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**“Indonesia’s Perilous Democratization: The Limit of
Religious-Based Social Capital in Democratic Transition”**

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Sociologists and democratic theorists have argued that social capital is helpful in establishing and allowing democracy to function (e.g., Coleman 1986 & 1988, Dahl 1989 and Putnam 1993). In line with this, many western *Indonesianists* have assumed that Muhammadiyah, as a moderate Islamic organization with many layers of social capital can play a significant role in the ongoing process of democratization in Indonesia. The presence and potential of fundamentalist and radical Islam have generally been overlooked. This misleading assumption or academic negligence has been responsible for the growing support for the agenda of radical Islam in current Indonesian politics. This problem has to be challenged in order to create a long-term peaceful competition for a democratic global community. Founded by a modernist Muslim in 1912 (KH Ahmad Dahlan) and with later funding from Middle Eastern philanthropists, Muhammadiyah now claims to have more than 25 million followers or 18% of Indonesian Muslims. Muhammadiyah controls more than six thousand institutions, including schools and universities, orphanages, health clinics, and banks. Thus, it is very important to have up to date knowledge of its development. While Muhammadiyah has played an important role in Indonesian politics its contribution to the groups that oppose democratic ideals should not be overlooked. A more critical and thorough approach has to be conducted. This paper presents some arguments that support the significant role of Muhammadiyah in supporting the agenda of Indonesian fundamentalist and radical Islam. Muhammadiyah’s support for this aspect of Islam contributes to the problematic nature of Indonesia’s journey toward full democratisation. A growing influence of radical Islam will have a negative impact on social and economic conditions.