"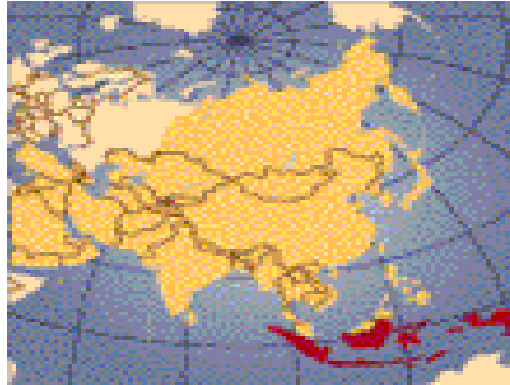The democratic era has brought with it a proliferation of political parties in Indonesia, but this has not led to a pluralist democracy. A major obstacle has been the rise of a particular form of political Islam, one that denies the country's rich cultural diversity and seeks to control women through the enactment of repressive laws. Such laws include the revocation of the women's parliamentary quota in 2009, the passage of a restrictive "anti-pornography" law in 2008, and the ratification of sharia laws at the local and provincial levels. This tight legislative control has stifled women's voices and limited their opportunities in parliament. What can moderate political parties and women's organizations do to counter these forces? First, they must establish common ground on women's issues. Moderate Islamic parties, such as PKB and PAN, are uniquely positioned to combat women's victimization in Islam, but if they are to expand their influence, they must democratize their party structure, improve their organizational capacity, and coordinate with one another. Similarly, Islamic and non-Islamic women's groups can bolster their influence by combining their efforts and working alongside moderate political parties. Only by collaborating on matters of common concern, while respecting differences, can moderate parties and women's groups broaden their appeal and capitalize on Indonesia's richest resource—the diversity of its people."

—Siti Nurjanah, June 25, 2009

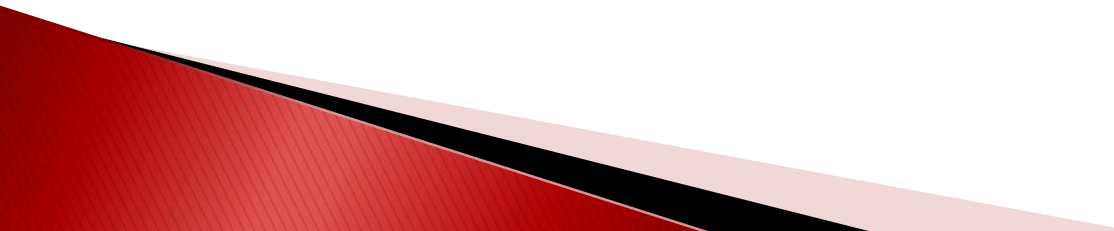# Grappling with the Rise of Political Islam: Threats or Opportunities for Women?
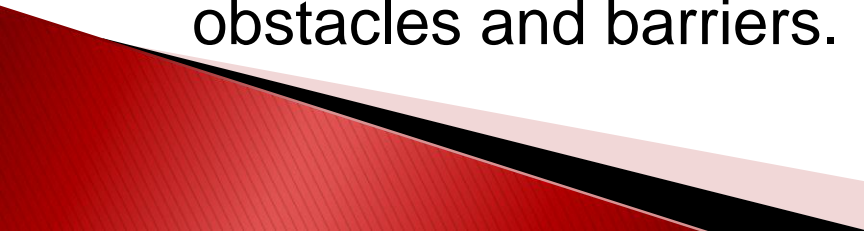

Siti Nurjanah
Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow
National Endowment for Democracy

Presentation Outline

▶ Key Points

▶ Part I: Historical Context: Indonesian Islam, Women & Politics

▶ Part II: Contemporary Context

▶ Part III: Looking Ahead

▶ Part IV: Recommendations and Conclusions

Key Points

- The decrease in number of votes won by Islamic parties in the 2009 election does not necessarily indicate a decline in the influence of political Islam in Indonesia.

- The establishment of an "Islamic state" has been a longstanding ambition for some Islamic groups.

- Islam has replaced local culture as the most significant deterrent to women's rights in Indonesia today.

- Certain Islamic parties have shown considerable duplicity in their rhetoric and actions concerning women's rights.

- Despite increasing women's activism in the public sphere, women's rights defenders continue to face formidable obstacles and barriers.

Democracy from Diversity

Indonesia has historically balanced the influence of Sunni Islam with diverse local traditions and cultures

▸ Population: 240 million (4th largest population in the world)

▸ Nearly 156 million live in Java Island

▸ Religions: Muslim: 86% , Protestant: 5.7%, Roman Catholic: 3%, Hindu: 1.8%, other or unspecified: 3.4% (2000 census)

▸ 742 Languages

▸ Ethnic groups: Javanese: 40.6%, Sundanese: 15%, Madurese: 3.3%, Minangkabau: 2.7%, Betawi: 2.4%, Bugis: 2.4%, Banten: 2%, Banjar: 1.7%, other or unspecified: 29.9% (2000 census)

Part I: Key Historical Moments (1921–1949)

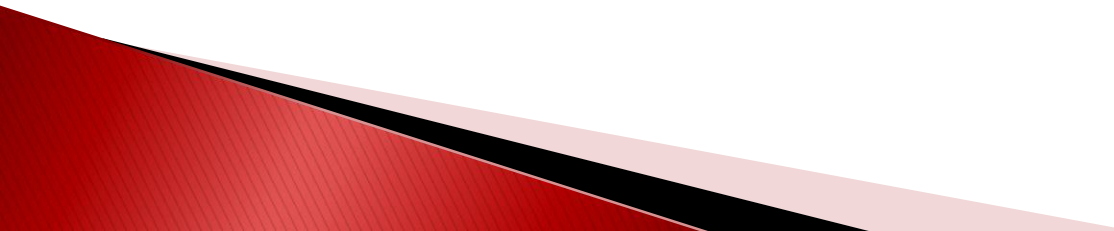| Year	Event
1921	First Women's Organization (Wanita Utomo) founded
1928	First Women's Congress
1945	Indonesia gains independence
1947	SK Trimurti: First woman minister (of labor)
1949	Military groups led by Kartosuwiryo declare the Islamic State of Indonesia
1949	Kartosuwiryo captured by Indonesian military and executed by Indonesian government

Part I: Key Historical Moments (1984–2004)

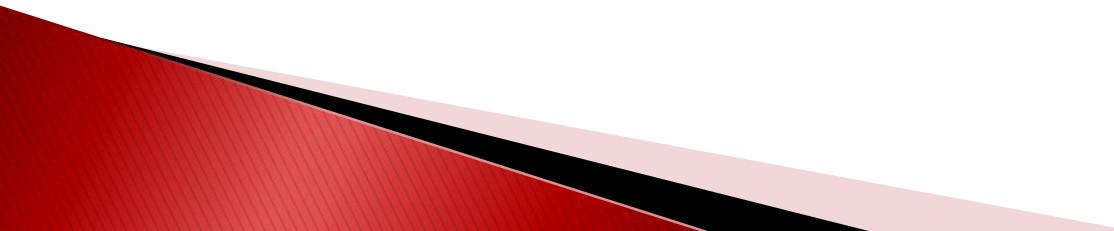| Year	Event
1984	CEDAW is adopted into national law.
1999	Megawati Sukarnoputri's victory is revoked by the Islamic parties and others. She is forced to accept the Vice Presidency, rather than the Presidency.
1999	National Law on Local Autonomy passes.
2001	Megawati Sukarnoputri resumes the presidency after President Abdurrahman Wahid is ousted.
2004	National Law Against Household Violence (KDRT) passes.

Part I: Key Historical Moments (2004–2009)

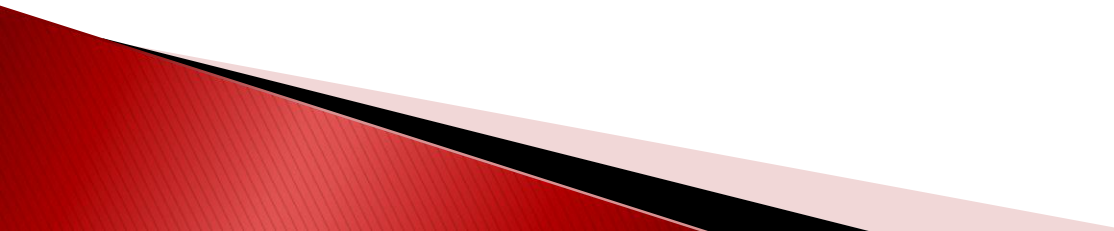| Year	Event
2004	30% women's quota in parliament passes.
2004	National Law on Abolition of Local Legislation / Regulation passes.
2006	Amendment on Citizenship Law accepted. Law confers Indonesian citizenship on children born in Indonesia even if one parent is not Indonesian.
2007	Marriage Amendment is proposed and rejected.
2008	National Law on Anti-Pornography passes.
2009	The Election Law Amendment results in abolition of 30% quota for women in parliament.

Increasing Islamic Influence in the Transition to Democracy

▸ 1998: The collapse of Suharto's authoritarian government opens the door for numerous political voices previously suppressed in Indonesia.

▸ Islamist groups come to the fore to advocate for the Islamization of Indonesia, targeting women as a focal point of Islamic morality and promoting the enactment of repressive reforms.

▸ Parliament and other government bodies pass laws that restrict women's rights.

Part II: Contemporary Context

- Political Actors

- Political Parties

- Recent Election Results

- Encouraging and Discouraging Developments in Women's Rights (1999–2009)

Political Actors

▸ Main Islamic Political Parties: PKB, PAN, PPP, PKS

▸ Main Secular Political Parties: Golkar, PDI-P, Party Demokrat (PD)

▸ Socio-Religious Islamic Organizations

- Supporting Women's Rights: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah

- Discouraging Women's Rights: Hizbut Tahrir, Laskar Jihad, FPI (Islamic Defender Front)

▸ Women's Organizations: Religious and Non-religious

Indonesia's Islamic Parties

Moderate

Conservative

PKB PAN   PPP   PKS

National Awakening & National Mandate Parties

- Ideology: Pancasila
- Platform includes human rights and democratic ideals (hifdzu- al-Aql)
- Supports women's rights

United Development Party

- Ideology: Islam
- The political party into which all Islamic groups were forced to merge in Suharto era
- Platform supports human rights & democracy within parameters of Islam
- Supports progressive and regressive laws
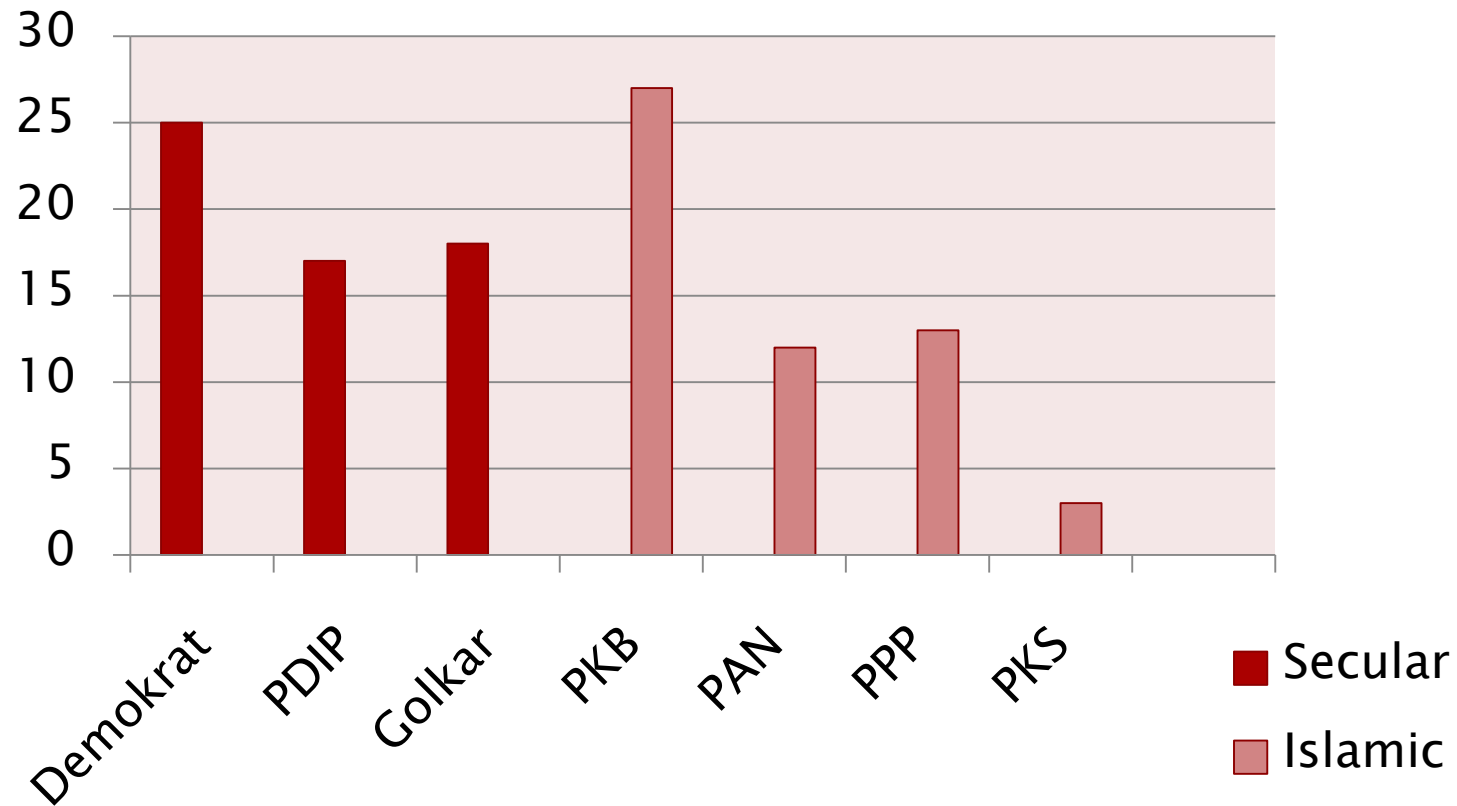
Social Justice and Prosperity Party

- Ideology: Islam
- Preaches & struggles for Islamic state in action, but not in rhetoric
- Seeks to empower rights of citizens within Islamic parameters but never mentions democracy or human rights
- Supports regressive laws concerning women

Parliamentary Election Results in the Lower House by Percentage (1997–2009)

Secular Parties

Islamic Parties

Dash indicates party's non-existence at that time

Party	1997	1999	2004	2009
PD	–	–	10.36	20.36
PDI–P	14.90	33.74	19.82	14.32
Golkar	68.10	22.44	23.27	14.24
PKS	–	2	8.18	8.46
PAN	–	7.12	9.45	6.36
PPP	17.00	10.71	10.55	5.46
PKB	–	12.61	9.45	5.12

Percentage of Parliamentary Seats Held by Women:
Secular vs. Islamic Political Parties (2009)

Encouraging Developments:
Women's Rights at the National Level since 1999

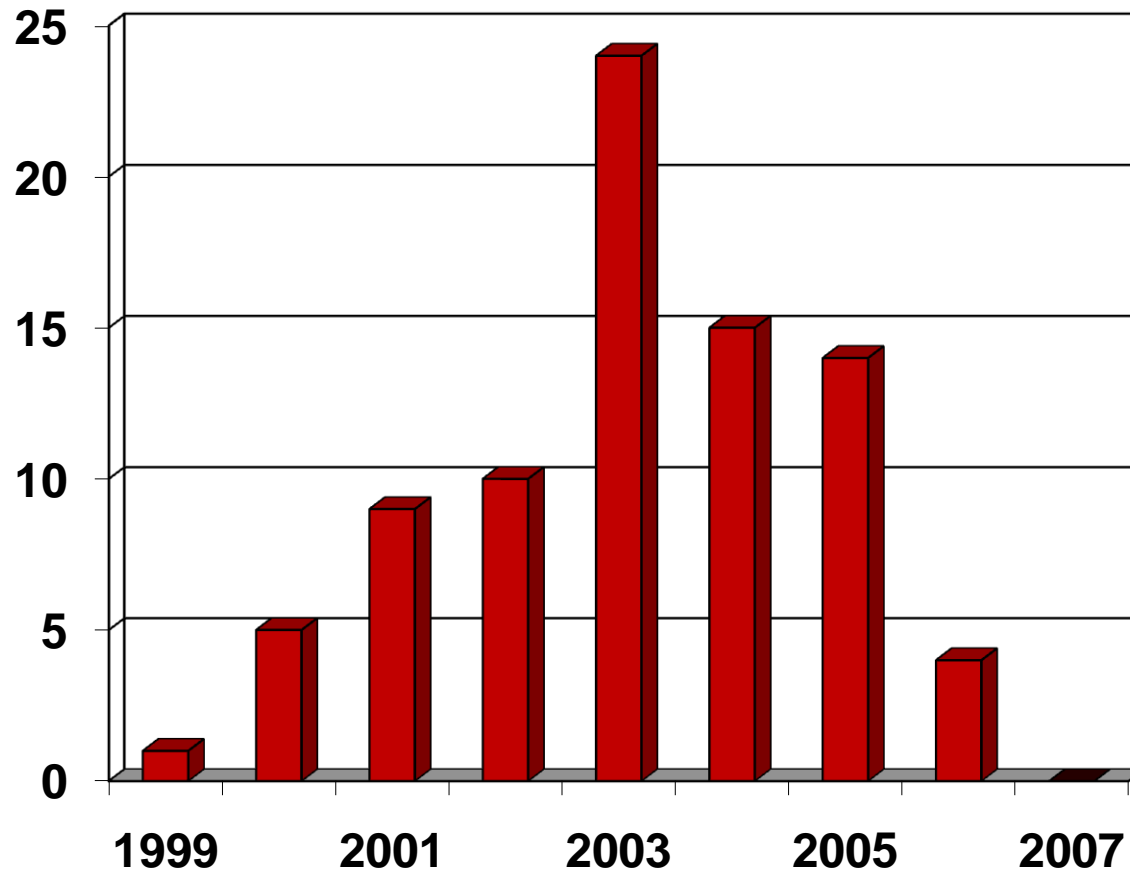| Law and Initiative	Actors (Political parties and Civil Society)	Outcome
Women's groups expose Dharma Wanita (Women's Righteous Duty) and PKK as organizations intended to promote women's domestication	Supporters: Religious and non-religious women's activists	Increased social skepticism of Dharma Wanita and PKK
2004 Anti–Domestic Violence Law	Supporters: PKB, PAN and PPP Opponent: PKS	Law raises awareness and offers protection to victims of domestic violence.
2004 Amendment to Citizenship Law	Supporters: PKB, PAN and PPP	Law grants Indonesian citizenship to children born to an Indonesian mother and non-Indonesian father.

Discouraging Developments:
Women's Rights at the National Level since 1999

Law and Initiative	Actor (Political parties and Civil Society)	Outcome
2009 Election Law Amendment	Supporters: PD, Golkar	Revokes 30% quota for women in favor of open list
2007 Rejection of Marriage Law Amendment	Supporters: Religious and non-religious women's organizations	Polygamy with wife's consent remains legal
2008 Anti-Pornography Law	Supporter: PKS, PAN, PKB, PPP Opponents: PDI, PDS	Imposes restrictions on women's dress and behavior in public

Definition of Pornography from Anti-Pornography Law:

▶ "Pictures, sketches, illustrations, photos, written material, voice, sounds, moving pictures, animations, cartoons, conversations, motions, or other types of messages sent through communication media and / or public performance that contain sexual exploitation that abridges social and angelic norms."

Discouraging Developments in Women's Rights at the Local Level:
Increasing Sharia Law Regulations (Perda)

82 Total (1999 to 2008)

■ Number of Perda Passed per Year

Current Sharia Law at the Municipal, Provincial and Local Levels

Islamic Dress Code

•14 laws require students and women to wear head-dress, including women civil servants

"Prostitution" and Adultery Bans
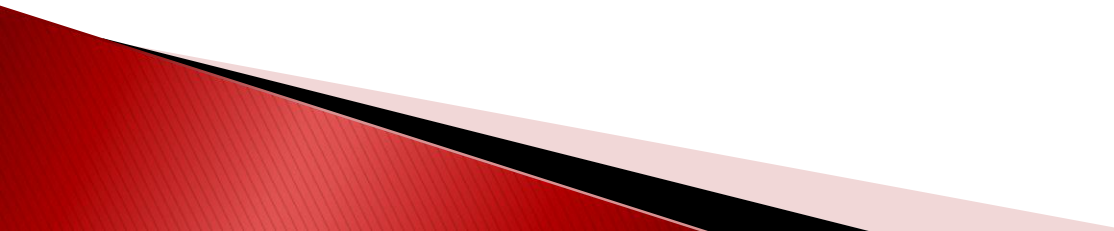
•14 laws total

Koran Literacy for Bride-to-Be

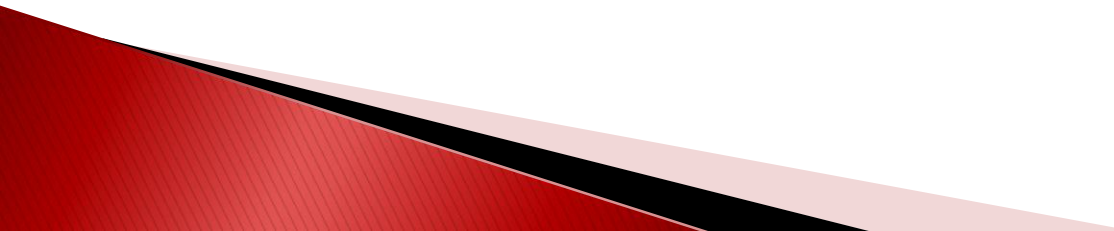•17 laws require Koran literacy for brides seeking marriage license

Sharia Law at the Municipal, Provincial and Local Levels

Looking Forward

▸ What opportunities exist for women's groups to advocate on behalf of women's rights?

▸ What explains the rapid rise of conservative Islamic groups?

▸ What should the government do to sustain democracy building in Indonesia?

Looking Forward

▸ Today, we see a growing number of political debates and forums on women's issues.

▸ Conservative Islamists take for granted Indonesia's democratic environment even as they oppose democratic values.

▸ The government should guarantee open and non-violent forums, thereby allowing debates and developing stronger democratic society.

Zulkeiflimansyah, Indonesia's National Deputy Secretary, made the following statement about the significance of the first lady's appearance in the Presidential campaign (May 25, 2009):

"Most of the hearts of PKS…are with JK and Wiranto because their wives wear headscarves. While this is a simple issue, it has a large impact." —Kompas, May 25, 2009

PKS Head of Fraksi, Mahfud Sidik, also made the following comment:

"Indeed, (the appearance) of JK's and Wiranto's wife is good. PKS could also suggest that Madam Ani (the First Lady) and the wife of Boediono wear headdresses" —Okezone.com, May 26, 2009

Recommendations:
Moderate Islamic Parties

Area	Recommendation
Organizational Development	▪ Build organizational capacity to ensure party system works ▪ Develop democratic party structure ▪ Develop transparent and adequate cadre system
Sustaining Party Base	▪ Every election period, PKB loses substantial numbers of votes from its constituency. The party should regain the trust of its base.
Consistency	▪ Make political decisions consistent with the party's platform
External relations	▪ Coordinate with other moderate Islamic parties to retain political power and sustain democratic pluralism ▪ Create working partnerships with women's groups and the media

Recommendations: Women's Groups

Area	Recommendation
Organizational Development	▪ Build stronger alliances and collaborate further with non-women's organizations
Strategy	▪ Integrate the approaches of religious and non-religious women's groups concerning women's rights ▪ Work with other moderate Islamic parties to retain political power and sustain democratic pluralism ▪ Conduct religious gender-sensitivity training for the media ▪ Monitor results using intermediary approaches and court system to improve media output ▪ Incorporate women's issues with larger issues of democracy
External relations	▪ Develop networks with political parties and civil society ▪ Develop media campaign

Recommendations:
Student Bodies and State Universities

Area	Recommendation
Organizational Development	▪ Develop organizational discipline to counter influence of conservative Islamic bodies
Strategy	▪ Develop stronger relations with universities' administration ▪ Instill moderate values in student bodies ▪ Develop religious-gender sensitivity campaign ▪ Integrate approaches within moderate Islamic and non-Islamic student bodies to counter the influence of radical student bodies
External relations	▪ Develop media campaign ▪ Build alliances with other civil society groups

Conclusions

1. The reform era has allowed for the creation of numerous political parties but has not produced a pluralist democracy. Laws related to women tend to restrict rather than promote women's rights.

2. Political parties, both non-religious and religious, lack real commitment to promoting qualified women. PKB is an exception.

3. The rise of political Islam has raised the stakes for women, as legislation increasingly focuses on controlling women's morality, as well as stimulating women's awareness of and engagement in the political arena.