The following represents a selection of research projects currently being undertaken by Centre staff and members.

**Muslim Organisations in Indonesian Society and Politics, 1950-1980**

**Researcher:** Steven Drakeley

This research project is a study of the role of Islamic organisations and leaders in Indonesian political and social affairs during this historically significant period. There have been many recent studies focusing on contemporary Islam in Indonesia, and on the period since 1980. These studies quite rightly implicitly recognise the central role of Islam in contemporary Indonesia. There were also some fine earlier studies of Islam in Indonesia that dealt with the earlier post-independence period. But little has been written on this period lately and the earlier studies, naturally, lacked the historical perspective that can now be brought to bear given the passage of time. In particular, for example, in earlier works, there was a prevalent but unacknowledged assumption that secular forces were of primary importance in the construction of independent Indonesia and would increasingly be so. Islam, while not ignored, was generally regarded as something of an obstacle to modernity and to Indonesian progress, rather than being seen as a contributor.

This study will aim to re-align the balance, recognising the under-appreciated contributions that Muslim organisations and Muslim leaders made to development and social cohesion in Indonesia, which helped to lay the foundations for the contemporary Indonesia of today. The study will also explore the period’s impact on Islam in Indonesia and on Indonesian Islamic organisations, examining the thesis that contemporary Islam in Indonesia was very much shaped by the developments and experiences of these three tumultuous decades.