

Sovereignty in the Age of Radicalism: Political Theology and the State's Battle Against Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Indonesia's counter-radicalism strategies against Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) through the framework of Carl Schmitt's political theology. HTI, a transnational Islamist group advocating for a global caliphate, poses a direct challenge to Indonesia's pluralistic democracy and its foundational ideology, Pancasila. The Indonesian government's response, including the 2017 ban on HTI under a Presidential Decree, highlights the state's assertion of sovereignty as a "theological sovereign," a concept central to Schmitt's idea of sovereignty as "the power to decide on the exception." This research explores how the state mobilizes Pancasila as a secularized theological construct to delegitimize HTI's ideology and reinforce national unity. Legal, social, and collaborative strategies are critically evaluated, revealing the interplay between theological narratives and practical governance. Comparative insights from Malaysia and Turkey contextualize Indonesia's unique approach, emphasizing its reliance on Pancasila as a unifying yet sacred framework. The findings reveal that while Indonesia's measures effectively disrupt HTI's organizational structure, they risk marginalizing dissent and narrowing democratic discourse. The state's theological framing of Pancasila, while successful in addressing immediate threats, raises concerns about its implications for pluralism and freedom of expression. This study contributes to the broader understanding of political theology in addressing radical ideologies, offering valuable insights into the balance between sovereignty, national identity, and democratic governance. The Indonesian experience underscores the need for inclusive approaches that address the root causes of radicalization while preserving the democratic ideals that underpin pluralistic societies.

Keywords: *Political Theology, Counter-Radicalism, Sovereignty*

INTRODUCTION

Radical Islamic movements have increasingly gained prominence in the global political landscape, posing significant challenges to state sovereignty and democratic governance (Alvian, 2023). These movements, often rooted in the aspiration to establish a transnational caliphate, contest the authority of

nation-states and seek to replace secular legal frameworks with divine law (Sharia). In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority democracy, the presence of such groups has sparked intense debates regarding the balance between religious freedom, state authority, and national security. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), a prominent transnational Islamist group advocating for the establishment of a global caliphate, exemplifies these challenges (Demidenko & Kutuzova, 2022).

Indonesia's response to HTI highlights the intersection of religion, politics, and state sovereignty. In 2017, the Indonesian government formally banned HTI under a Presidential Decree, citing its ideology as incompatible with the foundational principles of Pancasila and its potential to undermine national unity. This move has been both lauded as a necessary step to safeguard Indonesia's pluralistic democracy and criticized as an overreach of state power, raising questions about the legitimacy of such interventions in a democratic society. The case of HTI thus provides a compelling lens to explore the dynamics of political theology and state counter-radicalism (Marfiando, 2020). The state's response to HTI is rooted in a broader strategy of deradicalization, aimed at curbing radical ideologies and their spread among the population. This includes the use of legal measures, social reintegration programs, and collaborations with religious organizations to delegitimize extremist narratives. Statistical data from the National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) suggests that efforts to curtail radical ideologies have achieved mixed results, with recurring instances of radical sympathies among segments of the population. Furthermore, the increasing influence of conservative Islam in Indonesian society complicates the efficacy of counter-radicalism policies (Setia, 2021).

Carl Schmitt's political theology provides a foundational framework for analyzing the dynamics of radicalism and counter-radicalism in Indonesia, particularly the state's response to transnational Islamist movements like Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). Central to Schmitt's concept of sovereignty is

the idea of "the decision on the exception," where the sovereign transcends normative legal frameworks to address existential threats. In Indonesia, the government's ban on HTI under a Presidential Decree reflects this principle. By categorizing HTI's ideology as incompatible with Pancasila and a threat to national stability, the state asserts its sovereign authority to act outside the usual legal constraints, mirroring Schmitt's argument that sovereignty involves the power to decide in moments of exception. Schmitt's insights also highlight the theological underpinnings of political sovereignty, even in secularized states. In the Indonesian context, Pancasila functions as a form of secularized theology, embodying transcendent values that define the boundaries of acceptable political and religious behavior. The state's invocation of Pancasila as the ultimate foundation of its legitimacy demonstrates its role as a "theological sovereign," capable of determining which ideologies align with the nation's collective identity. The conflict with HTI arises as a competing theological claim, wherein HTI's vision of a transnational caliphate challenges the state's authority by proposing an alternative divine order, thus intensifying the ideological contestation(Irkhami, 2014).

Furthermore, Schmitt's framework underscores the centrality of theological narratives in justifying state actions during crises. While existing studies often focus on the legal and procedural aspects of counter-radicalism, Schmitt's perspective shifts attention to the deeper ideological struggle between the state's secularized theological claims and HTI's transnational religious vision(Maksum, 2017). This interplay reveals a critical dimension of the state's counter-radicalism strategy: its reliance on a theological justification to preserve sovereignty and national cohesion. By framing HTI's activities as threats to the sacredness of Pancasila, the state not only neutralizes radical ideologies but also reinforces its own authority as the ultimate interpreter of acceptable political and religious norms.Previous studies have explored the challenges of deradicalization in Indonesia,

including the social and political implications of banning radical groups. Scholars have examined the effectiveness of programs aimed at disengaging individuals from extremist ideologies, as well as the role of civil society and religious institutions in this process. However, these studies often lack a theoretical framework that connects state sovereignty and theological narratives, leaving an analytical void in understanding the ideological dimensions of counter-radicalism(Jaelani, 2022).

This article offers a novel contribution by situating Indonesia's response to HTI within the framework of political theology. By analyzing how the state mobilizes theological concepts, such as Pancasila's role as a "secular sacred" ideology, the study highlights the deeper ideological contestations underlying counter-radicalism strategies. Unlike prior studies that focus primarily on legal or programmatic responses, this research delves into the theological underpinnings that inform state actions against radical groups. Understanding these dynamics is not merely an academic exercise but a matter of urgent relevance. As Indonesia navigates the tensions between religious freedom and state sovereignty, its approach to counter-radicalism has far-reaching implications for its democratic stability and pluralistic identity. In an era of rising global radicalism, the insights gleaned from Indonesia's experience can also inform broader discussions on the role of political theology in addressing transnational extremist movements.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing a combination of case study analysis and textual interpretation to explore the intersection of political theology and counter-radicalism in Indonesia. The primary focus is on the state's response to Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and the role of Pancasila as a foundational ideological framework. Data collection is based on secondary sources, including government documents, legal texts, policy statements, and academic literature. This is complemented by discourse

analysis of speeches, decrees, and statements made by Indonesian political leaders to identify how theological narratives and sovereignty claims are mobilized in the state's counter-radicalism strategies. The use of Schmitt's political theology as a theoretical framework allows for a deeper examination of the ideological dimensions underpinning these actions.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, the study also incorporates a comparative approach by examining relevant counter-radicalism policies in other Muslim-majority democracies, such as Malaysia and Turkey. This comparative lens provides context for understanding the distinctiveness of Indonesia's approach, particularly the invocation of Pancasila as a form of secularized theology. The analysis is structured to highlight the interplay between sovereignty, ideological contestation, and theological narratives, as well as to assess the implications of these dynamics for democratic governance and social cohesion. By synthesizing theoretical insights with empirical data, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between political theology, radicalism, and state power in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION,

The theoretical foundation of this study is deeply rooted in Carl Schmitt's political theology, which serves as a critical lens for understanding the interplay between sovereignty, legal frameworks, and theological claims in political governance. Schmitt's central concept of sovereignty as "the power to decide on the exception" highlights the necessity of extraordinary measures in moments of existential threat to the state (McAllister & Napolitano, 2021). This concept has been extensively analyzed in political and legal theory, with scholars emphasizing its relevance in understanding state responses during crises. Schmitt's critique of liberalism and his focus on the theological origins of political authority provide a robust framework for analyzing state interventions, particularly in contexts where ideology and security intersect,

as in the case of Indonesia's counter-radicalism policies. The second core theoretical framework is the notion of secularized theology, where political authority borrows its structure and legitimacy from religious concepts. Schmitt argues that many foundational ideas in modern politics, such as sovereignty, are secularized versions of theological constructs (Baranger, 2023). This concept is particularly relevant to Indonesia, where Pancasila functions as a sacred ideology embodying the state's foundational values. The invocation of Pancasila in counter-radicalism efforts underscores how the Indonesian state operates within a framework of secular theology, asserting its authority as a transcendental sovereign while addressing challenges from Islamist groups like HTI.

Radicalism, particularly in its Islamic transnational form, has been a subject of significant scholarly interest. Studies on Hizbut Tahrir, for instance, have explored the group's ideological framework, which seeks to establish a global caliphate and rejects the legitimacy of the modern nation-state. Scholars have examined how HTI's ideology fundamentally conflicts with the principles of democratic governance and pluralism, making it a key target for state intervention in Indonesia. While much of the literature focuses on the group's ideological composition and recruitment strategies, less attention has been paid to the theological dimensions of the state's counter-radicalism efforts. Existing research on counter-radicalism in Indonesia has largely concentrated on practical measures such as deradicalization programs, legal frameworks, and community engagement initiatives. Scholars have explored the effectiveness of these strategies in curbing radical ideologies and promoting social reintegration. However, these studies often lack a critical analysis of the ideological contestations underpinning these policies. The application of political theology to understand the state's approach to radicalism offers a fresh perspective that connects practical strategies with the underlying power dynamics and theological narratives (Herrero, 2023).

Another significant the role of ideology in shaping state responses to

security threats. Studies have highlighted how states construct ideological narratives to legitimize their actions, particularly during crises. In Indonesia, the invocation of Pancasila as a unifying ideology against radicalism reflects the state's strategic use of ideological constructs to maintain social and political cohesion. This phenomenon aligns with Schmitt's argument that theological narratives remain central to the exercise of political authority, even in secularized forms. In the context of political theology, the relationship between sovereignty and crisis management has been extensively debated. Scholars have noted that states often invoke exceptional measures to address threats, thereby reinforcing their sovereignty. This aligns with Schmitt's assertion that the sovereign is defined by the ability to decide on exceptions. In Indonesia, the ban on HTI illustrates how the state asserts its sovereignty by bypassing legal norms and employing extraordinary measures to safeguard national unity and stability. The theological dimension of this decision, rooted in the sanctity of Pancasila, adds a critical layer to understanding the state's actions (Setia & Syarif, 2022).

Comparative studies on counter-radicalism in other Muslim-majority countries, such as Malaysia and Turkey, provide valuable insights into the similarities and differences in how states address radical ideologies. These studies highlight the role of religious institutions and state-sanctioned narratives in delegitimizing extremist ideologies. However, the unique context of Indonesia, with its pluralistic democracy and foundational reliance on Pancasila, offers a distinct case where secularized theology plays a central role. This distinction underscores the need for a context-specific analysis that integrates both practical and theological perspectives. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by bridging the gap between practical counter-radicalism measures and the ideological contestations underpinning them. By situating Indonesia's response to HTI within the framework of political theology, it offers a novel perspective that emphasizes the interplay between state sovereignty, theological narratives, and ideological conflicts.

This approach not only enhances our understanding of counter-radicalism strategies but also sheds light on the broader implications of political theology in managing radicalism within a pluralistic and democratic society (Rahman et al., 2023).

The State's Invocation of Sovereignty Through Pancasila

Pancasila, as the foundational ideology of Indonesia, serves as more than just a guiding set of principles. It embodies the collective identity of the nation and acts as a unifying framework that transcends cultural, religious, and ethnic differences. As a state philosophy, Pancasila is deeply entrenched in the nation's political and social structures, reflecting Indonesia's unique approach to governance. At its core, it represents a secularized form of theology, where principles of divine authority are translated into a national ideology that is inclusive and adaptable. This allows the state to maintain a sense of moral authority, grounded in both tradition and modernity. The importance of Pancasila becomes particularly evident in moments of crisis, where it functions as a moral compass for the state to navigate challenges to its sovereignty. The rise of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), a transnational Islamic organization advocating for a global caliphate, presented such a crisis. HTI's rejection of the nation-state model and its calls for an alternative global governance structure directly opposed the principles of Pancasila. In response, the Indonesian government viewed HTI's ideology as a threat not only to the stability of the state but also to the unity of its diverse population (Paelani Setia, 2021).

In 2017, the Indonesian government banned HTI under a Presidential Decree, citing its incompatibility with Pancasila and its potential to disrupt national harmony. This decision marked a significant moment in the assertion of state sovereignty. By taking such action, the state demonstrated its willingness to act decisively in the face of ideological threats, even if it meant bypassing usual democratic processes. This aligns with Carl Schmitt's concept

of sovereignty, where the sovereign is defined by the ability to make decisions during exceptional circumstances (Dulkiah et al., 2023).

Schmitt's idea of "the decision on the exception" provides a framework to understand the state's actions against HTI. According to Schmitt, sovereignty is not just about adhering to laws but also about having the authority to suspend them when the survival of the state is at stake. In the case of HTI, the Indonesian government's decision to ban the organization can be seen as an exercise of this sovereign power. By stepping outside the normal legal framework, the state positioned itself as the ultimate authority capable of making extraordinary decisions to protect the nation (Syah & Setia, 2021).

The invocation of Pancasila in this context highlights its role as a secularized theological construct. While Pancasila is not explicitly religious, it carries a moral and almost sacred weight in the political and social life of Indonesia. By framing HTI's ideology as a direct challenge to Pancasila, the state effectively positioned its actions as a defense of a higher moral order. This allowed the government to justify extraordinary measures as necessary to preserve the sanctity of the nation's founding principles. Official statements and policy actions during this period further emphasized the sanctity of Pancasila. Leaders repeatedly invoked Pancasila as the cornerstone of Indonesia's identity and the ultimate standard against which all ideologies must be measured. For instance, the government emphasized that Pancasila was designed to accommodate Indonesia's diverse society, making it incompatible with HTI's vision of a single, global Islamic governance model. These statements reinforced the perception of Pancasila not only as a political ideology but also as a moral imperative. (Rikza, 2020)

The banning of HTI also reflects the state's role as a guardian of unity in a pluralistic society. Indonesia is home to various ethnic groups, languages, and religions, making unity a critical aspect of governance. Pancasila provides a common ground that all citizens can rally around, regardless of their background. By framing HTI as a threat to this unity, the state underscored its

responsibility to protect the nation's pluralistic character against divisive ideologies. Moreover, the government's actions against HTI showcased the adaptability of Pancasila in addressing contemporary challenges. While Pancasila was formulated decades ago, its principles have proven resilient in guiding the nation through various crises. The state's ability to invoke Pancasila in its response to HTI demonstrates how foundational ideologies can be mobilized to address modern threats while maintaining their relevance and authority (Rizki, 2018).

Schmitt's theory also sheds light on the broader implications of the state's actions. By deciding on the exception, the state effectively demonstrated its capacity to act decisively in the face of existential threats. This assertion of sovereignty sends a strong message to other potential challengers of the state's authority, reinforcing the idea that the government will take necessary steps to protect national unity and stability, even if those steps require extraordinary measures. While the state's actions were widely supported, they also sparked debates about the balance between security and democratic principles. Critics argued that banning HTI bypassed the democratic process and set a precedent for limiting freedom of expression. However, proponents of the ban highlighted that HTI's ideology was fundamentally at odds with Indonesia's democratic values, justifying the state's extraordinary measures as a necessary safeguard for the nation's future (Setia & Rahman, 2021).

The invocation of Pancasila in this context highlights its dual role as a unifying ideology and a tool of state sovereignty. On one hand, it represents the values and aspirations of the Indonesian people. On the other hand, it serves as a justification for the state to exercise its authority in exceptional circumstances. This dual role underscores the flexibility and enduring relevance of Pancasila in navigating the complexities of modern governance. Examples from official policy actions further illustrate this dynamic. The government's outreach programs and public campaigns emphasized the

importance of Pancasila in countering extremist ideologies. These efforts were not only aimed at delegitimizing HTI but also at reinforcing the public's understanding of Pancasila as the foundation of national identity. This approach ensured that the government's actions were seen as both protective and proactive.

The sanctity of Pancasila as a state ideology also allows the government to draw clear boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable ideologies. This boundary-setting is crucial in maintaining social cohesion, especially in a diverse society like Indonesia. By positioning Pancasila as the ultimate standard, the state creates a framework within which all political and religious expressions must operate. The state's invocation of sovereignty through Pancasila reflects a deliberate and strategic response to the challenges posed by HTI. By framing its actions within the context of Pancasila, the government not only addressed an immediate ideological threat but also reinforced its role as the guardian of national unity and stability. Schmitt's concept of sovereignty provides a valuable lens to understand these dynamics, highlighting the interplay between legal authority, ideological narratives, and the exercise of exceptional power in moments of crisis. This case illustrates how foundational ideologies like Pancasila can be mobilized to navigate complex political landscapes while preserving the integrity of the state.

Theological Contestation between the State and HTI

Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) presents a unique ideological challenge to the foundational principles of Indonesia's statehood. Rooted in the vision of a transnational Islamic caliphate, HTI's ideology fundamentally rejects the legitimacy of the modern nation-state, including Indonesia's pluralistic and democratic framework. This rejection is not merely political but deeply theological, as HTI views divine law (Sharia) as the sole legitimate basis for governance. This theological stance places HTI in direct opposition to Indonesia's national ideology, Pancasila, which is built on the principles of

religious coexistence, democracy, and national unity. HTI's vision of a global caliphate is premised on the idea of a single Islamic governance structure that transcends national borders. This vision contrasts sharply with Indonesia's model of statehood, which emphasizes diversity and inclusivity within a unified national framework. Pancasila, as the ideological foundation of the Indonesian state, represents a form of secularized theology, where the moral and ethical values of religion are incorporated into a political framework that respects pluralism. HTI's transnational religious vision directly challenges this model by advocating for the replacement of Indonesia's state structure with a global Islamic governance system (Azzaro & Dewi, 2018).

This theological contestation between HTI and the state is evident in the way each defines sovereignty. For HTI, ultimate sovereignty belongs to God, and any human political system that does not derive directly from divine law is inherently illegitimate. In contrast, the Indonesian state asserts its sovereignty through the principles of Pancasila, which balance secular governance with respect for religious values. This divergence creates an irreconcilable conflict, as HTI's theological claims undermine the legitimacy of Indonesia's democratic and pluralistic framework. HTI's theological stance also poses a direct challenge to democratic pluralism. By advocating for a singular interpretation of Islamic governance, HTI excludes the possibility of coexistence with other religious and ideological perspectives. This exclusivity is incompatible with Indonesia's national identity, which is based on the idea of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). The state's emphasis on religious harmony and mutual respect is fundamentally at odds with HTI's vision of a homogeneous Islamic political order .

The ideological battle between HTI and the Indonesian state can also be seen as a clash between transnational religious aspirations and state-defined nationalism. While HTI's vision extends beyond national boundaries, seeking to unite Muslims globally under a single caliphate, the Indonesian state prioritizes the preservation of its national integrity and sovereignty. Pancasila

serves as a unifying framework that aligns with Indonesia's diverse cultural and religious landscape, making it an antithesis to HTI's homogenizing agenda. This conflict is further complicated by the theological narratives each side employs to legitimize their claims. HTI draws on Islamic theological concepts to argue for the necessity of a caliphate, presenting it as a divine mandate for Muslims. The state, on the other hand, invokes Pancasila as a sacred ideology that upholds the moral and ethical values shared by all Indonesians, regardless of their religious affiliation. This theological contestation reflects a deeper struggle over who has the authority to define the moral and political order in Indonesia.

The Indonesian government's decision to ban HTI in 2017 was a direct response to this ideological challenge. By framing HTI's activities as incompatible with Pancasila, the state positioned itself as the protector of national unity and stability. This action also highlighted the theological dimension of the state's sovereignty, as it sought to reaffirm Pancasila's role as the ultimate standard for acceptable political and religious expressions. The ban on HTI was not just a legal or political move; it was also a theological assertion of the state's authority to define and protect the nation's ideological boundaries (Alvian, 2023).

The conflict between HTI and the Indonesian state also underscores the tensions between universal religious ideologies and localized expressions of faith. While HTI promotes a uniform interpretation of Islam that transcends cultural and national differences, the Indonesian state emphasizes the contextualization of religious values within the nation's pluralistic framework. This tension highlights the broader challenge of reconciling global religious movements with local political and cultural realities (Falco & Rotondi, 2016).

Schmitt's concept of sovereignty provides valuable insights into this theological contestation. According to Schmitt, sovereignty involves the ability to decide on exceptions, particularly during moments of existential threat. In this context, the state's decision to ban HTI can be seen as an assertion of its

sovereignty, emphasizing its role as the ultimate arbiter of political and theological legitimacy. By defining HTI's ideology as a threat to Pancasila, the state exercised its sovereign power to preserve the nation's ideological coherence. The theological contestation between the state and HTI also reveals the limits of pluralism in the face of ideological extremism. While Indonesia's pluralistic democracy seeks to accommodate diverse perspectives, it must also draw boundaries to protect its foundational principles. The state's actions against HTI illustrate the challenges of navigating this balance, as it seeks to uphold pluralism while countering ideologies that threaten its very existence.

This ideological battle also highlights the strategic use of theological narratives by both sides. HTI uses theological arguments to delegitimize the state, portraying its governance model as un-Islamic. The state counters by emphasizing the sanctity of Pancasila as a unifying ideology that reflects the nation's moral and religious diversity. This interplay of theological narratives underscores the complexity of the conflict and the centrality of ideology in shaping political and social dynamics. The theological contestation between HTI and the Indonesian state reflects a broader struggle over the nature of sovereignty, governance, and national identity. HTI's transnational vision of a caliphate challenges the legitimacy of Indonesia's pluralistic democracy, while the state's invocation of Pancasila serves as both a defense of its sovereignty and a reaffirmation of its ideological foundations. This conflict highlights the enduring relevance of theological narratives in political governance and underscores the importance of understanding these dynamics in addressing contemporary challenges to state sovereignty and national unity.

Counter-Radicalism Strategies and Their Theological Underpinnings

Indonesia's counter-radicalism strategies against Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) reflect a multifaceted approach combining legal measures, social interventions, and collaborative efforts. However, the foundation of these strategies lies not only in practical governance but also in the theological

narratives employed to legitimize state actions. The state's invocation of Pancasila as both a unifying ideology and a secular-sacred framework illustrates the deliberate intertwining of political power and theological justification. This duality has proven effective in addressing ideological threats but raises critical questions about its implications for democratic values and the limits of state authority.(Irkhami, 2014)

Legally, the government's use of a Presidential Decree to ban HTI represents an extraordinary measure that bypasses typical democratic deliberation. This action, while effective in neutralizing HTI as an organized entity, sets a dangerous precedent for the arbitrary use of executive power. The ban underscores the state's willingness to prioritize sovereignty over procedural legality, echoing Carl Schmitt's concept of sovereignty as the authority to decide in moments of exception. However, such decisions risk undermining public trust in democratic institutions, as they blur the lines between necessary intervention and authoritarian overreach. Socially, the state has employed a range of programs to delegitimize HTI's ideology and promote national unity. These include public campaigns highlighting the compatibility of Islam with Pancasila and the role of religious diversity in Indonesia's national identity. While these efforts are commendable in addressing the root causes of radicalism, they often rely on simplistic narratives that ignore the nuanced grievances exploited by groups like HTI. By failing to address the socio-economic and political factors that drive radicalization, the state risks perpetuating the conditions that allow such ideologies to persist.

Collaboration with religious organizations and civil society forms another pillar of Indonesia's counter-radicalism strategy. The government frequently partners with moderate Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah to promote interpretations of Islam that align with Pancasila. While these alliances strengthen the state's theological legitimacy, they also reveal a troubling dependence on specific religious actors.

This reliance can marginalize other voices within the Muslim community, creating an imbalance that may inadvertently fuel resentment among groups that feel excluded from the political process. Theological narratives play a central role in reinforcing these strategies. The state's portrayal of Pancasila as a "sacred" ideology positions it as a moral arbiter capable of distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable beliefs. This framing enables the government to delegitimize HTI's vision of a global caliphate as not only a political threat but also a moral aberration. However, this approach risks conflating dissent with extremism, leaving little room for critical discourse within the framework of democratic governance. Such theological absolutism could stifle legitimate political expression and erode the very pluralism that Pancasila seeks to uphold (Setia, 2021).

Comparative cases offer valuable insights into the effectiveness and limitations of Indonesia's strategies. In Malaysia, the government similarly uses religious narratives to delegitimize radical ideologies, but with a stronger emphasis on state-controlled religious education. Turkey, under President Erdoğan, has taken a more authoritarian approach, merging political and religious authority to suppress dissent. While Indonesia's strategy appears more balanced, its reliance on Pancasila as a theological tool mirrors elements of these other cases, suggesting a broader trend of states weaponizing ideology to counter radicalism. The effectiveness of Indonesia's counter-radicalism efforts is mixed. The banning of HTI has undoubtedly disrupted the group's organizational structure and public activities. However, its ideology persists among segments of the population, often shifting to underground networks or influencing other movements. This highlights a critical limitation of the state's approach: while legal and social interventions can target organizations, they struggle to eradicate deeply held beliefs. Without addressing the underlying drivers of radicalization, such as inequality, corruption, and political disenfranchisement, the state's efforts may achieve only superficial results.

Moreover, these strategies pose inherent risks to democratic

governance. By framing counter-radicalism within theological narratives, the state assumes a moral authority that is difficult to challenge. This concentration of power can lead to the exclusion of alternative perspectives, including those that seek to reform or critique the status quo. Such exclusion undermines the democratic principle of open dialogue and risks alienating citizens who feel unrepresented by the state's narrow ideological framework. Indonesia's counter-radicalism strategies demonstrate both strengths and vulnerabilities.

The integration of legal, social, and collaborative measures has proven effective in neutralizing immediate threats like HTI, but the heavy reliance on theological narratives raises critical concerns about the long-term implications for democratic governance. While Pancasila provides a powerful tool for unifying the nation, its sanctification as a state ideology risks perpetuating a narrow vision of identity and sovereignty. Moving forward, Indonesia must strike a delicate balance between safeguarding national unity and preserving the pluralism and openness that define its democracy. Bold reforms addressing the root causes of radicalization and ensuring inclusivity in theological and political discourse are essential to achieve this balance.

CONCLUSION

The response of the Indonesian state to Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) provides a compelling case study of the interplay between sovereignty, theology, and political governance. By invoking Pancasila as a unifying and sacred ideology, the government effectively positioned itself as a theological sovereign, capable of determining acceptable ideological boundaries. The use of legal, social, and collaborative counter-radicalism strategies underscores the state's multifaceted approach to preserving national unity and stability in the face of ideological extremism. However, these strategies also reveal critical tensions between maintaining democratic values and addressing existential threats.

Carl Schmitt's concept of sovereignty as "the power to decide on the exception" offers valuable insights into the state's actions. The decision to ban HTI demonstrates the Indonesian government's willingness to prioritize national sovereignty and security over procedural legalism, reflecting Schmitt's assertion that sovereignty transcends normative legal constraints during crises. While this approach successfully neutralized HTI as an organizational entity, it raised concerns about the precedent it sets for the arbitrary use of state power.

The theological dimension of the state's counter-radicalism strategy, rooted in the sanctity of Pancasila, highlights the enduring relevance of theological narratives in modern political governance. However, the reliance on these narratives to legitimize extraordinary measures risks marginalizing dissenting voices and narrowing the scope for pluralistic discourse. This underscores the need for a more inclusive approach that addresses the socio-political and economic drivers of radicalization while preserving democratic openness. Indonesia's experience with HTI also offers broader lessons for other nations grappling with transnational radical movements. The balance between safeguarding national identity and preserving democratic principles is delicate and requires careful calibration. As Indonesia continues to navigate these challenges, its strategies must evolve to ensure that the pluralism and inclusivity that define its democracy are not undermined in the pursuit of security.

The intersection of political theology, sovereignty, and counter-radicalism in Indonesia reveals both the strengths and limitations of the state's approach. While the invocation of Pancasila provides a powerful framework for national unity, its theological sanctification raises critical questions about the future of democratic governance. Moving forward, Indonesia must strive to address the root causes of radicalization and promote inclusive theological and political narratives that reinforce its commitment to pluralism, democracy, and human rights.

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