found precisely in our attachments to others and 'as members of this family or community or nation or people' (Sandel, 1982, p. 179).

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Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (1981), *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988), and later books respond in detail to the liberal position.[178] MacIntyre also critiqued the individualism and supposed neutrality of Rawls. Human identity is inextricably connected to a person's narrative of life and embedded social connections. Two important concepts flesh out these ideas and their connections to justice. One is the nature of tradition and the related incommensurability of alternative traditions. The second is the failure of a particularly rational account of morality rooted in Enlightenment thinking. The latter can be tied to assumptions by Locke, Hume, and others on the democratisation of reason. Commensurable traditions are critical for a shared idea of justice upon which a society should be well ordered (MacIntyre, 1988). A certain level of incommensurability between traditions (or comprehensive doctrines, to use Rawls' language) threatens justice. MacIntyre also critiques the privatisation and separation of public and private morality by asserting his conception of the polity as the broader sphere in which the quest for the good life takes place and is implemented.

Charles Taylor offers a slightly different critique, as I showed in chapter 3, by giving a sweeping historical account of identity and personhood in *The Sources of the Self* (1989) and an equally broad account of the development of secularism in *A Secular Age* (2007). Again, extreme individualism comes under attack. Humans are connected through language and meaning-making and cannot stand alone. The self exists in moral space and cannot help but make strong evaluations or judgements which are core to one's identity (Taylor, 1989, p. 30). These strong evaluations are connected to levels of goods, some of which are hypergoods. Strong evaluations are unavoidable and often a source of

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[178] See also *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (MacIntyre, 1990).

conflict. Hypergoods resulting from strong evaluations indicate moral commitments that are a part of identity itself and cannot be easily ignored. Moreover, these change with time and preclude a disinterested neutral stance (Taylor, 1989, p. 88).

These varied critiques all focused on the conception of the person. They countered the assumption that an individual is unencumbered by their community in determining identity, meaning, and particular goods, including the issue of justice. They critiqued the assumed universalism and non-contextual nature of Rawls' original position. Notably, even Rawls posited a form of transcendence above the world in his original position, albeit a limited one as part of a thought experiment:

> Rawls's fundamental idea is that life in political society involves implied submission to fair principles of social cooperation, and that it would be a mistake to attempt to draw these principles from nature, or immanent structures of historical development, or conceptions of an essential human nature, or a theological conception of the universe and its Creator, or anything else that transcends the mundane purposes of individual citizens agreeing to participate in the society as a scheme of cooperative life. Basing one's conception of justice on any of these rival philosophical foundations would be wrong because it would be unacceptably controversial, and hence impossible to obtain as a basis of agreed principle among free and equal citizens. (Beiner, 2014, p. 199)

The response to liberalism's program of rescuing justice from religion points to the rootedness of the individual, which could also be framed as the religious self over and against the liberal self. These selves are a part of traditions, but incommensurability between traditions and rationalities remains and is perhaps underscored by multiple moral orders. The reality of multiple moral orders, with increasing movement reflected in diaspora studies, highlights the need for a strong discourse between moral orders in civil society. The non-state space of civil society allows for the development of social cohesion as well as a better, shared conception of justice which can be applicable to all.

Those with religious commitments were not the only ones critiquing liberalism. Aside from the communitarians, Beiner also connects discontent with liberalism to what he terms the 'postmodern theism' found in Nietzsche and Heidegger (Beiner, 2010, p. 369).[179] In this last phase of his book on civil religion, Nietzsche and Heidegger are presented as having theocratic tendencies. Surely, these two would not be placed in classical religious traditions; they were concerned with addressing the collapse of religious foundations. Rather, they were zealously dogmatic about a very different but equally strong vision for society.

> What defines liberalism, generally speaking, is a nervousness about religion and a desire to contain it. The antiliberal argument, roughly speaking, is that the consequences of this liberal impulse are worse than the thing it is trying to combat. Nietzsche is an unqualified antiliberal, and his antiliberalism is so militant that it might not be entirely surprising if we discover that he gets drawn into a defense of religion against liberal secularity. (Beiner, 2010, p. 375)

In analysing the West's turn away from religion, Nietzsche radicalises the shift in values towards atheism. This is certainly a move away from religiously defined goods. But, rather than move in the direction of toleration and peaceful cohabitation of liberalism, he has a hyper-individualistic focus, reflected in his will to power. Nietzsche's focus on bringing down Christianity and its 'political legacy of liberalism, egalitarianism, democracy, humanitarianism and so on' (Beiner, 2010, p. 390) moves away from democratic themes of liberalism. This can be viewed as his dissatisfaction with a milquetoast, modern vision for society. The allure towards powerful kingdoms and premodern civilisations is Beiner's way of justifying the theocratic label (Beiner, 2010, p. 394).

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[179] Beiner also writes of Nietzsche and Heidegger as articulating a 'radicalized version of antiliberal theocracy' and refers to George Grant as 'the first great explicit right-wing atheist' (Beiner, 2010, p. 374).

Heidegger observes a similar disenchantment of the world that goes back to 'forgetfulness of the mystery of being' (Beiner, 2010, p. 397). While not prescribing a similar will to power, Heidegger (1991, p. 2) certainly affirms with Nietzsche that Christianity has lost its influence and should make way for new gods. Rather than bolstering horizons of meaning which give vitality to life, Heidegger sees Christianity as having failed to readily equip people for this age. Thus, he agrees with Nietzsche that 'the West needs a new religion (or religions) to respiritualize it, to invest it with new cultural energies' (Beiner, 2010, p. 408).

These critiques are not necessarily a rejection of religion accompanied by a turn towards liberalism as a more hospitable environment. They are a rejection of some of the very claims of neutrality, acceptance, and perceived emptiness in liberalism which should be countered by something new. This is an alternative critique of liberalism, albeit quite distant from traditional religious thinking while acknowledging the threat of nihilism.

Limitations of the Critique of Liberalism

Towards the mid-1990s the communitarian/liberal debate fizzled to an end, although the communitarian label was not self-consciously adopted by its various proponents. After this point, various authors felt prepared to offer a summary of the discussion (Bell, 2019; Mulhall & Swift, 1996). As noted in earlier sections, the issues involved in the debate are of great importance to political philosophy: the political role of the community, the nature of the individual and selfhood, the limits of universal rationality and the lens of tradition, and how moral commitments are formed and sustained.

When liberals responded to the critique of communitarians, Beiner (2014, p. 189) argues, the liberals were able to absorb the critique and incorporate it. Bell (2019) notes that the debate over the view of the self faded as both sides realised it would not resolve the broader debate. The conversation shifted to political applicability, the importance of the community, and the value of multiculturalism (Frazer, 2006; Tam, 1998).

When communitarians responded to Rawls' liberal vision, as detailed above, they articulated the limitations of an individualist framework and the importance of communities. A very simple response to this challenge by liberals is to agree that communities should have a say in determining how they would like to live. If individuals would like to choose to live in strong communities, they can. However, communities do not need to be a part of the state's administration of justice. Beiner writes, 'Today, communitarianism is in large measure a spent force, in part because its insights were too easily accommodated by the liberal-individualist theories it meant to challenge, and in part because the theoretical energies it released were diverted in other directions' (Beiner, 2014, p. 190). When liberals acknowledge the significance of communities in determining societal goods, they absorb a large portion of this critique. The connection of these communities to identity also becomes the basis for privileging these identities though multiculturalism (Beiner, 2014, p. 192).

This analysis of how liberals responded to the communitarian critique is helpful in demonstrating how the argument died out. It affirms how the liberal tradition was shaped by and influenced by this critique, but there are still fruitful avenues to explore around these thematic issues. Debates over how to protect the goods of society, how individuals support and shape identity and moral commitments, and how to sustain meaning are

perhaps inexhaustible. Although liberalism has absorbed much, the challenge to universal rationality continues to be explored (Bell, 2000, 2006; Taylor, 1996).

In the next section, I will present some of Madjid's work as addressing important issues from this conversation. As Nietzsche and Heidegger emphasise, along with Rousseau and others, some sort of collective, positive vision for society is necessary for cohesion and to sustain a stable society. In our modern democracies, the state (with rare exceptions) does not allow any organization other than itself to implement justice. If the form of justice administered is not acceptable to all, the state becomes weak through division. With multiple religious traditions present in a society, a heavy-handed theocratic approach by a single religious tradition will not work. Rousseau's answer was to assert a civil religion, or an artificial religion put forward by the state, but this fails when it also is not acceptable to all communities. The liberal tradition articulated a desire to include all and sought to establish mechanisms to do so, but it presented a dissociated view of the person and marginalised religion in political life to such an extent that public religious goods were excluded in the name of neutrality based on reason. This neutrality has been questioned along with the robustness and strength of the liberal vision (Beiner, 1992).

Cross-cultural exploration, as is attempted in this thesis, presents the advantage of learning from democratic environments different from the historical headwaters of democracy. It offers the opportunity to see what citizens in other democracies choose to focus on from an alternate social imaginary. I explain the development of this pattern in Madjid's thought through a series of arguments presented in the next three sections. First is the importance of social cohesion for the long-term survival of a healthy state. Second, the dialogue among various moral orders, involving all of society, moves toward a

common vision of a just society. Third, this shared vision must inform the state's own administration of justice.

A Shared Vision of Justice Fosters Social Cohesion

Religious Social Cohesion is Possible Without an Islamic Government

Given Madjid's emphasis on Islam's contribution towards strengthening a beneficial society, one might assume that he favoured a strong Islamic government. However, he made an important distinction between arguing for the relevance of religion for political good and arguing for Islam itself. This distinction shows his distance from theocracy.

Following his previous critique of certain Muslims' preoccupation with promoting Islam's superiority, Madjid also critiques the idea of an Islamic state. He describes interest in this political expression of Islam, which he viewed as declining in Indonesia, as a defensive reaction to 'modern Western ideologies such as democracy, socialism, and communism' (2008b, p. 293). Even as far back as the 1970s, prominent Muslim scholars in Indonesia understood the importance of countering an inclination towards a 'totalitarian, ideological-political appreciation of Islam' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 293). In this defensive posture, proponents of an Islamic state wanted a comprehensive response that would include the political, social, economic, and cultural spheres. 'The Muslim community tried to prove that Islam was actually superior to or at least on par with Western civilization, whose modern ideologies embraced the economic, political, and social domains of society. … After having temporarily satisfied Muslims and restored their self-respect, the idea was finally proved to be incorrect' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 335).

Appreciating religion's necessary contribution to political implications of justice does not mean that a single religious tradition should take over. Madjid critiques this ideology by pointing to the linguistic meaning of religion, which does not encompass all domains. To assert Islam as dominating all spheres is to fall into error.

> If a Muslim truly realizes the position of the religious or spiritual life … he will not have a sense of inferiority. On the contrary, he will have a sense of self-respect in facing up to anybody. Fortified by the firm conviction of himself and his religion, he then becomes creative in other fields, with his mind freed from any sense of inferiority, he readily learns from others who are more superior in those fields. (Madjid, 2003b, p. 335)

The Islamic religious tradition can meaningfully contribute to moral discourse in the political sphere because it is interested in morality; it does not require a rigid implementation in law. The defensive posture represented in advocacy for an Islamic state comes from a legalistic understanding of Islam that overly emphasises Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The desire to advance an approach to Islam through sharia law is endemic to the Islamic state. Madjid asserts that reforming Islamic jurisprudence is a necessary task so that *fiqh* can properly integrate with modern life. In this context, we find some of Madjid's clearest statements regarding the role of religion and the state:

> Fundamentally, the concept of an Islamic State[180] is a distortion of the proper relationships between the state and religion. The state is one of the aspects of worldly life, which is rational and collective, while religion is an aspect of another kind of life which is spiritual and personal. Of course, it is not possible, as explained earlier, to separate religion and the state. Through the individual citizen, an inseparable connection exists between motivation (or inner attitude derived from being part of religious beliefs) and action (or outward stance derived from being part of a state). (Madjid, 2008b, pp. 296–297)

In this extended quotation from Madjid, we see elements of the argument from chapter 3. Religious selves cannot be separated from their religious goods. As was argued

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[180] This reference to an Islamic state predates modern expressions of this desire with similar names, such as ISIS.

in chapter 4, these religious goods exist within a moral order. In Madjid's case, this is Islam. However, rather than asserting the Islamic moral order over all society through the implementation of sharia law, we see Madjid arguing for discussion and collaboration. This should take place in the context of civil society, which must inform the state. Thus, we see Madjid avoiding both Islamic theocracy and secular liberalism.

Muslims can collaborate in society and lean on more universal understandings of Islam, without being preoccupied with issues of *fiqh* or shariah: 'These universal aspects of Islamic teachings, in particular those included in the Holy Book, became an ethical foundation for Muslims during the time of the Prophet Muhammad and the four rightly guided Caliphs, that was before the emergence of the debate on fiqh and sharia' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 199).

Madjid reinforces the Islamic commitment to the common good, which is not merely restricted to Muslims. This approach to the common good is distant from the call for Muslims themselves to live according to the teachings of their religion, which is possible in Indonesia.

> This should not be merely measured by the interests of certain groups, as Islam is God's gift to the entire world. Instead, this common good should be measured by the universal interests of mankind, and thus embrace other human beings across a wider environment. The universal teachings of Islam can provide Muslims with fundamental ethical view that can become the foundation for choices and decisions in life, including social and political life. Based on these fundamental ethics, a Muslim should adopt the most appropriate social and political views to support his attempts to pursues such common good. For this purpose, he should work with others in the spirit of humanity. (Madjid, 2003b, p. 200)

The Political Importance of Social Cohesion

The national motto of Indonesia, as stated in the introduction, is *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Javanese for 'unity in diversity'). Both unity and diversity are necessary for

Indonesia and most modern states. A certain measure of social uniformity and political consensus helps to maintain a stable democracy. This emphasis on social cohesion is seen in Rousseau's fixation on the general will. The desire for a strong state with social cohesion led Rousseau to civil religion, a state-mandated form of religion designed to be acceptable to all. This proposed arrangement created an alignment between religious tradition and political power, but it lacked ongoing influence. The further civil religion moved from actual religious traditions, the further it moved from the religious authority animating those traditions. Civil religion took the power away from the religious priests, but it left a civil authority disconnected from religious communities.

Madjid reflected on the relative stability of the New Order 20 years after its establishment, observing that stability was not guaranteed. Political stability is based on the interdependent conditions of permanency of the system, civil order, legitimacy, and effectiveness (Madjid, 1984b). He draws on what he terms a 'well-established proposition in political science that it is difficult to achieve and maintain a democratic and stable government in a complex society' (Madjid, 1984b, p. 203). Religious traditions can contribute to a certain amount of social uniformity and political consensus and thereby help to maintain a stable democracy.

The Indonesian motto accents this unity in diversity, which is meant to connect citizens to the state and to bring people together. Reflecting on the need for unity, Madjid writes, 'In the modern world, this common political bond is a sense of nationality' (1984b, p. 203). Nationalism and democracy are connected, as Madjid observes through quoting Rupert Emerson: 'The emergence of democracy as a political symptom has occurred in very close coincidence with the appearance of nations as conscious units' (Madjid, 1984b,

p. 204). Strong associations with nationalism help shape an imagination of a unified state, which is important, but this also needs to be coupled with stronger bonds that have 'greater intellectual content, such as "consensus" and "agreement on fundamental matters". It is not enough just to depend on structural and procedural equipment' (Madjid, 1984b, p. 204).

True social cohesion is not realistically sustained by simply assuming ongoing agreement. Consensus is hard to measure and can lack the necessary dynamism without some opposition. This is why the moral discussion must happen in civil society.

> The expression of differing opinions by sharply competing groups must be oriented towards the maximization of political participation, leading to equality of rights and obligations for all citizens. Therefore, in reality, agreement and consensus are the final products of democracy rather than the conditions for a democratic political process. (Madjid, 1984b, p. 205)

This leads to Madjid's idealistic statement that the dialectical process will create a society that can make rapid progress, like a 'high-tech vehicle that is able to run fast without too much shaking' (Madjid, 1984b, p. 206).

Given the context when Madjid originally wrote, with the New Order having supplanted the Old Order in Indonesia, this aspirational goal is understandable. The Indonesian president, Suharto, often squashed opposition and debates with a heavy hand. The valuing of true opposition was a veiled critique. Just as a political leader's inability to deal with opposition can disturb political unity, so also does the style of leadership. Leadership style is even more important when a political leader demands that someone follow them. No one should expect this since 'this is the beginning of a parochial and paternalistic attitude. … Such leadership lacks legitimacy, and it is only through heavy-handedness that such leadership can appear outwardly to be effective' (Madjid, 1984b, p. 208). These words demonstrate a clear critique of Suharto's dictatorial leadership. The

profound injustice of Suharto stealing resources from the nation for personal enrichment and punishing or silencing opposing voices became a threat to the state.

Not only can the style of leadership become a threat, but a leader's character can also aid or hinder the thriving of a nation. Madjid writes about leaders with integrity who lead with their actions and set an example:

> Having implanted good will in their heart in the fullest conviction, they are required to translate that good will into actual practice as ethical and moral acts. … A person who truly has a good will must always be prepared to lay the substance of their will and its actual materialization open to public test through the mechanism of freedom to express opinions and thoughts. (Madjid, 1984b, p. 207)

During the New Order era, Suharto's political forcefulness was not always openly opposed. Indonesian culture is often sensitive to the surface-level discussion as well as what lies beneath and prefers to deal with conflict in indirect ways. This can lead to situations which might seem counter-intuitive for more direct Western cultures. A weak government must be handled with care since it 'is no less dangerous for a democratic life than tyranny' (Madjid, 1984b, p. 208).

This statement could be seen as a critique of political proceduralism, as it points to what can happen without a sustaining ethic. Indonesia experienced a tyrannical government as well as a weak government. Without bonds that join society together, even without complete agreement in all forms, society can fall apart. Religion has resources which can bring people together and create important bonds that support a common understanding of justice. This is why religious communities need to be involved in defining the ethic which animates the state's administration of justice. Madjid conveys this clearly:

> Therefore, there must be social bonds that "are felt warmer at heart" than the procedural and bureaucratic bonds of the government machine, which can act as

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pillars supporting the state's edifice. These bonds, as had been stated already, are formulated on the basis of an internal system of rules, and the rules and commitment that occur will always stimulate the search for a system of ideas and meanings for the external public rules and commitment, especially at the level of the state. The truth can be seen when the state or nation is experiencing a critical situation, and when spontaneous and "sentimental" movements are emerging from the ranks of the people in defense of the state. … Among the various possible *raison[s] d'être* for a social bond of this kind, religious feelings are the strongest and most conspicuous. Although there is some truth in regarding religious groups as demonstrations of "primordialism" or even "communalism," there is no justification for generalizing all religious bonds as being of this kind. (Madjid, 1984b, p. 209)

Religion is of fundamental importance to the state. Madjid argues that a more tolerant form of Islam, along with other non-Muslim religious traditions, can contribute to state cohesiveness. The bonds created by religion, which are expressed in moral orders that engage in dialogue in civil society, contribute to shared meaning-making. Merely falling back on the legal code is insufficient. Strong resources are needed to articulate a vision of the good life. This vision is inevitably 'linked to questions of the most profound meaning of life, which in general, is offered by systems of religious conviction. Strengthening the orientation and the religious consciousness of adherents will in turn give birth to dimensions of morality, which lay the foundations for building a strong civilization' (Madjid, 2003b).

After writing these words, Madjid closes his essay by quoting an American president on the vital importance of religion for the state.

John Adams, one of the founding fathers of the United States of America said: 'We do not have a government armed with power capable of competing with the desires of men uncontrolled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for people who have that morality and religion. The Constitution is not at all appropriate for a community the conditions of which are different.' So if we speak of Islam, it is not only because of our spiritual motivation as people committed to religion, but also because of our awareness of the larger portion of national responsibility that lies on the shoulders of Indonesian Muslims. (Madjid, 2003b, p. 218)

A Dialogue of Moral Orders in Civil Society Defines Justice

Madjid's Rhetorical Strategy

Two speeches at the beginning of Madjid's public life revealed much that relates to his political thinking. He was asked to give an important speech, which he assumed would be private, on the theme of exploring useful ideas about Islam in Indonesia.[181] The event turned out to be much larger than anticipated, and his speech was leaked to newspapers. It prompted a strong reaction within the Muslim community to some of his terms, including secularization, desacralization, and liberalization. Two years later, Madjid shared similar ideas in a second speech around the same theme.[182] Towards the end of his career, reflecting on the backlash from these experiences, Madjid regretted his boldness:

> I wished I had never made such a tactical blunder as that … it was socially too expensive, and we suffered almost irreparable damage to our reputation within the Muslim community. If I were able to go back in time, I would follow my previous methods, i.e., penetration pasifique, the 'smuggling method' of introducing new ideas. (Kull, 2005, p. 61)[183]

This quotation gives us an insight into the layers Madjid himself intended to express within his own writing. Madjid does not back down from his initial statements but reveals his strategy of gently introducing potential controversial ideas.

In these two speeches, Madjid introduces concepts that would recur throughout his writings and are relevant to this chapter: *musyawarah*[184] (dialogue), *keadilan social*

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[181] The speech was titled '*Keharusan Pembaruan Pemikiran Islam dan Masalah Integrasi Umat*' (The Necessity of Renewing Islamic Thought and the Problem of the integration of the Ummah) (Madjid, 2008b, pp. 225—239).

[182] The focus of the second speech was on the younger generation and religious thought about Islam. It was titled '*Menyegarkan Paham Keagamaan Dikalangan Ummat Islam Indonesia*' (Reinvigorating Religious Understanding in the Indonesian Muslim Community) (Madjid, 2008b, pp. 273—297).

[183] Kull reports this fuller picture from personal interaction as well as Madjid's own writing (Madjid, 1979).

[184] These terms follow the Indonesian spellings, which share commonalities with some Arabic transliterations.

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(social justice) which includes care for the poor and oppressed, *takwa* (piety), and *ijtihad* (scholarly judgements), which need to inform social ideals such as democracy and citizenship. *Amal saleh* (good deeds) contribute to the *salam* (peace) of a harmonious society.

Madjid's reasoning suggests that it is impossible to approach social goods and contribute to society without including religious thinking and religious goods. In this way, he diverges from liberalism's artificial binary between public and private goods. Although the public/private distinction might make more sense within the Christian religious tradition from which it came, it does not fit all religious traditions. Madjid, like Talal Asad (2003, 2018), rejects this separation. This rejection comes through clearly in his argument concerning the important connection between the spiritual and the material, or the vertical and horizontal. This is why it was important for Madjid to speak about *iman* (faith) and *takwa* (piety) in a political context.

The Spiritual Dimension of Justice

Societies are constantly developing new technology that both solves some problems and creates new ones. Breakthroughs in transportation make it more efficient to transport goods, but they require roads, rails, and runways. To make way for this infrastructure, villages must be relocated and forests cleared. These technological advancements raise ethical questions not directly addressed by religious texts. While developments of this sort raise new questions, the heart of society is a shared humanity. For this reason, religious traditions are an important part of developing the noble character needed for a peaceful and just society. Economic development is important, but so also is sustaining societal connections and a sense of fulness in life.

Madjid's second speech begins by addressing modifications needed by religion in the modern world. He admits that in this modern era 'religious concepts are somewhat crippled' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 273). To have a positive effect on society, some religious concepts need to adapt to the changing character of society. These changes arise in unpredictable settings and are difficult to anticipate, thereby requiring ongoing contextualisation (*ijtihad*) of the teachings of Islam. Instead of embracing this work, however, some Muslim scholars have gotten caught up in defending Islamic superiority over against Western culture, and 'given that apology came from a weaker position, it sometimes revealed an inferiority complex' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 274). Rather than focusing on apologetics, Madjid aims to come back to the heart of Islam: faith and piety. He argues that many problems in society stem from moral issues. Proper moral solutions to societal problems must come from an experience of God.

For this reason, Madjid focuses on the primacy of *iman* (faith) and *takwa* (piety). He defines *takwa*, introduced in chapter 3 when I discussed the religious self, as an 'appreciation of God, constituting the core of human religious experience … a consciousness of God in a faithful man that represents one of the highest forms of spiritual life' (Madjid, 2008b, pp. 275–276). This experience of *takwa* is important for Muslims but can also be embodied by other religious traditions. For Madjid, this is an important part of contributing to society. A deep experience of God always leads to further consciousness of him, which aids in the mastery of self. This mastery is an important part of all social acts. Piety based on religious experience provides internal resources for a person to contribute to 'all his cultural acts throughout life' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 276). Faith and piety are internal, spiritual values which must come from a free individual's choice.

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They cannot come through coercion. In many ways, this describes the positive aspect of liberty as described in Berlin's famous essay: 'The "positive" sense of the world "liberty" derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master' (Berlin, 2002, p. 178).

Takwa, as an expression of the first principle of Pancasila, refers to the vertical relationship of man to transcendence, while the remaining principles focus on horizontal relationships with other humans. The fourth principle of Pancasila refers to the necessity of dialogue among wise leaders. This horizontal principle is crucial for defining what is just and for implementing this justice in political society:

> [The fourth principle of Pancasila] is in line with one of the fundamental social principles in Islam, which is deliberation or shura. … Because of this principle, it can be said that acceptance of modern democracy is very natural for Muslims. … The fifth principle of Pancasila—that is social justice—we may look at it from a similar point of view. It is important to note that upholding justice is one of the fundamental social principles in Islam. To uphold justice is even considered an act which is closely related to *takwa* or piety to God. (Madjid, 2019, pp. 3913-3914)

Madjid notes that the vertical principle, as it relates to God, does not require social negotiation, but the horizontal principle does:

> The implementation of all the other horizontal principles will always require participation from all members of society. The is because these principles have a social dimension, and therefore are subject to human laws. Perhaps nothing is more important and more serious for the future of our nation than the problem of maintaining high ethics and morals. It is in these attempts to overcome problems that Muslims can make their greatest contribution. (Madjid, 2019, p. 3914)

These two quotations show the interconnectedness of religious piety to justice. Since this does not mean that one tradition dominates all others, it is different from theocracy and aligns better with civil religion. The Islamic tradition is meant to be put into dialogue with other religious traditions, as one of many, in order to govern a good society. This interconnectedness, as it is embedded in Indonesia, also demonstrates the

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difficulty of declaring goods of the liberal moral order as clearly public while the goods of the religious moral order are kept private.

Based on their own spiritual experiences, which God alone is able to evaluate, citizens can engage in good deeds and attain to 'the good, the pure, and the true [which are] intrinsic qualities in man' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 278). Religious experiences, which are necessarily subjective, are a part of the process of exploring that which is beyond ultimate human mastery. This becomes part of Madjid's reasoning as to why society must continue to develop and mature. As God is full of an infinite variety of potentiality, this ongoing process cannot come to an end. Madjid's focus on *takwa* as a source for positive moral deeds is helpful, but good deeds that support the spiritual dimension of justice do not happen automatically. Islamists use fidelity to their religion as a justification for violent acts.

Because of Madjid's belief in the dynamism and vastness of God, Islamic morality is not fixed or determined but should contribute to society's exploration and implementation of morality. Religion has resources to contribute to noble character which, in turn, contributes to a peaceful and just society. Although defining the political and societal nature of this morality takes place over time, man will be ultimately judged for how well he adheres to Islam's regulations. This judgement takes place in the context of God's compassion and mercy but contributes to granting 'man a good or happy life, outwardly and inwardly, not just on this earth but also in the hereafter' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 280).

This emphasis on noble character should lead to *amal saleh* (good deeds) necessary for society. The good deeds are 'those which are harmonious or virtuous in their overall

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relationship with the environment, both in the spiritual and material sense' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 328). Religion's value lies in its ability to develop the capacity and motivation for performing the good deeds that help a stable society thrive. The non-spiritual person or society can only 'bring about a harmonious relationship if he understands the laws, which control and govern relationships, whether within nature itself, between nature and man, or between humans' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 283). This is a nod to the ability to determine laws based on reason, as asserted by Locke and Hume, but reason is limited and weak.

The limits of reason for developing morality subvert the assumptions of a deontological framework. Real, meaningful inferences attained through the application of reason can find broad acceptance, but there are borders that reason struggles to cross. Some of these moral laws can be known through the gift of reason or intellect, but one can never attain in this way to the fulness of what God has created. It can only be an approximation, yet man must try. Through the gift of reason, though it is limited and not perfect, man can develop and create order in the natural and social world so as to enable a good life. Through working together with others, humanity can overcome the limits of a single individual. This cooperation must be open to criticism and improvement as it is limited, like all human forms of knowing, and not absolute.[185]

Madjid (2008b, p. 282) affirms that those of different faiths can work together without needing agreement in the spiritual dimension. This is because the spiritual dimension is based on revelation and belief. The material dimension is the space for cooperation and dialogue, as it is based on reason and knowledge. This does not mean

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[185] Madjid supports this claim with a familiar argument that to absolutise any truth other than God is to place that truth on the same level as God and thus engage in *shirk*, which is a previous sin against God.

that the spiritual is private and the material is public. Both are connected and important but should be balanced. Focusing primarily on the spiritual dimension might lead to a society where physical needs of the hungry, sick, and poor are ignored. Focusing primarily on the material dimension can lead to a poverty of spirit, where citizens lack resources to do good works or promote justice. The inherent linkage of these two dimensions subverts liberalism's distinctions between public and private goods.

Madjid argues that men are called to work in both dimensions, to grow in piety as well as in good deeds. However, the horizontal dimension is of greater importance for political unity.

> One must—in accordance with one's nature (*fiṭrah*)—strive to attain the highest possible achievement in both this world and the hereafter. This effort is to be undertaken in the form of good deeds … that is harmonious socio-cultural activities in both aspects of life. … By putting faith and knowledge together, man is able to perform good works and thereby attain the highest degree of humanity. (Madjid, 2008b, p. 288)

Developing a well-ordered society that promotes human flourishing requires a specific structure. Development takes place at the level of the state and is 'why we have to choose an open political system—that is, democracy' (Madjid, 1999). The important foundation of *takwa*, which Madjid defines as a consciousness of God, is a necessary link in the chain that will help the political nation develop. Piety in a person's heart will foster good deeds, which in turn promote a just society that does not require solely the legal system to enforce it. This is why the state should promote moral dialogue as an important part of civil society. This will also lead to social justice, the fifth principle of Pancasila.

Given Madjid's emphasis on the political importance of transcendence, it is no surprise that social justice also includes more than obedience to laws for him. For Madjid, social justice is a type of good work best found in the context of social harmony. It

includes peace, prosperity, and security and can be summed up in the word *salam* (peace), which shares the same root as *islam*. This emphasis follows one of the cultural values of Indonesian society, expressed in *rukun* (harmony). 'Peace does certainly not grow by itself, but requires certain conditions. The most important condition is social justice, namely economic justice or where wealth is distributed among all members of society' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 290).

Madjid does not assume that the Muslim community in Indonesia has done this sufficiently. He critiques it for publishing voluminously on verses related to ritual washing while generating much less discussion on social justice. Madjid seeks to re-activate these discussions in both the religious and political community: 'Therefore, one of the aims of the present discussion it to correct, in a concrete way, a fault in religious thinking within the Indonesian Muslim community' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 289). Madjid also offers a subtle critique of government leaders who were known to be embezzling resources from the state. He supports his views by extensive discussion of verses in the Qur'an which condemn the wealthy for hoarding material resources and failing to contribute generously to the betterment of all society.

Social justice as a political ideal is good, but the imagination for what is right and just and spreads peace for all must come from somewhere, and religious texts are an important source. In a pluralistic society, however, everyone does not need to subscribe to the Islamic holy book in order to advance social justice. Social justice, for all its importance and appearance in the Qur'an, must be pursued through 'human knowledge which develops in accordance with the development of human society … this idea of social justice is therefore exceedingly human in character and belongs to the whole human

race' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 292). Humanity has no choice but to do the best it can within its limitations. Understanding these limits can help to develop an attitude of openness amidst criticism. 'Using this approach, we note the thoughts and ideas from others, and adopt the best among them. This is different from ideological appreciation, which leans towards absolutism, and as such is uncritical and rigid or closed. We have already mentioned how dangerous this closed attitude is' (Madjid, 2008b, p. 292).

Moral Dialogue Takes Place in Pluralistic Society

In a sign of his preference for something like an Islamic civil religion, Madjid admits that the Islamic teachings about right and wrong are not implemented well enough at the level of government. This was a fairly direct critique of the embezzlement taking place under the Suharto administration. These national issues can and must be countered using religious sources, or *al-furqan* (differentiating between right and wrong), to rebuff the 'inability of those who govern this country to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, between honesty and dishonesty, between praiseworthy and blameworthy, and last but not least between contribution and corruption' (Madjid, 1999).

In a nation where deep corruption crippled the government's ability to protect and care for its citizens, Madjid argued for religious morality to support the nation. The following passage illustrates the strong connection between religious traditions and defining justice for society:

> It does not seem excessive to suggest that only with a true understanding and the right implementation of Islamic teachings by its believers that the ethical principles of Pancasila can be maintained. In turn, this will bring about a strong nation. Without these foundations, society's structure will be as weak as a palace made of paper, vulnerable to storms or crises resulting from human weaknesses. Islam's contribution to maintaining the principles of Pancasila is very real considering that Islam is the most-adhered religion in the country. … We should remember that the decision to choose certain social institutions and structures is

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the result of commitment to specific ethical values and ways of life, at an individual level and also at society's level. In regards to America, the role of Christian ethics, particularly Puritan ethics, which were taken to America by migrants from Western Europe, was large. These ethics, which originally belonged to the Puritans, were later nationalized and adopted by all groups in the nation, regardless of their ethnicity or faith. By comparison, we can also discuss the role of Islam in Indonesia as the most important source for the nation's social values. (Madjid, 1999)

In this section, I have traced Madjid's argument for the deep connection between the vertical or spiritual dimension of existence and the horizontal or material and relational dimension. The state has relied on this connection as an implicit ethical framework. These moral discussions, which naturally occur in civil society, make claims about what is right and what is wrong. Madjid's focus on the broadly spiritual or transcendent is not limited to Islam. As I show in the next section, this dialogue which takes place in civil society must include all communities so as to strengthen the entire nation-state.

A Shared Vision of Justice Must Inform the State's Administration of Justice

Madjid's quotation of John Adams at the end of the section on social cohesion points to his belief that religious traditions, including Islam, offer a material benefit to society. Social bonds formed and sustained by religious communities contribute to a healthy state. The state has some responsibility for creating conditions in which the people can thrive, which goes beyond merely its protecting citizens. This role inevitably involves taking some stance on what constitutes a good life. Although the elements of the good life have been heavily debated in the history of philosophy, some imagination of human flourishing is unavoidable. For religious traditions, some idea of the good life is intimately connected with their moral orders and can be included in their vision of justice. A positive vision of the good life is the corollary to negative prescriptions of the legal code. The

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state does not need to adopt a single religious tradition's articulation of the good life; this would not be fitting in a pluralistic society. However, it should adopt elements of agreement on the good life that are developed through discourse in civil society.

Within Islam, both sides of this vision for life are articulated in a classic formulation which is compatible with a pluralistic state. In another of Madjid's essays on political ideals (Madjid, 2019, p. 3385), he describes the ideal Muslim's contribution to society from the Qur'an: 'You are indeed the best community that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] mankind; you enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and you believe in God' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 177, quoting Surah 3:110). This is a common phrase in Islam: do what is good and forbid what is bad. For Madjid, this is the basis upon which Muslims' struggle against tyranny can take multiple forms, including efforts to counter Islamist ideology and political Islam. In an essay written 12 years after the famous public speech in which he critiqued the idea of an Islamic state, Madjid continues to frame adherents to political Islam as reacting defensively to the modern nation-state: 'Islam per se is free from the limitations of ideologies … conceiving Islam as an ideology may inevitably lower the religion to the level of other ideologies' (2003b, p. 179).

Those who overly focus on political Islam have given up on contributing to the discourse on the common good and have prioritised specific legal implementations. Madjid describes this ideological view of Islam as a growing preoccupation with *fiqh* and Sharia over the spiritual and mystical orientation preferred in Indonesia's history. He objects to the impact of Muslims who were intellectuals and knew religious jargon but had no formal, in-depth training in traditional Islamic studies. These were not religious

scholars (*ulama*). Their emphasis was a reaction to an earlier era when influential Muslims were religious scholars (*ulama*) but were not intellectuals and were disconnected from modern scientific developments. An emerging group of Indonesian scholars, of whom Madjid was one, sought to bring these two domains of knowledge together. They criticized Islam as a 'socio-political ideology and are instead trying to comprehend Islam as a higher source of inspiration' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 180). Islam has room to grow within Indonesia, and it must do so as a part of pluralistic society.

A central focus for the type of Islam that Madjid envisions is pursuing the common good of all mankind. Humanity's natural virtue, even among non-Muslims, is an important resource that can also contribute to the common good. Under a pluralistic framework, all religions and persons can add to the discussion. Muslims can be legitimately supportive of this. Madjid writes, 'The political system that should be applied in Indonesia is one that will bring forth good, not only for Muslims but for all members of Indonesian society. … [This] is what Islam most aspires for, and this is in line with the inclusive nature of Islam' (2003b, p. 181).

Having begun to depict how Islam can properly contribute to a pluralistic and just society, Madjid supports his claim by looking at Islamic history. He presents early accounts of Umar bin al-Khattab, the second Caliph. Though this ruler conquered many other lands, his primary concern with the common good won support in the Arab region. He gave agricultural land to non-Muslims and won over local peoples. The Arab armies, in competition with the Byzantine Empire and the Persian Empire, were perceived as liberators.

> This idea of common good had never reached these people before even though they had been under the rule of those of the same nationality and religion. …

The people in the liberated regions warmly welcomed the Arab Muslims as their saviors and freedom fighters. … These concepts included the principles of religious tolerance and freedom in religious rituals, respect for the cultural heritage of others, the acknowledgement of individual rights, a positive attitude towards scientific studies, and a way of life that was freer from superstitious beliefs. (Madjid, 1999)

Arguing for early Muslim Caliphs as exemplars of pluralistic communities might go against the common conception, and Madjid recognises that this attitude was not sustained. This early, multi-cultural system not imposed by force was eclipsed by historical developments that challenged this pluralism. According to Madjid, the Iran-based '*shu'ubiyah* movement, a sort of nationalism in the medieval era which was embodied in the form of exclusive religious movements', as well as the 'arrival of the avaricious Western imperialists, who in turn left behind various tragedies', disrupted the pluralism of the Muslim world (Madjid, 2003b, pp. 182–183). Madjid likely places too much blame for this collapse of pluralism on the Persians and Western imperialists. Yet this is part of Madjid's case that there are authentic historical expressions of Islam's ability to work for the common good in a pluralist framework.

Religious Traditions Must Inform but Not Dominate the State

Madjid's emphasis on Islam's contribution to the state does not mean that he is pushing for an Islamic democracy. Madjid was consciously trying to rally Indonesian Muslim support for the religiously pluralistic ideals contained in Pancasila. Indonesia, with its culturally informed approach to pluralism rooted in Pancasila, reinforces an Islamic focus on the common good. This makes Pancasila an acceptable philosophical foundation for the state that can serve all Indonesians, both Muslims and non-Muslims. As discussed in chapter 5 on civil society, Muslim support for Pancasila and the Indonesian state can be found in the constitution of Medina, which 'was an agreement

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between Muslims of Yathrib, under the leadership of Muhammad, and other various non-Muslim groups to create a common political society' (Madjid, 2003b, p. 183).

Madjid admits that this idyllic collaboration did not last long. The earlier religious diversity became homogeneous over time. Madjid blames this development on 'a succession of betrayals by certain groups of Medinese Jews'. Because of these betrayals, city leaders were justified in punishing them, asking some to leave the city and destroying their military forces. As a result, the political society in Medina became more homogeneous. Madjid, perhaps unfairly, does not question the Muslim leadership's responsibility for marginalising minorities. While this hegemonic narrative does not accept blame for the reduced diversity, Madjid clearly endorses tolerance in modern times.[186] He notes that 'the first step taken by the prophet was to establish cooperation among the various groups in the city in the spirit of pluralism' (Madjid, 1999).

While Madjid creates a clear opportunity for religious communities to inform the state's administration of justice, he is not positive about non-religious people. Thus, he does not go all the way to what I am proposing by civil religious pluralism, because he makes little space for people of no faith. His insights regarding religion's positive contributions (though perhaps still prioritizing Islam) and compatibility with democracy are valuable, but his failure to explicitly accommodate unbelievers would not work in most Western contexts.

Under Pancasila in Indonesia, it is admittedly difficult to freely express unbelief in God. Madjid skips over the impact on atheists or agnostics and instead expresses his

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[186] Madjid demonstrated this attitude in his own life when he was heavily criticised for allowing his daughter to marry a Jewish man from New York. Rather than back down, Madjid used this occasion as an opportunity to promote tolerance (Perlez, 2002).

gratefulness that unbelief falls outside adhering to Pancasila. Madjid writes, 'In the Qur'an religious freedom is related to good common sense and the self-confidence, stemming from a belief that there is a clear line between what is true and what is false' (1999).

Instead of dwelling on this thought, Madjid continues to discuss Islam's continuity with Pancasila's first principle under the doctrine of *tawhid*. The affirmation of belief in one God and the principle of non-coercion in religion align with the state doctrine. Madjid expands tolerance to non-Muslims but does not go so far as to expand this tolerance to non-believers. Instead, his focus is on establishing a proper place for Islam within the state. 'By becoming a good Muslim, an Indonesian Muslim becomes a good citizen. Therefore, Indonesian Muslims must exercise their right as recorded in Pancasila, that is, to understand and practice their religion to the fullest extent' (Madjid, 1999). This aligns faithfulness in religious practice with faithfulness to country—a claim that carries even greater impact if one accepts the premise that Pancasila was drawn from Indonesian's cultural heritage.

Islam can support the state while remaining distinct from it so that both entities can mature in their own ways. Perhaps an ideal setting might bring a closer alignment between religious groups and the state, but too close an alignment can result in injustice. Democracy has a positive emphasis on the balance of power between branches of the government. Finding a proper balance of power can be difficult, as it certainly was during Indonesia's history.

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Madjid, in another subtle critique of Suharto's regime, acknowledged that Indonesia's current stage of development was problematic.[187] Indonesia lacked an authentic balance of power. 'We require transparent rules in order to form a political system with built-in mechanisms to correct any misconduct within the government or the abuse of power. … All citizens are expected to participate due to the transparent nature of democracy. By nature, democracy goes hand in hand with the principles of multiculturalism' (Madjid, 1999). The balance of power should be corrected by the citizens. The strength of modern democracy is the dynamism which allows for change and ongoing adaptation.

The state's dynamism can also be supported by religious dynamism. For Madjid, it was important to make a distinction between a political ideology that fits with Islam and Islam itself. Competing ideologies within the state are unavoidable as we exist in time and space, while Islam as a religion, which should be differentiated from political Islam, is on a different plane of transcendence:

> I am of the opinion that Islam is not an ideology, although it can instead serve as a source of ideology for its adherents. But Islam itself is free from the limitations of an ideology that is very concerned about the context of space and time. … A direct view of Islam as an ideology can result in lowering the religion to be on par with existing ideologies. (Madjid, 2019, pp. 3887—3888)

Given the differentiation between a political version of Islam that can be interpreted in different ways and Madjid's understanding of Islam, well-meaning Muslims can differ in their form of commitment to the state without compromising Islam itself. The conceptual space provided by Islam through the implications of *ijtihad* should encourage Indonesian Muslims to fully embrace democracy.

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[187] This statement was written during the New Order era and before the era of reform which was initiated by Abdurrahman Wahid.

For Madjid, Indonesia has a large gap between its current expression of democracy and where it aspires to be. The state must deploy religious resources to meet its contemporary challenges. Religious communities can also inject their values through the democratic process that is needed to continually develop values such as 'human rights, the freedom of speech, the freedom of association, law and order, and equal opportunity' (Madjid, 1999). Indonesia should engage in this work as other countries are also striving for a balance between religions and the state.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued for the necessary contribution of goods developed through dialogue amongst religious moral orders into the state's understanding and enforcement of justice. The state's administration includes defining justice, implementing these definitions into the legal code which the state enforces, and creating conditions in which its citizens can thrive.

Liberalism was a helpful correction in rescuing justice from theocracy, yet excluding religion from defining public goods in the name of neutrality goes too far. Supplanting religion with reason and removing religious goods from the state as far as possible can alienate religious communities. The case of Indonesia, with an overwhelmingly religious population, illustrates the positive additions religion can make towards the state without necessarily usurping state authority. Madjid's quoting of John Adams, regarding the need for the state to be composed of people with morality and religion, illustrates the interdependence of the state and religion. The burden of educating, training, or forming an explicit morality is beyond the ability and structure of the government. While the state does not want to shoulder this burden, neither will the state

allow another party to enforce justice. If the state's definition of justice excludes the moral orders of society, then the state is in danger of fragmentation or injustice.

Moral conflicts continually surface in all three branches of modern democracies around contested social issues. A response that religious values have no place in the discussion, or that the state is the only neutral party able to mediate between religious differences, presents an unjust outcome to religious communities. Certain positions on social issues, like sexual ethics or transgenderism, rely on a particular view of what constitutes the most important aspects of a person. These views amount to strong evaluations, to use Taylor's term, and each person's moral commitments are a core part of their identity. These moral commitments are embedded in communities and a moral order. Thus, we have confusion and contestation as to what is just and how justice should be implemented. Sufficiently different conceptions of justice that grow apart over time destroy social cohesion and the fabric of society necessary for the state's continued existence.

There are no simple answers, and I do not propose that civil religious pluralism will eliminate disagreement around important social issues, except to say that liberalism's exclusion of religion from political life seems shortsighted. Insights from Madjid's reflections on religion and justice in Indonesia speak to the possibility of including religious communities, with their religious goods, in the political discourse of Western nations.

The tradition of civil religion attempted to address these same concerns. Rousseau emphasised social cohesion through his conception of general will and proposed creating a sort of religious foundation that would be acceptable to all. But Rousseau's formulation

was not acceptable to Protestants and Catholics, and it would definitely not satisfy Muslims, not to mention other religious traditions.

The arrangement presented in Madjid's writings can begin to address these issues. The state can remain in control of the administration of justice, with all that such an assignment entails, but should ensure a vigorous dialogue about the good life in civil society. Religious traditions can contribute to defining what is good, which inevitably affects the administration of justice, but in pluralistic ways. This does not imply that everyone will agree on matters of policy, but this arrangement would allow for a greater shared vision of justice that could support social cohesion. This shared vision of justice would then inform the state. The key difference between civil religious pluralism and civil religion is that instead of a singular religion circumscribed by the state, the moral force for social cohesion and justice comes from a dialogue of moral orders.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this chapter, having discussed four themes that constitute civil religious pluralism in the previous four chapters, I begin by reframing historical issues of religion and the state. After restating my research questions and sub-questions, I then show how those questions are answered through my study of Nurcholish Madjid. I restate my original contribution, which is a synthesis of my four thematic chapters, and I comment on how civil religious pluralism as political philosophy offers a just arrangement of authority between religion and the state. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I discuss limitations of the study, possibilities for further research, and the practical relevance of this theoretical framework as illustrated in a collaboration between Humanitarian Islam and the World Evangelical Alliance.

Reframing Historical Issues of Religion and State

At the beginning of *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor describes his investigation of the development of secularism as a shift in the conditions of belief. He does this by framing how much changed between 1500 and 2000 CE as we have 'move[d] from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace' (Taylor, 2007, p. 3). That 500-year jump in time illustrates the magnitude of change as Taylor seeks to 'tell his story' of how this change came to be. Just as these snapshots of change over time demonstrate the differences in approaches to belief, they also illustrate how our societies have chosen to organise themselves politically.

Taylor's historical frame provides a helpful introduction as his investigation of the development of secularism is connected to dramatic changes in political structures and

political authority. In the 1500s, the world was organised around kings, queens, and their kingdoms. From a European perspective, it was an age of exploration and expansion of territory under the various crowns. The Byzantine Empire was ending while the Ottoman Empire was ascending. South and Southeast Asia had a multitude of sultanates with varying degrees of power and fluctuating kingdoms. Most of these political entities were closely aligned with one of the major religious traditions. In many of these locations, religion was wedded to power. This is likely what Rousseau had in mind when he claimed that 'no State was ever founded without religion first serving as its basis' (Rousseau, 2002, p. 249).

By the turn of the millennium, most monarchies had faded from the scene or had their powers greatly reduced. In the place of kingdoms ruled by individuals or families, we see a relatively new political arrangement that seems to have swept the world by storm: the modern nation-state. Rather than being defined by the centres of power, typically the seat of the monarch, modern nations are defined by their borders. Previous views of the king's sovereignty, as rooted in 'divine right', have shifted completely. In the modern nation, these imagined communities have collective sovereignty. The modern nation-state has replaced previous conceptions of what binds people together. This newer political arrangement treats authority quite differently. Rather than coming from some notion of God, authority arises from the consent of the people themselves:

> It [the nation] is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the living pluralism of such religions, and the allomorphism between each faith's ontological claims and territorial stretch, nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so. The gage and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state. (Anderson, 2016, p. 7)

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With the important caveat that I am not claiming that this thesis parallels Taylor's insightful work, the political contrast between the time periods Taylor uses illustrates how conceptions of power and society have changed. Taylor's contrasting historical periods aptly frame the changing role of religion in political society, though he specifically limits himself to what he terms North Atlantic societies.

A burst of writing on political theory occurred during this period which proved influential for the political structure of the nation-state. Many of the texts produced within the West were conceived in a majority-Christian context. One hundred and fifty years into Taylor's 500-year period, Hobbes published *Leviathan*. Two hundred and fifty years into this period, the United States' Declaration of Independence established a new form of modern democracy, followed soon thereafter by the French Republic. This marked a growing emphasis on human rights. The two world wars, followed by the Cold War in the 20th century, increased the speed of political change, and not all developments followed democratic trends.

Both religion and government have considered their relationship to one another in terms of political theory and theology. This interaction has led to diverse systems and societies that seek to resolve tensions in different ways. Though Western societies were arguably shaped by engagement with Christianity as the dominant religious tradition, other regions of the world interacted with the viral idea of the nation-state in diverse contexts amidst different religious traditions. While shared political structures such as elections, representatives of the people who produce legislation, and intricate justice systems may appear similar on the surface, vibrant variety is present under the surface. In an era of globalisation, it is important to develop a conversation between national

communities. In a post-colonial climate, it is even more important that the listening does not only happen in one direction. Countries such as Indonesia have developed modern democracies with Islam as the dominant religious tradition. Their societies, because they are different from the West, offer insights relevant to modern political discourse as we seek to bolster peaceful pluralism.

Tension between the state and religion appears universal and unlikely to go away. This tension relates to authority and competing visions for how to best organise diverse, developing societies that uphold justice for all citizens. With migration and travel, adherents of religious traditions have spread in unpredictable ways. Evangelism and conversion also play a role in redistributing people of varying religious commitments. The structure of the nation-state and the decoupling of religion from political power mean that political structures are increasingly pluralistic.

In this pluralistic context, the political power and dominance of a single religious tradition, like theocracy, will not provide justice for all citizens. The removal of religion from political power in the state, as is the case of liberalism, was intended to provide a better arrangement for justice. This has taken hold in many Western nations, but without a critique of its assumptions, liberalism is in danger of monolithically enforcing its own views on everyone. In this way, liberalism could actually perpetrate the same type of abuses it sought to resolve in challenging theocracy. Civil religion was another possible answer to theocracy, but in seeking to apply a version of religion acceptable to all, it fails to become acceptable to many. This becomes even more problematic as a civil religion created by the state would be enforced in the legal code.

Liberalism developed as a response to the dangers of theocracy, but within the Christian tradition. By looking at Muslim reformers including Nurcholish Madjid, I have presented thinkers who have sought to integrate the idea of the modern nation-state with their own religious tradition. This effort has resulted in alternative forms which might be helpful for pluralistic democracies re-examining their own Christian assumptions. In the same way, Muslim majority societies might look to the writings of Nurcholish Madjid, and the concepts in civil religious pluralism, to strengthen their own versions of religiously informed pluralism. My contribution of civil religious pluralism is one possible vision of a post-liberal state which desires peace and human flourishing for the individual, the community, and the state.

Restatement of Research Questions

Religion and the state both have competing claims of authority on citizens who might also be religious followers. The state primarily asserts its authority through the justice System. This includes the passing of laws, enforcing these laws throughout society, and applying penalties for transgressing laws while also remaining open to appeals. Religious traditions and communities also assert authority in overlapping areas with the state. Religious claims involve monetary resources, primary allegiance, and defining what is just. To restate Rousseau's observation, the political leader has a more obvious ability to compel action, but the religious leader's claims touch on the destiny of the soul and afterlife.

Competition between these authorities raises questions as to how these tensions might be more satisfactorily addressed. To this end I pose my primary research question: To what extent can the writings of Nurcholish Madjid contribute to developing a political

philosophy of civil religious pluralism that seeks to reimagine justice for a pluralistic democratic state? This main question is pursued by sub-questions which were each pursued in a thematic chapter. How does the state engage with the goods of citizens possessing religious identity? How does the democratic state, with multiple modernities, move beyond the singular liberal moral order by including the religious moral order in its public good? How can the democratic state create a legitimate space between the state's governance and religious authority that places in dialogue multiple moral orders with a view to informing public goods? How can the state's administration of justice take into account multiple moral orders of its citizens?

Answers from the Writings of Nurcholish Madjid

The primary research question and sub-questions find a response in the collected writings of Nurcholish Madjid. Thematic insights from these writings were articulated in four thematic chapters that offer counter claims to an abstracted self and a liberal moral order. The religious self and multiplicity of moral orders can interact in civil society and influence the state's understanding and enforcement of justice.

The first thematic chapter, on the self, identity, and the good, pays attention to the essential goods of the religious self. Indonesia's more collective society presents a view of the self which is clearly embedded in community. This is different from the abstracted self of liberalism. Madjid's Islamic self has an inseparable orientation to *takwa*, *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas*. These terms, which can be roughly translated as piety, sincere devotion, and purity, are religious goods which represent legitimate ends of the religious self. Madjid argues that these are also public social goods which contribute to a peaceful society. They can also support the common good and provide moral resources for an excellent citizen.

In the second thematic chapter, on moral orders, social imaginaries, and political society, I present Madjid's argument for *kontextualisasi*, *ijtihad*, and *tawhid*. These ideas (respectively, as of contextualisation, interpretation, and oneness of God) are part of an alternate social imaginary which derives from a religious moral order. Madjid rejects a universal application of the liberal moral order and asserts a religious moral order which is compatible with the democratic state. Multiple moral orders are expected within multiple modernities and can legitimately contribute to public goods.

In the third thematic chapter, on civil society, pluralism, and tolerance, I argue for an interstitial space in which multiple moral orders, with diverse public goods possessed by religious selves, can be placed in dialogue. In this chapter, I present Madjid's case for Islamic contributions towards pluralism in Pancasila and *masyarakat Madani* or *masyarakat sipil*. The philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state, which promotes a tolerant pluralism, is authentically supported by Islamic sources. The notion of civil society as a significant non-state space in political society is also found in the Islamic tradition, such as the constitution of Medina.

In the fourth thematic chapter, on the administration of justice, I contend that the state must take into consideration and proactively support a dialogue of moral orders in civil society. Given that the state has primary responsibility to define and implement justice, it should include public goods of its citizens. Madjid proposes that this necessary interaction will result in *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, *salam*, and *amal salih* (respectively, social cohesion, harmony, and good works), which strengthen the state and contribute to a shared sense of justice for all citizens.

The thematic chapters address my research sub-questions. I have combined these interrelated themes as integral components of civil religious pluralism. This forms my primary answer to my main research question: To what extent can the writings of Nurcholish Madjid contribute to developing a political philosophy of civil religious pluralism that seeks to reimagine justice for a pluralistic democratic state?

Original Contribution

My original contribution to knowledge has been to bring Madjid's sources, which are mainly in the Indonesian language, into dialogue with political discourse in the West. Through reading his work closely, I have developed a framework of ideas which engage with the issue of religion in political philosophy.

In chapter 2, I introduced my conceptual framework in dialogue with classical political theorists. After articulating the limitations of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion, I proposed a modified form of civil religion, which I called civil religious pluralism. This conceptual framework adds to a critique of liberalism by placing Madjid's writing in context with other Muslim thinkers' dissatisfaction with the liberal modern state.

In chapter 3, I proposed the importance of understanding the religious self. I interacted with liberalism, Islam, and the discourse on multiculturalism. The religious self cannot privatise certain goods without doing violence to itself. Building on Taylor's investigation of the construction of the modern self, I further critiqued the liberal self through Madjid's conception of an Islamic self which has its own vision of the good. I argued that the religious self can equally contribute to the public good. Incorporating the goods of the religious self is consistent with the values of multiculturalism.

In chapter 4, I argued that these religious selves are embedded in religious communities with moral orders. I engaged with social imaginaries and modernity, ultimately arguing for the relevance of multiple modernities. The assumed universal rationality of the liberal moral order is critiqued by the discourse concerning multiple modernities and alternative social imaginaries. Accepting the ways in which various cultures have confronted modernity creates conceptual space to appreciate key components of Nurcholish Madjid's moral order, which is rooted in an Islamic imagination. Madjid's moral order includes religious goods as an integral part of political discourse.

In chapter 5, I argued that civil society is the non-state space wherein a dialogue of moral orders can take place. I worked with the category of civil society and Muslim authors' dissatisfaction with absolutising secularism in democracy. With the rejection of theocracy and elevation of the voice of the people in modern democracies, the state must engage the citizens to whom it is accountable. The state has clear authority to create and enforce the legal code. Religious communities have the clear authority to practice and teach their religious beliefs. Civil society is the interstitial space where the civil and religious can dialogue without being directly under either's authority. In this space, different moral orders can engage in dialogue about social goods.

Chapter 6 presented the claim that the integration of the themes presented in chapters 3—5 offers a better process for administering justice. I reiterated how classical theorists conceived of the state as providing justice for its citizens. I framed the movements of theocracy, liberalism, and civil religion as different pursuits of justice. I then drew on Madjid's writings to show how religion can contribute to pluralistic notions

of justice that should inform the state and address issues of social cohesion. An informed state which revises its understanding and enforcement of justice is the anticipated outcome of civil religious pluralism.

Limitations

In this thesis, I have tried to make a case for the necessary interaction between the state and its citizens about public, political goods. These goods are affirmed by individuals and do not stand alone, but exist within moral orders, including religious traditions. This dialogue is envisioned as taking place within civil society and producing a fusion of horizons which is then able to inform the state's administration of justice. A clear limitation of this arrangement is a situation where there is a clash between goods which cannot be resolved. One clear example of this is the current debate in the United States on the issue of abortion.

In a very generalised way, the liberal tradition emphasises the good of the mother's right to choose what happens to her own body. The Christian tradition, which is the most vocal, emphasises the good for the unborn to have a right to life. This debate has much greater nuance related to what constitutes life and at which point in gestation the mother's right to choose should be abandoned. Regardless, both sides advocating for these very personal goods see themselves as taking an important stand for the good of all society. Developing conversation in civil society may reduce the demonisation of the other and may include a fusion of horizons in terms of improved understanding, but it is unlikely that consensus will arise from civil society to inform the state's creation, implementation, and interpretation of laws. Civil religious pluralism articulates a theoretical way for the negotiation of goods but cannot overcome incommensurable or clashing goods. It does,

however, foster interaction and eliminates an assumption that the state is a neutral party without any moral order and thus able to fairly adjudicate the discussion.

Another limitation, specifically with regard to Madjid and the Indonesian context, is the attitude toward unbelief. As is argued in this thesis, religion can positively contribute to the public good, but Indonesian writers leave little space for unbelief. In a country that emphasises pluralistic tolerance between religions, agnostics or atheists have little to no space in the public square. I see no reason why lack of affiliation with a religious tradition or lack of belief in God would preclude agnostics or atheists putting forth their goods within the dialogue of traditions in civil society. However, this does not come from Indonesian sources. Incorporating those without belief in God in civil religious pluralism is a Western contribution to overcome a limitation in Madjid's writing.

This thesis is also limited by the breadth of engagement possible with contemporary political theory or policy. As this thesis is focused on political philosophy and the ends around which society is organised, I largely focused on classical sources. I felt this was necessary given the dialogue I was attempting between an Islamic-majority and a Christian-majority political society. Explaining aspects of Madjid's thought within the Muslim and Indonesian context and developing legitimate connections between Indonesia and Western democracy limited engagement with current discussions on policy.

Further Research

As noted in the previous section, this thesis could be developed further by assessing the political philosophy proposed here in light of contemporary discussions. There is a

stream of research by people like Jonathan Fox at Bar-Ilan University that further analyse state policy with regard to religion (2013). His research and further interaction with the entire Religion and State project would add further nuance to theoretical discussions as well as sociological grounding (Fox, 2008).

This project focused on developing and justifying the lens of civil religious pluralism to show its relevance to the debates on competing authority between religion and the state. This lens could be tested in a number of real-world situations in Western democracy. Subsequent research might offer modifications to this theory or demonstrate its practical usefulness. In some of the work in which I am involved, I intend to use this theory and assess its practical relevance in parts of the world with religious conflict or restrictions of religious freedom.

Practical Relevance

Humanitarian Islam and the World Evangelical Alliance[188]

Indonesia, like much of the Muslim world, contains diverse expressions of the majority religion. The two largest Muslim organizations represent a large percentage of the population. These are the modernist Muhammadiyah and the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama. Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912, as a reformist response to developments in the West, similar to Muhammad Abduh and Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (Barton, 2014; Hefner, 2000, p. 40). This modernist organization favoured a so-called 'pure' form of Sunni Islam, one that sought to expunge Indonesian cultural adaptations. This stream has struggled with the state over political implementations of Islam (Palmier, 1954). Within Indonesia, Islam's relationship with the state is an evergreen topic but, at the 1985

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[188] Much of this section is taken from a forthcoming article in the *International Journal of Asian Christianity*.

national congress, Muhammadiyah communicated its acceptance of pluralism within Pancasila alongside its commitment to realizing an Islamic society (Nakamura, 1983).

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), though founded after Muhammadiyah and in response to it in 1926 (Bush, 2002), lays claim to a traditionalist practice of Sunni Islam as it has been contextualized in Indonesia and is significantly larger than its modernist counterpart.[189] In 1994, Abdurrahman Wahid, Nahdlatul Ulama's general secretary, withdrew Indonesia's largest Muslim organization from competing in the political sphere and became much more supportive of the Indonesian state. The traditionalist organization has promoted Islam Nusantara,[190] or Islam of the Indonesian archipelago, which the current general secretary, Yahya Cholil Staquf, has described as developing in the unique atmosphere of Indonesia. As Islam came to the island chain, it came through 'a "diffusive" and "adaptive" process that, for the most part, eschewed military conquest. Like Hinduism and Buddhism before it, Islam "dissolved" and was gradually absorbed into the prevailing local civilization of Nusantara' (Staquf, 2015, p. 21). Nahdlatul Ulama's focus on spiritual elements of Islam, such as *tasawwuf* (mysticism), allowed their religious leaders to 'position Islam as an equal citizen within a highly pluralistic society rather than as the beneficiary or carrier of a violent supremacist ideology' (Staquf, 2015, p. 24).

In 2019, leadership from NU, using the English-friendly term Humanitarian Islam,[191] formed a joint working group with the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA). The

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[189] Holland Taylor also points to NU founder Hasyim Asyari's desire to respond to the 'Wahhabi conquest of Mecca and Medina approximately sixteen months before' (Ariev, Ratno, & Taylor, 2011, p. viii)

[190] For historical descriptions of this development, see Laffan (2015); Tjandrasasmita (2009).

[191] Humanitarian Islam seeks to counter Islamism based on Indonesia's tradition of pluralism and cultural values. This movement was launched by Nahdlatul Ulama's spiritual leaders and detailed

global Evangelical organization, representing 650 million Christians in 142 countries, partnered with the 90 million–member Muslim group to counter religious extremism and secular extremism. This alliance was not based on shared theology, but a broader commitment to the common good. 'This is not the peace of shared religious beliefs; it is the peace of compatible approaches to life in society'.[192] This unlikely partnership has clearly articulated a shared vision for peaceful society without watering down their own religious truth claims (Abdul-Haqq, 2021). Much of the rationale for this partnership, including a call for others to join in universal respect for all humanity,[193] has been articulated in their jointly published book *God Needs No Defense: Reimagining Muslim-Christian Relations in the 21st Century* (Johnson & Taylor, 2021). This fascinating development to protect each other's religious communities without downplaying exclusive claims,[194] whether in the majority or the minority, may have been possible only with an Indonesian expression of Islam as a Muslim partner.

Humanitarian Islam's collaboration with Evangelical Christians has drawn on the critical work of ulama (religious scholars) in drafting and affirming the Nusantara

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philosophical statements articulating their principles have been formally adopted by the organization (Iskandar, Shah, & Dinham, 2020).

[192] This working group was jointly announced on Humanitarian Islam's and the World Evangelical Alliance's websites. See https://worldea.org/news/14857/global-evangelical-and-muslim-organizations-launch-major-joint-religious-freedom-project/ and https://baytarrahmah.org/2020_04_22_global-evangelical-and-muslim-organizations-launch-major-joint-religious-freedom-project/.

[193] At an event launching a jointly published book between the WEA and Humanitarian Islam, a joint statement was released which further describes the work between these groups as they 'call upon people of goodwill of every faith and nation to join in building a global alliance founded upon shared civilisational values. This global alliance seeks to prevent the political weaponization of identity; curtail the spread of communal hatred; promote solidarity and respect among the diverse people, cultures and nations of the world; and foster the emergence of a truly just and harmonious world order, founded upon respect for the equal rights and dignity of every human being'.

[194] *Christianity Today* published an article on the public book launch at The Nation's Mosque in Washington, DC titled 'Christian and Muslim Leaders Agree on Legitimacy of Evangelism' (Casper, 2021).

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Manifesto[195] and rulings from Nahdlatul Ulama's national conference (Munas) in 2019.

These documents express the need to change the Muslim mindset which fosters conflict:

'These views are rooted in specific interpretations of Islamic teaching, which must change

if we are to mobilize the Muslim world. … This will entail "recontextualizing" a number

of fiqh views that are no longer compatible with, nor reflect, the realities of the

contemporary world.'[196]

One example of updated jurisprudence is the ruling that the legal category of infidel

is no longer relevant as a political category.[197] This powerful decision was complemented

by support for the political structure of modern democracies and a Muslim's

responsibility to live within them. As further explicated in the jointly published book, the

2019 rulings by NU religious leaders made additional statements which justify

participation in contemporary society:

> The modern nation-state is theologically legitimate. All citizens, irrespective of religion, ethnicity or creed, have equal rights and obligations. If it is concluded that any element of positive (i.e., statutory and/or regulatory) law contravenes the highest principles and purposes of religion, this should be — and may only be — corrected by constitutional means. The existence of such laws and regulations may not be employed as a justification for defying a legitimate government. Muslims have a religious obligation to foster peace rather than wage war on behalf of their co-religionists, whenever conflict erupts between Muslim and non-Muslim populations anywhere in the world. (Johnson & Taylor, 2021, p. 7)

These promising contributions to pluralistic democracy from within the Indonesian

Islamic tradition have historical precedents in the writings of former Indonesian President

Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid. The contemporary developments in

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[195] This statement is referenced in *God Needs No Defense* (2021) and is available online at https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2018/Nusantara-Manifesto.pdf.

[196] These statements have been translated into English and are available online at https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2019/2019-Munas_The-Recontextualization-of-Fiqh.pdf.

[197] An English translation of this ruling can be found online at https://www.baytarrahmah.org/media/2019/2019-Munas_Findings-of-Bahtsul-Masa'il-Maudluiyyah.pdf.

Indonesia are very much in line with key components of Madjid's thought. They suggest practical utility for civil religious pluralism and new avenues to be explored in the ongoing pursuit of peace and justice for all.

This is not to say that tension between religion and the state has gone away, or that Indonesia is a panacea of religious freedom. The recent case of blasphemy charges against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok), the former governor of Jakarta, are troubling (Hadiz, 2019; Osman & Waikar, 2018; Singgih, 2019). The existence of blasphemy laws in general demonstrates ways in which Western democracy might be able to positively contribute to non-Western democracies.

Summary

In my concluding chapter, I reframed the discussion on historical issues of religion and the state. I restated my original research questions and provided answers to them from the writings of Nurcholish Madjid. I explained how this thesis has made an original contribution by integrating ideas from Madjid's writings with political discourse in the West. I explained limitations of my research and suggested possibilities for further research. I also offered a brief example of how two religious communities could contribute to peace in a pluralistic state.

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