

**ISLAM
IN
SOUTHEAST ASIA**
A Study for Christians

by
Robert A. Hunt

GBGM Books

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Published jointly
by
The General Board of Global Ministries
of The United Methodist Church
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115
United States of America
and
The Methodist Church of Malaysia
69 Jalan 5/31
46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor
Malaysia

ISBN 1-890569-04-6

Printed in Malaysia

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Foreword

The material in this book was originally commissioned for a consultation of Methodist pastors sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church and organized by the Methodist Bishops in the Southeast Asian region. The purpose of the consultation, held in Kuala Lumpur in 1995, was to expose these religious leaders to a wide range of information about Islam, particularly in Southeast Asia. It has been published for a wider readership in the belief that an increased understanding of the history and religious setting of Southeast Asia will benefit all who wish to live in productive relationships with their Muslim neighbors.

Introduction

This book is designed as a basic introduction to Islam in Southeast Asia. While the focus is on Islam, the book is aimed at Christian readers, and therefore specific reference is made to Christian interactions with Muslims, and in the final chapters to issues in Christian-Muslim relations. Nonetheless the author has been guided in his writing by the rule which must be the touchstone of every authentic presentation of religious beliefs and cultures; the hope that Muslims will recognize themselves in what has been written and will understand it as an expression of respect and love.

In a work of this length it is impossible to be truly comprehensive, and at the end of each chapter suggestions for further reading are given. These point to the general or recent works which the author hopes will be available to most readers. A more complete Bibliography is available at the end of the book. Footnotes have been kept to a minimum, and are used to indicate either the source of quotations and data, or citations of opinions or observations not found more generally in the academic literature on the subject. Otherwise the material given represents either commonly acknowledged facts or the author's own interpretation of events.

Robert Hunt
Trinity Theological College, Singapore
May 1, 1997

Note on Spelling

The languages of Southeast Asia use a large number of Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit loan words in their religious terminology. The way in which these words are spelled varies from dialect to dialect and from era to era. In recent years English language publications in the region have tended to standardize their spelling in two directions. Arabic and Persian loan words are usually spelled in romanized forms that are found in English language publications in Europe or the U.S., rather than in the traditional Malay or Javanese spelling. Other religious terms are spelled according to the now standard Malay spelling which has been adopted by Indonesia and Malaysia. This convention is followed below, however the glossary indicates variant spellings which may be found in older publications, or which remain in common use. Neither Arabic nor Malay form plurals by the addition of “s” at the end of the word. The author has endeavored to use the most common plural form found in English language publications, whether this derives from Arabic or Malay.

The different ethnic groups in Southeast Asia which share a common linguistic and cultural heritage have a large number of common terms for social roles and relations. However, these vary in meaning from group to group. Their spellings also vary in older publications as regional pronunciation differences were incorporated into the spelling. In the text below standard Malay spellings for these terms have been used, but variations in meaning and spelling are noted in the glossary when appropriate.

Place name spellings follow those found in the present edition of the National Geographic World Atlas.

I. THE FACES OF ISLAM

I was looking at books in an Islamic book stall at the market in Belakang Padang, a small town on a small island in Indonesia. A woman greeted me "Hello?", She was dressed in slacks, a long sleeved blouse, and had her hair pulled back in a scarf. A young girl in a frilly dress held her hand. To the question in her greeting I answered that I was interested in books on religion. "Are you a Muslim?" she asked. When I told her that I was not she smiled warmly and answered simply. "All in God's good time." Her confidence and warmth are not unusual. Most of the Muslims one meets, whether on the university campus, in corporate offices, in government assemblies, or in paddy fields and small town markets, are self-confident, open to the world, and hopeful of their future.

In Indonesia and Malaysia Muslims make up the majority of the population, and dominate the political and social structures. Their literacy rate for both men and women is the highest in the Muslim world. Their children can look forward to at least a secondary education, and many will attend a university as well. Although most do not enjoy great material wealth, basic amenities such as clean water, electricity, and modern communications are rapidly becoming universal commodities in these countries. For these women and men Islam is more than a matter of religious beliefs and practices. It is a source of identity which links them to their past, strengthens their ethnic identity, and joins them to a wider political, economic, and intellectual world which they see as having a glorious history and bright future. Perhaps most importantly, these Muslims of Southeast Asia see themselves as the emerging leaders of this wider Islamic world. They point with some pride to both the

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intellectual accomplishments of their scholars and the economic success and political stability of their countries. They see themselves at the forefront of a new Islamic consciousness which is both faithful and progressive.

Yet there are other faces of Islam in Southeast Asia as well. In 1990, in an airport in Kuala Lumpur, I fell into conversation with a young man who called himself Ismail. He was on his way to Libya from Mindanao, the southernmost island of the Philippines. When I remarked that Libya seemed an unusual place to look for a university education he replied with some anger, saying that "The universities of the Philippines are no place for the Moros!" He, and three companions from the same tribal group, were also traveling on Libyan passports. These travel documents, and their education as engineers, were gifts from the Libyan government. It supported, or so they said, their struggle for independence from the Philippines national government.

Before the advent of colonialism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, almost all Muslims in Southeast Asia shared in a broad culture of trade, politics, and religion in a region called Nusantara. The Malay language was the universal language of this culture, and customs and social structures from a variety of influences gave it unity. Then the Portuguese, followed by the Spanish, British, and Dutch, parceled out between them the lands extending from Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula in the Northwest to the Philippine Islands in the East. At approximately the same time, the Cham Muslims along the central coast of what is now Vietnam lost a long series of battles with the Vietnamese to the north. As a consequence their territories were gradually colonized by the Vietnamese and they were cut off from the Malay Muslim world with which they had trade and religious ties. The broad unity of the Nusantara, the classical Malay world, was fragmented by these conquests.

New borders were fixed when most of Southeast Asia achieved independence after World War II. These new borders insured that Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia would have Muslim majorities. And the new national boundaries left Muslim minorities in Southern Thailand and Mindanao in the Philippines. On the mainland of Southeast Asia the creation of modern Burma left a Muslim minority

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in West Burma, while the Cham Muslims, who had migrated to the Mekong river delta, were divided between Cambodia and Vietnam. These minority Muslim groups have sometimes felt both isolated and oppressed. In the case of the Cham, hundreds of thousands were eliminated with other ethnic minorities in the “killing fields” of the Khmer Rouge regime. These minorities are protective of their ethnic identities. In Mindinao and southern Thailand they have asserted their historical claims to self-governance. Some among them have pursued armed revolution in an attempt to establish independent Islamic states. While there are now encouraging signs that they will find ways to enter peacefully into the national life of the countries in which they live, grievances and problems remain.

The third face of Islam in Southeast Asia belongs to those Muslims who feel that the economic and political achievements of their nations are incomplete because a strict Islamic way of life is not fully implemented in their societies. One such woman is Rafidah, who talked with me at the University of Malaya. Her clothing identified her as a *da'wa* person, a member of the informal coalition of religious men and women seeking to encourage fellow students to take up a more serious and complete religious faith. She wore heavy black socks beneath her sandals and gloves on her hands. A shapeless brown ankle length skirt was covered by an equally shapeless long sleeve blouse which reached to the knees. It was draped by her scarf of the same brown color, tied severely at the chin so that none of the neck was exposed. Covering her nose and mouth was a brown veil. She was from Kelantan, a Malaysian state known for its conservatism in religious matters, and the only state to have declared large parts of orthodox Islamic law as the official state law. Rafidah recognized that she and her friends were a minority on the campus. But they are concerned less with being accepted, than with being faithful.

They interpret faithfulness in terms of concrete obedience to the *Shari'ah* or Islamic guide for human behavior rooted in the Quran and the traditional sayings of the Prophet Muhammed. As she explained to me, “Islam is a belief *and* a practice. If you do not believe what all Muslims must believe, and practice those things required by God, then you are not a Muslim.” She and her friends are discontented with what they see as compromises made for the

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sake of economic prosperity or political stability in their religiously and ethnically plural societies. They and others like them throughout Southeast Asia often support political groups which are opposed to the ruling parties and coalitions. They sometimes face varying degrees of political oppression. Yet in close electoral contests they may be courted by the ruling political parties. Their presence as a large, and vocal, minority has sometimes forced the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia to implement Islamic practices either more quickly, or in different ways, than they would otherwise. And the insistence by these groups that many traditional cultural practices (*adat*) found among Muslims are *haram*, or forbidden by the faith, has created a difficult tension with those Muslims who are seeking to strengthen both their cultural and religious identity.

Living side by side with the Muslims of Southeast Asia are the many non-Muslims who make this region one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse areas of the world. In Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, Buddhism and traditional religions predominate, although in each country there are Christian as well as Muslim minorities. In the Philippines Christianity is the most widely practiced religion. In Indonesia and Malaysia large Indian, Chinese, and Eurasian minorities follow Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and traditional Chinese religions. Over many centuries these ethnic and religious minorities have played an important role in the shaping of society. The Chinese minorities in Indonesia and Malaysia still control a significant part of the national wealth. In Sabah and Sarawak (Malaysian states on Borneo island) the non-Muslims make up a political majority. This has meant that one of the most pressing challenges for all Muslims in Southeast Asia is the challenge to live faithfully in a world where no one can be isolated from neighbors whose beliefs and way of life are different. As we look in more depth at Islam in Southeast Asia we will see both the ways in which Muslims have answered this question in the past, and how in our own time they are seeking to forge new paths of faith in the midst of change and diversity.

The Faces of Islam

A. Questions for Discussion

1. Around the world Islam has many different faces. What are some of the faces of Islam in your community?

2. What is the face of Islam which you see on TV, hear about on the radio, or read about in the newspaper? Is it the same as that which you see in the Muslims of your own town? How is it different?

3. What are some ways that you and your church could get to know better the face of Islam in your own community?

B. Suggestions

In many places Christians have taken the lead in building better communications with Muslims. If it is practical you may want to arrange a visit with an imam or leader of the local mosque. Or you may want to ask a knowledgeable Muslim to come and share with your group about his or her faith and the challenges which face Muslims in your country.

C. Further Reading

John L. Esposito, ed., *Islam in Asia. Religion, Politics & Society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Islam in Southeast Asia

II. THE RELIGIOUS HERITAGE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

A great diversity of cultural and religious influences has swept through Southeast Asia over the last two thousand years. Archeologists working on the Asian continent and in the islands to the South have established that a wide spread stone tool culture has existed for thousands of years. The contours of its religious beliefs can be seen in the beliefs of modern day tribal groups which have not yet been affected by outside religious influences. They are also found in the remnants of those primal religious beliefs which until today are found even among peoples who regard themselves as Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, or Christians. The most obvious feature of that primal religion was a belief in both an invisible force or power which could be utilized by humans, and belief in a wide variety of spirits who could work for or against any human endeavor. Much of religious practice consisted of ways to garner and use the invisible force called in Malay "semangat," or in the propitiation of the spirits for the sake of health, peace, and prosperity.

A. The Hindu and Buddhist Influence

The first outside religious influence to reach the portions of Southeast Asia which now have Muslim majorities, was Hinduism. Mythical accounts of the beginnings of the great kingdoms of Malaysia and the Indonesian archipelago tell of three Hindu gods who descended on a mountain in Sumatra and intermarried with the daughters of local rulers. They thus established the reign of semi-

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divine rulers whose descendants, at least in name, continue to rule until today as the sultans of Malaysia and the Indonesian archipelago. Behind this mythical account is the truth that nearly 2000 years ago Indian traders brought Hindu beliefs to the small entrepots, or port kingdoms, of Southeast Asia. Settlements of Hindu traders were followed by Brahmins (Hindu religious leaders), who established themselves as religious advisors in the royal courts of the archipelago and Malay peninsula. Alliances by marriage with the powerful kingdoms on the coast of India were created. For a thousand years the sea lanes carried the exotic produce of Southeast Asia to India, and brought in return the cultural and religious heritage of India, first Hindu and then Buddhist. It was a religious heritage which enriched rather than replaced the existing religions of the region. It survives in the ancient Buddhist monuments of Java, the rituals of the Balinese, and the Hindu epic stories which underlie almost all classical Malay and Javanese drama and dance. These Hindu epics, and hundreds of other stories recounted in village after village through shadow plays and by professional storytellers, added to the richly populated spirit world of the peasant, even though Hinduism and Buddhism as such were found primarily in the royal courts and port cities.

B. The Coming of Islam

Beginning in the tenth century, or perhaps even earlier, another group of traders and missionaries began to arrive at the ports of the Indonesian archipelago. Arab and Persian traders began a process which would result finally in Islam becoming the near universal religion of Indonesia and Malaysia. The conversion of these peoples to Islam was not immediate, and was influenced by changes both inside and outside of Southeast Asia, not the least of which was the evolution of Islam itself.

1. The early expansion of Islam in Southeast Asia

Islam began as a distinct religion with the revelation of the Quran to Muhammed early in the 7th century after the birth of Jesus. Shortly after receiving the first revelations Muhammed shared these with his family, and through preaching. By the time Muhammed died in 632 Islam had become the religion of almost all the Arab

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tribes, and was a powerful unifying force making possible the subsequent expansion of Arab military and political power. As the seventh century drew to a close Muslim armies had conquered much of the modern day Middle East and North Africa. They brought with them their faith and its way of life and by the end of the seventh century an Islamic empire was ruled by the Ummayyad dynasty. This empire and its successors grew and evolved with Islam for several centuries. A civilization with a distinctive artistic, architectural, and intellectual life grew up with it. Even after the Muslim empire ceased to expand politically Muslim traders carried this civilization, and their faith, across Asia and Africa.

When Arab Muslim traders first arrived in Southeast Asia. it was a region politically dominated by small kingdoms whose power came from their control of the trade in local produce which was brought from the interior. At times one of these would extend its influence over its neighbors and form a kind of empire. The formation of these larger polities, as well as the establishment of trade ties, helped create a common culture and encouraged the use of Malay as a common language. Islam made its first impact in those kingdoms located along the coast of Java, Sumatra, and modern day Malaysia. In these towns, and in the royal courts, an indigenous mixture of Hinduism and Buddhism was the dominant religion. Kings were regarded as divine, or at least of divine origin. This belief was reinforced by both elaborate rituals and exalted royal titles. Individual rulers might exercise more or less power depending on their ability and circumstance, but in theory they were both absolute in temporal power and at the apex of the spiritual hierarchy of their kingdoms. These rulers were generally tolerant of the various religions practiced by the traders (from Arabia, India, China, and elsewhere) who lived in the port towns. Where permanent communities of foreign traders developed, their religion was also established, and it appears that this is how Islam first appeared in Southeast Asia, and especially the Malay Peninsula and Indonesian archipelago. As converts were won, Islam then spread to areas not directly touched by Arab trade.

a. The appeal of a universal God

In this early stage most converts to Islam came from among the rising class of traders who began to venture from their home islands

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by boat in order to bring local produce to the trade centers. They were originally followers of local animistic religious cults. But these cults were not readily transportable because they focused on local spirits whose power seemed irrelevant in the broader world of the trade routes. For the traders the worship of a God whose power was universal fulfilled a personal need, while the apparent wealth of the Muslim merchants in the trade centers indicated the potency of that God. The God of Islamic teaching also offered an alternative to the unpredictability of the spirit world. As Anthony Reid writes,

Like Christianity, Islam offered a refuge from the domination of these demanding spirits in a different view of the cosmos. This was a predictable, moral world in which the devout would be protected by God from all that the spirits could do and would eventually be rewarded by an afterlife in paradise.¹

b. The power of the word

Islam was also a scriptural religion. Although most were illiterate, the people of Southeast Asia had a high regard for the written word, and associated writing with spiritual insight and magical power. Religious teachers who could read, and who could write charms, enjoyed great prestige, and their services were much sought after. Many Muslims had these abilities. The possession of a book which claimed to come from God gave Islam (as well as Christianity) added credibility. One early account tells how a Muslim convinced a follower of animistic religions of the truth of his faith by showing that its beliefs were written in a book.² Thus for the Hindu prince, or animist trader, Islam appeared an attractive supplement, or even alternative, to traditional beliefs.

2. *Changes in Islam in the eleventh through sixteenth centuries*

If Islam had remained a religion of merchants, limited to the port towns, it might never have become more than yet another exotic religion among the many found along the trade routes. Instead, Islam in island Southeast Asia suddenly blossomed and expanded beginning in the fifteenth century. On the mainland of Southeast Asia Islam also advanced, and in the seventeenth century Muslim kings ruled in the area of modern day Kampuchea and Laos.³ Four

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external factors contributed to this expansion. The first was that changes within the Islamic world affected the way in which Islamic teaching was received by the non-Muslim rulers of Asia.

a. Islam and political power

When Arab traders arrived in Southeast Asia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries they brought with them Islam as it had developed in the Abbasid dynasty. It was dominated by Islamic orthodoxy and focused on faithfully carrying out required rituals of prayer and fasting, obedience to Islamic law, and strict monotheistic religious belief. Such a religion was the antithesis of the highly syncretistic religions of Southeast Asia. Whether peasant or royalty, men and women of that era believed in a complex world of deities and spiritual forces. Religious life put a heavy emphasis on manipulating these spiritual powers and the mystic discovery of esoteric religious truth. In addition to their faith the Arab traders brought with them the claim of the Abbasids to be the sole legitimate rulers of the Islamic world. The Abbasid rulers called themselves *caliph*, a title which implied that its holder exercised universal authority over Muslims. While Islam had some appeal for local traders, for the rulers of the kingdoms of the Indonesian archipelago and Malay Peninsula there was initially little attraction in Islam. It did not address their concerns for manipulating spiritual power and mastering esoteric religious truths, and it devalued their political authority.⁴

Soon after the arrival of Islam in Southeast Asia changes in the religious understanding of political authority began to take place in the homeland of Islam. The development of Shi'ite Islam in Persia advanced the belief that the rightful rulers of the Muslim world were a succession of rulers called *imams* who were descended from Ali (the son-in-law of Muhammed and fourth Caliph), and who possessed unique spiritual insight. In some mystic circles they were even believed to have existed in the form of primordial light before the creation of the world. These ideas, and others of pre-Muslim Persian origin, influenced the Muslim understanding of the *caliphate* even during the Abbasid dynasty. Muslim rulers even accepted the exalted title of "Shadow of God on Earth". The *Caliph* was believed

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to radiate divine blessings, and his subjects kissed the ground before him.

Even before the last Abbasid Caliph fell from power in 1258, rulers across the Muslim world had begun to assert their political independence. To bolster their own authority they took for themselves the titles previously reserved for the *Caliph*. On the Eastern edges of the Islamic world in particular, the unique spiritual stature and authority of these new rulers, who called themselves *sultans*, were emphasized. They also called themselves the "Shadow of God on Earth", and promoted the idea of their divine origin. As a result, as A.C. Milne says:

On the eve of Islamization of the Malay world, . . . , there existed an expanding galaxy of Persianized Muslim sultans, who - on the face of it - performed roles and possessed titles not far different from those of the pre-Islamic Malay raja.⁵

The Javanese and Malay rulers could now see the political implications of Islam in a very different light from that of earlier centuries. By becoming part of that "galaxy of Muslim sultans", so much larger than the limits of the Malay kingdoms of Southeast Asia, they could enhance their authority as kings and spiritual leaders. Alongside benefits for trade and acquiring political allies, this made embracing Islam an attractive possibility in kingdoms which had previously shown little interest in the religion.

b. The rise of Muslim states in India

A second impetus to the adoption of Islam by the rulers in Southeast Asia came from political changes in India. Much of the trade in Southeast Asia originated from the kingdoms of the Gujarat coast of India, and it was from there that both Buddhist and Hindu influences had enriched the religious culture of the Indonesian archipelago for centuries. Beginning in 1292 the Gujarati kingdoms fell to Muslims moving eastward from Persia, and became Islamic. Gujarati Muslim traders spread into Southeast Asia, and went on to trade in China. The presence of these traders, and the wealth they brought from the Muslim kingdoms of India, enhanced the status of Islam among the rulers of the archipelago, and added to the existing

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Arab Islamic presence. When the Kingdom of Gujarat itself became politically stable, its rulers were patrons of Islamic scholars who were renowned throughout the Islamic world for their piety and learning. The influence of Gujarati Islam was felt from the thirteenth century onward, and by the sixteenth century one Malay entrepôt, Malacca, had a community of over 1000 Gujarati Muslims. The presence of these traders and religious scholars, who came from lands and spoke languages long familiar in Southeast Asia, attracted both rulers and urban traders to Islam.

c. Sufi teaching

The third factor which spurred the acceptance of Islam in the archipelago was the arrival of the first teachers of Sufi Islam. Sufism developed in the first several centuries of Islam as a supplement to more exoteric orthodox spiritual practices. Orthodox Islam had come to emphasize formal adherence to the external requirements of Islam: the daily prayers, worship in the mosque, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the profession of faith in God and Muhammed as the prophet of God. The Sufis did not abandon these external signs of submission to God's will. They did put an additional emphasis on seeking a personal, inward, knowledge of God culminating in complete identification with God. By seeking a mystical union with God the Sufi freed himself or herself from the illusions of the changing world and the attachments of the ego to these illusions. Thus they felt they would discover the fulfillment of human existence as existence only in God. Sufism also put an emphasis on metaphysical speculation, much of which was based on ancient Greek gnosticism, and which in some branches had links to Hindu philosophy.

The methods of the Sufi mystics varied, and they were divided into *tariqah* according to the line of teachers whose esoteric teaching they followed. Common to the groups which came to Southeast Asia was the practice of both individual and group meditation, and the belief in *wahdat al-wujud*, or the "transcendent unity of Being" which had been taught by Ibn al-Arabia. Verses of the Quran would be repeated hundreds and even thousands of times to focus the mind on God and eliminate worldly delusions. In group worship a trance-like state would be achieved by repeating these verses as well as

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through rhythmic motion. In the *sama* or “spiritual concert,” worshippers would circle at an increasing speed; bowing, and chanting “Allah” until all or most dropped into a trance. In the resulting state of spiritual ecstasy the Sufis claimed to experience oneness with God. In this they would also realize the truth that only God may truly be said to exist. Great Sufi leaders were also believed to possess extraordinary powers because of their piety and spiritual attainments. Their knowledge of esoteric realities was believed to give them insight into the causes of disease and illness, and the ability to manipulate spiritual forces for the purpose of healing, charming, and controlling demons and other supernatural forces. Even after death these *wali* or “saints” were believed to be the source of *barakah* or blessing, and visiting their tombs was a common Sufi practice.

Sufi Islam was brought to Southeast Asia by traveling missionaries who visited not only the royal courts, but also the villages of the peasants. There Sufi teachers formed schools where their followers gathered for teaching and meditation, as well as to learn Sufi magic. These schools proved very popular, and exposed Islam to large parts of the population who never came in contact with the Muslim traders in the port cities. Sufi teaching was popular at two levels. The ideas of seeking unity with God through meditation was part of the existing Hindu and Buddhist religious beliefs of the rulers. Thus the Sufis brought new techniques and a broader religious framework for achieving what many religious people already sought. At a more popular level Sufism introduced new methods of obtaining spiritual power and using it for human purposes. These aspects of Sufism, combined with the simplicity and piety of the first Sufi teachers, made Islam attractive. For both rulers and their subjects existing animistic beliefs were overlaid, rather than replaced, by an Islamic faith which addressed their needs and fears in a way which they could understand. The popularity of Sufism was such that from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries the traditional Hindu and animist religious leaders adopted large parts of Sufi method and teaching. Eventually a synthesis was created (particularly in Java) which retained much of the traditional mysticism, but incorporated into a framework of basic Islamic belief and practice.

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d. The advent of European colonialism

The final external factor which influenced Southeast Asians to convert to Islam was the influx of European colonial powers, which began when Portuguese forces under Alfonso d'Albuquerque gained control of the Indian Ocean in 1509 after defeating a combined Turkish-Egyptian fleet. Having established naval superiority in the Indian ocean they proceeded to seize Goa from the Sultan of Bijapur and then to gain control of the key ports of Aden and Ormuz, which controlled the Red Sea and Persian Gulf respectively. This Portuguese thrust into Asia was motivated by the dual purposes of carrying out the centuries old battle for religious hegemony against Islam and establishing control over the lucrative spice trade routes to Europe and the Middle East.

i. The conquest of Malacca

Island Southeast Asia, including the Malay Peninsula, was the major source of spices and other natural resources which Europeans sought. They were entering a market where Chinese, Thai, Arab, and Indian traders were already well established in international trade, while local traders carried goods within the archipelago. Of particular importance were Javanese traders, who brought rice and other trade goods from the international trade to the Moluccas (known as the Spice Islands), which could not support their population with local agricultural products alone.

European colonialism entered the world of Southeast Asia in 1511, when the Portuguese fleet under d'Albuquerque appeared off the coast of Malacca and attacked, under the pretext of rescuing sailors arrested as part of a trade mission two years before. The intention of d'Albuquerque was to gain control of at least some part of the spice trade which flowed through Malacca. At the time, Malacca was in the midst of an internal political crisis and d'Albuquerque's forces were aided by foreign merchants, particularly the Javanese. The Sultan, Mahmud, abandoned the city in the mistaken belief that the Portuguese, like other plunderers, would not settle. By the time he could launch a counterattack their position was impregnable. Two years later the Javanese kingdom of Demak sent a force against Malacca as part of its own bid to

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establish hegemony over regional trade. By defeating the Javanese fleet, and slaughtering 8,000 Javanese soldiers off the coast near Malacca, the Portuguese eliminated their only serious rival in the Malacca Straits and established a permanent military base that would serve them for more than a century.

While the quest to control trade provided the economic fuel for Portuguese conquest, the religious struggle with Islam also provided both a motive and a rationale. The failure of the 1509 Portuguese trade mission to Malacca came about in part because Muslim merchants from Gujarat instigated the Malacca Bendahara, one of the Sultan's key followers, to arrest some of its members. These Gujarati merchants were still suffering from earlier Portuguese incursions into the Indian Ocean. For the Portuguese Malacca provided a base from which Christian missionaries could join the Portuguese fleets sailing into the archipelago. Portuguese efforts to control the trading centers of the spice trade thus went hand in hand with efforts to convert the local populations to Christianity.

ii. The conquest of the Spice Islands

Control of Malacca, and the sea lanes surrounding it, gave Portugal an important advantage in controlling and exacting levies on the spice trade. However, the real source of that trade lay in the Moluccas, or "spice islands." The rulers of these islands traded primarily with the Javanese. The Javanese in turn traded spices for precious stones and fabrics from India, and porcelain and precious metals from China. Portugal wanted to gain control of this trade so that its own traders would be the only beneficiaries of the increase of value in the spices as they were transported to, and sold in, Europe. For this reason, after securing Malacca, the Portuguese approached the kingdom of Ternate, which was engaged in a rivalry with nearby Tidor for control of the spice producing islands in the region. In return for the right to purchase all Ternate's cloves Portugal offered military assistance to Ternate's rulers. The arrival of the Spanish in the region allowed Tidor to make a similar treaty with Portugal's rival. The tiny islands of Southeast Asia had become the center of a superpower conflict. However, the Spanish had no firm base in the region and in 1530 the Portuguese succeeded in subduing Tidor. At the same time, at least in Portuguese eyes, Ternate shifted from being a trading partner to being a vassal. Portugal built its own base

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in nearby Ambon and rather than trading through Ternate the Portuguese sought to control the spice trade in part through military garrisons on the islands involved, and in part by missionary efforts to spread Christianity throughout the islands.

The effect of these efforts was in many ways paradigmatic of the next two hundred years of Christian mission in the region. Catholic missionaries attempted to learn local languages, and in many cases were able to communicate effectively the Christian gospel to the indigenous peoples. In Ambon a sizable Christian population developed. However, in too many cases their rigidity in rejecting or belittling local customs, and their association with Portuguese political and economic demands, brought about conflict. In Ternate the local rulers had solidified their power over the indigenous populations of the islands in part by insisting on conversion to Islam. Christian missionary efforts were thus a direct affront to their authority, and could be sustained only under the threat of Portuguese military intervention. And such efforts only spurred Ternate's rulers to greater zeal in spreading Islam, which was synonymous with loyalty to themselves rather than Portugal.

iii. The Spanish in the Philippines

In the sixteenth century Spain was Portugal's great rival in the development of international trade and the monopolization of trade goods coming from Asia. Magellan undertook his voyage around Cape Horn to the Pacific specifically to find a route to the Moluccas and to annex land for the Spanish crown. He arrived in Southeast Asia, in the islands later named the Philippines, in 1521. There he formed tentative pacts with some local rulers. However, his further efforts to control local politics resulted in his being killed. What remained of his crew escaped through the Moluccas (where they briefly opposed the Portuguese) and Brunei to complete the voyage. The Spanish expeditions which followed Magellan's voyage were largely failures until 1565, when Miguel Lopez de Legazpi arrived in the Visayas. Legazpi first tried to establish his base in Cebu island, but constant difficulties with the islanders, a shortage of food, and Portuguese military threats persuaded him to move further north to Manila, which had both a good harbor and access to adequate supplies of rice. Since Manila was an Islamicized

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sultanate, the arrival of the Spanish put them directly in conflict with Manila's Muslim allies to the south. An attempt was made to persuade the ruling Sultan, a new convert to Islam and son-in-law of the Sultan of Brunei, to submit to Spanish authority. When this failed the Spanish attacked Manila in 1571 and after a series of battles killed Sultan Suleiman and 300 followers, took many of his relatives prisoner, and captured the city. In the next few years they made themselves masters of as much of Luzon island as was accessible, and of most of the islands north of Mindanao and Palawan.

For the Spanish, the conquest of Manila was important mainly because it secured a safe, easily defended port between Spain's New World empire and its trading partners in Japan and China. The Spanish did not find readily exportable resources, and did not attempt to develop the agricultural potential of the islands for over a century. Although Manila itself grew rich on the trade brought by Spanish galleons from the New World, most of the Philippines was left to missionaries. The first were Augustinian friars who accompanied Legazpi's initial expeditions. As a matter of policy they accompanied each group of Spanish soldiers who established an inland garrison. From these centers the Augustinian friars would spread out to build other towns. Before the end of the sixteenth century the Augustinians were followed by Franciscans, Jesuits, and Dominicans. In 1606 the Recollect Mission arrived. These groups were each assigned to different islands and territories. Unarmed and generally too far from military outposts to seek their protection, these missionaries nonetheless formed a network of Spanish and Christian influence across the Philippines. As discussed below, that network of missionaries not only Christianized the Philippines, they also helped create a new pattern of social organization, one amenable to the imposition of a more thorough-going colonization in the nineteenth century.

The great exceptions to this rule of expanding Spanish missionary influence, however, were the southern islands under the rule of Muslim sultans. These sultanates traced their beginnings to early Muslim missionaries who converted the native population. According to tradition these missionaries were descendants of the Prophet Muhammed, and married into the families of local rulers to establish sultanates linked to the family of the Prophet. Both local

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traditions and a strong Islamic identity, enhanced through alliances with Brunei, made the sultanates on Mindinao and the Sulu islands formidable opponents to Spanish power. The Spanish attempted to subdue them with military power, subversive political activities, and by sending Christian missionaries into their midst. All of these efforts failed in the face of developed political structures and a strong sense of ethnic identity and independence. Moreover Christianity was associated with political and economic subjugation by European powers. If anything, the presence of the Christianized Philippines to the north only strengthened the Islamic consciousness of the Islamicized ethnic groups in the south, and turned them toward their Muslim neighbors in Borneo for trade and military alliances. Only when the nineteenth century gave them vastly superior weapons did the Spanish succeed in conquering the sultanates of Mindinao and Jolo by military force.

e. Summary: Islam in island Southeast Asia

The sixteenth century was crucial for the development of Islam in Southeast Asia, and set a pattern of growth and development which continued up until the beginning of the twentieth century. Through the combined efforts of Muslim traders, religious scholars, and mystics, Islam had been introduced throughout the Malay world of island Southeast Asia. Converts were won among traders, rulers, and peasants, because Islam offered both an attractive religious vision and a means of opposing colonialism. It was a religion with many facets, and could manifest itself in both esoteric mysticism and an orthodox insistence on narrow conformity to external laws and rigid beliefs. And as Islam became ingrained in the beliefs and way of life of the peoples of Southeast Asia it became, with a few exceptions, their indigenous faith and a deep part of their identity.

On a broad scale Portuguese, and then Spanish, efforts to establish trade monopolies and spread Christianity succeeded in encouraging the spread of Islam. Muslim traders were denied access to important ports by the Christian colonial powers. As a consequence they congregated in those ports which remained free. Aceh, on the northern tip of Sumatra, thus became a major center of trade and for the spread of Islam, as did Brunei on the coast of Borneo. Elsewhere in the archipelago, those rulers who were already Muslim resisted the colonial powers, and "Islam became the rallying

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banner for all those who wished to destroy the commercial competition of the Portuguese.”⁶ Among those who had made no prior commitment to the religions being introduced from the West, Islam became a symbol of indigenous efforts to resist European power. Although Islam had been established largely through trade and the work of Sufi missionaries, it was later imposed by Muslim conquerors as a matter of policy, much as the extension of Christianity was the policy of the Portuguese. In some places, such as in Java, the forcible extension of Islam became part of the policy of those sultans who sought to expand their political power. But there was this difference. Everywhere except the Philippines, the race to convert the non-committed indigenous peoples went to Islam.

3. *Islam in mainland Southeast Asia*

Islam came to mainland Southeast Asia through trade. The main groups of Muslims were: 1.) traders in places like Bangkok and Rangoon, 2.) Muslim groups from the area of modern day Bangladesh living in areas claimed by the Burmese kings, and 3.) the Cham Muslims of the Mekong river delta. The story of the Muslim groups on the border between Burma and modern day Bangladesh belongs properly to the history of Indian Islam. The Cham Muslims of Cambodia are thus the main group of mainland Southeast Asian Muslims with which this essay will deal.

The beginnings of Champa are obscure. It appears that well before the tenth century a people linguistically and ethnically related to the Malays settled in the coastal regions of what is now Vietnam. Inland mountains kept them to the coastal regions and their settlements were bound by the sea. Thus geographically they were in circumstances similar to the Malay peoples of the archipelago. And they remained linked to the other Malay groups through marriage and trade. Evidence shows signs of Muslim influence beginning in the tenth century, and this must certainly have come from Muslim traders from Arabia or Persia, possibly even traders who had come overland through China. What is more certain is that as the Malay kingdoms of the archipelago embraced Islam they influenced the Cham. Cham tradition says that religious teachers came from Brunei and Aceh during the sixteenth century to teach the Cham Islam, and

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that at the beginning of the seventeenth century a Cham raja traveled to Kelantan to study Islam.⁷ However, while trade ties and opposition to European colonialism were binding together the Muslim kingdoms of the Indonesian archipelago, the Cham peoples were being cut off from their Muslim neighbors by the expansion of Vietnamese power southward. After the fifteenth century their rulers grew weaker as their population was divided by Vietnamese colonization of the regions where they had settled. From that point onward Cham history is dominated by the effort to survive under a series of colonial powers including Vietnam, Thailand, and finally France.

C. Colonialism and Islam from the Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries

The sixteenth to eighteenth centuries represent a middle period in Southeast Asian colonialism. The arrival of the Dutch in the region brought an intensification of the kind of colonialism that had been experienced under the Portuguese. As a result parts of the economy of island Southeast Asia were permanently altered, and with it social structures and religious beliefs, particularly in Java and the Moluccas. The Portuguese had established two bases from which they sought a limited monopoly on the spice trade. The Dutch ultimately tried to control completely both production and marketing of Southeast Asian commodities. They also tried to go beyond the control of trade in native goods to growing new agricultural products which could also be traded. These developments brought increasing numbers of Europeans to Southeast Asia. The Dutch intentionally worked to bring about not just economic and political, but also cultural, hegemony as well. As a result the great kingdoms of Java's interior, and the dominance of Malay-Muslim sultanates in trade, were a distant dream by the dawn of the nineteenth century, which was the next great period of change in Southeast Asia.

The territories which first felt the Dutch impact were the Moluccas, where the Dutch succeeded in ousting the Portuguese in a series of conflicts between 1599 and 1605. The Dutch immediately

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declared a monopoly on the entire spice trade, by which they unwittingly forced the local rulers into rebellion. All of the spice islands were dependent on Javanese rice. If local spice growers could not sell their spices to the Javanese then they would literally starve, a fact which gave backbone to their stubborn resistance to the Dutch monopoly. In the end the Dutch could only establish a monopoly on spice by effectively depopulating several islands in a brutal conflict fought in 1621. Similar wars, again with the intent of establishing control over spice producing regions, reduced Ternate and Tidore to Dutch control between 1607 and 1666. Periodic rebellions against Dutch power continued into the nineteenth century. In the same period the Dutch fought to gain total control of the markets and production centers of Macassar. Its Sultan had established a center of Islam and free trade by allowing both his own subjects and British and Portuguese traders to engage in business in his realm. Despite rallying support to his cause by declaring a *jihad* against the Dutch, he was forced to abdicate in 1668 and his territories came under Dutch rule. The immediate consequence, as elsewhere, was the economic ruin of the local population, which turned from trade to become pirates, mercenaries, and migrants to regions still free of colonial control.

The next major conquests by the Dutch were in Java, the most prosperous and populous island in the region. The Dutch established an independent trading center at Batavia in 1619, and from there sought to spread their influence over the trade in pepper from Sumatra. This brought them into conflict with the kingdom of Bantam in Java, which had been founded by Malays fleeing the Portuguese a century earlier. Bantam had grown to control much of West Java and South Sumatra, and with these territories controlled the trade in native pepper. Bantam's power was only increased by the fall of the Moluccas sultanates and the Dutch capture of Malacca from the Portuguese in 1641. In each case these extensions of Dutch hegemony simply brought more trade to Bantam's ports. However, in 1684 the Dutch forced a treaty on the state, which in turn for a nominal independence allowed Dutch military garrisons to control trade and enforce the Dutch monopoly. A rebellion in 1750, and a series of local conflicts, did nothing to stem the tide of Dutch power. By the nineteenth century Bantam's princes were little more than

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Dutch officials while the sultans held only their title and an annual pension.

Mataram was the second great Java power in the seventeenth century, and a rival to the Dutch for control of trade in all East Java and the nearby islands. It had risen with the defeat of the Hindu Majapahit empire of Central Java. By time the Dutch arrived Mataram controlled a huge territory, a population of 2.5 million, and the production of rice needed throughout the islands. Its dependence on the export of rice also made it a major trading power, and it was this rivalry which the Dutch could not tolerate. Unable to subdue Mataram with military power, the Dutch instead systematically tried to deny it trading partners or access to good ports. They also intrigued with those willing to lead internal rebellions. After two centuries Dutch efforts succeeded to the extent that by 1800 the kingdom was fragmented, and many of its rulers were open to Dutch influence. However, in Java as elsewhere Dutch policy, especially when aimed at stopping uncontrolled rice exports, served finally to weaken the entire economy.

The final Dutch effort to subdue its trade rivals was in Aceh, which in the sixteenth century was one of the most important ports and centers of Islam. As with Mataram the Dutch did not have the military power at their command to control directly Northern Sumatra. They did, however, control the seas and the vital port of Malacca. This they used to strangle Acehnese influence, while also intriguing in Aceh's internal affairs to weaken its Sultanate. The strategy failed to extend Dutch hegemony primarily because their English rivals, who also used the nearby port at Kedah, intervened to protect Aceh from falling under Dutch sway. However, the long power struggle which developed between Aceh's interior chiefs and its Sultan, reduced its ability to control the pepper trade in Northern Sumatra, and opened the way for greater Dutch (and English) influence.

Their success in the Moluccas and Java did not bring to the Dutch the total domination of Southeast Asian trade for which they had hoped. Aceh was a weakened, but still independent, sultanate. The islands east of Java, as well as Borneo, remained independent and allowed a continuation of the kind of international trade which had previously existed. Dutch interference did have long term

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effects throughout the region. By changing traditional trade patterns it brought economic ruin to many islands. By displacing the small Malay sultanates which depended on trade, the Dutch encouraged the rise in piracy; which was the only means left for former sultans and their princes to support their retinues. And the displacement of the ethnic Bugis leadership from Macassar had long term implications for politics in Aceh and the Malay peninsula. Bugis adventurers and mercenaries joined the courts of the both the sultans of Aceh and Johore, only to eventually take over and rule themselves.

The development of Islam was also affected by these events. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth century the concentration of Muslim traders in key independent ports had brought a revival of orthodox Islam to those kingdoms, and proved a stimulus to the spread of Islam to the interior. By the mid-seventeenth century these centers of Islamic teaching and power had been disbursed by the Dutch, and both Arab and Gujarati traders were excluded from much of island Southeast Asia. Islam, for nearly 150 years, entered a kind of decline. While the number of Muslims continued to grow, the level of Islamic learning, and the depth of piety, decreased, while syncretistic practices gained ground in both the courts and villages. However, as Christian missionaries attempted to reach the Muslim populations of the archipelago they found this temporary weakness did little to help their aims. Except for the animist peoples of the interior, Christian missionaries faced a local population for whom Christianity had meant nothing but economic ruin and social disruption.

D. Christianity in Southeast Asia

The establishment of Christianity in Southeast Asia was as complex as the coming of Islam. There is evidence that Nestorian Christian traders visited the ports of the Malay Peninsula in the centuries before the Portuguese arrived, and that they established religious communities which were part of the Nestorian church structure.⁸ They had no lasting influence on the religious beliefs of the region, but their presence in the royal courts indicates an openness to foreign religious beliefs. This openness ended when Christianity became associated with European efforts to establish political and economic dominance. The Nestorian church had

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already declined and disappeared from the region when the Portuguese Catholics arrived in the Indonesian archipelago and Malay Peninsula along with European colonialism. They and the Spanish missionaries to the Philippines established the oldest Christian churches still in existence. The Dutch, British, French, Americans, and Germans arrived later and succeeded in establishing small, but now growing, Christian communities in virtually every part of the region.

1. *Christianity comes to island Southeast Asia*

For the Portuguese, establishing Christianity was synonymous with establishing a commercial and political presence in Southeast Asia, and was a continuation of a centuries old struggle with Islam. However, Portuguese missionary efforts were limited by a scarcity of resources, resistance by local rulers, and the negative association of Christianity with political dominance. A Christian church was established in Malacca after its conquest in 1511. This community has continued to the present day, and the descendants of mixed marriages between Portuguese and indigenous peoples make up an important part of the Catholic community in Malaysia. The Christian communities established in the latter part of the sixteenth century by Francis Xavier and the missionaries who followed him were larger. Xavier visited the Moluccas in 1547-1548 and translated the first Christian works into Malay, the lingua franca of the archipelago. In Ambon he and his successors were successful in establishing a growing Christian church, which by the 1590's had 40,000 to 50,000 members.

When Dutch traders began to arrive in island Southeast Asia they brought both trade and religious rivalries. The Netherlands was Protestant and would not tolerate a Roman Catholic presence in its territories. In 1605 the Dutch East India Company succeeded in driving the Portuguese from Ambon. In 1646 they conquered Malacca. The Dutch expelled Catholic missionaries from the areas under their control and forced the conversion of Catholics to Protestantism. The Dutch East India Company then discouraged further missionary work by Dutch Christians so that there would be no interference with trade relations. However, Christianity did spread slowly due to the work of chaplains serving the Dutch traders in Dutch controlled towns, as well as through the work of a few

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pious employees of the Dutch East India Company. These men succeeded in translating prayers and hymns into Malay, and by the end of the seventeenth century a complete Malay New Testament was published. Small indigenous Christian communities grew up in conjunction with Dutch churches. By 1700 the number of Christians in the archipelago had risen to as many as 100,000. At the same time, however, Muslim missionaries, sponsored from India or local Muslim sultanates, were spreading Islam throughout the archipelago and even in Dutch controlled trading centers.

In the Philippines a different set of circumstances led to dramatically different results in the establishment of Christian mission. Most of the inhabitants of the Philippines had not been exposed to any religion outside their indigenous animistic beliefs. They lived in *barangays*, or small villages, headed by local chiefs. The Spanish Christian missionaries who went to live among the rural people of the Philippines would initially meet with barangay leaders to teach about Christianity. It was a religion which interested the indigenous peoples, and as presented was capable of absorbing many of their beliefs and customs. The missionaries would also introduce new agricultural products and new industries, and set about gathering the scattered population of shifting farmers into communities centered around a church. In three centuries of Spanish missionary work many thousands of such towns were formed, altering forever the social landscape of the islands. To link and further develop these communities the missionaries built the first public works (such as roads, bridges, and irrigation canals), as well as the first schools. They established Spanish as the common language among peoples divided into over eighty-seven distinct language and dialect groups. As a result of their work far-reaching changes in social organization were effected. By the twentieth century almost the entire population of the Philippines north of the Sulu and Magindanao kingdoms was converted to Christianity. With the exception of a few remaining interior tribal groups most were organized into farming communities centered around a small town. Local leadership patterns were replaced by formal structures of town officials under Spanish leadership.

While these changes at first improved the security and living conditions of the Filipinos, they did not prevent the disastrous burdens of colonization from falling on them. In the seventeenth century the threat of Dutch attacks on Spanish shipping led Spanish governors to force peasant laborers to come to Manila as workers in

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the shipyards. This, in combination with corruption among local officials, led to a series of rebellions in affected areas. In the eighteenth century a new uprising occurred because the Christian missionary orders, which had become huge landowners, allowed their local managers to steal the land and land-use rights of the local population. The transition from being independent farmers to tenants on large Spanish controlled estates contributed to the rise of class divisions and the virtual enslavement of peasant farmers by Spanish property owners. As a result the first anti-clerical rebellions broke out. They were all the more intense because priests, who in other cases could act as mediators, were the cause of peasant discontent. Yet none of these rebellions seriously threatened Spanish power. Relatively small numbers of Spanish troops, given their modern weapons, could control such outbreaks. And because as yet there was no sense of unity among the various ethnic groups of the Philippines, the Spanish could use local troops recruited from other provinces. Each of the rebellions thus remained a local affair. This would change dramatically in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when the unity created by the extension of colonial society throughout the Philippines would become the springboard for a revolution which would at last oust the Spanish entirely.

2. Christianity comes to mainland Southeast Asia

The first sustained Christian presence in mainland Southeast Asia was established by the French Société des Missions Etrangères in 1662 at the capital of Thailand at Ayuthia. From that location missionaries spread out into Cambodia and Vietnam. Living among the people, and at first representing no colonial or trading interest, they enjoyed a large measure of success. By 1750, for example, there were approximately 300,000 Vietnamese Christians.

This large body of people who had embraced a foreign religion, as well as the presence of foreign priests among them, created first suspicion and then hostility among the rulers of the Vietnamese. The Vietnamese had always been both culturally and politically influenced by China. The conservative Confucian advisors to the rulers looked down on Christianity and regarded the presence of any religion which conflicted with official Confucian orthodoxy as a threat to the unity of the kingdom. As a result persecution of Christians began. These ranged from the arrest and expulsion of

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foreign priests to the burning of Christian villages and the displacement or massacre of thousands of Christians. French efforts to intervene in Vietnamese affairs, and to dominate trade, resulted in even more suspicion being cast on the Christians. An escalating pattern of conflict between the French and Vietnamese developed. The French insisted on protecting the Christians of Vietnam and forcing the country to open its borders for trade. The Vietnamese looked upon the Christians as dangerous traitors, and insisted on maintaining the monopolies over trade which they had always had. Ultimately the French would colonize Vietnam in the nineteenth century. In the intervening years, Catholic Christianity continued to spread, with many hardships, and Vietnamese Christianity came to be a potent force in the national life, albeit one rarely associated with the non-Vietnamese Cham minority.

E. Summary

As the nineteenth century dawned the pattern of religion in Southeast Asia was largely set. The original animist religions of the Southeast Asian peoples had become confined to the tribal groups of the interior of the large islands and Malay peninsula. Hinduism, which had once dominated Java, remained strong only in the kingdom of Bali. Buddhism remained the dominant religion of mainland Southeast Asia. With the exception of the Philippines, Islam had become the dominant religion of coastal peoples and traders of the archipelago, and its influence was continuing to spread inland as the Muslims came in contact through trade or conquest with the inland peoples. Christianity, although the religion of a majority of Filipinos, was limited elsewhere to the trade centers where converts had been won through contact with the Portuguese, Dutch, or British chaplains. The relative strength of the Muslim and Christian populations would change little in the next 150 years. However, the great influx of Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth century, the opening of more rapid communications and travel between Southeast Asia and the Middle East, and the final political domination of Southeast Asia by the colonial powers would substantially change the ways in which Christians and Muslims saw themselves, and each other.

F. Questions and Discussion

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1. People change their religious faith for many reasons. What are some of the reasons that Southeast Asians became Muslims?
2. What were some of the factors which made Muslim missionaries successful in spreading their faith?
3. In our world Islam is a growing faith. Why are people attracted to Islam in our time?

G. Suggestions for Further Study

Make a survey of your own community. Are there ethnic groups which are associated with one particular religion? Which ethnic groups have members of more than one religion? How did people of different ethnic groups and religions come to be part of your community?

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II. ISLAMIC REVIVAL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

As the nineteenth century began, Islam was the established religion of most of the population of island Southeast Asia. Many different dimensions of Islamic teaching had come to Southeast Asia. Combined with the continuing influence of folk beliefs, they created a patchwork of Muslim belief and practice. Accounts by both Muslim travelers from the Middle East, and by Europeans, confirm that most Muslims, particularly in more rural areas, were acquainted with only the rudiments of Islamic teaching. Although they would attend Friday prayers at a mosque or surau, their religious life was still dominated by ceremonies to appease and control the spirits. *Adat*, or customary law, was more important than Islamic law in regulating life in the community. The most popular distinctly Islamic teaching was from Sufi, or mystic, sources. The Sufi *sheiks* (spiritual guides) stressed methods of spiritual healing, ways to find esoteric knowledge, and the ecstasy of achieving union with God through meditation and ecstatic ritual. Moreover they were masters of Islamic magic, and provided their followers with charms and other means of obtaining supernatural power and protection. At a political level many of the traditional ceremonies which surrounded the local rulers (who now used the Persian title *sultan*) had continued from the Hindu period. Persian ideas of divine kingship, (filtered through Persian Islam, and integrated with Hindu beliefs), undergirded the continuing power of the sultans, who were regarded as almost divine.

More orthodox Islam was found in two very different places. In rural areas in parts of Java, Sumatra, and the East coast of the Malay Peninsula, religious teachers had established communal schools (*peasantran*). These schools maintained some independence from

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village life and its syncretistic tendencies. The *kiyayi* or school masters usually had contacts with Arab traders or teachers through their participation in one of the Sufi *tariqah* (orders). Through contact with the Qadirriyah and Naqshbandiyyah orders in particular, the *kiyayi* were influenced away from syncretistic practices. Their students, called *santris*, gained a formal education in Sufi mysticism as well as Islamic law. The latter included both the specific rules of behavior found in the Quran and the Hadith, and body of legal decisions which had grown up around these basic rules in the first four centuries of Islam, called *fiqh*. In the port cities, where continual contact with the wider Islamic world was possible, Islam was also more conservative and orthodox. In these cities religious teachers from centers of Islamic learning could be found. Arabic was used both in literature and teaching.

These teachers and their followers were *Shari'ah-minded* Muslims, Muslims who believed that being faithful to their religion meant following a conservative and rigid interpretation of Islamic law, or *Shari'ah*. They opposed the heterodox beliefs which had been adopted from folk religion and Hinduism. There were even occasions when these teachers would convince a sultan to enforce orthodox Islamic teaching. In one noted case in Aceh the mystical works of two well known Sufi teachers were burned. Nonetheless prior to the nineteenth century the *Shari'ah-minded* Muslims rarely succeeded in their efforts at purifying popular Islam. Although they spread the orthodox Shafi school of Islamic theology and law throughout the archipelago, their creeds were accepted alongside, rather than replacing, the more mystical, or even syncretistic, faith of most Muslims.

The complex interaction of ancient pre-Islamic religious traditions, Sufi mysticism, and *Shari'ah-minded* Islam led to a religiously complex society among Muslims in Southeast Asia as the nineteenth century approached. The rules which governed social interactions were drawn in varying degrees from *adat*, (customary law), *Shari'ah*, (orthodox Islamic law), and the decrees of the sultans. Religious beliefs and world-views likewise derived from both traditional and Islamic sources. And religious practice included those enjoined upon all Muslims in the *Shari'ah*, Islamic practices adopted from Persian, Indian, and Arabian sources which were not strictly found in the *Shari'ah*, and more purely indigenous, animistic

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and Hindu rituals. These widely varying beliefs were promoted, or opposed, by a whole range of religious and political leaders. The *ulama*, (or traditional Muslim scholars), *wali* (or Sufi saint), *dukun* (traditional healer and spiritualist) and a host of others could be found in the courts and villages of island Southeast Asia. From the nineteenth century to the present the accommodation of varied and syncretistic practices within Southeast Asian society came increasingly under attack from within Islam, even as Muslims themselves continued their struggle against colonialism.

A. The Forces of Change

Changes in the central lands of Islam, whether primarily political or primarily religious, had always had their eventual effect on the Islamic periphery of Southeast Asia. Developments such as the redefinition of Islamic kingship and the rise of Sufism had, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, profoundly impacted the growth of Islam in Southeast Asia, as had the Muslim conquest of India. Despite these developments, and the growth and spread of Islam throughout Asia, the theological and legal theory in orthodox Sunni Islam changed very little from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries. The first Islamic scholars had developed a system of theology and law which sought to exclude all human speculation. They sought to build a framework of belief and practice which would exactly match God's ideal for humanity as revealed in the Quran and Sunnah (traditions concerning the actions and words of the prophet Muhammed). By the tenth century scholarly concern mounted that this heritage of theological dogma and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) not be lost or distorted. This led to the idea that *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) about the correct application of the Sunnah and Quran should come to an end. From the standpoint of the orthodox, Islamic law and theology had been fully articulated, and teachers needed only to carry out the ongoing task of applying received wisdom. In both Islamic theology and Islamic law the rule was *taqlid*, or imitation and application of existing creeds and judicial rulings. This understanding helped create a uniformity of basic practice and belief across the Islamic world which is unique. It also stifled the ability of Islam to shape the changes taking place in society. The idealized Islam of the scholars grew further and further from the lives of the urban rulers, artisans, and merchants on the

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frontiers of the evolution of Islamic society. The Islam of the scholars retained its purity even while the Islamic world seemed to slip into greater and greater degradation.

European imperialism was the factor which finally provoked reform within Islam. Centuries of crusading Europeans had failed to significantly encroach upon Islamic civilization in the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian sub-continent. Then in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this changed. Industrializing European powers spread across the globe seeking markets, control of basic commodities, and new products. They used trade and military might to establish their influence across Asia. The Muslim world experienced military defeats, internal political divisions in the great Muslim empires, and social and economic decline. The European invasion brought new ideas and practices with regard to government and law, scientific thinking, and technology. It also brought growing numbers of Christian missionaries with the explicit aim of changing people's religious beliefs. Muslim rulers and intellectuals alike were forced to respond. The result was that for the first time in nearly nine hundred years, new ideas and approaches to religious thinking began to emerge not just in isolated cases, but across the world of Islam.

1. Islamic Reform in the Subcontinent and the Middle East

The first reform movements in Islam had two essential features. They were anti-colonial and they sought strength in returning to pure Islam. Their leaders believed that by eliminating syncretistic practices and beliefs which originated in indigenous religious beliefs, and by rejecting the corrupting influence of the Christian West, Islam could be returned to its glory. Movements like the Wahhabi in the Arabian peninsula (1703-92), the Sanusi in Libya (1787-1859), and the Mahdi in Sudan (1848-1885) were aimed at removing corrupt local leaders and reestablishing authentic Islamic rule in areas where the colonial powers had not yet penetrated. The Fulani in Nigeria (1754-1817) tried to block Christian expansion into Islamic areas and extend the Islamic faith in Africa. Movements like the Faraidiyya in Bengal (1764-1840) directly opposed the colonial powers and sought to reestablish Islamic rule. Some of these movements, such as in Sudan, Libya, Nigeria, and the Arabian peninsula, succeeded in forming new states; states whose existence and ideals would provide inspiration for other Islamic reform

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movements. They also created a new kind of religious organization within traditional Islamic societies; an organization dedicated to purifying Islam through a return to pristine beliefs and practices within a state whose power was dedicated to this purified Islam. Finally they began to introduce the radical notion that true Islam was found in cutting past the received traditions of the medieval Muslim scholars to study the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammed directly. John Esposito points out that these movements thus had four key ideological components:

- (1) Islam was the solution; (2) a return to the Quran and the Sunnah (model, example) of the Prophet was the method; (3) a community governed by God's revealed law, the Shari'ah, was the goal; and (4) all who resisted, Muslim or non-Muslim, were enemies of God.⁹

2. Early Southeast Asian reform movements

Islamic reform movements in Southeast Asia were inspired by many of the same circumstances found in the Middle Eastern, African, and Indian reform movements. The practice of Islam in the great Islamicized kingdoms of Java had declined and become more syncretistic at a time when these kingdoms were growing weaker in the face of Dutch colonialism. Dutch colonial policies, combined with corrupt local leadership, led to oppression and impoverishment of the peasant populations. The spread of direct rule by the Dutch opened new areas to Christian missionary activity and the expansion of an alien western culture. Such circumstances diminished any faith in the old claims of the rulers to possess special divine power. Expectations for salvation and renewal turned to Islam, and those Islamic leaders who had maintained their aloofness from the corruption of the courts and the syncretism of the village religious life.

Prior to the nineteenth century these *Shari'ah-minded* Muslim leaders had made periodic, local, attempts to purify Islam of its syncretistic elements. In the seventeenth century Nur al-Din al-Raniri, a native of Gujarat, resided at the court in Aceh. He launched a strong campaign against what he regarded as the heterodox mysticism of Hamza Fansuri and his successor Shams al-Din of

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Pasai. As a result their works were burned and their pupils driven underground for a time. Yet this, and other even more localized efforts, had little long term effect. What made the reformers of the nineteenth century different was that for the first time their movements were inspired by, and linked to, reformist Islam in the Middle-east and India. Moreover they made explicit the link between Islamic purity and Islamic political power, daring to work against the traditional rulers when necessary to establish the latter.

a. The Padri Wars

In 1803 three Muslim pilgrims returned to Sumatra and the Minangkabau kingdom from which they had come. They had been in Mecca to witness the final Wahhabi conquest of the holy city, and its subsequent purification of all practices which hinted of idolatry or syncretism. While they did not share the Wahhabi's abhorrence of the veneration of saints, they were determined to put an end to any practices which seemed to compromise Islam among the Minangkabaus, and to establish Islam not just as a religion, but as the paramount source of law and social order. They were called *padris* by Europeans after the Portuguese word for priests or religious leaders. Their efforts were at first directed against moral laxity. They opposed gambling and intoxicants, demanded that people attend to the five daily prayers, and insisted that both men and women conform to Islamic dress standards. The truly revolutionary nature of their movement became clear, however, when they began to insist on the right of Islamic authorities to coerce people, even on pain of death, to conform to these external regulations. Their aim brought them directly into conflict with the existing social order, which accommodated not only Islamic religion, but a traditional patrilineal ruling class, a matrilineal village social order, and a wide range of adat or traditional laws. The *balai* was the traditional place where the village elders, the *penghulu* (village head and keeper of *adat* law), and the *ulama* (local Muslim religious teachers) met to determine how to guide the community. As William Roff points out, when violence finally broke out it was with the burning of a *balai* by Haji Miskin, one of the returned pilgrims, for the *balai* represented exactly the integrative, but syncretistic, character of Minangkabau society.¹⁰

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The *padri* movement spread by force or persuasion from village to village, throughout the Minangkabau lands of western Sumatra. Traditional chiefs who refused to join the *padri* were killed or forced to flee. In their place each village had an *imam* (traditional leader of the mosque who in this case disseminated Islamic law) and a *qadi* (or Islamic judge). By 1818 the movement had taken control of much of interior Sumatra. In that year it was transformed from an internal movement for Islamic reform to an anti-colonial movement. A group of *penghulu* who had fled from the *padris* appealed for help to Stamford Raffles, at that time British governor at Padang on the Sumatra coast. He established a small fort in the interior to help protect their pepper trade, which had been hurt by the *padri* conflicts. A year later the Dutch took over this area from the British and began much more extensive efforts to subdue the lands controlled by the *padris*. Three periods of open warfare against the *padris* followed between 1818 and 1837. In the face of this Dutch military threat to Minangkabau independence, the importance of the conflicts between the reformist *ulama* and the *penghulu* diminished. Moreover, the demands of the *padris* had become less strident over time. By the late 1820's they were willing to make alliances with the traditional leaders in order to oppose Dutch control. However, they were not strong enough to resist Dutch military power. In 1833 the royal ruler of Minangkabau was exiled to Java, his kingdom never to be restored. In 1837 the last of the original *padri* leaders were captured and exiled.

Although the *padri* movement failed to establish a purified Islamic society in Sumatra, it did have important long term effects on the development of Islam. Among the Minangkabau people, who also lived in Eastern Sumatra and in many places on the West Coast of the Malay peninsula, Islam became a much more important part of the social order, and the *ulama* came to have a higher status and greater role in society. The potential conflict between Islam and *adat* and the traditional social order was also brought into the open, and would be the subject of intense debate among Islamic reformers, and colonialists, for the next century. Finally, the end of the *padri* wars brought Dutch domination to all of Sumatra south of Aceh.

b. The Java War

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The *padri* movement in Sumatra was instigated by men who had experienced Islamic reform in Arabia and brought it to their homeland. The movement begun by Dipa-Negara in 1825 to purify Islam in Java by casting out the infidel Dutch, was more purely indigenous. Dipa-Negara himself was heir to the throne of the Yogyakarta sultanate, but had twice been passed over or refused to accept it. He was said by his followers to be extremely pious, and was certainly disgusted by the European influence on the royal court, and the indifference of the royalty toward Islam. His practice of wearing Arab-style clothing and seeking solitude for prayer, as well as a genuine concern for the peasant classes, led people to associate him with long standing expectations in Javanese society for the coming of a *ratu adil* (just king) who would save people from oppression and restore the land to peace and plenty.¹¹

He himself seems to have also had visions which led him to believe he was destined to lead the Javanese to follow Islam purified of all outside influences, especially that of the Dutch. When a dispute broke out over the arrogant behavior of a Dutch official, at least part of which involved the destruction of the tomb of a saint, Dipa-Negara and his followers issued a general call to arms against the Dutch and their allies among the Javanese royalty. One of the first persons to join the rebellion was Kiyayi Maja, one of the *ulama* who was popular with the peasants, and who may have influenced Dipa-Negara to see his rebellion as a *jihād* or struggle to establish Islam. In its opening stages the war was waged against the Javanese elite who had so often oppressed the peasants, but soon many of the traditional chiefs and landlords joined the rebellion against the Dutch authorities.

The Dutch were caught unprepared for Dipa-Negara's armed rebellion, and eventually had to call in troops from as far away as Europe. Still, by 1827 they had gained control of most major towns and forced the Dipa-Negara and his followers into guerrilla war. In 1828 the Dutch built a series of forts which further isolated the rebels from one another and their peasant supporters. In this situation the various war leaders of the rebellion separated, by necessity, into independent groups. The Dutch were then able to undermine the rebellion by offering peace and special grants of land and titles to those leaders who surrendered. In 1829 Kiyayi Maja

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was captured, and finally in 1830 Dipa-Negara himself was treacherously taken prisoner after coming to negotiations under the promise of safe conduct. He was exiled to Sulawesi and died in 1855, his request to make a pilgrimage to Mecca denied by the Dutch authorities.

The cost of the Java war was tremendously high. Some 200,000 Javanese died, primarily of disease and starvation as the war disrupted peasant agriculture. 15,000 Dutch soldiers also perished, again mostly from disease. The destruction of established coffee estates, and the cost of the war to the Dutch, damaged the whole economy of Java for decades. More long lasting, however, were the effects on Javanese society, and on Dutch attitudes toward Islam. The stature of the *ulama* and other more conservative Islamic leaders was greatly raised among the peasants. These men had been the heroes in the struggle against both the *kafir* (infidel) Dutch and the oppressive local landlords. Long after the war the process of Islamization among the peasants continued.¹² The Dutch saw in the rebellion a lesson that independent Islamic leaders were highly dangerous when allied with local rulers. It became Dutch policy to support, albeit indirectly, the traditional ruling classes and to encourage their jealousy of and animosity toward independent Islamic officials. To circumvent these leaders, the Dutch encouraged the traditional rulers to incorporate into the state administrative structures, those local Islamic officials whose duties related to religious matters such as inheritance and marriage. This effectively removed the independence of those of the *ulama* who participated. At the same time the independent local *ulama*, *kiyayi* (the Javanese term for the heads of the *peasantran*), and other Islamic teachers, whom the Dutch regarded as fanatical, were repressed and restricted. In particular, contacts with urban Arab traders and teachers was discouraged, as was participation in the pilgrimage to Mecca. The result was not, however, a reverse for their prestige among the peasants. To the contrary, these independent *ulama* and *kiyayi* tended to be given most of the leadership in the religious life of the community. As leaders of *peasantran*, Sufi orders, and everyday religious festivals they became the focus of peasant loyalties. The ultimate result of these developments was that official Islam, while ever more developed structurally, was increasingly alienated from

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both Islamic reform and the peasant class. These divisions continue to mark Islam in Indonesia today.

c. The reform of Sufism

Before the nineteenth century the dominant school or *tariqah* of Southeast Asian Sufism was the Shattariyah, which over the centuries had accrued an idiosyncratic blend of animist, Hindu, Buddhist, and other mystical beliefs and practices.¹³ Other mystic orders, notably the Qadiriyyah, Naqshbandiyyah, Rifa'iyyah, Chistiyyah, Shadilliyah, and Ahmadiyyah came to Southeast Asia with Muslim traders and religious teachers, the last arriving only in the late nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century two of these orders, the Qadiriyyah and Naqshbandiyyah, played an important part in reforming Sufism. Pilgrims from Indonesia met the learned and orthodox *sheiks* of these groups in Mecca, and many were initiated into one or more orders. Pilgrims returning to Southeast Asia, who had been commissioned by a *sheik* of the order, then set up their own branches and schools. Because of their hierarchical structure by which messages and teaching were passed down to the followers of the Mecca *sheiks*, the *tariqah* were an effective means of spreading reformist ideas. In Minangkabau, Naqshbandiyyah reformers were responsible for opening and keeping alive the conflict between orthodoxy and *adat* in the period after the Padri wars. Their *peasantran* became rivals for other orders, which often were either absorbed or forced into reform. Elsewhere in Sumatra and Java the individual *kiyayi* were bound together as students of a higher *sheik* either locally or in Mecca. They in turn had loyal followers in their *santri* or students. In Java this hierarchical organization in the orthodox Qadiriyyah *tariqah* was not only a way of advancing Islamic reform, it also became the structure within which protest movements were organized against the Dutch.

d. Summary

The Padri Wars and Java War represent the most important Islamic reform movements of the early nineteenth century. Although fought for differing reasons, they had similar effects on both local attitudes and Dutch colonial policy. They heightened the stature of the *Shari'ah-minded ulama* and *kiyayi* among the peasants and even some of the nobility. Combined with the gradual reform of Sufism

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and the *peasantran* they were powerful reminders of the potential power of Islam. To the Dutch they became symbols of the danger of “fanatical” Islam, and as a result, a policy of suppression of independent Islamic leaders and contacts with Muslims from the Middle East was adopted. These policies continued well past the middle of the century, but failed in their purpose. Communication with the Muslim heartland continued and the stature of the *ulama* was actually increased by their isolation from a ruling elite which was seen as alien and oppressive to the peasant population.

3. New colonial movements in the nineteenth century

The first Islamic reform movements in the nineteenth century had essentially been confined to bounded political areas of Sumatra and Java. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia colonialism and other outside impulses for reform entered more slowly. In the latter part of the century Islamic reform, while sometimes associated with local political uprisings, began to have a more regional character, and was more closely related to international reform movements. Improved technology, especially the advent of steam ships and the opening of the Suez canal, brought improvements in international communication and travel throughout the archipelago. More complete Dutch and British political hegemony broke down internal political barriers, and helped make possible the rapid dissemination of ideas through traveling teachers and publications. Mecca and Singapore became the twin termini of a busy link between Southeast Asia and the Arab world. In Mecca, pilgrims and students from Southeast Asia could easily find famous religious teachers from their homeland. And in Singapore, Muslims from thousands of miles away gathered to sit at the feet of well known Arab teachers or to plan their own pilgrimage.

The changes brought created by the extension of colonialism, while they speeded the process of reform in Islam, also caused tensions within Islamic society, between Muslims and the colonial government, and, for the first time on a large scale, between Muslims and Christians. In many ways they set in motion the forces which still determine, for better and for worse, Christian-Muslim relations to the present day.

a. Dutch colonial policy

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Initially, Dutch policy in the archipelago had been determined by the needs of the Netherlands East India Company and its trade policy. The main thrust of this policy was to control all trade to, from, and among the islands so that the Company could enjoy the benefits of a monopoly. Sea power was the main tool for implementing this policy, and the Company, and later the Dutch government, concentrated its attention on the ports and coastal areas of the major groups of islands. This policy of seeking monopolies had an effect on the development of Islam, particularly as Muslim traders were concentrated in the independent port of Aceh, and Islam became a symbol of resistance to the Dutch. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Dutch policy changed. Not content to monopolize the trade in native goods, the Dutch determined to expand their control to the inland areas, particularly in Java, so as to gain direct control of production and to develop new agricultural products such as coffee. The Java war was one result of increasing Dutch interference in political affairs in Java. The Padri wars became an excuse for such interference in Sumatra.

The changes brought about by full scale Dutch colonization of the archipelago went beyond political developments. Western culture became more established in the interior, and particularly among the ruling classes, called *priyayi* in Java, which acted as intermediaries between the Dutch and the local populations. Managing the colonies required a civil service made up of educated local officials. Schools, other than the *peasantran*, were introduced for the first time, as were hospitals, banks and other western institutions. Christian missionaries also arrived in increasing numbers. They sought to convert people to Christianity, and brought printing presses which they used to publish large numbers of Christian works in the local languages. The Dutch also attempted to shape the economy of areas under Dutch control in order both to raise money to pay for the colonial government, and to maximize the profits of Dutch companies who traded in the archipelago. As a result of changing laws affecting land ownership, control of wholesale markets, conversion of land to cash crops, and the development of transportation infrastructures, the whole social fabric was torn apart and reshaped. And this happened more than once, as the Dutch (and British when they were in control of certain

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areas) experimented with social and economic policies in their new colonies.

The changes brought by colonialism could not but affect the religious life of the Indonesians. Perhaps the most obvious effect was in the growing tension between the various classes in Javanese society, a tension which divided Muslim from Muslim and resulted (as noted above) in the development of two distinct types of religious leader: those associated with the official religious hierarchy, and those who maintained their independence. However, Dutch policies could also work in favor of Islam. Initially most of the local officials sent to non-Muslim rural areas and the islands outside Java were Muslims, and by the mid-nineteenth century these men had become an effective part-time missionary force for Islam. So effective were they that eventually the Dutch, as a matter of policy, no longer sent Muslim civil servants to non-Muslim areas. Although Dutch economic policy generally succeeded in creating more poverty than wealth, the opening of markets to foreign traders in the early nineteenth century did bring newfound prosperity to many land owning farmers. These people often took advantage of their participation in a cash economy to make their pilgrimage to Mecca, and returned full of zeal for Islam, and with a deeper insight into its world-wide presence and power. The Dutch government was convinced that these people were being drawn into fanatical anti-colonial groups in Mecca. Eventually Dutch policy limited exit visas for pilgrims, required that each traveler have a substantial amount of cash, and sought to limit those who could use the prestigious title *hajji* or *hajjah* (for a man or woman who has made the pilgrimage) by requiring that returned pilgrims pass an examination. Such policies could not help but alienate exactly those parts of society which the Dutch hoped would be most sympathetic to the colonial policies from which they benefited.

In addition to effecting broad social changes and seeking to control Islam directly, Dutch colonial policy in the nineteenth century both guided and encouraged Christian missions. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century Dutch policy had restricted Christian missionary activity. In particular it limited work among Muslims, many of whom belonged to still nominally independent states. After the Java war, Dutch policy turned to considerations of

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how the population of its colonies could be made more amenable to Dutch rule. Christianization, particularly of Muslims (now identified as a problem group) was one accepted solution. In addition to opening new areas to Christian mission, and allowing a greater variety of mission groups to operate, the Dutch government also offered incentives to those who converted. An 1849 law gave converts to Christianity rights and privileges equal to those of Europeans. Even after it was abrogated in 1854 Christians could still expect easier entry into government schools, ready government employment, and more rapid promotion in the civil service.¹⁴ Christian missionaries also provided direct benefits to those who converted, ranging from formal schooling, to hospital care, to participation in communal agriculture schemes which employed European technology.

The final development of Dutch policy relating to Islam came after the well-known Islamicist Snouk Hurgronje was employed to advise the government. He encouraged a more neutral stance toward Muslim activities (such as the pilgrimage) which were not overtly political. In this way he hoped to win the confidence of what was seen as the moderate majority of the Muslim population. He also continued the policy of encouraging Christian missionary activity. Perhaps most importantly he noted the tensions between the *adat* (custom) oriented Muslims and the *Shari'ah-minded* Muslims. He suggested that while the government should be firm in suppressing "fanatical" anti-government Muslim movements, it should actively encourage and cultivate those in Indonesian society who placed a greater stress on *adat* and the ancient forms of religious mysticism. These he regarded as less politically dangerous. It was expected that their particularly Indonesian practices would both moderate their political aspirations and keep them distant from the Pan-Islamic movements growing up in the Middle East and India. This strategy was used with some success in finally subduing the Acehnese (after a war stretching from 1873 to 1903). The *ulama* who headed the *jihad* against the Dutch were attacked mercilessly, while the Dutch negotiated with the rebellious *hulubalangs* or traditional leaders, and through them eventually established control over a considerable part of the countryside.¹⁵

The effects of Dutch colonial policy on the growth of Islam,

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and on Muslim attitudes toward Christianity, were varied. Both growth and reform continued to take place within Islam despite Hurgronje's policies. His policies did succeed in strengthening those Muslims who also identified with indigenous Indonesian cultural and religious practices. While they too would be involved in Islamic reform movements their particular approaches served to buffer more extreme developments in Islam. The pro-Christian policies of the colonial government had the expected effect of bringing one part of the population to identify strongly with the West and the colonial government. However, in the eyes of many Muslims, Christians became yet another westernized elite in an already divided and class conscious society. Their presence, and the continued efforts of missionaries to enlarge their numbers, was greeted with hostility in many rural Muslim areas. At the same time, Christian missionaries enjoyed some success among Muslims, and large numbers of non-Muslim Indonesians from across the archipelago became Christian. Christianity, like Islam, became a cohesive social force in a territory divided into thousands of islands with as many ethnic groups and languages. And significantly for the future, as the contrary experience of Malaysia was to show, Christianity came to be identified with the Indonesian peoples rather than just Westerners or the immigrant Chinese and Indians.

b. British colonial policy

i. The Straits Settlements

Despite the seventeenth century presence of British traders in the Archipelago, Britain was a relative latecomer to Southeast Asian colonialism. In the eighteenth century British traders working out of India had occasionally offered military and other assistance to local rulers against the Dutch when it served to keep ports open and markets available. Finally, in 1785, one of these traders, Francis Light, approached the ruler of Kedah to request that the island of Penang be ceded to the British in exchange for a military alliance against the Burmese and Thais, who had long threatened Kedah's territory. Sultan Abdullah agreed, and the British flag was raised over the new settlement in 1786. However, the British East India Company (which at that time governed Britain's Indian possessions)

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refused to recognize the alliance, and Abdullah was forced to accept a yearly pension for his property without a promise of protection. In 1800, British control was extended to a portion of the mainland opposite Penang and the pension was raised, but again without a formal military alliance. As a consequence the feared Thai invasion proceeded, and Kedah lost its independence for the next century. Penang itself quietly developed into an important port and trade center independent of either the Malay princes of the Peninsula, or the Dutch administration in the archipelago

The next major British incursion into Southeast Asian politics came as a result of the French Revolution of 1789. In 1794 the revolution spilled over into the Netherlands, and its government came under French control. As a result in 1799 the Dutch East India Company collapsed and the Netherlands East Indies were put under the control of French officials. Earlier, in 1795, Dutch authorities fleeing the revolution which had come to the Netherlands granted Britain the temporary right to administer its Southeast Asian territories. Britain lost no time in occupying such areas as it could before a rival French administration could be installed. British officials entered Bencoolen in West Sumatra, Malacca, and by 1802 the Moluccas (Sulawesi), as well. Sir Stamford Raffles of the British East India Company was the motivating force behind this rapid takeover. He was anxious to extend his influence, having been slowed only by the arrival of the new French/Dutch administration in Java in 1803. The opportunity came in 1811 when he was able to capture Batavia (now Jakarta) from the French administration and for five years take control of Java.

In 1815 the wars in Europe came to a temporary end. Independence was restored to the Netherlands, and Britain agreed to return to the Dutch their Southeast Asian colonies. This left Raffles scrambling to find a new base in Southeast Asia. He intrigued with local rulers, fearful of renewed Dutch incursions into the Johore-Riau Kingdom, to purchase the island of Singapore in 1818. This new settlement, with a good harbor and a strategic location, soon grew to be the most substantial port in Southeast Asia. It also served as the jumping off point for further British expansion into Peninsular Malaysia. In 1824 the relative spheres of influence of the British and Dutch were further defined by the Anglo-Dutch treaty. Malacca was put again under British control and the Straits of Malacca was fixed

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as the dividing line between the two colonial powers. The division split the ancient maritime sultanates which had embraced both Sumatra and Peninsular Malaysia. In 1826 Penang, Malacca, and Singapore were brought under a single British administration and designated the Straits Settlements. From thenceforth British policy would be the major outside factor affecting the growth and development of Islam.

Initially, that policy was one of non-interference with regard to Islam, and any Christian missionary activity which might offend local religious sentiment was discouraged. For the urban Muslims who remained or settled in Singapore, Penang, and Malacca, the British brought a new administration to an old way of life. As traders and traveling religious teachers they continued their activities unhindered. In one incident where a Christian missionary tried to distribute inflammatory anti-Islamic tracts, the Muslims of Penang successfully petitioned the governor for them to be banned and destroyed. At the same time the British administration did not forbid missionaries to work in the Straits Settlements among any of the religious and ethnic groups.

ii. The Malay peninsula

On the mainland, Britain recognized the traditional rulers, and involved itself only indirectly in their internal affairs until 1870's, despite strong lobbying from business and colonial interests wishing to more readily extend their activities into the hinterland of Malaya. What finally drew the British into direct political involvement in Malaya was the complex and destabilizing situation which developed in the Sultanate of Perak in the 1860's. The opening of the British Suez canal opened markets in Europe for Malayan products, notably tin. The result was a rush to develop the tin fields of Malaya, which involved both British and Chinese companies. By the 1870's the number of immigrant Chinese had become so large, and the influence of their armed gangs and money so great, that open warfare had broken out on several occasions. The nominal Malay Sultan, Abdullah, was caught up in factional intrigue in his court and was powerless to deal with these events. Malay rulers never kept a large standing army and their military strategies were oriented toward seaborne raids designed to insure hegemony in their control of riverine trade, rather than physical control of territory.

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Moreover, the Larut tin-wars, as they were called, also involved various Malay factions seeking to use the Chinese unrest to press their own claims to rule Perak.¹⁶ The British found the civil unrest in Perak a commercial liability of major proportions. In 1873 the new governor of the Straits Settlements, Andrew Clark, determined to settle both the Chinese disputes and the succession quarrel in Perak. He invited the parties involved to a meeting at Pangkor island off the coast of Perak. There, Sultan Abdullah offered to accept a British Resident in return for their recognition of his position as Sultan. In 1874 a treaty was signed ratifying this arrangement, making it possible for the British to forcibly put down the fighting in Perak.

Abdullah soon realized that he had given away more than he wanted by accepting advice from the first British Resident, J.W. Birch. He instigated, or allowed, a clumsy assassination of Birch. This only succeeded in giving the British an excuse for a more direct military presence, as well as the exile of Abdullah, and his replacement by a more compliant sultan. What was key for Muslims, however, was less the British interference in political and economic affairs than the way in which the treaty divided responsibility between the Sultan and the British resident. Since this treaty was copied in agreements between the British and other West coast Malayan states, in the following years it became the basic policy of the British toward Islam and Malay cultural rights. The treaty specified just two areas in which the Sultan could act independently: "those touching on Malay religion and custom". This was commonly interpreted to mean that the sultans could manage all the religious affairs of the Malay/Muslim community. With this understanding both the British and the sultans found it to their advantage to develop a structured religious bureaucracy under the control of the Sultan himself. For the sultans this was a means of extending what control they had to the furthest reaches of their population, and brought uniformity to enforcement of religious laws. Such an Islamic bureaucracy also allowed them to more effectively intervene in disputes over local hereditary titles and positions in which they or their relatives had an interest. The British found that an organized system of *qadi* courts which determined matters of family law, customary law, and inheritance, relieved their own officials from onerous and unpopular decisions.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, systems for

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administering Islamic and customary law had been legally enacted among all the West Coast states.¹⁷ Despite the fact that Johore and the East Coast states were not directly affected by the Treaty of Pangkor, they made similar enactments. Johore tended to make its laws more amenable to British concerns, while Trengganu and Kelantan developed systems which more closely followed the *Shari'ah*. As Andaya and Andaya note, "Despite the very real differences in the two approaches to government, the aim was the same: the maintenance of meaningful Malay political control when it was apparent that economic initiatives were passing into alien hands."¹⁸ The result was also the same. Throughout Malaya a religious bureaucracy was created which linked the interests of Muslim teachers and religious leaders to those of the traditional rulers and long standing customary law.

At the same time the implementation of European ideas of constitutional law and the need to codify the place of Islam within them, led to the new concept of Islam as the "State Religion" (in Trengganu) and the "National Religion" (in Johore).¹⁹ Such terms in the new state constitutions begged the larger question of the nature of these former sultanates, which had become states.

Large non-indigenous, non-Muslim communities lived throughout the Peninsula. In general they had managed their affairs, with the permission of the ruling sultan, under their own leadership and according to their own customs. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries these communities lived directly under British law as opposed to the customary and religious law under the sultans' oversight. Christian missionaries were generally of the opinion that the treaty of Pangkor gave the sultans the right to forbid proselytizing among the Malays. However, they regarded it as their right to carry out their work with impunity among the Chinese and later Indian non-Muslim populations, and to establish churches wherever they wished.

Thus although Islam was a "state religion" its laws did not apply to every resident of the state. The concept of Islam as a "state religion", whether specifically mentioned in the constitution of the state, or merely implied by the existence of a state managed religious bureaucracy, would have far reaching effects when the sultanates were gathered together to become an independent nation; a nation with large minorities who had never felt themselves directly

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responsible to either Malay customary law or Islamic religious law. Moreover this development distinguished British Malaya from the Dutch controlled East Indies. In the latter traditional rulers developed religious bureaucracies, but without specific constitutional recognition in the larger Dutch colonial state.

iii. British Borneo

As the nineteenth century began, the Island of Borneo remained virtually untouched by the colonial powers. The northwestern coast was under the control of the Sultanate of Brunei. The northeastern tip of the island was part of the Sulu dominated regions which stretched north to Mindinao. The remaining coastal areas on the Straits of Macassar and Java Sea were under the control of a number of smaller sultanates. The vast inland areas were almost entirely the domain of indigenous tribal groups, and remained largely unexplored until after World War II. The Dutch had sought to control the trade originating in these regions several times without success, and for most of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were content to leave the areas to be ruled by their own sultans, albeit with Dutch advisors in residence. Beginning in 1850 the Dutch deepened their control after intervening militarily to suppress the lawlessness of the large Chinese *kongsis* which controlled the gold mining industry in Sambas. After discovering coal in the interior, the Dutch moved into the remaining independent sultanates, and by 1900 successfully brought them under Dutch authority.

The urgency felt by the Dutch to control these long neglected areas came in large part because of the activities of James Brooke, who arrived in Southeast Asia in 1839 as an adventurer and trader. In 1840 he aided the Raja Muda of Brunei in putting down a rebellion on the Sarawak river. After negotiations and some military threats he parleyed this into an appointment as “governor of Sarawak”. He eventually took the local title of Raja, and from that time onward he missed no opportunity to extend his powers northward toward Brunei itself. His successors finally ruled all of modern Sarawak by 1905, and maintained control until the Japanese invasion in 1941. He also encouraged British government efforts to obtain control of the island of Labuan as a trade center in 1848. The other diminution of Brunei’s territory came when its Sultan sold concessions for trade and development in his territory in North

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Borneo to an American adventurer in 1865. He was bought out by other entrepreneurs, who succeeded in 1878 in getting a treaty ceding them the portion of North Borneo under control of the Sultan of Sulu. After a variety of failed attempts to make these concessions pay the British North Borneo Company a British firm, chartered by Parliament, purchased it in 1881. This company ruled, or more properly managed, what became modern day Sabah until World War II.

What is most characteristic of British Borneo is thus the idiosyncratic nature of its government until well into the twentieth century. Policy in Sarawak was set by the Brooke family, and in North Borneo by the Company. Neither set of rulers wished to change social structures dramatically, and Muslims were not at first greatly affected by the new administrations. This changed, however, with the advent of economic development and the spread of Christian missions. Both Brooke and the North Borneo Company invited groups of Chinese settlers who, it was hoped, would develop the agricultural potential of the country. In both cases large numbers of the immigrants were Christian, with the long term effect of establishing a substantial Christian/Chinese minority. Christian missionary groups, primarily Anglican and Catholic, brought the gospel to the indigenous groups. By World War II there were sufficient converts that it was clear that indigenous Christians would also be a substantial minority. Muslim Malays were largely ignored in the process of economic development, and were protected from Christian proselytization. Thus, in these sparsely settled territories, the demographics of religion were very different from other British territories. While the majority of the population remained animist, the Christian minority soon surpassed the Muslim minority not only in economic influence, but also in size.

c. Spanish colonial policy

The treaty whereby the British and Dutch had agreed to divide Southeast Asia into spheres of influence in 1824, was part of a larger movement among European powers to fix spheres of influence in the colonial world as one means of achieving a workable balance of power in Europe. By the nineteenth century Spain was a minor power in these negotiations, but its colonial holdings in the Philippines were nonetheless affected. Two forces thus acted on

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Spanish policy.

The first was Spain's long felt need to bring the independent Muslim sultanates to the south under control. Spain would not entertain their traditional claims to the island of Mindinao (which already had Christian settlements) and was fearful of continued raids on coastal towns and shipping in the islands. However, Spain's efforts to subdue the Muslims were at first opposed by Britain. It found it convenient to have an independent buffer state between its own interests in Borneo and the Spanish Philippines, while its traders enjoyed the relatively free ports and markets in the Sulu islands. In the middle of the eighteenth century Britain had briefly occupied Manila, and its superiority in sea power over Spain only grew in subsequent years. As Nicholas Tarling writes "The lesson was not lost on the Spaniards, . . . if they were to retain their territories, they must rule them more efficiently. They must also develop them and even open them up to foreign commerce."²⁰ Over the nineteenth century a compromise developed in which Spain opened up the Philippines to freer trade, while Britain gradually dropped its objections to Spain's increasingly violent attacks on the Muslim kingdoms. In 1843 Spain was able to purchase four steam powered British gunboats and over a period of five years used them to bombard the capitals of the sultanates and temporarily capture all of them. A second series of campaigns in the 1870's and 1880's used both the gunboats and modern artillery to begin establishing control of the inland portions of the sultanates. At the same time Manila was opened for non-Spanish traders in 1834, and other ports followed in 1855. The major beneficiaries of this policy were the British traders.

As had happened in Indonesia, the relative liberalization of trade created a new social class made up of moneyed indigenous or mestizo land owners who prospered through by-passing existing economic structures to trade directly with the British and other foreign traders. For these families, Spain's inefficient, corrupt, and self-serving government was increasingly seen as an intolerable burden preventing them from benefiting fully from the world market for their crops. The Spanish tobacco monopoly is a particularly telling example of what farmers suffered. They were forced to plant tobacco, and forced as well to sell their entire crop to the

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government at a fixed price well below market level. Those who failed to produce their quota were fined or worse, and many were never paid for their crop. The oppression was so great that populations in the tobacco growing areas declined, as farmers fled their land for other regions or Manila. Besides the devastating effects of such policies on small landholders the Spanish failed to develop the economic infrastructure as was being done in the Dutch East Indies and British Malaya. In 1898 the entire Philippines possessed only 900 miles of road.²¹ Given these economic inefficiencies the Spanish had to rely on forced labor from the rural peasants in some industries, and on involuntary conscripts to serve its military. The mid-nineteenth century wars on the Muslims placed a particularly heavy burden on the lowest classes of Philippine society. The result was a nation ready for rebellion; a nation in which virtually every class suffered under colonialism. Among those who suffered most were the Muslims, who as a conquered people found that their land fell into the hands of Christian landowners seeking to expand their production, who now found their traditional trade ties controlled by the Spanish government. When revolution finally broke out, they too would seek autonomy and the protection of their traditional rights, in a struggle which has not yet ended.

d. Nineteenth century Christian missions

Kenneth Scott Latourette has called the nineteenth century the “great century” of Christian missions. In terms of quantity the title certainly applies with regard to Southeast Asia. The influence of the French Revolution on the Netherlands East Indies resulted in the declaration of religious freedom and the return of Catholic missionaries, followed by a virtual explosion of Protestant missionary activity in the first half of the nineteenth century. In peninsular Malaysia (the other area with a substantial Muslim population) the establishment of the Straits Settlements gave missionaries both a field in which they could freely work among almost all the races of the archipelago, and a staging point from which to reach the interior populations.

i. *The Indonesian archipelago*

The new administration of the Dutch East Indies which was

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established in 1799 regularized the position of the widely scattered Protestant congregations in the Netherlands East Indies by gathering them into a single Protestant Church of the Netherlands Indies. This body did not carry out missionary work; but in the first half of the century American and British missionaries entered Java, Sumatra, and Borneo. In the Netherlands the *Nederlandsch Zendelingenootschap* missionary body first began work reviving neglected congregations, eventually extending its work as far as Sulawesi. After 1850 new Dutch, German, and American missionary groups began working in places, and among populations, that were not reached by the older Catholic and Protestant organizations. In this period church leadership still fell primarily to missionaries, and there were no attempts to educate or ordain local clergy. Nonetheless the nineteenth century saw Christianity established throughout the archipelago, including a number of areas where Islam had predominated.

This flowering of missionary activity had several direct results. The work among non-Malay or Javanese indigenous groups (usually carried out in the local languages) effectively stopped the spread of Islam into many inland areas. Where such efforts were most successful, as in Sulawesi, Irian Jaya, and among the Karo Bataks, the majority of the population eventually became Christian. In Java and Sumatra missionaries enjoyed a measure of success converting less rigidly orthodox Javanese and Malay Muslims. As a result Javanese and Malay society in Indonesia, always more open to diversity of religious belief and practice than the related societies of Peninsular Malaysia, accepted Christianity as a small part of its overall makeup. Finally, Christian methods of proselytizing which involved education and economic development, as well as government financial support for Christian missions, created animosity and resentment among some Muslims. The term *masuk Belanda*, or “become Dutch” was used for those who converted. Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century various Muslim *ulama* issued rulings declaring it un-Islamic to wear Western style clothing or to attend mission schools. The process of Islamic reform had become in part an attack on Christian missions.

The greatest failure of missions in the nineteenth century was to create a church which could claim to be indigenous in the way that

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Islam was indigenous. The use of Malay, Javanese, and other languages did open the door for interaction between Christianity and local culture, and certainly made Christianity more accessible. However, the sad conflict between the Sadrach and the Dutch Reformed Mission indicates well the unwillingness of the missionaries to let an indigenous Christianity take root.

Sadrach had been converted at about age 30 after having heard the gospel from other Javanese Christians. After working for a time distributing tracts he set up his own Christian center. Sadrach had been converted because he found in Christianity a superior *ngelmu*, or teaching. He was able to attract followers because of his superior spiritual power, healing powers, and teaching. They came from both *santri* and *abangan* backgrounds to join him in an organization built on the lines of a *peasantran*. By 1887 the movement had expanded and was organized like a Sufi *tariqah*, with seventy local and seven regional groups. The Javanese concept of *a ratu adil* was related to the coming of Christ as Messiah. Despite Sadrach's success in relating the Christian gospel to Muslim Javanese of many backgrounds, Dutch missionaries could not accept either what they saw as syncretism, or his independence from their churches. Motivated by narrow theology and racism, they denounced him as a false teacher and made intense efforts to bring his followers into the conventional churches. With such pressure his movement died with him.²²

ii. British Malaya and the Straits Settlements

The earliest Christian presence in the Straits Settlements was that initiated by the Roman Catholic Portuguese in Malacca in the sixteenth century. The first Protestants, however, came from the London Missionary Society, with the express purpose of preparing for evangelistic work in China. These early missionaries made efforts to reach all segments of the population, and published Christian literature in all the languages of the archipelago. However, having experienced great difficulty in converting Malays, including the small number willing to enter Christian schools, the missionaries turned more and more to work among the Chinese. Churches were founded in both Singapore and Penang. In the latter part of the

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nineteenth century there was an upsurge in Protestant missionary activity in the Straits Settlements, most notably with the arrival of J. B. Cooke of the Presbyterian Church in England, and William Oldham of the Methodist Mission of the U.S. Methodist Church. Cooke took advantage of the good ties the Presbyterians enjoyed with the Sultan of Johore, who was educated in a Presbyterian Mission school in Singapore, to extend their work among the Chinese settlers in Johore. The Methodists built large English-medium schools, and through them reached both the Chinese and Tamil populations in the Straits Settlements. However, despite continued efforts by the Methodists, and some Anglicans, the Christians failed to win more than a handful of Malay converts, and never formed these into a distinct congregation.

As the nineteenth century came to a close the Christian churches in the Straits Settlements were enjoying their first large scale success. Methodist, Catholic, and Anglican schools were very popular and had the opportunity to expand into Malaya with the use of government education grants. Congregations were growing among the Chinese and Indians. Christians from the ethnic groups were migrating into Malaya from China, India, and the Straits Settlements. In some areas these immigrants outnumbered the local Malay population. There were great new opportunities for church growth. There was, however, one particular feature of this growth which would continue to haunt Christian-Muslim relations: the lack of a Malay church and of any significant outreach in social work or education among the Malays. That status of the Malays as a distinct Muslim community which had been tacitly recognized in the treaty of Pangkor was confirmed by Christian missionary reticence (with rare exceptions) to either evangelize among them or to try and carry out social work for their benefit. Instead Christianity was more and more identified with the immigrant communities and British colonial law — an identification which would have far-ranging consequences in the twentieth century.

4. Summary

For Muslims in Southeast Asia perhaps the most significant fact of the nineteenth century was that it brought the end of the closely integrated society of earlier generations. Colonial boundaries artificially cut across ethnic and trade ties that had existed for

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centuries. Both colonial rule and economic development brought with them large numbers of immigrants from China and India; not merely urban traders but also laborers whose presence was felt particularly in Sumatra and Malaya. The growth of Christianity, the first religion other than Islam to make exclusivist claims to truth and one associated with colonialism, brought another new dimension to the social fabric of Southeast Asia. Long established patterns of social interaction were also disrupted. The structures of religious authority were reshaped by the creation of religious bureaucracies under the traditional rulers, and by the loyalty given by the peasant population to the independent *ulama* and *kiyayi*. The introduction of colonial laws and the colonial bureaucracies added another dimension to the growing conflict between *Shari'ah-minded* Muslim reformers and traditionalists who wished to maintain the standing of *adat*. World-views were also being transformed. From both Europe and the Middle East new ideas were flowing ever more rapidly into Southeast Asia, ideas which challenged long held assumptions about both the human and spiritual worlds, and how they interacted.

B. Late Nineteenth Century Islamic Reform

1. The Straits Settlements as Islamic centers

For centuries the ports of Java, Sumatra, and Peninsular Malaysia had played a key role in both trade and cultural and religious exchange. In them the archipelago met the world. The nineteenth successors to this long tradition were the Straits Settlements, particularly Penang and Singapore, under British rule. British policies which welcomed immigrant traders from the Middle East, and freely allowed pilgrim traffic, made the Straits Settlements the ideal staging area for pilgrims. At the end of the nineteenth century they had, for example, a community of some 1500 Arab traders and teachers with links to the Hadramat. This, combined with a burgeoning publishing industry run largely by the Jawi Peranakan (Muslims of Indian and Malay descent), made them one of the major centers of Islamic learning and publication in the world. Students from all over the archipelago, including those who could not actually make the pilgrimage to Mecca, could sit at the feet of well known teachers and begin to imbibe the spirit of change and renewal

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which was sweeping the larger Islamic world. As importantly, the Straits Settlements provided a haven for political reformers on the run from Dutch authorities, former rulers in exile, and all those wishing to make contact with foreign Muslim powers (notably the Ottoman empire) which might be sympathetic to their causes. In them both sultans and sheiks could even engage the discreet services of British law firms who could advise on everything from economic development to petitioning the Ottoman rulers for aid. And in their cosmopolitan arms Muslims could experience first hand modernity in all its diversity, decadence, materialism, and technological power.

2. Islamic reformers

If the restoration of orthodoxy and purity, spurred by Wahabbism, was the major theme of early nineteenth century reform, modernity, and its long challenge to Islam through colonialism, became the major concern of the last decades of the century. Within Southeast Asia, as across the Islamic world, it seemed that European, Christian dominance came through a superiority of organization, weapons and methods of war, the technology which both produced and transported trade goods, and educational systems which produced a more aware, disciplined, and productive population. Muslims also suffered the darker side of modernity; with its economic exploitation, brutal militarism, and moral decadence. Alive to the glorious memory of former greatness they were not inclined to embrace modernity wholeheartedly. Instead many sought a combination of Islamic reform and openness to new ideas and learning which would both restore Islam to its rightful place and offer humanity an alternative to what were seen as the excesses of the West. The key center for this reform movement, at least as it affected Southeast Asia, was Cairo, and the Al-Azhar University under Muhammed Abduh.

Muhammed Abduh (1849-1905) had pursued a life of learning and received a conventional and thorough background in Quranic and theological studies before devoting himself to mysticism while living in Cairo. His life was revolutionized by a meeting with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, one of the pioneers of nineteenth century Islamic reform. Through Afghani, Abduh became familiar with European

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literature translated into Arabic, and with new ways of understanding Islam. Afghani's program had a revolutionary political intent, but recognized that Muslim strength to repulse European colonialism could come only through a reform which cut away the layers of Islamic tradition which encouraged popular fatalism and allowed despotism. He, like generations of reformers to follow, would find inspiration in the works of Ibn Tamiyyah, who rejected the doctrine of *taqlid* and insisted upon his right to make judgments based on the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammed. Conservative Muslim scholars insisted that *bidah* or "innovation" was a sin and thus rejected all efforts to overturn or change the centuries old pattern of Islamic life. Afghani, inspired by Tamiyyah's rejection of many popular practices not found in the Quran, and followed by Abduh, turned this argument on its head. He insisted that it was precisely the highly elaborated and scholastic teaching of the orthodox scholars which was *bidah*, and which strayed from the original teaching of the Prophet. He insisted on the right of *ijtihad* or independent reasoning, and the need for a new *ijma* or consensus among scholars regarding Islamic law and teaching. According to Abduh the teachings of Islam were in no way contrary to developments in modern science. Indeed he argued that Islam was more modern and rational than Christianity, and provided a solid basis for both physical science and the science of religion. In fully developing his ideas he finally reached conclusions that cut against the grain of long-standing Muslim teaching. He regarded the Quran as created (a position first held by the *Mutalizes* and condemned as heretical in the ninth century) and limited the number of laws which required strict obedience to those with a clearly ethical dimension.

In 1882 Abduh was banished from Egypt for his participation in a revolutionary movement. In Paris he met again with al-Afghani and the two produced a newspaper titled *al-'Urwat al-Wuthqa* which reflected al-Afghani's belief that Muslims needed to shake off European imperialism. Although banned after six months it spread widely in the Islamic world, and was widely reprinted. In 1889, after a period of exile which took him to Europe and Beirut, Abduh returned to Cairo and filled a succession of important official positions, including that of Head of Islam (state mufti) for Egypt. He was also a leading member of the governing council of al-Azhar,

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Islam's oldest and most prestigious university. Through his own books, lectures, and articles, and through the journal *al-Manar* (which began publication in 1897 and was edited by his close friend Rashid Rida) Abduh's ideas were widely spread and gained great currency. Southeast Asian Muslims heard of them in Mecca. Many went to Cairo to study at al-Azhar, and there experienced Abduh's teaching personally. On their return to the Straits Settlements or other parts of Southeast Asia they brought ideas which shook the foundations of Muslim society.

The ideas of Afghani and Abduh probably first reached Indonesia through copies of *al-'Urawat al-Wuthqa* which were smuggled into the country despite a Dutch ban on the periodical. Soon after pilgrims and travelers from the Middle East also began to bring modernist ideas through the Straits Settlements to the archipelago. And in 1897 *al-Manar* began to circulate. Modernism in this early period was not yet formed into movements. These would come with the return, in the early twentieth century, of both Indonesians and Malaysians who had studied in Mecca and Cairo. However some of its key characteristics, those which would guide its development, were already manifest in this early period. The first was its use of the popular press to disseminate ideas. Abduh himself was a journalist, and journals, notably *al-Manar* (in Arabic) and later *Al-Imam* (in Malay) would be at the center of the modernist movement in Southeast Asia. The use of journalism allowed the movement to cut across the traditional divisions of Muslims into different Sufi *tariqah*, as well as across ethnic and dialect differences. A second characteristic of this early modernism was its association with study clubs and discussion groups. One such group, the Persekutuan Rasyidiah in Riau, played a role in exposing Syed S h e i k A l - H a d i , l a t e r e d i t o r of *Al-Imam*, to modernist ideas before he traveled to Cairo to study under Muhammed Abduh personally.²³ Such clubs were a new kind of social organization, quite different from either the *peasantran* under the guidance of the older of the *ulama* or the court centered religious bureaucracy. Thus on the eve of the twentieth century not only were new intellectual movements stirring in Southeast Asian Islam, the foundations of a new kind of social force were being created. Its power lay in networks of like-minded intellectuals, and

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their utilization of the popular press.

3. Pan-Islamism

Closely associated with Modernism were Pan-Islamic ideas. The Pan-Islamists argued that Islam should transcend the national boundaries created by colonialism and that a restoration of Muslim greatness would come under a revival of the Ottoman Empire or an even greater successor. Pan-Islamism in its most theoretical form argued simply that the *ummah* or whole gathering of Muslim believers, should never be divided. It looked to the early days of the Prophet, and to the great Islamic empires, as ideals of Muslim unity which created powerful and sophisticated civilizations rivaling anything found in the West. Such an ideal was necessarily political, and given the fragmented state of the Islamic world as the twentieth century approached, unrealistic. Nevertheless it played an important role in Southeast Asia by inspiring rebellions against the British and Dutch with the hope of receiving Turkish aid. This was true in the Pahang war of 1891, in which the rebels believed Turkish aid to be imminent, and more importantly in the prolonged Dutch war to gain control of Aceh. In the latter the Acehnese appealed to the Ottomans for help in both 1868 and 1873. Despite being turned down, many continued to believe that aid was imminent, a belief which helped prolong the war until nearly the end of the century. While Pan-Islamism did not succeed in bringing the Muslim masses from Cairo to Mindanao to rise up against the colonialists, it did inspire considerable concern and sometimes fear among the Europeans who ruled large and often unhappy Muslim populations. Pan-Islamic ideas, in more realistic dress, would inspire—in the twentieth century—a host of international Islamic organizations. They also sowed the seeds of fear among non-Muslims which would bear fruit in our own time with discussions of a “clash of civilizations” in which the Christian West would be pitted against the Muslim East.

4. Christian reactions to nineteenth century Islamic reform

British and Dutch colonial policy toward Islamic reform movements were in the midst of change in the late nineteenth century, as has been sketched above. Specifically Christian

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responses, however, were more uniform, and were more uniformly negative. There were exceptions, such as G. M. Reith, the chaplain of the English language Presbyterian congregation in Singapore. He argued that true Islam was identical to true Christianity and true Judaism. Ultimately he felt both Christianity and Islam needed “the rise of a sound historical criticism” so that the job of the Christian missionary was “to rouse a spirit of inquiry and to instill the principles of true criticism, in order that the Mohammedans themselves may be enabled to rediscover Islam—the vital principle of faith which is common to the three great religions of the world.”²⁴ However, the great majority of missionaries working in Indonesia and Malaysia had already identified Muslims as the group most most reluctant to learn about, much less convert to, Christianity. Practical experience had shown them that where Islam was weakest, or most syncretistic, it was easiest to convert Muslims. The logical conclusion was that Islamic reform, which clearly strengthened the sense of Muslim identity, was inimical to Christian missions. This was borne out by anecdotal evidence of villages which turned against Christian missionaries after a visit by a haji, or Arab teachers who advised their students not to read Christian tracts. And missionaries shared the more general fears of Pan-Islamism which were found among their fellow colonialists. It was a time when Christian missionaries were beginning to consider the possibility that other religions might have some positive value in ethnically or theologically paving the way for Christianity. While Islam sometimes won approval for its monotheism or aspects of its ethics, in general Christians believed that Islam, especially when reformed, was an obstacle rather than a preparation for the gospel. This hardly prepared them for dispassionate study or the building of deeper relationships between Muslim and Christian communities.

C. Conclusion

Southeast Asia at the turn of the twentieth century was in the midst of far reaching social change. New political systems were being born as the colonial empires adjusted to near complete mastery over areas once ruled indigenously. Economic development was recreating social hierarchies. In this new world Christians were finding themselves ascendant in social position if not in political

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power or population. Muslims, although sometimes demoralized by their loss of autonomy and social fragmentation, were finding new energy from both a sense of universal fellowship and an influx of new ideas which came from expanding contacts with Islamic centers in the Middle East. On the horizon for Christians, Muslims, and the other communities of Southeast Asia, was the question of what role they would have in managing their own affairs in an era where recreating the old indigenous states and political structures would be impossible.

D. Questions for Discussion

1. People desire religious reform for many reasons. What were some of the reasons Muslims in Southeast Asia wanted religious reform? How are these similar to the kinds of religious reform which Christians sometimes seek?
2. In the nineteenth century the policy of British and Dutch governments both affected and was affected by Muslim reform movements. In your own country what are some ways in which Christians or Muslims have been affected by government policy? How have they reacted? How has government policy been affected by religion or religious feelings?
3. In both Indonesia and Malaysia Christian missionaries often enjoyed both the protection and support of the colonial government. What are some of the dangers of receiving such support? How should modern Christians react to offers of government support in their missionary efforts?

E. Suggestions for Further Study

What was your own community like in the nineteenth century? How much was it affected by colonialism? Did most people follow traditional religions? Were there Muslim? Christians? Find the oldest Islamic institution in the area where you live. Was it traditionalist, reformist, or modernist?

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IV. SOUTHEAST ASIAN ISLAM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

New ways of understanding Islam which were suggested by the Muslim modernists, and the new hopes for strength to resist colonialism found in Pan-Islamic movements, came to Southeast Asia in the latter part of the nineteenth century. They were accompanied by social changes which would result in colonies being transformed into independent nations. In this new environment Islamic movements became institutionalized in political parties, clubs, societies, and associations which eschewed using either the traditional Sufi *tariqah* or the court centered religious bureaucracy as models of organization. At the same time modernist Islam and the pressures of the colonial environment introduced new values by which Muslims would increasingly measure their success and that of their religion.²⁵ These shifts would occur through the complex interaction of four ongoing conflicts among Muslims trying to understand and realize their faith. The first of these was between modernists and traditionalists over what really constituted the *Shari'ah*, the guide to Muslim belief and practice. The second was between the desire to maintain ethnic identity and the desire to embrace a universal religious culture embodied in the *Shari'ah*. The third was between mystical religion and that more concerned with ritual and law, and the fourth between giving priority to developing a national identity and giving priority to developing an Islamic identity. Making the resolution of these issues all the more urgent was the final division of Southeast Asia by the colonial powers, and with it the creation of what would be the modern nations of Southeast Asia. These new boundaries divided the Islamic world of Southeast Asia and determined whether the Muslim peoples would shape their future as large majorities or isolated minorities in their new countries.

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A. The Making of Modern Colonial Southeast Asia

At the beginning of the twentieth century colonialism and European economic development were everywhere advancing into Southeast Asian society. The building of roads and railroads opened the interior regions to economic exploitation. Common currencies, languages, and bureaucratic structures were replacing the much older common culture of trade, religion, and family alliances. The rationalization of land laws, tax systems, police and court procedures, and the extension of government into education, public health, and even urban planning brought the colonial government into the daily lives of every member of the Southeast Asian population in an unprecedented way.²⁶ Muslims in particular found that their lives now fell under a new kind of law, which they called *qanun* or the secular law of the West. Where nineteenth century reformers had debated the relative place of *adat* and *Shari'ah*, their twentieth century successors would be forced to wrestle with the place of secular, state-based law, which was the inheritance of colonialism, and the bureaucratic structures which administered it and through it controlled much of society. Many of these changes were based upon, and introduced, new systems of values. Efficiency, speed, progress, and consistency were all values of an age of industry. These, and the values introduced through contact with other cultures in Asia, competed for precedence with the sometimes contradictory values which were already found in Islam and traditional Southeast Asian cultures.

This extension of colonial interests both geographically and socially had other results as well. In the nineteenth century the colonial powers had established "spheres of influence" which delineated which local rulers fell under the sway of each colonial power. However, the boundaries of these local rulers' influence was often unclear. The establishment of more direct and pervasive control by the colonial powers demanded the setting of firm boundaries, and in some cases involved the creation of whole new states (such as Sarawak and Sabah, as mentioned above.) The result, along with the encouraging of immigrant labor, was the creation of "plural societies" in which a single state embraced a variety of ethnic groups, and which divided ethnic groups and even long standing political entities by new colonial boundaries. The consequences affected both Muslims and Christians, as an era

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approached in which control of political majorities would affect the shape of the whole of society.

1. *The formation of Indonesia.*

In the nineteenth century the Dutch steadily extended their rule over Sumatra. The Minangkabau areas came under Dutch control at the end of the Padri wars, and the royal family of Palembang was displaced in 1825. In 1834 the ruler of the Lampongs was exiled. Elsewhere, both British and German influence grew in the region, and by 1870 the Dutch were concerned to solidify their position in the face of these rival powers. Despite an accord with Britain which would leave Aceh independent, the Dutch, under various pretexts, engaged in a long war from 1873 to 1903 which finally brought the country under Dutch control. After years of intrigue in the politics of Siak, the Dutch also effectively took control in 1890. Jambi was similarly subjugated in 1905 with the exile of its last Sultan. The Batak kingdoms were fully under Dutch control in 1907. In the case of all these sultanates the process of Dutch subjugation was much the same. First local rulers were forced to accept Dutch advisors and other officials to regulate trade. If they rebelled the Dutch would seek a more suitable proxy, and if none was found direct rule would be established. In some cases rebellion was not necessary to excuse Dutch intervention. A ruler might “fail to pacify” anti-Dutch elements and thus also come under Dutch attack. The result of Dutch subjugation of Sumatra, and of the success of the British in establishing their own political systems on the Malay Peninsula, divided the Malay Muslim world and separated Malaysian Muslims from the large majority of Muslims in Dutch held territories. This not only broke long standing cultural and even family ties, it left the Malays in some states on the West coast of the Malay Peninsula, and in the Straits Settlements, newly conscious of their position as minority populations, relative to the Chinese and Indians who had migrated to these regions.

This process of slowly establishing direct control of areas in which the Netherlands had a trade interest went on everywhere. In Bali, Macassar, and the islands on the eastern end of the archipelago Dutch authority was established over the independent Bugis and Balinese kingdoms in the period from 1850 and 1908. As the Dutch

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moved east they came into the sphere of British interests. The Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1905 set the boundary between West Irian (on New Guinea) and East Irian (British Guinea). Firm Dutch control of these areas opened the way for Christian missionaries who would succeed in creating new Christian populations in the twentieth century, particularly among the indigenous inland tribes. In the 1850's, despite a prolonged guerrilla war by the last of the Banjarmasin rulers, the Dutch established control of the West coast of Borneo. Again their efforts began to touch on British controlled areas. The need to define the limits of British and Spanish influence in the Sulu sea led to the 1885 Sulu Protocol, which acknowledged Spanish control over the Sulu territories with the exception of those ceded to the British North Borneo Company on Borneo itself. One result was a Muslim minority in the British controlled territory of Sabah, whose economic and trade ties were all oriented to the Philippines rather than the rest of British Southeast Asia. And in the Philippines a substantial, and disgruntled, Muslim minority was created in Mindanao and the nearby islands. This delineation of Dutch, Spanish, and British authority not only defined boundaries, it also marked the paths of common laws, language, and economic structures along which a new common culture and identity could form. By the time World War II ended in the Dutch East Indies its peoples were, with some exceptions, ready to see themselves as Indonesians, as in the Malay Peninsula people increasingly saw themselves as Malayans.

2. British North Borneo, the Philippines, and the division of the Sulu/Magindanao Muslim sultanates

The formation of the Philippines reached its final stages in two separate events. The first was the final submission of the Muslim kingdoms in the South and the peoples of Northern Luzon to Spanish rule late in the nineteenth century. With the aid of steam powered gunboats the Spanish were able to blockade the Sulu Sultan in Jolo in 1873. In a desperate attempt to obtain outside help the Sultan ceded his territories in North Borneo to British entrepreneurs. They did not deliver on their promise of military and political support (a pattern in British relations in the region) and he was forced to surrender to the Spanish. The process of taking control of the Sultanate was barely complete from a military point of view

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when general rebellion against Spanish rule broke out in Luzon in 1896. The mutinies among Filipino soldiers in the employ of the Spanish and local uprisings which followed made it clear that popular support was strong everywhere. However, the leaders of the nationalist movement were primarily in Luzon, and were soon forced by superior Spanish military power to flee to mountain strongholds where they were gradually being starved into submission. In December of 1897 the largest fighting group, under the command of Emilio Aguinaldo, accepted exile and an indemnity in exchange for laying down their arms. Sporadic fighting continued, nonetheless, as neither the rebels nor the Spanish found it in their interests to carry out the terms of the treaty. All that was necessary to fan the rebellion into full flame again was the entry of the United States into Philippines affairs with the advent of the Spanish American war in 1898.

While the dispute between Spain and the United States centered on Cuba and the West Indies the American military was prepared to use the event to extend U.S. power, which had no territorial base in Asia, to the Philippines. An American fleet which had been waiting in Hong Kong for events to unfold between Spain and the United States, sailed for Manila immediately after war was declared. On May 1st it arrived in Manila Bay and in a single morning destroyed the entire Spanish fleet. In the months which followed American army forces, in coordination with Filipino nationalist forces under Aguinaldo, completed the conquest of the Philippines. Then in August, much to the anger of the Nationalists, the Americans concluded a treaty with Spain in which Spain ceded control of the Philippines to the U.S. rather than the Nationalists. Even before the treaty was ratified by the U.S. congress, the U.S. military in the Philippines had declared a military occupation which was to last until 1901. By February of 1899 tensions between the Nationalists and the U.S. military had risen to breaking point. A number of shooting incidents, and the publication of President McKinley's statement that the U.S. would "assimilate" the Philippines, led to outright war for independence by the Nationalists. This war ended in 1901 with the defeat of Aguinaldo and his remaining forces in Northern Luzon. As a colony of the United States, the Philippines would continue to develop a common identity, albeit one based increasingly on the English language and American culture.

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The exceptions to this rule were the sultanates of south, which took advantage of the defeat of the Spanish to reassert some measure of independence. When the American military forces arrived in Sulu to take over the Spanish garrisons they made a treaty with Sultan Jamal-ul Kiram II which promised to safeguard Islamic worship and pay the Sultan an allowance in return for making Sulu an American protectorate. This agreement turned out to be acceptable to neither side. The Sultan could not control other Sulu leaders, who did not want to accept American rule, and the American Congress was unhappy at paying pensions to traditional leaders. Outright war broke out in 1903 and for the next ten years the American military was engaged in subduing both the Sulu islands and the Magindanau Sultanate on Mindanao. In Sulu the first civilian administration in 1913 was able to win the trust of the remaining Sulu princes and a treaty was concluded in 1915 recognizing Sultan Jamal as spiritual head of all Muslims, but giving administrative control to the U.S. government. In Mindanao the Muslims carried on a far more bitter struggle. While 1913 marked the beginning of a regular American administration of the area, fighting against any non-Muslim authorities continued for several years until Muslims were either subdued or were convinced that the American administration would respect their interests. The next phase in the development of Islam would come, when rule of the Muslim lands of Sulu and Mindanao shifted to Filipinos.

3. *The Anglo-Siam Treaties and the division of Kelantan and Kedah from Patani.*

The Treaty of Pangkor, although a model for British policy in Malaya, settled the political fate of only the Sultanate of Perak. From 1871 to 1875 the British were also able to take sides in dynastic disputes in Selangor and establish a resident advisor to the Sultan. Negri Sembilan, which as its name implies comprised nine semi-autonomous states, came under the sphere of British influence from 1874-1883, being formed into a single administrative unit in 1895. Together with Perak and Selangor it became part of the Federated Malay States in which British administration was most firmly and completely implemented. This still left, of the traditional Malay sultanates, Kedah, Perlis, Patani, Kelantan, and Trengganu under nominal Thai suzerainty. And Pahang and Johore remained as

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the relatively independent remnants of the old Johore-Riau empire which had been dismembered by the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824. The final formation of British Malaya involved the integration of Johore and Pahang into the colonial administration, and the treaties with Siam which allowed the other northern states of modern Malaysia to fall under increasing British control.

In the years following the Treaty of Pangkor the British began a more aggressive policy toward establishing administrative control in Peninsular Malaysia. They were prompted not only by the increasing presence of British commercial interests in Johore and the East Coast states, but also by fear of other outside powers. As a result Pahang was pressured into accepting British administration in 1887. Johore resisted much longer, in part because its status in relation to the British government was already governed by earlier treaties. However, after 1906 the Sultan was forced to accept advice from British officials in Singapore. In 1909 he was obliged to bring British advisors into his government. Finally in 1914 a new treaty obliged him to accept a full scale British administration, albeit one which was at least visibly in his employ.

In consolidating its interests in the Malay Peninsula in the late nineteenth century, the British government was forced eventually to deal with the long-standing claims of Siam to suzerainty over the northern Malay Peninsula. In Kedah these claims had some immediacy in the latter part of the nineteenth century, for from 1821 to 1840 Siam had ruled the territory directly. In 1840 a Malay ruler was restored by the Thais, leading to a period of indirect rule. In 1869 the British and Thais, without consulting the sultans, made an agreement which confirmed the position of Siam as suzerain over the Northern Malay territories, as well as confirming British control of Penang and the coastal territories opposite the island. Then in 1896 the British and French, whose colonial interests were beginning to overlap in mainland Southeast Asia, made an agreement which essentially left an independent Thailand as a buffer zone between British Burma and Malaya to the West and South, and French Indochina to the East. Each country presented itself to Siam as a defender of its independence against the other, and each negotiated for Thai concessions in return. In 1902 Siam promised to use British advisors in Trengganu and Kelantan. In 1909 the administration of the states, and of Kedah, was fully turned over to

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Britain. However, the Malay sultanates of Setul and Patani were put under Thai control. Implementing these agreements, to which again the sultans were not made a party, proved more difficult than signing them. Still, British pressure was sufficient to force an agreement with the Kelantan Sultan in 1910. Trengganu was able to resist longer, in part because the state was too impoverished to attract commercial attention by the British. In 1919 it was forced to receive a Resident. A brief rebellion in 1928, in which a number of people were killed, marked the end of Malayan resistance to British colonialism. However, while the Anglo-Siam agreements helped the British consolidate their position on the Peninsula, they fragmented the Muslim Malay region of which Patani and Setul had long been a part. And just as the British forced the sultanates of Kedah, Kelantan, and Trengganu to be integrated into British Malaya, so the Thais, from 1909 onward, attempted to “integrate” the southern Muslim provinces of Patani and Setul into Thai administrative and cultural structures.

4. *The division of the Cham peoples*

By the fifteenth century Vietnamese power was steadily moving south, and had confined the Cham rulers to small coastal areas, although they were still recognized as political leaders. In 1740 the Vietnamese advance forced the last recognized ruler of Champa to flee West into the Mekong river delta with his followers, dividing the Chams between a small minority remaining near Phan Rang on the Southern coast of Vietnam, and a larger group which settled in the area then also inhabited by the Cambodian peoples who had migrated into the Mekong delta after their defeat by Siam in 1431. The minority of Cham still living in coastal Vietnam were involved in a final struggle to maintain their independence, in which they had volunteer help from Kelantan. They were defeated in 1832 and from that time on neither Vietnamese nor later French authorities recognized a Cham polity or region.²⁷ The remainder of the Cham population which migrated spread over the region between Tay Ninh in Vietnam and Kampong Cham in Cambodia. They were unable to establish any common polity, after France first reduced Cambodia, and then Vietnam, to the status of protectorates and effectively set the borders of the two countries between 1867 and 1884, a boundary which still divides the Cham community between Cambodia and

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Vietnam.²⁸

B. Issues in Islamic Reform

Even as the colonial powers were putting the final touches on the political structures which would dominate Southeast Asia in the twentieth century, Muslims were engaged in an accelerating process of religious reform. In Southeast Asia this process continued to be inspired by developments in the rest of the Muslim world. And it continued to be influenced by the pressures put on Muslim societies by colonialism. Yet it also had a dynamic all its own. Islam always had internal mechanisms for change and renewal, and these insured that Islamic reform in the twentieth century was never merely a matter of reacting to external pressure. Islam in Southeast Asia also had a unique history of change and reform, and Muslims brought their own experience and points of view to bear on the problems which they faced. As a result, Islamic reform in Southeast Asia had its own unique contribution to the overall development of Islam. The development of that contribution can be traced through a series of conflicts out of which the most important issues facing Muslims were clarified.

1. *Reformers and conservatives (Kaum Mudah and Kaum Tua)*

The first Muslim modernists were given the name *salafiyyah* (from the phrase “the pious ancestors”) because of their insistence that the interpretation of the meaning of Islam for the modern world must be based on the Quran and Sunnah rather than later traditions. Their influence on Southeast Asian Muslims in the early twentieth century introduced what is for many historians the paradigmatic dialectic out of which modern Southeast Asian Islam continues to emerge. The pioneers of modernism in Malaysia were educated, urban Malays who were drawn together first around journalistic enterprises. These included the newspapers and journals *Al-Imam*, *Neracha*, *Tunas Melayu*, *Al-Ikhwan*. Modernism in Indonesia was more diverse, but equally dependent on an educated urban class which used the press to link those interested in new ideas. *Al-Munir*, *Al-Achbar*, *Pedoman Masyarakat*, *Al-Fatwa*, and many other journals provided a forum for modernist discussions and a means of

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spreading modernist ideas. Journals from both Indonesia and Malaya circulated throughout the archipelago creating a unity of thought across colonial boundaries. The central theme of these modernists was that Islam needed to return to its original purity so that Islam could progress into a modern age. This involved first overcoming a number of negative encrustation's on Islamic society. These included syncretistic practices which compromised pure belief with local superstition, unhealthy and inward looking mysticism, laziness and complacency, and most of all traditional structures of religious authority. The latter, including the traditional *ulama*, were said to encourage people to *taqlid buta*, blind imitation, and thus discouraged the kind of independence and strong-mindedness needed to rescue Muslims from their weakness. Once these negative traditions were overcome the modernists believed that a golden age of Islam could be created. It would be based on the teaching of the Quran and Sunnah, interpreted through the classical rules of *ijma* (consensus), *qiyas* (analogy), and most of all *ijtihad*, or independent reasoning. *Taqlid*, or following of precedent, would apply only to those things found in the Quran and Sunnah and not the vast body of *fiqh* built up after the time of Muhammed. Referring to traditional authorities, *Al-Ikhwan* wrote that they:

Behave as though it was obligatory to believe all the law books of the *ulama*, and every word in them, as though they were the Quran itself . . . while the *Kaum Muda* hold that the Quran and Hadith alone have this authority, and that as none of the *ulama* are free from error, God has given us reason, or intelligence, with which to examine what the *ulama* say.²⁹

The contrast was not entirely accurate, for even among the modernists there were disagreements about just how much of traditional Islamic teaching should be pruned away to get to the roots of genuine Islam. And there was disagreement among Indonesian Islamic reform groups over how much the discussion of such questions might help or hurt political objectives.³⁰ Yet all agreed that what had become orthodox in Southeast Asia fell short of either Islamic ideals or what was needed for Muslims to progress.

Kaum Muda, the young group, is the name applied to and taken

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by the modernists. It reflected not just their age, but their sense of belonging to a new era in Islam in Southeast Asia. They saw coming a time when Muslims would themselves enjoy the strength and prosperity which came with the fruits of progress displayed in the colonial societies which surrounded them. The idea that Islam was truly “progressive” was the complement to the modernist’s desire to return to its roots. Syed Sheikh bin Ahmad Alhady, onetime editor of *Al-Imam*, published *Islam and Reason* in the 1930's. He argued for the “reasonableness” of Islam based on its utility for creating unity, progress, freedom, peace, industriousness, and social responsibility.³¹ Both in his concern to show that pure Islam is rational, and his concern for “modern”, values in the colonial context Alhady typifies the *Kaum Muda*. It should not be thought, however, that modernism regarded itself as a compromise of Islam with colonialism or the West. To the contrary, the modernists argued that once Islam was unencumbered by its centuries of stagnancy it would be revealed as the true source of these supposedly “Western” values. Unlike many Muslims who sought to advance through participation in or imitation of western education, the *Kaum Muda* began their own schools which tried to ground students in a thorough knowledge of Islam as a foundation for the study of “modern” subjects such as science and mathematics. In Malaysia and Indonesia *madrasah* were opened by reform minded intellectuals to compete with the secularized government schools and the *pondok* or *peasantran* schools of the *ulama*. In Indonesia, modernist organizations formed these *madrasah* on a systematic basis and gave them a central administration. This gave them a continuity not found in the *peasantran*, which often died with their founder.

The ideas and activities of the reformers both directly and indirectly attacked the existing Islamic religious establishments of Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. While the Malayans were circumspect in criticizing the traditional rulers, they nonetheless urged them to institute reform in the one realm where they still had power under British colonialism. The actual religious authorities they attacked more directly. Not only did they question their *fatwa*, or rulings on religious matters, they regularly published alternative *fatwa* from learned Muslim reformers in the Middle East. Their most

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vehement attacks they leveled against the village *ulama*. Their participation in the Sufi *tariqah*, dependence on the orthodox *fiqh* to guide villagers in their daily lives, and *peasantran* and *pondok* schools which sometimes taught little more than chanting the Quran and memorizing of basic religious law, were to the modernists the primary sources of the weakness and backwardness of the Muslim community. Consistent with their outlook on the objects of their scorn the *Kaum Muda* referred to the traditionalists as *Kaum Tua*, the old group. It was a term the traditionalists embraced. Up until World War II modernism was defined as much in its opposition to the *Kaum Tua* as by its alliance with similar movements in the Middle East.

Were the *Kaum Muda* / *Kaum Tua* conflict to be seen only in terms of theology, or as a struggle for power, then it would seem that the *Kaum Tua* had little to recommend them. And indeed to the *Kaum Muda* it seemed that the *Kaum Tua* were not only backward, but had compromised too much and too long with colonial power. Yet their wide following was not entirely a product of peasant ignorance or backwardness. In Malaya in particular they were associated with the last remaining symbols of Malay pride and identity, the sultans. The royal families, with their recognized claim to own vast tracts of land, their power to appoint or approve an array of local officials, and their ability to sponsor Islamic institutions, were a center of Malay power far more potent in the pre-war period than that of the urban reformers. Patronage by local Islamic officials, although less significant, also existed in Indonesia. And in both countries the *Kaum Tua* represented also a traditional way of life and identity which was scorned less by those who lived it than by those who observed it from their urban vantage point. With regard to Islam the *Kaum Tua*, however rigid or unimaginative, maintained a tradition of learning and spirituality which was, if in some ways problematic, nonetheless a source of pride for Muslims. The manuals of *fiqh*, the vast commentaries on the Quran, the metaphysical speculation and poetry of the Sufis, were all signs of the great creative power of Islam in the past, and still inspired Muslims to self-confidence that they were truly following God's *Shari'ah*.

The *Kaum Muda* / *Kaum Tua* controversies are no longer called

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by that name in Southeast Asia, but the issues have not diminished in importance. How those Muslims holding such diverse groups interact has become more complex. Both groups now potentially have available the power of nation-states to promote and implement their understanding of an Islamic society. Their interaction is no longer just intellectual, it has become political, and like all things political, economic as well. However, circumstances in Indonesia and Malaysia are now so different that they will be treated separately in a later section.

2. Mysticism and external obedience (Abangan and Santri)

Closely related to the tensions between the *Kaum Tua* and the *Kaum Muda* were questions relating to the indigenous Muslim spirituality of Southeast Asia. The first popularizers of Islam among the *rakyat*, or common people, were Sufi mystics, and for centuries Sufism had been the center of Islamic spirituality for most Southeast Asian Muslims. In many respects it was no different from Sufism elsewhere in the Islamic world. Students studied esoteric philosophy and learned the rituals of their *tariqah* under the guidance of a sheik. In addition to their personal meditations there were regular public recitations of *dhikir*, as well as celebrations devoted to the saints of that particular Sufi order. Those who could visited and prayed at the shrines erected at the graves of these saints. The Wahhabis had opposed such practices, and their type of reform had come to parts of Southeast Asia (notably Minangkabau) in the early nineteenth century. In the twentieth century opposition came also from the modernists. They observed that syncretistic practices (such as calling on the name of Hindu gods and heroes) were interwoven with Islamic practices. Even among Sufi groups such as the Naqshbandia, which tried to eliminate such practices, the modernists found fault. In India and Persia the Naqshbandia became centers of political reform but in Southeast Asia this was not the case. Their inward looking and other-worldly spirituality, and their continued reliance on magic and charms rather than reason and science, was exactly what the modernists felt hindered the advance of Muslim society. In Java the modernists found the situation even less acceptable. Many Muslims were basically followers of traditional Javanese mysticism, which had little relation to the teaching of Islam and perpetuated a view of the spiritual world which

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incorporated Hindu, Buddhist, and Animist beliefs.

There were few, if any, Muslims who would mount a defense of the heterodox beliefs which the modernists opposed. Yet Sufism is more than these, and Sufi teaching was remarkably resilient, as it remains up to the present day. The inner communion with God, and a glimpse of the mystery of Divine Being, remain sought after goals among Southeast Asian Muslims. Basic Sufi literature in Malay is still widely available, some in new editions or in English, and for every heterodox *tariqah* that the government authorities suppress it seems a new one arises. In urban areas new *tariqah* are already being formed.³² Javanese mysticism, the religion of the *abangan* Javanese, has also continued its popularity, despite criticisms by the *santri* who regard it as heretical. In both cases the failure of the modernists indicates two realities about Southeast Asian Islam. The first is that its structures of authority and respect are still deeply rooted in individual loyalty towards local leaders of outstanding spiritual power and piety. This has always provided the links in the Sufi chain and it appears that the efforts of modernists (and modern governments) to focus Muslims' attention on less personal and more universal authorities have not yet succeeded. In Java such loyalty is a reflection of the self-consciousness of a distinct class in Javanese society which wants to retain its deep cultural identity. Secondly, it appears that Sufi mysticism and the *kebatinan* practices of the Javanese fill spiritual needs not touched upon by more conventional Islam. As is the case in other religious traditions, it is unlikely that the drive to find an identity secure within the limits of a defined belief and practice will ever reconcile itself with the desire of the mystic to seek identity in the Reality which is beyond definition. And this continues to create tension as Muslims seek to understand what it means for Islam, submission to God's way, to characterize their common life.

3. Ethne and ummah (adat and shari'ah)

Colonialism and the importation of Western culture changed society in ways which directly eroded those ways of life which helped Southeast Asians find their place in both the physical and spiritual world. Islamic reform movements, both modernist orthodox, were equally inimical to many of the traditional ways of life found among Southeast Asian Muslims. Just as colonialism sought to impose what Europeans believed to be a universally valid

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system of beliefs and ultimately social structures on Southeast Asia, so Muslim reformers claimed to have a universally valid, and indeed divinely-sanctioned, order which Muslims should adopt. This order was pervasive, and could be pervasive in its conflict with *adat* or traditional law and ways of life. In most of the Muslim world outside Southeast Asia the problem of integrating traditional law with Islamic law had been dealt with through the flexibility of the four *mazhab* or schools of law, which reflected the regional variations within the Muslim world at the time they were codified. *Shi'ism* represented another variation. However, many aspects of Southeast Asian *adat* were not anticipated in these variants. A good example is the inheritance structure of the Minangkabau, which passes certain property on to the offspring of the holder's sister. All Islamic inheritance law proportions an estate in clear divisions between the offspring of a marriage, and these proportions do not satisfy Minangkabau *adat*. Similarly the *Shari'ah* had clear teaching forbidding efforts to manipulate and have relationships with the vast range of spiritual beings called *jinn*. Yet Southeast Asian Muslims believed that controlling spirits themselves was an important part of life, and a necessity in many cases of sickness or misfortune. Beyond this type of direct conflict there were a number of traditional practices which, although they did not conflict with Islamic teaching, did not conform to it either. Such customs, like traditional dress, varied from place to place and in concert provided part of the inner map on which Southeast Asians located themselves and their neighbors. They were part of the richness and breadth of culture which Southeast Asians enjoyed. A villager in Kelantan, listening to a shadow play performed in her own peculiar dialect, and based on a Javanese or even Hindu epic history, was firmly rooted, yet in a world of wide boundaries with a glorious past.

The Muslim reformers were not opposed to having an identity or a sense of participation in a glorious past. But for them identity was first and foremost identity with the *Shari'ah*, and the proper cultural world was that of the *ummah* or universal body of believers. Depending on their stringency they might merely oppose the magic of village *bomohs* and *dukuns*, or demand even the wearing of Arab style robes and the abandonment of traditional *wayang kulit* (shadow plays based on the Hindu Ramayana Epic). This type of reform could have a deep appeal to those who had seen the glories of Mecca and whose

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command of Arabic opened them to a wide Islamic world. In the pre-war period, however, it came into conflict with the conservatism of those whose place in society revolved around the maintenance of *adat* (meaning traditional non-religious leaders of all types), as well as with a growing need of the various Muslim peoples of Southeast Asia to protect their own communal interests which were being eroded by colonialism. In the 1930's, in Malaya, the first Malay associations were formed. They almost immediately decided that local Arabs and Indians, long leaders in Islamic affairs and even proponents of the Malay language, would not be part of their movements.³³ They determined that their most fundamental needs and problems stemmed from their identity as Malays, not as Muslims. And this was not unreasonable. The majority of non-Malay Muslims were urban traders and businessmen who identified little with the majority of Malay agriculturists, and who could not be expected to protect their political interests. And the most obvious economic threat to the Malays was the large number of Chinese, who had quickly gained control of almost all aspects of the economy.

In the Dutch East Indies the lines of conflict between loyalty to *adat* and ethnic identity were more complex as Muslims were found in many ethnic groups; Javanese, Minangkabau, Batak, Acehnese, and others. Yet the issues were similar. In Sumatra Minangkabau leaders like Datuk Sutan Maharadja opposed Muslim reformers, whether modernist or Wahhabi, because of their antipathy toward *adat* and with it the basic Minangkabau social structures.³⁴ In Java the *Jong Java* and *Budi Utomo* promoted Javanese culture and had multi-religious memberships. They saw the Islamic reform movements as a danger to both Javanese culture and political unity of the Javanese in the face of Dutch colonialism. For nationalist leaders like Sukarno love of country must be rooted in the deepest reaches of its history and culture. And this included in Java not just *adat* such as the *selamatan* or spiritual feasts commonly celebrated by both Muslim and non-Muslim Javanese, but the Hindu kingdoms of the past and their great heroes and culture.³⁵ Where Indonesia, and particularly Java, differed from Malaya was in the substantial early involvement in the nationalist movements by non-Muslims (both Christians and practitioners of *kebatinan*, or traditional Javanese mysticism). Thus very early in the processes leading toward

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independence not only the drive to preserve ethnic identity, but the need to forge a multi-religious nationalism, came in conflict with the desire of Muslim reformers to find their identity in the universal law of Islam.

4. Islam and nationalism (iman and kebangsaan)

In a running debate between Sukarno and Agus Salim of the Sarekat Islam (a Java Islamic reform group) the issue between Islam and the embryonic nationalism of pre-War Indonesia was aptly expressed. Salim maintained that *kebangsaan* or nationalism as Sukarno understood it, was a religion, an alternative to Islam;

Thus we observe how the religion which enslaves man to the fatherland-idol leads to competition and rivalry for the acquisition of wealth, honor and pride; to the suppression of , enslavement and danger of the fatherland to others without regard to right and justice.³⁶

For the Islamic reformers and modernists the true source of nationalism had to be united support of the universal law of God found in Islam. This alone provided a foundation for authentic justice and peace. To seek to build a nation on any other foundation was essentially idolatry, making material and worldly relationships more important than the unity of people in God. The nationalists argued that their movement was also universal in the sense that it was part of a universal struggle for freedom and justice, a struggle which reached back into Indonesian history to a time before Islam, and which embraced non-Muslim as well as Muslim peoples. This division between the religiously neutral nationalists and the Islamic parties became increasingly pronounced through the pre-war period. Muslim reformers sharpened their position, and rhetoric, insisting that because a large majority of Indonesians were Muslim, Islam should play the leading role in defining the nation. The nationalists also developed a number of arguments for their position, including the observation that Islam generally suffered rather than prospered under government control, and that unity was impossible without taking into account the religious sentiments of non-Muslims and the intellectual disagreements between Muslims. In 1941 Sukarno wrote:

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If you become the government of the country in which many of its people are non-Muslims, do you want to decide by yourselves that the state be an Islamic state, the constitution an Islamic constitution, all the laws be the laws of the Islamic sharia? If the Christians and those professing other religions do not want to accept what will you do. If the intellectual groups do not want to accept, what will you do? Do you want to force them to agree with your decision? . . . do you want to play dictator and force them with your arms and your cannon?³⁷

Sukarno here reflected a political realism which ultimately served him well in forging a national consensus around the principles of *Pancasila*, which he believed both Muslims and non-Muslims could embrace. However, he did this within the assumption that the pragmatic needs of forming a geographically bounded nation would remain the primary concern of the people of Indonesia. The idealism of those who wished to see their religion, the religion of the majority, as the guiding factor for all society, and who wished to have their national law draw them into unity with the universal *ummah* of God, would remain a factor in Indonesian politics up to the present.

C. Christians and Muslims in Early Twentieth Century Southeast Asia

Just as Muslims began to relate their religion to the concrete social setting in which they lived, Christians in Southeast Asia felt challenged in the first part of the twentieth century to identify their role in society not just in terms of general ministries, but in response to their particular time and environment. These responses varied widely. In Malaysia and Singapore Christians identified themselves with English medium schools, moral reform, the particular needs of Chinese and Indian communities, and outreach to the non-Malay indigenous groups. Missionaries in this period were pre-occupied with building up Christian institutions and spreading the influence of Christianity in colonial society. Asian Christians were beginning to assert their independence from missionary leadership and to give Christianity a more indigenous form. Thus occupied with internal

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matters or making a significant place in colonial society, Christianity was somewhat removed from developments within Islam and among the Malays. Sincere, but usually abortive, efforts were made to minister either to Malay needs or evangelize among them. They were the exceptions which only highlighted the rule of the indifference which would later pave the way for mistrust and misunderstanding.

In Indonesia the situation was more complex. Where Christian missionaries succeeded in their work among indigenous groups, Christianity became the majority religion of a region. This sometimes created Christian islands in what was otherwise a sea of Islam. In Java Christianity was more evenly spread among the Javanese, and Christians played an active role in the development of nationalist and intellectual movements. Christian missionaries were committed to evangelizing Muslims and were more aware of developments within Islam. The Dutch and Germans in particular created a lasting heritage of Christian scholarship on Indonesian Islam. This did not necessarily make them more sympathetic to Muslim ideas. In fact considerable tension was created when Muslims educated in Dutch and other European languages began to read derogatory material written about Islam by some missionaries.³⁸ Some of this material was of relatively minor importance to the Christian world. Hendrick Kraemer's writings were, by contrast, of international significance. His book on Islam in Malay, *Agama Islam*, gave a scholarly and objective view of the religion. However, when he considered the question of missionary attitudes toward religion in general and Islam in particular his judgment was negative. His effort to critique "religion" following Karl Barth, thus opening the way for Christian missions which were not bound to Western cultural forms, sounded like harsh criticism when applied to Islam. As a practical matter he favored the *kebatinan* religion of the Javanese to the more resistant reformist Islam. While in Batavia he may have instigated non-Muslims among the *Jong Java* to exclude Islamic teaching. Varied missionary attitudes toward Islam, the contradictory role of Christians as beneficiaries and critics of colonialism, and the wide variety of Christian social relations with Islam, left a rich legacy of possible relationships between Christians and Muslims, all of which are being explored in our own time.

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The Philippines were the other major area where Christianity came into sustained contact with Muslim populations. These, however, were dominated not by missionary concerns for understanding Islam but by military and political concerns for integrating the still resistant Muslim regions of Mindinao and Sulu into the nation of the Philippines. Unlike British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies where Muslims had always been at the heart of the colonized territories, in the Philippines the Muslims had been outside colonial control, and maintained their political independence, into the late nineteenth century. Even the last Spanish victories over the Muslims had served to establish isolated garrisons rather than significantly alter indigenous social structures. In the twentieth century the American administration was more ambitious about bringing Muslim regions of Mindinao and the Sulu islands into its overall administration of the Philippines. After a period of military rule an American commissioner for the region managed it from 1914 until 1920. Then it came under the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes of the Ministry of the Interior, and in 1936 under a Commissioner for Mindinao and Sulu. These moves were designed to integrate the political control of the Magindanao and Sulu sultanates into the political system being set up by the Americans in the Philippines. That system relied upon Christian-Filipino administrators who often displayed deep bias toward the Muslims and toward whom the Muslims felt antipathy as foreigners extending a foreign rule. It also brought into Muslim lands increasing numbers of Christian settlers. What was lacking in the system was any degree of respect for, or deep interest in, the Islamic identity or protection of traditional land rights of the indigenous peoples.³⁹ Thus for the Muslims, Christianity was not so much a "European" religion as the religion of political and military domination whether at the hands of Spanish, Americans, or Filipinos. Christians for their part found it difficult to see the Muslim ethnic groups as anything other than backward, uncivilized, non-Christian tribal groups to be assimilated like all other such groups into a newly emergent nation.

Christians in Southeast Asia were concerned primarily with Muslims as neighbors whom they needed to evangelize, cooperate with in national or community development, or subdue and bring under control. Yet outside Southeast Asia, missionaries, and some

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local church leaders, were involved in rethinking Christian relations not so much with specific groups of Muslims as with Islam as a religion. In the twentieth century Islam continued to be a “problem” for missionaries, but it was a problem which they began to see in a changing light. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Samuel Zwemer pioneered a new Christian scholarship of Islam which brought to the attention of missionaries two significant facts. The first was that anti-Islamic polemical literature was ineffective for evangelism. In its place Zwemer suggested an in-depth knowledge of Islam based on studying Arabic and Islamic literature. Zwemer’s own attitude toward Islam could be harshly negative. Yet the personal experience and scholarship he brought to bear on Islam, and his approach of using Islamic teaching as a starting point for sharing the gospel, gave missionaries a fresh look at the “problem” religion. At the Missionary Conference in 1910 Islam along with other religions was now agreed to a “preparation” for the gospel. A year later Zwemer founded the *Muslim World*, a journal dedicated to Islam and Christianity. By the 1920’s there was a flourishing new Christian scholarship of Islam which was firmly rooted in a command of the Arabic language and knowledge of classical Islamic literature. Some Christians were making an active effort to learn from Muslims, and the *Muslim World* in particular was becoming a place that Muslims could address a Christian missionary audience about their understanding of their religion. Missionary scholars were coming to understand the nuances of different Islamic traditions, and were creating literature in a variety of languages which it was hoped would address both local and Islamic sensibilities. The key to all of this was that Christians were coming to rely on Muslim sources for their knowledge of Islam rather than repeating the prejudiced Christian anti-Muslim polemics which had developed in earlier centuries. As they became more aware of both the Islamic tradition and its outworking in the daily lives of Muslims, many developed a new appreciation for Islam in both its classical and reforming modes. Prior to World War II these developments brought neither greater evangelistic success nor greater mutual understanding at a local level. They did pave the way for new thinking about relations between followers of different religions, and moved toward formulating a theological basis for the non-polemical mutual regard which had first been put forward on the basis of practical missionary

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experience.

D. Islam and the Creation of Independent Southeast Asian States

The struggle of Southeast Asians to free themselves from colonialism varied in intensity and type from country to country. In places like Vietnam the armed struggle to remain free had never fully ceased. In the Philippines independence was achieved in large part through intense pressure put on the U.S. by Filipino nationalists. The Muslim minority never accepted the place allotted them in the new order. In Indonesia the struggle for political freedom was shifting away from localized uprisings toward building organizational infrastructures, often based on colonial models, to oppose colonialism. Older anti-colonial movements based on either restoration of the traditional order or on millenarian expectation had not proven potent enough to resist the organized might of the West. In Malaysia nationalist sentiment was divided between those who saw it primarily in terms of re-asserting traditional Malay polities, and those interested in creating independent, but new, social structures. Regardless of type, the years between World War I and World War II were years in which these movements gained momentum. The Great War, although it had little direct effect on Southeast Asia, destroyed pretensions of European moral superiority. The rise of Communism, and the Great Depression which affected the small laboring class in the colonies, inspired groups already committed to independence with new and potent ideologies. World War II, which brought the Japanese occupation and a hiatus in European control of Southeast Asia, galvanized these widely varied movements and quickened the commitment of Southeast Asians to nationalism and independence. After the war independence came within a decade to almost all of Southeast Asia, sometimes with Muslim concerns playing a leading role, and sometimes with Muslims as passive and unhappy participants in the creation of states of which they felt no part.

1. Indonesia
 - a. The Islamic organizations

The first two decades of the twentieth century were a time when

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the key issue both within Islam in the Dutch East Indies, and between Islam and the colonial situation, became clearer. In the three decades which followed, these shifted from being theological and ideological conflicts within a Muslim community looking for a common direction to becoming political conflicts between rival Muslim groups seeking to determine the future of what would become an independent Indonesia. In the context of growing nationalism this was also a period in which Muslims would be forced to define their role in relation to non-Muslim nationalist movements and Dutch imperialism.

The early twentieth century was a time when groups with common interests throughout the Dutch East Indies began to form organizations to protect themselves or further their goals. Thus trade unions were formed for many types of workers and government services. Clubs were also formed around preserving and forwarding ethnic and religious interests, such as the *Jong Java* (Javanese, 1918) *Sarekat Ambon* (Ambonese, 1920), and *Pasundan* (Sundanese, 1914). One of the most widespread was the *Sarekat Islam (SI)*, founded in 1912. It was initially a cooperative of batik traders intended to overcome Chinese monopolies in the trade. Under the leadership of H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto membership became an expression of discontent with Chinese economic dominance, Dutch authority, and the class of lesser nobility (*priyayi*) utilized by the Dutch in administration. By 1919 it claimed two million members. Whatever the true figure, its power over village administrative and economic affairs where it was popular, and the effectiveness of its boycotts at a local level, helped both the Dutch and the emerging Indonesian educated elite realize the potential for politically significant mass movements. For the *SI* this political significance would wax and wane through the first half of the century. The peoples of the archipelago still understood organization primarily in terms of loyalty to charismatic leaders, and rivalries in leadership often led to divisions. Problems maintaining control of local branches, and ideological and class divisions, also weakened groups like *SI*, while economic problems and Dutch suppression would drive people to them for aid. When true political parties finally emerged, these organizations sometimes aided, and sometimes frustrated, efforts to mobilize the population.

SI was Islamic in name, but initially represented no particular

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Islamic viewpoint. As it grew in popularity it became allied with labor unions, political groups, and religious groups, usually through leaders with dual memberships. Eventually it was divided several ways. The communists had sought to use *SI* to form a mass base. Their presence created a division between those with Communist and socialist ideals and other leaders more concerned with addressing specifically Islamic questions such as the spread of Christian missions and the need for Islamic schools. In 1921 the Islamic faction succeeded in forcing out members who were also part of the Indonesian Communist Party (*PKI, Parti Kommunis Indies*). However, this group was itself divided over whether to pursue nationalist or Pan-Islamic goals. Eventually the interests of its various constituencies became too diverse, and the party splintered. Its major contribution to the development of Islam was a long-running debate over the character of a national government with the religiously neutral nationalists.

SI, (renamed *Parti Syarikat Islam Indonesia* in 1929), and smaller groups, reached the height of legitimate political activity in the period just after W.W.I, when the Dutch government was seeking to foster some local participation in decision making. In the late 1920's and 1930's the government became more conservative and discouraged the growth of indigenous political activity. By this time, however, a new generation of leaders had arisen which was articulating a new idea; that the peoples of the Dutch East Indies should consider themselves a single nation, one which would eventually be freed from Dutch rule. In this environment the purpose of political organizations began to change. While many continued to focus on resolving specific local issues in the context of Dutch administration, others saw the possibility of a larger role in shaping events throughout the archipelago. These circumstances both created new Islamically oriented political parties, and forced the older large Muslim organizations to decide how they would participate in the ongoing political developments.

The *Kaum Muda* had not been content to press their views in the press, but realized that the strength of orthodox, and unreformed Islam lay in the widespread schools of the *ulama* and *kiyayi* which initiated successive generations into both the Sufi *tariqahs* and orthodox approach to interpretation of Islam. Moreover they believed that the backwardness of most Muslims was due to a lack

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of education appropriate to the changing circumstances brought on by colonial society. As a result the building of schools, and systems of schools, was an important part of the early modernist movement, especially in Indonesia. This was followed by initiating community projects like clinics, cooperatives, and orphanages. The most organization involved in such projects was the *Muhammadiyah*, which was founded in 1912 by Kiyayi Hajji Ahmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta. In 1920 the organization's school had become firmly established and a constitution was adopted. Other branches began to be built up elsewhere in Java and a year later throughout Indonesia. In many cases these were not new organizations, but were simply the assimilation of existing local schools or like-minded clubs. In the case of building orphanages, and forming scouting groups for young men, the *Muhammadiyah* consciously imitated successful Christian strategies. In the late 1920's the organization also began to send out substantial numbers of missionaries who worked toward the reform of Islam and winning new converts. By World War II the organization had 250,000 members, maintained 834 mosques, 31 public libraries, 1,774 schools, and had over 7,000 missionaries, both male and female.⁴⁰

The *Muhammadiyah's* work was complemented by a host of smaller organizations with similar strategies and views: *Persatuan Islam (Persis)*, *Persyarikatan Ulama*, *Al-Irsyad*, *Al-Jamiat Cair*, *Sumatra Thawalib*, and others. While they did not always agree on the type and extent of modernist Islamic thinking which should be adapted, they all saw a need for education and permanent Islamic organizations which could meet Muslim needs not touched on by traditional officials and in village pesantran. Like *SI* these organizations could hardly avoid becoming politicized, and this in turn led some of them to become bitter rivals. This was especially true of those which took on communist leanings or other teaching which seemed to conflict with strict Islamic law. Their success, and particularly that of the *Muhammadiyah*, also provoked the more conservative Muslim leadership to answer the challenge of the modernists. Traditionalists in Minangkabau formed the *Ittihadul Ulama Minangkabau* (Union of Minangkabau Ulama) and later the *Persatuan Tarbiyyah Islamiyyah* (Union of Islamic Education, or *Perti*) in 1930. These aimed at bringing unity and reform to traditionalist education such as was found in the schools formed by

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modernists. The most significant of these traditionalist organizations, the *Nahdatul Ulama (NU)*, was founded in 1926.

The issue which finally galvanized the traditionalist *ulama* in Java to form an organization was the overthrow of Arabia by Ibn Saud and his efforts to carry out a Wahhabi like purification of the Holy places. At an All Islam conference in Bandung in 1926 the traditionalists found themselves outvoted on the issue of asking Ibn Saud to respect the maintaining of tombs of saints, the saying of traditional ritual prayers, and allowing all the traditional *mazhab*. Moreover the delegates sent from the conference to Mekka were from the *Muhammadiyah* and *Syarikat Islam*, both of which were seen as part of the *Kaum Muda* groups. The traditionalists were unhappy at being excluded and left the conference to make plans to send a petition to King Saud themselves. Out of these efforts the *Nahdatul Ulama* was formed in 1927. It was for Muslims who adhered to one of the four traditional *mazhab*, and was to give support to traditional schools, mosques, surau, to care for orphans and the poor, and to advance the commercial enterprises of its members. The latter became one of its most important functions as most of its members, *ulama* and non-*ulama* alike, were traders of some type. Even the heads of the *peasantran* supported their schools with light industries or trade in agricultural products. Besides the use of periodicals and books to spread traditionalist teachings, its council also played an important role in issuing *fatwas* or statements on the application of Islamic law to the various circumstances which faced its members in the rapidly evolving social conditions of the pre-war era. This enhanced the credibility of traditionalist claims that orthodox Islam, bounded as it was by *taqlid*, was nonetheless relevant and capable of meeting the challenges of the modern world.

b. Religiously neutral parties

The Islamic organizations which developed in the early twentieth century, although they would claim to represent the 85% of the population which was Muslim, were in fact more limited in their appeal. The *NU*, *SI*, and *Muhammadiyah*, were organizations of religious teachers and small traders. Of the large peasant population many, perhaps a majority, were nominal Muslims devoted to *kebatinan* and its equivalent elsewhere. They were aligned with

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neither the modernists nor the strictly orthodox traditionalist *ulama*. Also not necessarily attracted to any Islamic organization, were the educated *priyayi* who filled the Dutch East Indies Civil Service. Members of this class had traveled most widely, were aware of events in the outside world, and began to see Indonesia, as the Dutch did, as a single territory with its own economic and social integrity. It is they who first organized true political parties, in the sense of groups designed not so much for socially beneficial activities as to marshal power behind a set of objectives, the ultimate goal being autonomy or independence for Indonesia. The *PKI* was one of the first such groups. It fell into an unplanned rebellion in 1925 and by 1926 had been crushed by the Dutch. In 1927 Sukarno founded what would become the *Parti Nasional Indonesia (PNI)*. This was suppressed two years later and Sukarno, along with other nationalists, was arrested.

In the remaining years before World War II the story of Indonesian politics was largely one of survival in the face of increasing Dutch oppression, and division within existing parties over their aims and how to pursue them. While an all-Indonesian nationalism became a recognized aim of many groups, both religious and religiously neutral, they remained divided over whether to cooperate with the Dutch, over economic issues (socialism vs. capitalism), and over the degree to which Islam, and which type of Islam, would play a role in political affairs. In the process Islamic groups, while not necessarily functioning as political parties, were forced increasingly to assert the interests of Muslims in political developments. This led to the controversy between Salim and Sukarno discussed above, and many which followed. However, by 1942 and the advent of a new colonialism by the Japanese, Islamic groups were no longer arguing against the idea of a nation-state on the European model. Rather they were asserting that Islam would have to play a significant role in the ordering of such a state.

c. The Japanese occupation

In 1942, when the Dutch surrendered Indonesia to the Japanese, it was a country whose indigenous political movements were still divided along lines of class, religion, and ideology. Moreover, its huge peasant population, having spent the depression years in a

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struggle merely to survive, was largely a-political. However, the last years of Dutch administration, which had suppressed or embarrassed even the cooperative political groups, succeeded in creating new unity around the idea that Dutch rule would never again be acceptable. Within a year of beginning their occupation the Japanese faced serious military reverses in the Pacific. They mobilized nationalist leaders to create mass peasant movements to support the war effort, and trained thousands of Indonesians as auxiliary soldiers. They thus succeeded in politicizing the peasant population and creating an army which would serve future attempts to resist Dutch rule. As part of their effort to mobilize local support they also attempted to organize the existing political parties. The *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdatul Ulama* were combined with other smaller Islamic parties into *Masyumi*, a pan-Islamic party. As the war approached its end, the Japanese encouraged these parties to form an independence movement which might slow the allied advance when it arrived. This strategy and others like it was forced to a premature conclusion by the sudden end of the war after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese surrender obliged the Japanese military in Indonesia to maintain control until they could hand over administration to allied forces. Before this could happen the nationalists acted and declared their independence in Java on August 17th, 1945. The Japanese military were understandably reluctant to suppress them on behalf of the allies, and in many cases handed over to them the weapons which would otherwise be surrendered to British or Australian forces. The end of World War II was the beginning of the Indonesian war for independence.

d. Islam and independence.

Just before the end of the war the Japanese had formed a committee of virtually all the prominent leaders, nationalist and Muslim, to draft a constitution for the proposed independent Indonesia. Sukarno proposed what he called *Pancasila* (five principals) as the philosophical basis for the new nation. These were belief in God, nationalism, humanitarianism, social justice, and democracy. Islamic leaders present on the committee objected to this because it made no special mention of the place of Islam. As a consequence a compromise upon *Pancasila*, called the *Piagam Jakarta* (Jakarta Charter) was accepted. It replaced the first of the

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sila with “belief in God, with the obligation for adherents of Islam to carry out Islamic law.” What this would mean in terms of a state obligation to support Islamic law was to be the subject of much debate. In the event, however, when the Republican government was established after declaring Indonesian Independence it dropped the Jakarta Charter in the constitution and replaced it with *Pancasila* because it was felt that the Outer Islands, where Christianity and other religions were strongest, would not accept the new constitution if it made a special place for Islam. To the Islamic parties this was a betrayal, and the Jakarta Charter, vague though it was, became for them the touchstone of Islamic legitimacy in any Indonesian constitution.

Like almost all revolutions, the war in Indonesia from 1945 to 1950 was as much concerned with establishing control *of* the new Indonesian government as it was with establishing control *for* the new government. While sympathy for the new government was widespread its leadership was effective mostly in Java, and the leaders themselves were mostly Javanese and Sumatrans. Moreover the extent of their actual constituencies was unclear after years of Dutch suppression and Japanese occupation. Nonetheless several factors of lasting significance did emerge in this period. Firstly, Christians and other non-Muslims played important roles in the struggle for independence. Secondly, the army proved to be an important and religiously neutral player in the political realm after a number of armed Islamic militias were either disbanded or absorbed. And finally Sukarno, who favored *Pancasila*, was the only leader who could control all the variant forces in Indonesian society. Leaders with stronger Islamic convictions were either excluded or preferred to focus on non-religious issues in the development of the new state.

e. Indonesian Islam after independence

Several themes emerge in looking over the years between 1950 and the present decade, a time of considerable social and political change. The first is that gauging the real support for any political ideology is difficult or impossible when there is no democratic framework for assessing its popular support. Throughout the Dutch period political leaders had tried various means, from armed rebellion, to strikes, to mass rallies, in order to demonstrate the popularity of their programs and under-gird their demands for

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change. Time and again what appeared to be popular movements collapsed with the loss of a single charismatic leader, or with minimal suppression. Secondly, disentangling the complex conflicts existing in Indonesian society was equally impossible, and made it difficult to judge what motivated the populous to action. In the course of the revolution violent confrontations broke out between groups whose differences included ethnic rivalries, religion, commercial competition, class, and family quarrels. When a party split, as occurred when the *NU* withdrew from *Masyumi* in 1952, it was a combination of ideological, religious, and class differences which were the cause, not simply a conflict between Islamic modernists and traditionalists. Regional differences were also large. In the Outer Islands *santri-abangan* conflicts were less relevant than those between Christians and Muslims, or between old nobility and young government servants and traders. In Aceh, where Dutch rule had barely taken hold, dissatisfaction with the failure to give Islam a prominent place in the new government led the *ulama* to form a break-away republic. It resisted integration into Indonesia for many years. Christians in Ambon, equally suspicious of the new Republic but for opposite reasons, also staged a shorter lived rebellion. Finally, and significantly for the role of Islam in politics, it was shown again and again that claiming to represent Islam was somewhat different from actually representing the desires and opinions of Muslims.

From 1950 onwards Indonesia was preparing for the elections which would give its government democratic legitimacy. The Islamic movements, which now understood that they would achieve their goals only through political power, continued building and displaying popular support for their organizations by adding new members and exercising as much control as possible in local administrative affairs. As elections approached in 1955 these parties shifted their focus to publicizing their platforms and trying to garner votes. When elections were held in September the results surprised many. The *Masyumi* coalition and the *NU* together received only 39% of the vote. These were the groups which had argued most strongly for the Jakarta Charter and a pre-eminant role for Islam in the new nation. The *PNI* received the largest single share of the vote, 25%, but bested *Masyumi* by only a narrow margin. The re-built communist party, *PKI*, received the fourth largest share, with 16% of the popular vote. This election was not a mandate for a more Islamic

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constitution or the Jakarta Charter. Neither did it give a mandate to secular approaches to government. The religiously neutral nationalists would be forced to work with either the communists or the Islamic parties if they were to govern.

The election underscored the divisions in Indonesian society. The chaotic efforts to govern in their aftermath, which were transformed but not ended by Sukarno's takeover of the political process with military support and the advent of Guided Democracy, demonstrated this all too clearly. Islamic parties could continue to claim to represent 85% of Indonesia's population, but they had been unable to deliver even 40% of the votes. In subsequent decades they faced not only the old issue of defining true Islam, but that of rallying power around an Islamic agenda. Since 1955 the actual strength and type of Islamic sentiment among Muslims has not been tested in an open election, and that the divisions among them, and between them and other segments of Indonesian society over the role of Islam in the state, appear to be as deep as ever.

2. Malaysia

Malayan politics in the pre-war period were dominated by different forces than those at work in Indonesia. The class of Muslim traders which played an important early role in Indonesia was found primarily in the Straits Settlements rather than Malaya itself, and in many cases was more oriented to Indonesia than Malaya. The British had used Indians and Chinese in the civil service, although it gave priority to training members of Malay royalty, so there was nothing strictly corresponding to the *priyayi* class in Indonesia. Islamic movements, reform or traditional, had not formed large organizations. Thus the only extensive *systems* of schools were either government Malay medium schools, independent Chinese schools, or the mostly missionary-run English medium schools. The primary organizations formed by Malay Muslims were the Malay associations, which were protective of the special position of the Malay aristocracy, Malay land rights, and the preferential treatment given to Malays in the civil service. The rise of these associations was a direct response to what Malays perceived as the most immediate threat to their social position, the large number of Chinese immigrants in the Federated Malay States. Islam, although the subject of debate among reformers, was protected by the treaties made with the sultans and had a place in the legal structure of the

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states. Although modernists challenged this system as inadequate, they did not have large popular support.

The Japanese occupation did little to politicize the majority of Malay Muslims, who were faced with the problem of pure survival for most of the war. It did strengthen the small group of Malay educated radicals whom the Japanese hoped would oppose the British when it became clear the tide of the war was turning. However, this group was neither given the training and arms made available to the Indonesians, nor was it allowed to build a mass base among the youth as was encouraged by the Japanese in Indonesia. There was no declaration of independence for Malaya at the war's end. What finally fixed the attention of the Malay community on political developments, and united it at the same time, was the 1946 British proposal for a Malayan Union. In it the sultans would surrender their remaining political powers, a central government and administration would be formed for all the Malayan states, and virtually all residents of Malaya would be given citizenship rights. Opposition to the plan, which was in the midst of being carried out before it was officially announced, was rapid and widespread. A congress of Malay associations met to condemn the plan and form a national organization (*Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu Bersatu*, United Malays National Organization, *UMNO*) to carry on their political struggle. A large number of former British administrators also attacked the plan publicly in London, and by 1948 the colonial government had, in consultation with the sultans and *UMNO*, formulated an alternative plan for a Malayan Federation. The protection of the status of Islam played some role in these negotiations, and within *UMNO* another association, *Party Islam Sa-Melayu (PAS)*, pressed a traditionalist Islamic agenda. But initially religion was an appendix to the question of preserving the position of the sultans and maintaining the special privileges of the Malays.

While the Malayan Federation plan satisfied the majority of Malays it was greeted with disappointment by many Chinese, because it excluded them from citizenship. This, in combination with British suppression of the burgeoning trade union movement led the Malayan Communist Party to abandon legal politics for a campaign of terror against the large British estates, beginning the "Emergency" period of communist insurgency. Besides disrupting the economy the Emergency had an adverse effect on already

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strained relations between the Malays and Chinese, the latter now being seen as trouble-makers and potential revolutionaries. At the same time many Chinese, who were displaced into “New Villages” for the duration of the Emergency and long after, felt that their loyalty was now being questioned. After having already been treated unfairly in the Malayan Federation scheme, this seemed to them a poor repayment for their loyalty to the British and their suffering during the war. With such communal tensions still simmering the British felt that they could not immediately move toward fulfilling their pledge to grant Malaya independence.

By 1952 moves toward independence, including local elections, had become an important part of the propaganda war against the communists. In the first local elections the Malayan Chinese Association (*MCA*), formed in 1949 as a response to the formation of *UMNO*, joined with *UMNO* to cooperate in the state of Selangor. In 1954 the Malayan Indian Congress (*MIC*) was joined to the alliance of *UMNO* and the *MCA*. In the 1955 federal elections this Alliance party won a huge victory. This apparent unity among ethnic political parties was built on the commonalties their leaders had as an English educated elite with a realistic understanding of what would be necessary to achieve independence. It paved the way for a rapid move toward granting independence by the British. In the same year the Reid Commission developed, in consultation with Alliance leaders, a constitution for the new nation.

In 1957 Malaya became an independent nation. Almost immediately Malaya's independence led to the question of the long-term status of the other British territories. Neither Singapore nor Northern Borneo was part of the initial federation. In the case of Northern Borneo the need for some decision was quickened by Indonesian and Philippine claims on the territories. In 1963 the Federation of Malaysia, which included Singapore and the Borneo territories, was formed. Sabah and Sarawak received certain legal caveats which, among other things, allowed them to restrict immigration, gave the special status reserved for Malays in Malaya to the non-Muslim, non-Malay indigenous peoples of the territories, and promised funds for economic development. There would be long-standing disputes about how fully the promises made to the Northern Borneo states were kept. In 1966 the independent minded Chief minister of Sarawak was replaced by a man believed to be

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more amenable to the Federal Government. The process was repeated in 1967 when the Christian Chief Minister of Sabah was replaced with a Muslim. These efforts were sufficient to cool separatist movements temporarily, but never overcame the fundamental problem of the wide ethnic and religious differences between the Borneo states and Peninsular Malaysia; issues which are still politically explosive. In Singapore these differences were too overt and uncontrolled to be managed. The 1964 general elections revealed the deep division between the Alliance and the People's Action Party of Singapore, a division which festered in the months following the election. Political leaders agreed that Singapore should withdraw from the Federation rather than risk becoming the center of communal violence. Singapore became independent in 1965.

The development of Islam was affected by a number of factors arising out of the formation of the new state. In the new constitution rules for citizenship were modified from those in the Malayan Federation period, and this increased the Chinese electorate substantially. To safeguard Malay interests provisions were thus made so that both the role of the sultans, and the place of Islam as the state religion, were constitutionally guaranteed. However, as had been the case in the colonial era, the substantive administration of Islamic law lay with the states under the oversight of the sultans. This left open the question of what role the federal government would play in the development of Islam and in particular the implementation of the *Shari'ah*. Under these circumstances conflicts between modernists, other reformers, and traditionalists could easily become conflicts between federal and state governments, or between elected state officials and those dependent upon the sultans for their appointments.

A second factor affecting the development of Islam was its role as a symbol of Malay unity, a role ratified by the constitution which defined a Malay as a Muslim. The use of Islam as a political tool by the Malay parties had contradictory effects. Both Malay political parties needed to appeal to the widest range of Muslims. This meant that both would attempt to prove their Islamic credentials by developing Islam. The idea of "Islamization," if full of contradictory meanings, was a political necessity for *UMNO* and *PAS*. At the same time each needed to define itself in opposition to the other,

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particularly for its core constituency. This would throw the weight of partisan politics behind particular Islamic movements, and would result in attempts to influence the popular concept of Islam so that it conformed with that which was politically expedient for one party or the other. The political development of Islam would be largely defined by the need to control the image of Islam for the political purpose of rallying Malay voters, and to justify policies which the government wished to pursue.

Developments in Islam were not entirely based on cynical political maneuvering, however. Malay religious leaders, intellectuals and artists were grappling with the formation of a national identity in a society far removed from the rural, agriculturist traditions of most Malays and their complement in the court traditions of the sultans. The development of Malay as the national language (as opposed to the “colonial” language English) was one means of doing this. Another, and equally important, was the assertion of Islam as central to being a Malay. So as politicians struggled to define and support Islam as a political tool, intellectuals and other Muslims took up the struggle to understand “true” Islam and how it was relevant to shaping the identity of Muslims caught up in the reality of a modern, religiously heterogeneous, and rapidly industrializing society. This effort also had communal overtones as Malay intellectuals tried to varying degrees to promote Islam as an essential part of a “national culture.” At stake was not only academic status, but control of and benefit from a wide range of government programs (and funds) designed to promote the “national culture,” as well as the development of the curriculum in the national school system.

A final factor affecting the development of Islam, a factor likewise present in Indonesia, was the establishment of closer ties with Middle Eastern governments and international Islamic movements. These were based on Malaysia’s role as a petroleum exporter sharing common economic interests with Middle Eastern states, the influence of Islamic movements among students in European and American universities which Malays attended in large numbers after the late 1960’s, the conflicts with the state of Israel in which Muslims world-wide felt an interest, and the Iranian revolution which likewise attracted the attention of Muslims worldwide.⁴¹ All of these factors seemed to strengthen Islam among

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the Malays and within Malaysia. Yet their effects on Malay society and the development of Malaysian (and Indonesian) society were complex and sometimes contradictory. Islamic ideals of universal equality conflicted with assertions of ethnic privilege and the maintenance of Malay traditions of royalty and class division. Traditional Islamic prohibitions on women working outside the home, and on certain types of financial transactions, conflicted with the real needs of a modern industrial economy. Because of these tensions, and others, the path by which Islam has developed in Malaysia has been far from straightforward, and continues to take surprising turns.

The role of Christianity and Christians in the formation of independent Malaya during the years before and after Independence was less than Christian leaders had hoped. Malay issues had come to dominate the political agenda. Moreover Christians, like the non-Malays in general, found it difficult to articulate their own hopes for an independent Malaya in a way which would not offend Malay aspirations and contribute to communal misunderstanding. Prominent Christian leaders pursued paths of quiet compromise which would insure some protection for non-Muslim religious interests, but would hardly give them a public image as ardent nationalists. In colonial Malaya, and in the Straits Settlements and Northern Borneo, Christians were still a small minority of the overall population, less than 5%. Yet they had a substantial social presence because of their large systems of English medium schools, which embraced over half of the students in the English medium in Malaya, including 80% of the girls in English medium schools in 1947. The influence of Christian schools was even greater in Borneo. This role for mission schools in English medium education, and particularly secondary education, increased dramatically in the post war years as the colonial government encouraged them to expand nearly six-fold by 1955. As long as the political and social leaders of Malaya were English educated (and virtually all were in this early period) the prominence of the Christian contribution to the nation would be assured.

However, the contribution of English language secondary schools essentially benefited the urban middle classes, since the vast majority of Malaysian pupils, whether Chinese, India, or Malay, attended vernacular schools in rural areas and had few opportunities

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to advance to secondary school when almost all secondary schools were English medium. For this reason the Malay nationalists had insisted that Malay be the national language of the Federation. With the *MCA* and *MIC* they succeeded in giving a constitutional mandate to the vernacular languages, particularly Malay, as the primary media for education. This was accompanied in the 1960's by laws which eventually brought all the schools directly under the control of the Federal Education Ministry. The overt Christian contribution to Malaysian society was diminishing. This was felt even more acutely in the 1970's and 1980's when government policies to promote the economic stature of the *bumiputra* communities seemed to reduce even further the scope for social contributions by Christianity. The steady increase in Malay political and economic power was synonymous with the increasing importance of Islam in Malaysia. At the same time Christianity did grow in the 1970's and 1980's, particularly among urban Chinese. While the role of Christianity in Malaysia has changed dramatically, the community itself is stronger numerically and financially than it has ever been and faces the challenge of whether and how to use this strength for national goals in a country which is increasingly Islamic.

3. Singapore

After its brief membership with the Malayan Federation, Singapore found itself an independent nation with a unique legacy from its colonial past. Although its population was dominantly Chinese the pro-Malay policies of British Malaya left Singapore with a large body of Malay soldiers, policemen, and civil servants. It also remained heavily dependent on Indonesia and Malaysia, from which it obtained its water and food supplies, and which controlled the sea lanes leading to its harbor. Conscious of its vulnerability, national unity became a first priority for Singapore. A vague Deism combined with humanist ethicism had long been the underlying religious orientation of many in Singapore's British educated elite. By virtue of almost 150 years of work in education by Catholic, Methodist, and Anglican missionaries, Christians formed a second substantial part of the social elite, particularly in the upper reaches of the civil service and in educational institutions generally. Among both groups there already existed a long-standing tradition of sensitivity to religious and ethnic traditions, particularly Islam. The

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first group of leaders understood the need to appeal to the diversity of Chinese religionists as a matter of political pragmatism, while the second had built their schools on the goodwill of communities which did not feel threatened by sending their children to Christian teachers. As Singapore struggled to find a national identity, much effort was expended in trying to articulate these values of sensitivity and trustworthiness in such a way as to build up a common Singaporean ethic which would be acceptable to members of all religions and would have the kind of mass appeal found in popular religion. At the same time religious extremes which threatened national unity were not tolerated.

Islam although the religion of only 15% of Singapore's population, received privileged treatment in this environment. This was partially as a continuation of past policy and partially because of the sensitivities of Malaysia. Of all Singapore's communities the Malays had most demonstrated a tendency to react violently to matters which appeared to threaten their religion. In 1953 the Natra case, where a Dutch girl raised by a Muslim family was forced to return to her Christian parents, resulted in three days of rioting in Singapore. In 1964 Malays rioted in the tense atmosphere after the 1963 elections on the occasion of the Prophet's Birthday.⁴² Moreover, the Malay community in particular posed some distinctive challenges to the development of Singapore. At independence it was among the poorest and most poorly educated of all Singapore's communities. The long separation of Singapore from the Malay political world denied it the kind of court-based leadership found on the Peninsula. The upper levels of its civil service had never been reserved for Malays as was the case in Malaya. Yet, Malay nationalism had weakened the links between Malays and the Jawi Peranakan and Arab leadership that existed in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Singapore government response to these problems was to provide an institutional base for strengthening leadership in the Muslim community. A government funded Islamic Religious Council was formed to advise the government on Muslim affairs. Eventually it would take charge of building mosques, managing *waqf* land, and coordinating the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. A special *Shari'ah* court was created to oversee marriage, divorce, and other aspects of family law among Muslims. At the same time government housing policies weakened

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social ties based on proximity more quickly than they could be replaced by other links more appropriate to Singapore's urban culture.⁴³ The overall result of these, and other changes since World War II, was to diminish Singapore's importance as an Islamic center for Southeast Asia or even its own Muslim population.

4. *The Philippines*

For most of the last four centuries the Muslims of the Southern Philippines were involved in a struggle to maintain their independence against colonial forces. As a consequence of these unsettled conditions, and because of their geographical isolation, many of the forces of Islamic development and reform bypassed them until the twentieth century. While they were very conscious of their identity as Muslims their actual knowledge of the religion remained limited, and ancient pre-Islamic practices were thoroughly integrated into their religious life.⁴⁴ While religion played a role in their struggle against Christian Spain, and later the U.S., it was equally centered on preserving ancient social structures, rights to land, and ways of life. This changed in the fifty-nine years between the advent of a civilian administration of the Southern Philippines and the imposition of martial law by Marcos in 1972. In that period the struggle of the Muslims has shifted from a struggle to maintain the Magindanao and Sulu sultanates to a struggle for ethnic and religious identity and self-determination in the face of domination by the Christian population of the Philippines. In the course of this shift the forces of Islamic reform were introduced.

From 1913 to 1935, when the Philippines moved to a Commonwealth status in relation to the United States, administration of Sulu and Mindanao shifted gradually to Filipino officials. This was unwelcome to the Muslims, who were convinced that the Filipino rule was motivated by a hatred of their religion inculcated by the influence of Spanish Catholicism and a desire to seize their relatively under-populated lands. The U.S. would not entertain, however, plans to keep the Muslim lands under either a U.S. or independent national government. Thus in 1935 when the Commonwealth was instituted, the Muslims found themselves part of a new nation with whose majority population they had never had ethnic, economic, religious, or political ties until the early twentieth century. And unfortunately their fears of Filipino motives seemed to

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be well grounded. A concern for national integration led the Commonwealth government to remove those aspects of American policy which had preserved indigenous social structures (such as the semi-official recognition of traditional leaders). And the great need for land to relieve the overpopulation of Luzon and the Visayas led the Commonwealth government into a policy of “colonization and economic development” of lands traditionally claimed by the Muslims.⁴⁵ The consequences of these efforts had long term effects. Christians and Muslims came into much closer proximity to each other, with all the potential that had for both breaking down or reinforcing existing prejudices. The economy of the Southern Philippines was also tied more closely to that of the Philippines as a whole. Finally, the percentage of Muslims in the population of many places was reduced by the influx of Filipino settlers, and in some areas they became a minority. This weakened the position of the Muslims in a democratic system of government, and of diminished their hopes to create a Muslim homeland by democratic means.

These developments were interrupted by the Japanese occupation and the four years of war which followed. Like many peoples who did not yet identify strongly with the colonial enemies of imperial Japan, the indigenous Muslims in the Philippines had mixed reactions to Japanese occupation. Some traditional leaders found it safest to cooperate. Among the young men many joined the Filipino resistance to the Japanese and as the war progressed carried on a guerrilla war with the use of American arms. At the war's end this cooperation in defending the Philippines led to Muslims being appointed to important political posts, and in the 1946 elections Muslims won a number of seats in the House of Representatives. In the same period many of the Muslim soldiers received their back pay and war damages reparations. This led to a large increase in monetary wealth among the Muslims, so much so that many were able to make their pilgrimage to Mecca. However, the newfound ability to participate in the cash economy of the Philippines also brought about the realization of how truly poor they were in comparison to their Filipino neighbors. Finally, the end of the war left among the Muslims large amounts of arms and ammunition which they gave up reluctantly, if at all. As Peter Gowing says “Moros in the postwar period had the wherewithal to offer

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something more than mild protest against the governmental policies, programs, and officials they disliked.”⁴⁶

The return of Muslims from the *hajj*, and the increasing encounter of the Muslims with Christians, had the effect of changing Muslims’ perceptions of their own religious identity. The need to define themselves as *Muslims* in contrast to their Christian neighbors came at a time when they were becoming more conscious of the larger and more universal Islamic tradition. In a sense the post-World War II period brought to the Muslims of the southern Philippines the kind of religious consciousness which had come a century earlier, or more, to the other Muslim parts of the archipelago. There was an increase in *madrassa* where Arabic, Quran reading, and Islamic law were taught. As had happened elsewhere at an earlier stage, these were often built as alternatives to government sponsored schools which aimed at creating a Filipino rather than Muslim identity. There was also an increase in new Islamic organizations whose membership cut across the ethnic divisions in the Muslim community. Contacts with nationalist movements throughout the Islamic world made Muslims in the Philippines more conscious of Islam not only as the basis for personal and ethnic identity, but as the basis of a national identity as well. By the late 1960’s the term *Bangsa Moro* or Moro Nation, was increasingly used by Muslims to distinguish themselves from the nation of the Filipinos.

A wide variety of forces finally resulted in the creation of the Moro National Liberation Front (*MNLF*) and the onset of war against the Philippines government in Mindinao and Sulu. Many of these, such as increasing poverty, loss of land tenure to wealthy landlords, official corruption, and brutality and inefficiency in law enforcement by the Philippines army, affected large parts of the population of the Philippines, and resulted in violence in many regions. However, the situation in the southern Philippines was more acute because economic development had been slower, the Moros had lost more land, and the army had been gradually overshadowing civilian administration for a longer period. The Federal government had its own reasons for insecurity with regard to the Muslim population. In 1962 the Philippines President Macapagal had asserted a claim on Sabah at the time when it was being integrated

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into the Federation of Malaysia, straining relations between the countries. When a Sulu prince, Dato Mustapha, became Chief Minister of Sabah in 1967 the divided loyalties of the Muslims in the Philippines were, at least in the minds of some, highlighted. The aggressive stance of Indonesia during this period also heightened anxiety in Manila about the loyalty of its Muslim citizens. In the atmosphere of communal tension and a large unruly military presence several specific incidents sparked violence in Mindinao and Sulu.

The imposition of martial law by Marcos in 1972 completed the chain of factors which convinced a majority of Muslims that outright rebellion and the establishment of an independent Muslim state was necessary. Under Marcos, government was entirely in the hands of Christians: the cronies of Marcos and their minions in the military. Political options were non-existent. Government efforts to collect all civilian-held guns forced armed Moros to choose immediate rebellion or forfeit the possibility of future armed action. Once war broke out between the *MNLF* and the Philippines army, the Islamic identity of the Moros became subjected to new influences. In the 1960's the Philippines government had accepted gifts and grants from the oil states of the Middle East which allowed the establishment of Islamic institutions and scholarships for a small number of Muslim students. The outbreak of armed conflict brought a new Muslim influence to the region — that of international arms merchants and terrorist groups. It also led to the migration of many Muslims out of the region, and particularly into Manila, where making international contacts was easier. The Moros were being drawn not only into the great tradition of universal Islam; they were being drawn into the best and worst of its complex modern manifestations.

5. The mainland Southeast Asian states

a. The Patani Malays of southern Thailand

The intrusion of Thai bureaucracy on the region of Patani and the way of life of the Malay Muslims there, began in earnest in 1909 with the signing of the Anglo-Siam accord. It led to increasing dissatisfaction, particularly among the former nobility and the *ulama*. A mass movement to resist Thai taxation began in 1922. In

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1932 the Thai monarch was forced to relinquish his absolute power and a democratic government was to be formed. For the Malays of Patani, however, the primary result was being even more subjected to the influence of the Thai-Buddhist nationalist impulse which sought to bring about the social and cultural integration of the entire country. When the regime of Phibul Songkhram came into power in 1938, these efforts were stepped up, and Malays were encouraged to accept Thai names. Islamic laws of marriage and inheritance were replaced by civil law, and other aspects of Malay culture were either discriminated against or banned. These rules were not only enforced, but enlarged upon by local Thai officials who introduced the building of new Buddhist temples and in some cases forced Muslim school children to pay homage to statues of the Buddha. This policy was officially sanctioned by the Thai governor of Patani who claimed that as the religion of the majority, Buddhism, should be the state religion of Thailand, and that all citizens must therefore pay homage to the Buddha as an important symbol of Thai national identity. Thai nationalism had become Thai chauvinism, but it is noteworthy that it was no different from the chauvinism of Muslim nationalists in Indonesia, and later Malaysia, who insisted that the religion of the majority should become the respected symbol of national integration.

All that prevented immediate expressions of unrest in Southern Thailand was the advent of World War II. Thailand aligned itself with the Axis powers, thereby avoiding invasion. In return it was given control of the Northern Malaya provinces it had once dominated. This and the hardships caused by the war brought a temporary lull in the implementation of plans for national integration. However, by 1944 a new series of decrees was issued, including one requiring that citizens of Thailand “value Buddhism higher than life.”⁴⁷ Shortly thereafter the last vestiges of traditional Islamic religious courts were abolished. The only Muslim elected official left Bangkok in protest, and moved into Malaya to organize a resistance movement. Other Muslim leaders left for Saudi Arabia where they could formulate their own plans free from the watchfulness of Thai authorities.

For the majority of Muslims the end of the war in 1945 brought about both hopes for relief from Thai policies, and a new surge of

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nationalist sentiment. The Thai government renounced its claims on the former British territories in Malaya, and revoked most of the chauvinist edicts which so offended the Muslims. In the 1946 constitution religious and cultural freedom was guaranteed, a Central Islamic Council was set up, and a commission was formed to study Malay-Muslim problems. These were not, however, satisfactory to the Muslims who saw the way in which the Malays of British Malaya had been able to flex their political muscles in opposition to the Malayan Union scheme. Moreover, many had entertained hopes that Britain would punish Thailand for its complicity with the Japanese by alienating the Southern provinces from its control and attaching them to Malaya. When in 1947 the Phibun administration came back into power through a military coup, and the British failed to oppose it, agitation against the Thai regime began afresh. The Thais suspected that this was centered around Haji Sulong, leader of the Central Islamic Council, and he and his associates were arrested. Far from ending the agitation the arrests enflamed it, and from 1948 to 1950 there were a series of violent incidents even though the area was for a time under martial law. As a result the Muslims formed their first political party, the *Gabongan Melayu Parti Raya (GAMPAR)*. In conjunction with other Malay political organizations in Malaya it eventually attracted international attention to the situation in the region, resulting in further reforms by the Thai government. None of these, however, was sufficient to quell Muslim discontent, particularly as it remained Thai policy to use public schools to advance national integration on Thai-Buddhist lines, and to hire for the civil service only those who with academic qualifications which excluded virtually all Malays. The disappearance of Haji Sulong, who served three years in prison for supposed anti-government activities, created further suspicions among the Malays. The presence of Malayan Communist Party fighters, who had been driven from Malaya in the early 1950's, and Thai Communist Party fighters, naturally led to increased militarization of the region and suspicions within the military that these groups were being harbored by the Muslims. Finally, in the 1960's Thailand implemented a program of settling people from heavily populated areas on supposedly unused land in lightly populated areas. Such economic development as the region enjoyed

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had already bypassed the Malays in favor of Chinese and Thai entrepreneurs. The Malay Muslims saw the entire structure of Thai policy as a territorial invasion which would ultimately marginalize them entirely.

In such a situation separatist movements easily found local support. And they had leadership from among the Patani nobles and *ulama* who went abroad after the war and cultivated wider Islamic contacts. The most important of these organizations are the National Liberation Front of the Patani Republic (*BNPP*), and its armed division, the National Liberation Army of the Patani People (*TNPRP*), the National Revolution Front (*BRN*), and the Patani United Liberation Organization (*PULO*). The oldest of these, the *BNPP*, was formed in 1949 and looked to a restoration of Patani sultanates in an autonomous arrangement with Thailand. The *BRN* was formed in the 1960's and has had limited support, confined mostly to urban youth with socialist leanings. The last was formed in 1968 and is the largest. It is reported to have substantial overseas support and a training center in the Middle East.⁴⁸ All of these organizations, and a fourth called the *Sabil-illah* (Path of God) were given new impetus in November and December of 1975 when it was reported that the Thai military had murdered five Muslim youths. This provided an opportunity for a Thai educated Muslim student movement, the South Thailand Muslim Students Group, to act as intermediaries with the Thai government. They were unsuccessful and in December held demonstrations which broke up in violence after twelve demonstrators were killed by a hand-grenade. Another incident in January of 1976 resulted in violence and further military intervention until the Thai government met some demands of the protesters. When, in October of 1976, the democratic government was overthrown in yet another coup many students, already fearful of arrest, abandoned their efforts for peaceful reform and took to the jungles to join the separatist groups.⁴⁹

As in the Philippines, the effort to integrate a distinctive ethnic and religious group with a long tradition of national sovereignty into a nation with a very different history and ethos has proved to be difficult. The flexible structural relationship of the Kingdom of Siam to Patani as suzerain to vassal had allowed for a degree of local autonomy not possible in a modern state. And when successive Thai

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governments did seek ways to meet the particular desires of Muslims, they were thwarted by interruptions in the democratic process by the military, patterns of economic development, and the pressure to relieve other national problems such as regional excesses in population. Passing years served only to inexorably tie the Muslim population with the Thai state culturally, economically, and administratively without relieving anxiety that this would eventually make it impossible to keep their identity and remain faithful to their religion.

b. The Cham of Cambodia and Vietnam

While the Muslims of the Mindanao/Sulu region and Patani enjoyed a degree of autonomy and social integrity well into the twentieth century, the Cham of Vietnam and Cambodia had been reduced, by 1900, to living as one of many ethnic minority groups in the regions of Indochina under French control. They had lost their territorial integrity through the migrations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and between Vietnamese and later French conquests lost their political identity as well. They did not lose their ethnic identity or distinctive religious practices, but were, however, cut off from the reform and nationalist movements which did so much to shape other Muslim communities in the region. After World War II, they were caught up in the war between the Vietminh and French (and later Americans) over independence for Vietnam. The French plan for postwar Southeast Asia called for a Union of Countries in French Indochina which would include partitioning Vietnam. While the Vietminh were the largest independence movement they were linked with similar movements in Laos and Cambodia, so that the entire region was affected by the war. In its later stages, U.S. bombing raids seeking to cut off Vietminh supply routes devastated portions of both Laos and Cambodia. These events notwithstanding, the Cham community still had, in the early 1970's, a number of *ulama* who had been educated abroad, Sufi *sheiks* and their followers, and 300 Islamic schools. Although not well documented there also existed militant, separatist groups.

In the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from the region the Cambodian government under Prince Sihanouk fell to the Khmer

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Rouge. The Pol Pot regime pursued the goal of national integration based on a dominant ethnic and cultural group. This was common to nationalist movements in the region, but was pursued by Pol Pot with an unheard-of brutality. Rather than subverting or transforming minority cultures he simply pursued genocide. The Cham, linguistically, religiously, and culturally distinct were among the most brutalized populations. Available estimates suggest that the Khmer Rouge killed 70% of the Cham population between 1975 and 1979.⁵⁰ The mass murders were ended by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the withdrawal of Pol Pot to the Thai border. In Vietnam the smaller Cham population suffered less at the end of the Vietnam war, and is more dispersed in the urban areas. With the end of the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia and a return to more open ties with other Southeast Asian countries, the Cham have been in more regular contact with Muslims in the region. A number of Cham refugees have been settled in Malaysia. However, the long term prospects for the Cham are as tenuous as the political situations in which they live.

E. Summary

The twentieth century has seen Islam in Southeast Asia drawn from being part of international movements of reform within Islam to being part of a new international political order in which Muslim commitments to their faith must be expressed not only in their family and vocation, but as citizens of states. The desire to be a good Muslim is now irrevocably linked to decisions about how to vote, which organizations (national and international) to support financially, and which laws and policies should be upheld in the realm of public debate. This politicizing of religious life is not just a product of the much vaunted integrity of religious and political concerns in Islam. It comes from the modern reality, which affects members of all religions, that a citizen of a modern state has the whole of his or her life linked to the ordering of that state. The comprehensiveness with which government invaded the lives of Southeast Asians in the colonial era is more than continued by the independent governments under which they live today. Leaving any part of the population to order itself by communal or traditional law creates precisely the independent centers of power which modern

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states find a threat to their integrity. In this environment, religious reform, if it is not purely private and personal, is inevitably political. Even a choice of clothing can become a politically potent symbol and therefore of concern to the state whose legitimacy comes from the political realm. For Muslims and non-Muslims alike the last half of the twentieth century has been one in which public religion is inexorably linked with the underlying premise of the existing states, and the even more radical question of whether the modern state has any supramundane legitimacy at all.

F. Questions for Discussion

1. Islamic worship involves a highly structured routine of prayers in Arabic with accompanying postures. Much of the continuing movement of Islamic reform centers on restoring to normal practice the regular performance of these prayers. From the explosive growth in attendance at the mosques in the region it appears that the majority of Muslims find deep meaning in these ritual devotions. In what ways do you imagine that the restoration of regular ritual worship has strengthened the spirituality and identity of Southeast Asian Muslims?
2. Both Sufi mystics and the practitioners of other meditative forms of worship try to go beyond this formal worship to seek a deeper sense of the presence of God and even unity with God. Their methods include repetitive chanting of verses of the Quran or the word Allah, and physical movement. How in your own religious practice do you seek to be more fully aware of the presence of God, both as an individual and in a group?
3. The reform of Islam in Southeast Asia has been closely linked with efforts to incorporate Islam into the legal and administrative structures of the state. Non-Muslim governments have wished to incorporate the values of other religions, such as Buddhism (in Thailand) and Christianity (in the Philippines) into the law of their countries. What role should religion play as a basis for law in a country with many different religious groups?

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G. Suggestions for Further Study

Visit a local Muslim religious leader and find out what ways local laws affect the practice of Islam in your community. Do Muslims find such laws helpful, or do they create problems? What laws affect the Christian community in your community? Are they helpful, or a hindrance?

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V. ISLAM TODAY, WINDS OF CHANGE IN THE LANDS BELOW THE WIND

It is a dangerous thing to try and identify the end of an era during the midst of the dynamism of history. Mainland Southeast Asia remains politically unsettled. Yet it appears that the long end of the era, in which the concerns of Southeast Asia were centered on establishing national identities, came with the end of the Pol Pot regime and the withdrawal of Vietnamese occupation troops to allow for the formation of a new Cambodian government. The establishing of boundaries, whether they be geographical, cultural, or religious, appears to be giving way to establishing trade ties which are almost universally acclaimed to be the secret of future prosperity in the region. The desire of Southeast Asian countries to foster closer ties and mutually benefit from the economic growth in the region has had a number of effects on the development of Islam, and on the relationships of Muslims with other religious groups. Muslim minorities find that the opening of the region makes contact with other Muslims easier. It has also meant that their particular nationalist aspirations find less support in Indonesia and Malaysia because of the strong desire to maintain the political status quo in the region for the sake of economic ties. For the same reasons Southeast Asian governments are careful in the way they treat Islam, having an eye to the effects it will have on relations both within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and in the larger world.

Within ASEAN this has largely meant that each country has a “mind your own business” attitude with regard to the treatment of religious and ethnic minorities. The days when Malaysian newspapers would express outrage over events in Patani are long

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over, and the Thai government, like Indonesia and Singapore, willingly cooperated with Malaysia in the suppression of the Al-Arqam religious movement. If, however, ASEAN members have increasingly recognized and refused to compromise members' sovereignty for the sake of religious or ethnic solidarity, the same cannot be said of the wider Islamic community. Southeast Asian Muslims have long since graduated from ties consisting of trade routes and Sufi *silsilah* to active membership in international Islamic organizations and their causes, the development of international networks of Islamic schools, training centers, and missionary organizations, and complex trade and financing arrangements with other Islamic countries. The nature of these ties is complex. They are fostered at many different levels ranging from student groups in the West where tens of thousands of Southeast Asian Muslims are educated, to the clandestine arms trade routes which pass through the region. What they have in common is that they bring to Southeast Asia new ideas about the meaning of Islam, and sources of both guidance and support for Islamic movements.

Perhaps as important as these external links has been an internal dynamism which is slowly bringing Southeast Asia from the periphery to the center of the Islamic world. Indonesia and Malaysia have large dynamic Islamic movements whose participants have both traditional and modern academic credentials. Their high literacy rates (among the highest in the Islamic world), political stability, and economic growth have led their leaders to suggest that they may be models for other more apparently Islamic countries to follow. Both have also emerged from colonialism to advocate forms of Islamization, which thus far appear to be politically credible and attenuated to the maintenance of stability and growth. The same can hardly be said for any other country in the Islamic world.

With both a high internal dynamism and complex links to the wider Islamic world, Islam in Southeast Asia has the potential to develop in many different ways. What this means for the future can only be guessed, but in the paragraphs below are sketched at least some of the main factors at work in the continuing evolution of Islam in Southeast Asia, and what they may mean for Christians and other non-Muslims.

A. Islam in Politics

1. Kampuchea and Vietnam

Of all the Muslim groups in Southeast Asia the Cham live in the most precarious position. They were strong supporters of the Democratic Kampuchean Regime, which with the aid of Vietnam put an end to the Khmer Rouge rule. They have benefitted from the restoration of Buddhism and Islam as legitimate religions in Cambodia. Those in Vietnam also benefit from the opening of Vietnam to the outside world and trade relations with it. However, they can expect little support from their Muslim neighbors in Indonesia and Malaysia should they again face persecution under the atheist regime in Vietnam, or under either a revived Khmer Rouge regime or Buddhist oriented Cambodian state. When, in 1979, the United Nations faced the issue of whether the Khmer Rouge or the PRK represented the Kampuchean people the governments of ASEAN preferred to support Khmer Rouge genocide rather than risk a change in the status quo. At the time of this writing the Khmer Rouge are still being protected by Thailand, and armed by the international community. While recent years have brought limited aid for building schools to the Cham people, their future holds only insecurity so long as the international community, including most Muslim nations, refuses to put an end to the activities of Pol Pot.

2. Thailand

Since the violence of 1975 and 1976, the Thai government has taken several steps to accommodate its Muslim citizens, including the reintroduction of Islamic institutions for managing family law and encouraging the pilgrimage to Mecca. Through the generosity of Middle Eastern governments more schools and mosques have been built in the Patani region, and of symbolic importance, in Bangkok. At the same time support for the separatists has waned, and the *PULO* office in Jeddah has been closed by the Saudi government. The official end to the armed struggle of the Malaysian Communist Party, which had taken refuge in Thailand, as well as ambitious plans for regional economic development involving Patani, the northern states of Malaysia, and Aceh, have improved relationships between Malaysia and Thailand. As a consequence, support within Malaysia for the Muslim separatists in Thailand has steadily

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diminished. The use of kidnapping and banditry by the more radical groups is considered intolerable by both governments. Complicating any further development of Muslim plans for autonomy is the presence of a large Thai population in Patani since the 1960's, a population unlikely to tolerate an Islamically oriented administration. Developments in Malaysia, where Muslims are benefitting from both rapid economic growth and a political administration committed to Islamization, continue to underscore the realization by the Muslims of Patani that they are not fully sharing in regional economic development, and do not enjoy the closer integration of state and Islamic law found just to the south. At the same time their ability to participate in local and national decision making has been enhanced by Thailand's maintenance of democratic governments for several years and the opening of the Southern Thailand administration to Malay speaking bureaucrats.

3. *The Philippines*

As a source of separatist activity the Muslims of the southern Philippines have proved far more intractable than those elsewhere in the archipelago. Relations with the Philippines government could only deteriorate during the Marcos regime, which not only saw renegade armed forces persecution of civilian populations, but also the arming of the Christian oligarchies in the South. After the fall of Marcos, the Aquino administration took steps to open negotiations with the *MNLF*, and ultimately granted autonomy to four provinces in Mindanao which voted in its favor in a plebiscite in 1989. This still left nine provinces which have substantial Muslim minorities and Muslim separatist activities under direct Federal administration. In recent years (1994-95) negotiations with the *MNLF* groups have proceeded, although without an agreement on limited autonomy. Following a pattern now familiar in areas where governments seek to compromise between demands for independence and demands for integration, radicalized groups of both Muslims and Christians are thwarting efforts to put an end to violence in the region. The *MILF* and *MNLF-reformist* group have broken away from the *MNLF*, maintaining that the *MNLF* leadership has abandoned its Islamic aspirations. And the *Abu Sayyaf* group has created headlines through kidnappings and urban terrorism. The difficulty inherent in their demands for independence is underscored by Christian vigilante

groups who are unhappy with government compromises. These have also been behind violent actions directed either at Muslims or the government in the region. Whether the population will continue to tolerate violence as an expression of discontent will no doubt continue to depend on equality in economic development, the freedom to participate in the democratic process, and a sense of security with regard to the protection of religious freedom and human rights.

4. *Indonesia*

The complex story of Old Order politics (under Sukarno) and New Order politics (after 1968 under Suharto) would far exceed the limits of this essay. What both periods have in common is an effort by the serving President to simplify and control the political landscape. Under Suharto this has been accomplished by forcing the old political parties into coalitions which, in addition to the government party *Golkar*, are intended to represent the entire legitimate political spectrum. The United Development Party absorbed the Islamic parties, while the Indonesian Democratic Party absorbed the Christian and Nationalist Parties. *Golkar* itself was the political vehicle for the military (*Abri*) and a wide variety of trade unions and other organizations. Any ideological distinctiveness which Islamic groups might maintain by drawing on their allegiance to the Jakarta Charter was denied them when in 1984 all political parties, and even non-Governmental organizations, were called upon to declare Pancasila as their sole ideology. Shortly after this the *NU* withdrew from the *UDP* and renounced political involvement in favor of its social and educational programs. This reduced the credibility of the *UDP* as an Islamic party even further. In the elections since Suharto became president, none of which has met ordinary democratic ideals of openness and fairness, *Golkar* dominated.

These developments have not necessarily meant that the political significance of Islam has waned under Suharto. Freed temporarily from expending their efforts on politics, Muslim groups have been able to concentrate on building the Islamic consciousness of nominal Muslims and advancing Islam through sympathetic local officials rather than national policy. Robert Hefner reports, for example, that since 1975 there has been a “spectacular increase in

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government sponsored *dakwah*.”⁵¹ This is possible in the present Indonesian political system because religious policy is “an ongoing, complex, negotiated process involving interaction between national policy makers, regional leaders in a variety of bureaus (not all necessarily dedicated to the same policy interests), and diverse local populations.”⁵² In this environment, parties like the *NU* can be more effective through influence on local officials than in trying to influence national policy. In recent years Suharto has increasingly favored Islam, although without easing restrictions on Islamic political activities. Non-Muslim military heads have been eased out of office in favor of officers considered pro-Islamic. Suharto has also shown openness to the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (*ICMI*) and it appears to be acting as a sounding board for Muslim input on public policy. Whether this means that Indonesia is becoming Islamicized is another matter. Divisions between Muslims over government policy, as well as the strength of the political appeal of Islam, have been masked by the inability to discuss policy matters openly, and the lack of a credible democratic process. Given the current stability of the Suharto government it appears that only when he leaves office will it become clear how much, and what kind, of political power Islamic parties can wield.

5. *Malaysia*

Political developments related to Islam in Malaysia have been dominated by one event and two personalities. In 1969 riots broke out after federal elections in which the opposition parties won enough seats to deny the original alliance of *UMNO*, the *MCA*, and the *MIC* its ability to alter the constitution. While the exact genesis of the riots remains a matter of controversy, they clearly demonstrated that large numbers of Malays would not tolerate any threat to the privileges granted them in the constitution, which were being steadily implemented by the Alliance. The key issue, however, was economic rather than religious. Once democracy was restored, a central part of the government’s plan for national integration was the New Economic Policy; which sought to insure increasing Malay participation in the economy. The election of Dr. Muhammed Mahathir as Prime Minister and head of *UMNO* in 1980 was a second turning point in Malaysian politics, and he has dominated both *UMNO* and government policy since. Mahathir’s commitment

to Malay political dominance and his understanding of the need for symbols of Malay unity were known from his writings before 1980, writings which a decade earlier were considered so inflammatory that they were banned. His grasp of Islam as a crucial factor in Malaysian politics was shown when in 1982 he persuaded Anwar Ibrahim to join *UMNO* with the promise of a significant role in an *UMNO* government. At the time Anwar headed the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement (*ABIM*) which seemed to be a natural ally for *PAS* in the elections which were called in 1982. With Anwar as a symbol of *UMNO*'s commitment to Islam, Mahathir not only outmaneuvered *PAS*, he brought into government an articulate and charismatic political leader of impeccable Islamic credentials.

Anwar's alliance with *UMNO* was the beginning of *UMNO* efforts to shape the Islamic political agenda. Not content to react to Muslim opinion, *UMNO* under Mahathir, often with Anwar in the lead, has sought to define Islam for the Malay public even as it continues to promise Islamization as its goal. Under Mahathir the Federal Jabatan Hal Ewal Islam (Islamic Affairs Department) has greatly expanded its role in training local heads of mosques, determining the content of their teaching, and organizing large scale seminars and exhibitions. The Federal Government also built a number of new universities with departments of Islamic studies, has maintained the International Islamic University (with Saudi funding), and more recently has initiated two foundations for the development of Islamic thinking and policy (*IKIM* and *ISTAC*). While they serve a variety of puposes their underlying aim has been to justify current political policy and shape a future policy which will continue the pattern of political stability and economic growth characteristic of the last decade in Malaysia.

As he has advanced Federal initiatives in Islam, Mahathir has also sought to reign in the remaining political power of the sultans and with it their place as Malay and Islamic leaders. While traditionalists still abound in Malaysia, the old court-centered Islamic power base has been almost completely broken. Nor has Mahathir tolerated any other use of Islam as a symbol around which political power might be gathered. In 1994 and 1995 he successfully suppressed and dismantled the *Al-Arqam* movement which had numerous schools, business, and communes, as well as a large following in the civil service. And since the 1995 elections he has

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launched continual attacks against *PAS* for “misusing Islam,” and has threatened to force the party to drop the use of Islam in its name. All of this, combined with a booming economy and political stability unrivaled in the region, has led to tremendous intellectual ferment among Malay Muslims. It remains to be seen how this ferment will be used by Mahathir’s political successors.

B. Islamic Reform

Perhaps the best way to introduce the changes which have come to Islamic reform movements in the last three decades is with two pictures the reader should form in her or his mind. The first is of the Ayatollah Khomeini. The second is of row upon row of veiled women marching in the streets of Tehran to bring him into power in Iran. For most Westerners, and indeed Christians, these pictures are distressing, frightening, even revolting. Yet, the political events which they symbolize are in fact rather common in the twentieth century: the overthrow of a dictator to be replaced by another political leader with a new ideology. It happened in Pakistan when Zia al-Haq took over and declared that he would form a truly Islamic state. But Zia was beardless with a pencil thin mustach, wore a military uniform, and looked like the dictators with whom Westerners are familiar. The Ayatolla, sunk in his robes with his eyes fixed on the camera, was alien beyond comprehension. *But not to Muslims*, not even to Muslims in Southeast Asia who rarely have beards or robes. To them the Ayatollah and the veiled women fit an old heroic image, one long propagated in story books and alive in the most famous religious teachers of their own world. What he did also struck a chord with their memory of history. Like Muhammed and the greatest of his followers the Ayatollah swept away a corrupt and irreligious culture and society and replaced it with one based, to all appearances, on the dictates of God alone. Such an ideal was more to be admired than emulated in Southeast Asia, but the 1979 revolution which brought the Ayatollah to power brought with it a new dimension to Islamic reform. The Ayatollah’s fundamentalism was not just a return to the roots of an Islam beyond the changes wrought by history. It was a recreation of what was believed to be a pure Islamic order within, but disavowing all responsibility for the modern world. For Muslims who were materially comfortable, but felt compromised and alienated from their ideals, the Ayatollah’s

regime was enormously attractive. While it did not spark similar revolution in Southeast Asia, it did inject Islamic reform movements with new ideas and symbols of authentic Islam.

Perhaps the most important of these was the idea that Islam was not a religion which influenced or shaped the social order, but was rather the social order itself. Sayyid Qutb, martyred in Egypt, but whose works have long been available in Malay, had spoken of returning to a “Quranic Generation” whose lives would be shaped by nothing but the Quran and the example of the Prophet. The revolution in Iran seemed to many to be a concrete manifestation of Qutb’s lucid and forceful calls to create such a generation. Islamic reformers would ever after need to justify not just the policies of the state, but also its structure and that of society overall. And this has posed a tremendous problem for politicians throughout the region. The Ayatollah did as theorists of the Islamic state had said was necessary and made the *ulama* (called *mujtahid* in Shi’ite Islam) the source and check on policy and law. For politicians to implement such a state would be tantamount to removing themselves from office. And this was, from the point of view of radical Islam, perfectly legitimate. Politicians are by definition those whose expertise lies in the *polis*, the manipulation and implementation of the will of the people. But an Islamic state would be a state governed by the will of God revealed. Surely who but the *ulama* could say what that would be? After the Ayatollah Islamic reformers would grapple with the host of issues surrounding the relationship of state power to religious authority and to the popular will. The issue is far from being decided in both Malaysia and Indonesia. Politicians have answered the challenge of Iran by promoting the idea that political leaders, in concert with the Islamic intellegensia, are the true experts on the meaning of God’s revelation. They not only possess the intellectual knowledge of the Islamic tradition of interpretation, they are the masters of *shura*, or consultation, and *ijma’*, or the consensus necessary to fix an opinion as law. The *ulama* by contrast have been increasingly projected as respected local teachers who can guide private behavior but are out of their depth when it comes to matters of governance. The mosque has been, almost as a matter of law, depoliticized, and with it the traditional Islamic leadership.

A second characteristic of the Ayatollah’s rebellion, one which it shared with two prior generations of reformers and revivalists, was

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its sharp critique of Western society and Western culture. However, prior to the Ayatollah's attacks on Western decadence, seemingly proved out by pornography, high crime rates, and racism, Islamic criticism seemed hollow when the Islamic world could offer no better example. Iran, at least initially, and for as long as its internal propaganda machine worked, seemed to embody an alternative. Its mosques were full to overflowing with fervent worshippers. Its women, when they went out, wore the most modest of all dress. Its men seemed busy with religious matters. All the corruptions of the Shah's monarchy were swept away and with them (supposedly) crime, pornography, and all forms of ungodliness. While this seemed draconian to many in the West, it was to many Muslims a sign of social progress, which they measured not so much by freedom of personal expression, as freedom from the temptation or opportunity to break God's law. And with each year that Iran survived international economic pressures and internal dissention, its image as a real alternative to Western decadence increased.

Throughout Southeast Asia the search for an alternative to Western culture as a model for modern urban society struck a chord with many Muslims. An increasing number of Malaysians and Indonesians found that a stricter adherence to Muslim dress codes, food laws, and rules of social relationships between men and women gave them not only a sense of piety, but of identity with the larger Islamic world as well. Some indeed, were so taken with the prospect of a radically new lifestyle of obedience to Islamic law that they became followers of communitarian movements which separated themselves from the mainstream of society to pursue an Islamic lifestyle. In Indonesia existing Muslim reform groups have grown in strength as Muslims seek both a supportive environment for their return to an Islamic lifestyle, and the political power to implement the Islamic vision for society.

What set Iran apart from most of the Muslim world was not just its successful revolution, but the fact that Iran was a Shi'ite state and its leaders were followers of what is called "Twelver" Shi'ism. In most respects Shi'ism is like the Sunni Islam which is found in 80% of the Islamic world. It is set apart in its belief that the spiritual authority to give the true esoteric interpretation of the Quran was handed down to the heirs of Ali until the twelfth Imam disappeared, to return only at the end of the age. In his absence, spiritual authority

belongs to the Ayatollahs, men blessed with a special insight into the Imam's understanding. The expectation that Ayatollah Khomeini was the Imam returned gave a particular messianic fervor to the Iran revolution, and also encouraged its spread in other Shi'ite communities. While Shi'ism has never had a wide following in Southeast Asia, the millenarian expectations roused by the Iranian revolution did find fertile soil among some Muslims. One popular manifestation of this was the *Al-Arqam* movement of Ashaari Muhammed in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. He was said to have over 30,000 followers before his movement was banned and he himself recanted his teaching as unIslamic.

As in the case of *Al-Arqam*, both Indonesian and Malaysian authorities have felt compelled to respond to both anti-Western rhetoric and the rise of millenarian Muslim movements centered on charismatic teachers with exalted claims to religious authority. But their response has been cautious. Anti-western rhetoric is a favored political tool, but one which is used temperately since both countries are actively seeking Western investment. Shi'ite understandings about spiritual authority are those least likely to accommodate modern political structures, and any charismatic leader such as Ashaari is seen as a political threat. Beyond the specific problem of Shi'ite influences there is the broader issue of diversity within Islam which faces reformers in and outside of government. Shi'ism, and the four *mazhab* of Sunni Islam, had coexisted because they rarely overlapped geographically, and when they did, could be accommodated by flexibility in the implementation of certain laws. In modern Malaysia and Indonesia this has not been possible. For example, in a celebrated case in 1994 - 1995 a man was arrested in Malaysia for having ten wives. He claimed that all were legitimate under Shi'ite law. This happened as the Malaysian government was in the midst of an effort to reform marriage law to both discourage divorce and virtually forbid taking a second wife. Clearly it wished to put a stop to a bad precedent. Yet the court case was handled with unusual care, because within Shi'ite law the man's claims seemed legitimate. Islamic reform is concerned not only with finding faithful ways forward, it also involves finding ways to accommodate diversity without jeopardizing the universality of government policy and law.

The Iranian revolution drove home the comprehensiveness and

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universality of Islamic claims. The completeness with which it changed society in Iran, and its exportation of its revolution throughout the Islamic world, underscored the fact that Islamic reform could not be merely an accommodation of Islam to modern circumstances. Claims that Islam was progressive, scientific, rational, and moral, or even that it was the source of these values, were relegated to the realm of apologetics. For many Muslims what counts now is whether Islamic leaders can make good on the claim of true Islam to unite the *Ummah* across the world into a *Dar al-Islam* which implements fully God's desire for humanity revealed in the Quran and Sunnah. Malaysians and Indonesians find amidst these claims for Islam that they can offer unique leadership to the Islamic world. As *ijtihad* becomes the acceptable way forward Southeast Asian intellectuals find that they are on more equal footing with Islamic scholars whose strength was in *taqlid*. Both countries have had to struggle with the problem of Islamization and the role of large ethnic and religious minorities. And both countries have vibrant economies closely linked with the larger world economy through the sale of commodities and the use of advanced technology in manufacturing. This means that success of Indonesia and Malaysia as Islamic countries can become a starting point for reflection on how Islam can and should make its place in the modern world. In the new world of Islam political wisdom, economic savvy, and sociological reflection have become contributors to Islamic knowledge equal to that of mastery of classical commentaries on the Hadith. As Islamic science experiences a rebirth, these highly literate and economically developed countries hope to become centers of Islamic knowledge.

C. Islamic Spirituality

While resurgent Islam has had profound implications for both Islamic reform movements and the role of Islam in politics, it is most manifest in the awakening of an interest in spiritual matters among Muslims throughout the region. At the most obvious level this is shown in the greatly increased attendance in worship at the mosque, and in praying five times a day. Classes in Arabic and Quran reading at local mosques have increased greatly in enrollment, and many of the students are mature men and women who are trying to make up for what they missed while attending secular schools in their younger days. There has been a continuing

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increase in Muslims using their holiday time to make the *umrah*, or lesser pilgrimage to Mekka outside the month of the *haj*. And the number attending the *haj* is limited only by Saudi restrictions, not by any lack of demand. These external displays of faith go far beyond what is required as a matter of good politics or polite society. And they are not limited to young radicals clad in Arabic robes or Iranian chadors. They represent a genuine attempt by a wide range of people to be right with God, and a sincere belief that Islam is the true path which leads to this rightness. Muslims find in their prayers, in their halting efforts to not just chant but understand the Quran, and in their solemn participation in the rituals of the *umrah* or *haj* a sense of peace and well-being in God.

Beyond a return to the sincere practice of the basics of Islam, the five pillars of confession, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and tithes, the resurgence of Islam is expressed in other ways according to the need and personality of the individual Muslim. One of the most visible manifestations of an increased interest in spiritual matters is in the outpouring of intellectual effort on behalf of Islam. For a well educated Malaysian or Indonesian to leave a good job to study intensively Arabic and Islamic law overseas is no mean sacrifice. Yet it is happening with regularity because Muslims in the secular world are increasingly committed to submitting their professional expertise to the desire to create a truly Islamic society. And among the most popular magazines and journals are those in which intellectuals debate matters of moment from the standpoint of Islam. When a national newspaper publishes, as has recently happened, a long debate on the role of linguistic philosophy (from Wittgenstien onwards) in Islam, it is an indicator that men and women are willing to dedicate their minds to the search for the truth of God.

Finally, recent years have witnessed throughout the region a greatly increased interest in *tasawwuf* or Islamic esotericism and mysticism among young urban Malays. When the Islamic resurgence was synonymous with political struggles, this branch of Islam withered except in the rural areas, where it is often mixed with heterodox and even heretical practices. This history of heresy associated with Sufism has made it suspect in the minds of many. But currently in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia there are a growing number of Sufi *tariqah* associated with the Naqshbandia and Qaddiriya orders, which are known for their orthodoxy. Those

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who study under a *sheik* and attend regular sessions of *dhikir* include politicians, academics, and business people of the young urban elite. What they gain, by their own account, is a deeper sense of oneness with God than they can find in their conventional devotions, and an outlook on Islam which moves beyond the borders of mundane concerns with economics and politics, which dominate so much of the Islamic discourse in Southeast Asia. In the past, Sufism has almost always added a depth and strength to Islamic revival which is otherwise missing, just as the sense of God's inner presence adds fervency to even ritual prayers. It is but another sign that the present revival among Muslims is likely to endure beyond the resolution of the issues which first sparked it nearly two centuries ago.

D. Christians with Muslims in Southeast Asia.

As the remnants of colonialism have begun to disappear, almost all the religions in Southeast Asia have experienced a measure of revival. Freed not only from the presence of the missionary oversight, but also the encumbrances of irrelevant traditions, Asians have begun a religious renaissance which is as surprising as it is wide. Christianity in particular has grown, and diversified, in the last thirty years. This does not necessarily mean that Christianity has become "indigenous" or "enculturated" in the ways expected by missiologists and church historians. It does mean that international connections and influences are given a place only as they compliment the internal dynamism of the local Christian movements. For Christians in the midst of their own revival the renaissance of Islam and the extension of Islamic institutions into the realm of government, education, and the economy has posed a variety of challenges and has sometimes created anxiety. The possibilities for Christians are still open. What remains to be seen is what role or roles they will choose in a society where Islam, whether it be the religion of the majority or a minority, will be a powerful force shaping Southeast Asian society for the foreseeable future.

Just as nationalism and nation states are relatively new to Southeast Asia so a Christian consensus on how to relate as a believer to the state is not yet fully matured. Where there has been deep dissatisfaction with the state, as in the Philippines, Christians have been divided over what course to take in bringing about change, and in reacting to Islamic resurgence. Some have preferred

to avoid political involvement, while at the other extreme some have used violence to short-circuit the political process in order to protect their interests. Some within the Christian community have even preferred to immigrate to the West in order to avoid the pressures of Islamization.

Of the political options one has been for Christians to identify themselves as ethnic or religious minorities, and then to struggle with the government over their rights and privileges. In both Malaysia and Indonesia Christians have faced a variety of restrictions on the practice of their religion, ranging from laws restricting or forbidding the building of new churches to controls on publication and use of the media. This has led to much discussion of minority rights in an authentically Islamic society. Thus far such discussion has borne little fruit. In both Malaysia and Indonesia decisions which adversely affect Christians at a local level may have numerous causes other than an official policy of Islamization. Finding specific cases around which to protest is therefore difficult. Moreover, few Christians in Southeast Asia have sufficient knowledge of Islamic legal theory to participate fully discussions of Islamic policy, even if they were invited. And, in any case, Muslim scholars themselves have serious disagreements over whether and how past legal precedents apply to modern religious minorities. Also, a focus on protecting minority rights only increases the alienation of Christians from society as a whole. Most Christians have seen any Islamic future as less desirable than the secular or even Christian present and past. As they guard past precedents and policies, many of which are associated with colonialism, Muslims see Christianity as a hindrance to their own desires for self-determination. Dr. Eka Dhamaputra has pointed out that if Christians are to fulfill a role of national leadership which takes responsibility for their neighbors', as well as their own interests, then minimally they must see that their Christian identity makes them citizens first and members of a minority second.

Christian relations with Muslims have also been complicated by the fact that Christians are not merely a minority, they are an evangelistically active minority whose missionary efforts have substantial financial backing, trained personnel, and great enthusiasm among church members. A number of Christians, perhaps a majority, express a strong commitment to evangelizing all

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of Asia in coming years. Whether or not efforts like the *DAWN* movement and the various *AD2000* initiatives are successful, they will impact daily life in ways that many Muslims find unacceptable. A common complaint of Muslims is that while the *da'wa* movements are aimed primarily at the inner reform of Islam, Christians are more interested in winning converts than putting their own house in order. When Christians couch their claims of freedom to evangelize in terms of human rights, it only increases suspicions among Muslims that political power is at the root of Christian efforts. Christians are thus faced, like Muslims, with the paradox of living in particular societies towards which they have responsibilities as citizens, and beneath a universal mandate to share a religious message which overrides every other loyalty. It remains to be seen whether Christians with Muslims can find an understanding of the mandate of loyalty to their God which includes ways of living with neighbors of a different religions in peace and fulfillment.

E. Conclusion

Islam was brought to Southeast Asia by traders, and won its first adherents primarily by offering a more comprehensive and powerful religious vision than that of the indigenous religions. Political developments aided the spread of Islam: positively by creating an environment in which it was beneficial to local rulers, and negatively by making it the religion of resistance to colonial economic hegemony. While Islam, like Christianity, was sometimes used as a political tool to insure loyalty to a sovereign, its appeal to most Southeast Asians was found in the spiritual benefits it offered and the winsome qualities of its representatives.

Islam came to Southeast Asia in diverse forms over time, and has displayed a diversity arising from both this variagated heritage, the variety of its social and cultural environments, and the inclinations and insights of its most influential teachers. The commonalities in Islam range across the region and through the years. The are: 1.) an enduring interest in mysticism, particularly among rural Muslims, and 2.) an ongoing tension between those whose adaptation of Islam to local beliefs moves toward heterodoxy, and the orthodox who seek to purify Islam from animistic and Hindu/Buddhist influences. In this century the reformist movement

has developed facets which make it unique. These include a high interest in the problem of relating ethnic identity to religious purity, the problem of relating Islam to the political structures in a highly pluralistic religious environment, and the relation of Islamic to nationalist movements which have a high non-Muslim component. With the larger Islamic world, Southeast Asian Muslims share a concern about the influence of modernity and its dominant cultural forces on Muslim youth, the relationship of the Muslim *ummah* and nation-states, the problems of living a faithful lifestyle faced by Muslim minorities, and the need to foster economic growth without compromising on Islamic economic principles. In Malaysia and Indonesia, the two countries which account for the great majority of the region's Muslims, attention by Muslim scholars and leaders has been focused primarily on "Islamization," or the transformation of society toward an Islamic ideal. In both countries there is a vibrant intellectual effort aimed at both defining the Islamic ideal and charting the political course necessary to attain it.

Christians living in Southeast Asia cannot pursue their personal and social goals without taking cognizance of the developments in Islam and the forces which drive them. Where Christians form either a local or national majority, they struggle to balance the Christian imperative to evangelize with the demand by Muslim communities that they be allowed to face the challenges of the modern world without interference by religious or political groups which would shatter their solidarity. Where Christians are a minority they must find ways to participate in a process of decision-making increasingly dominated by an Islamic ideology. And they must preserve both their own solidarity and the essential Christian elements of their way of life.

The challenges facing Christians, Muslims, and their neighbors of other religions may seem insurmountable. Yet the remarkable peace and stability of Southeast Asia over the last two decades, the increasing openness of its nations to the world, and its economic growth suggest that its peoples are better seen as pioneers than victims. They are engaged in a great historical experiment the results of which, if sometimes troubling to the participants, also offer encouragement to a larger world. The successes of Southeast Asians in living together in fidelity to faith and neighbor may even suggest that its experiments are applicable to the larger world. Certainly the

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larger world will need to watch Southeast Asian Islam if it is to understand what Islam means for the world, for it is in Southeast Asia that the future of Islam may very well lie.

F. Questions for Discussion

1. How has Islam played a role in political developments in your community? What do Muslims want out of the political system? How do they pursue their political aims?
2. What are the specific problems which Muslims in your community face in trying to follow faithfully an Islamic lifestyle in the modern world?
3. Have Muslims become more active in religious activities in recent years in your community? In what ways have they become more actively religious?
4. What are the places and occasions where Muslims and non-Muslims regularly socialize, or work together on community problems? How could these be used to foster better relations between Muslims and non-Muslims?

G. Suggestions

Visit a local bookstore or shop which sells publications (books, magazines, or newspapers) for Muslims. Read several issues of one of these publications in order to find out what issues Muslims are discussing, and how they are seeking to resolve to meet the challenges of the modern world.

H. For Further Study

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GLOSSARY

of

Abbreviations, Key Concept Words, and Names

Sources: Delia Noer, *The Modernist Movement in Indonesia*, Seyyed Hossein Nassar, *Islamic Spirituality*, Gibb and Kraemer, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, Michael Leifer, *Dictionary of Modern Politics in Southeast Asia*.

- abangan* (Javanese) Nominal Muslim.
- ABIM Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia, Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement, and influential student movement which continues to uphold a reformist agenda in Malaysia.
- Abu Sayyaf Militant Islamic fundamentalist seperatist group in Mindinao which has used terrorist tactics to thwart efforts at Filipino - Moro reconciliation and political compromise.
- adab* Protocol/conduct.
- adat* Traditional or customary law. Arabic 'ada.
- agama* Religion.
- 'aqidah, akidah* Faith, creed.
- Aisjijah The women's section of the Muhammadiyah.
- AKUI Angkatan Kesatuan Ummat Islam (Unity of Muslim Community). The name of a party in East Java established especially to face the elections in 1955.
- Al Djamiatul Washlijah Lit.: Contact Society. The name of an organization established in Medan in 1930. It has been active in missionary work among the Bataks in North Sumatra.
- al-'Urwat al-Wuthqa Reformist newspaper produced by

Glossary

- Al-Afgahni and Muhammed Abduh in Paris.
- Al-ArqamCommunal Islamic reform group headed by Ashaari Muhammad. It had approximately 30,000 adherents and was influential in the Malaysian Civil Service before being banned in 1994 and subsequently disbanded.
- Al-Imam.....Modernist Newspaper published in Singapore beginning in 1906. It was modeled on al-Manar, Rashid Rida's and Muhammed Abduh's Egyptian Modernist Newspaper.
- al-Manar.....Cairo Journal edited by Rashid Rida in which Muhammed Abduh and other modernists advanced their ideas. The model for similar modernist journals in Southeast Asia.
- alim*, '*alim*See ulama.
- AllahGod
- amal*, '*amal*Deeds, virtue.
- amil*, '*amil*Agent (collector) of zakat.
- Angkatan 45The 1945 generation, writers and artists who sought to incorporate into their art the spirit of Indonesian Independence.
- Ansar El-IslamMoro independence movement
- ARMMAutonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, A policy implemented in 1990 to grant limited autonomy to those Muslim regions in the Southern Philippines which choose such a form of government by plebiscite.
- arwah*Spirit(s) of the dead.
- ashabijah*Tribal loyalty, nationalism.
- balai*Traditional meeting house in Minangkabau lands, where community decisions are discussed, more generally a hall or meeting place.
- bangsa*People, nation, ethnic group; also kind, species.
- Bangsa Moro.....Moro nation, a term which became symbolic of Moro claims to a distinct national identity.

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- barakah, berkat*..... Blessing
- barangay*..... Name for a small geographical area in the Philippines whose people were linked by kinship and which had a unified social structure.
- bay'ah* A pact or agreement. In Sufism the solemn agreement between master and pupil through which the *barakah muhammadiyah* or grace/blessing of Muhammed is passed down through the ages.
- bid'ah* Innovation, novelty, accretion, deviation; some view, thing or mores of action the like of which has not formerly existed or been practiced. The reformists in Indonesia combatted *bid'ah* in the field of *din*, pure religion.
- BNPP Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Pattani
- bomoh* Traditional Malay healer who uses both herbal and spiritual methods.
- BRN Barisan Revolusi Nasional, Pattani Revolutionary Group setup up in the 1960's, with links to the now defunct Malayan Communist Party and the Thailand Communist Party.
- Budi Utomo Society for the Good; Noble Endeavour. An association of Javanese character founded in Djakarta in 1908 and influential in setting a secularist political agenda.
- bumiputera*..... Literally "son of the earth/soil"; native. Originally referring to a Muslim, later on gradually losing its religious character, and denoting just native. In Malaysia the specific constitutional designation for Malay Muslims, and embracing both the religious and ethnic sense of the word.
- Comite Chilafat (Komite Kilafat)..... Caliphate Committee, founded in 1924 with the support of most Islamic groups. In 1925 it lost the support of the traditionalists.
- Comite Merembuk Committee for Consultation Hijjaz About Hijaz Questions. A committee established at Surabaya

Glossary

in 1925 by traditionalists as a counter organization to Komite Chikafat. Komite Merembuk Hidjaz was transformed into Nahdlatul Ulama in 1926.

Comite voor het favaansch Nationalisme Committee for Javanese nationalism established in 1918.

Cultuurstelsel Culture System. A forced cultivation system introduced by the Dutch in Java in 1830 by which the farmers were obliged to reserve part of their land for producing certain crops in the interests of the government. It was abolished in the 1870s.

da'wa dakwa Invitation to accept a religion, or school within a religion. Now used for Islamic missionary activity generally, and specifically for those who encourage Muslims to embrace a more conservative or fundamentalist form of Islam. Sometimes a designation for a person who dresses conservatively or takes part in conservative missionary activity.

dajah *Pesantren* in Aceh.

DAP Democratic Actions Party, an opposition political party of Malaysia whose near win of the 1969 General Elections precipitated a political crisis.

datuk, datok, dato' Title for the head of a Minangkabau clan (*suku*). Elsewhere literally "grandfather," but widely used as a title for officials of the Sultan's court. Now an honorary title.

DAWN Disciplining a Whole Nation, an evangelistic program adopted by most Malaysian churches, which aims at evangelizing the whole population of Malaysia and building a church in every village.

dhikr (Malay-zikir) Remembrance. For Sufis and other Muslims it is a recited word which serves as God's means of becoming present to humans. Hence the Quran is *dhikr*. More technically it is the practice of repetitively chanting certain ayat or surah of the Quran, or the word Allah, until an ecstatic state of union with God is achieved (*fana' fi'l-*

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tawhid)

- Djam'ijat Ansar..... Association for the Protection of the Haramain Two Holy Places, i.e., Mekka and Medina; the name of an association formed in Mekka in 1927 on the initiative of Hadji Agus Salim.
- dukun* Traditional healer and spiritualist. The term has more animist and Hindu connotations in Indonesia.
- fana* Annihilation or extinction. In Sufism the state in which a soul becomes annihilated before God.
- fana' fi'l-tawhid*..... Self-extinction in the contemplation of God's Unity. First taught by Au yazid al-Bistami (261/875). *fana' fi'l-tawhid* is neither self destruction nor self-absorbtion, but self-illumination.
- faqih, fakih Pakih* (pl. *fuqaha*)... Expert in fiqh.
- fara'id* Law of inheritance.
- fard* Obligatory; refers to actions the performance of which is rewarded and ommission punished. See also: *wajib*.
- fard 'ain* An obligation imposed on every individual Muslim.
- fard kifajah* An obligation imposed upon the Muslim community as a whole.
- fatwa* Statement of legal issue; decision of religious character, given by a recog nized religious scholar (*ulama*).
- fiqh* Jurisprudence, law, in Islam a much wider field than in Western law, and embracing matters of personal behavior, ethics, and family and social relationships.
- fuqara* (plural personal of *faqir*). Members of a Sufi order, or brotherhood.
- furu'* Branches, details, as opposed to principles, frequently referring to the systematic elaboration of positive law.

- GAMPAR.....Gabongan Melayu Pattani Raya, Greater Pattani Malay Association.
- GAPIGabungan Politik Indonesia (Federation of Indonesian Political Parties), founded in 1939.
- GerindoGerakan Rakjat Indonesia (Indonesian People's Movement), a party of religiously neutral nationalists in the 1930s.
- Golkar*Golongan Karya*, or “functional groups,” the ruling party of Indonesia which itself represents a wide variety of organizations including the army (also called Abri).
- gotong royong*Mutual assistance; mutual cooperation, usually referring to an event where the community works together on a project.
- had*, (pl. *hudud*)Limitation, restrictive ordinance; the provisions of the Law in the Quran, whether commands or prohibitions; also pu nishment prescribed by Quranic canon law.
- hadith*, (pl. *ahadith*)An account of a statement and/or actions of the Prophet.
- hajj*The pilgrimage to Mekka.
- hajji, haji*, (fem. *hajjah, hajah*)A Muslim who has accomplished the Mekka pilgrimage.
- hakim*Judge.
- halqah, halakah*,Circle; referring to the circle of students attending a lecture at traditional *surau* or *pesantren*.
- haram*Forbidden, unlawful, sinful; refers to actions the performance of which is punished and ommission rewarded.
- harato panoaharian*Property acquired by the father on account of his own sweat, as distinct from *suku* property in the Minangkabau.
- harato pusako*Property of a *suku* in the Minangkabau.

- hijrah* Migration; the migration of Muhammad from Mekka to Medina in 622 A.D.; the Muslim calendar is dated from that event.
- hikmah* (Malay *hikmat*)..... Wisdom, also used for esoteric knowledge as opposed to *ilm* for more mundane sciences.
- hisab* Calculation (for determining the days, months, years). In Indonesia, especially for determining the time for prayers, fasting and the two Id.
- Hizbul Wathan Party Army of the Fatherland; name of the scout organization of the Muhammadiyah.
- Hof voor Mohammadaanse Zaken Supreme Court for Islamic affairs in colonial Indonesia.
- hudud* See *had*.
- hukum, hukm* (pl. *ahkaam*), Law, judgment, legal category.
- hulubalang*..... Traditional leaders in Aceh.
- ibadah, ibadat* Ritual, service of worship, religious duties; the ordinances of divine worship.
- Ibu Pertiwi* Mother Earth; fatherland.
- ICMI Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia. A intellectual movement associated with Suharto's closest economic and political advisors.
- IIFSO International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations.
- ijazah* Certificate or diploma, formal document from a Sufi master to his disciple certifying the disciple's ability to teach Sufi doctrine and lead Sufi ritual.
- ijma'* Concensus.
- ijtihad* Independent reasoning, exerting oneself to form an opinion in a case or as to the rule of law.
- ikhwan* Brotherhood (*al-Suhbah*).
- IKIM Institute Kefahaman Islam Malaysia, a Malaysian government sponsored think tank presently used as a vehicle for formulating Islamic policy and associated with the Prime Minister Mahathir

- Muhammed.
- ilm, ilmu, (Javanese *ngelmu*)*Knowledge, science, art.
- imam, Imam*Chief, leader of the congregational prayer; also head of a community.
- iman*Belief, devotion, faith, piety; having faith in Allah and his Prophet and message.
- Indonesia RayaGreater Indonesia.
- ISDVIndisch Sociaal Democratische Partij (Indies' Democratic Party) established in Semarang in 1914. It developed into a Communist party after the Russian revolution.
- ISTACInstitut Antarabangsa Pemikiran dan Tamadun Islam. A Malaysian Islamic "think tank" associated with current Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.
- Islam*Literally "conformity with the Divine will," the religion of those who follow the religion of the Quran and Muhammed.
- Ittihadul Ulama*Union of ulama; the name of a traditionalist organization in the Minang kabau, established in 1921.
- Jakarta Chartersee Piagam Jakarta.
- Jawi Peranakan.....Muslims of Indian and Malay descent.
- JIBJong Islamieten Bond (Union of Young Muslims), established in Jogjakarta in 1924.
- jihad*Struggle against the enemies of Islam, whether within or without.
- jihad al-nafs*The "greater war" of the Muslim against the corruption of the soul.
- Jong JavaYoung Java: the name of an organization of Javanese young people, established after 1910.
- Ka'bah, Ka'baThe sacred shrine at the centre of the Masjid alHaram (mosque) at Mekka.

- kafir* Unbeliever, nonMuslim.
- kafir londa* Dutch kafir, a derogatory term.
- kaul* Vow, commemoration of the dead, accompanied with feast and prayers, a practice disapproved by the modernist Muslims but still commonly found.
- Kaum Muda “Young group,” reformists; modernists.
- Kaum Tua “Old group,” traditionalist Muslims.
- kebangsaan* National, Nationalism.
- kebatinan* The esoteric religious practices of the Javanese.
- kenduri* Meal or feast of religious character; also Java *slametan*.
- keramat* Shrine, grave of saints.
- khalifa, Caliph* Successor to the Prophet Muhammed as leader of the entire Islamic community. Continued as a formal, but rarely actual, institution until the fall of the Ottoman Empire.
- kiyayi* Religious teacher, leader of a *peasantran, ulama*, used especially in Java, usually also a *sheik*, or leader of a Sufi *tariqah*.
- Kongres Muslimin Indonesian Muslim Congress, the Indonesia name of joint congresses of Indonesian Muslim organizations in the late 1930s.
- KPKPSII Komite Pertahanan Kebenaran PSTI (Committee for the Defence of Truth in the PSII), the name of a splinter party of the Sarekat Islam founded by S.M. Kartosuwirjo in 1939.
- langgar* Small prayer house.
- laras* District head in the Minangkabau.
- Madilis Tardjih Council of Opinions: a council of the Muhammadiyah which is concerned with finding *fatwa*.
- Madjlis Tanwir Conference of Muhammadiyah

- Consuls, i.e., of regional commissioners of the Muhammadiyah central board.
- Madjlis UlamaCouncil of Ulama, established by the Sarekat Islam in 1927.
- madrasah*.....Residential religious school, a term used by reformers to distinguish their schools from the traditionalist, peasant, and pondok schools.
- MAIHSMadjlis A'la Islam Hindia Sjarqijah: East Indies' section of All Islam Supreme Council; a transformation of Komite Chikafat in 1926 after the All Islam congress in Mekka in 1926.
- mantri*Police, junior police official.
- masuk belanda*.....Lit. Become Dutch, commonly used in Java to refer to those who had converted to Christianity.
- MasyumiThe name of a coalition party of Islamic groups in Indonesia, formed during the Japanese occupation and active in the independence period. It was dissolved in 1960 by government order.
- mazhab, madhhab*Sect, school, schools of Sunni jurisprudence.
- MCAMalayan Chinese Association, a Malaysian political party which is part of the current ruling coalition.
- MIAIMadjlisulIslamil A'la Indonesia; Madjlis Islam A'la (also A'la) Indonesia; Indonesian Muslim Supreme Council; a federation of Muslim organizations in Indonesia, established in 1937.
- MICMalaysian Indian Congress, a Malaysian political party which is part of the current ruling coalition.
- MILFMoro Islamic Liberation Front, A breakaway from the MNLF claiming that the former had abandoned its Islamic mandate.
- MIMMuslim Independence Movement, formed in Cotabato in Mindanao in May of 1968. This proved to be a shortlived precursor to the MNLF.

- MNLF Moro National Liberation Front
- MNLF-RG MNLF-reformed group, similar to the MILF, broke away when MNLF leader Nur Misuari tried to broaden MNLF appeal to non-Muslim residents of Mindanao in order to increase its political legitimacy.
- Moro Term for the Muslim groups of the Mindanao and Sulu region, originally a derogatory Spanish term which did not recognize their ethnic diversity. Now it is commonly used by the Muslims themselves as a mark of national identity.
- MRI Madjlis Rakjat Indonesia: Indonesian People's Council; a united body of federations of political, social and eligious organizations, founded in 1940.
- mu'tazilah* Rationalist; referring to the Muslim rationalists of the second and third centuries after Muhammed.
- mufti* Title of a religious official who is authorized to give interpretations of Muslim law.
- Muhammadiyah The name of a social religious organization founded in Jogjakarta in 1912. Through its network of schools and social agencies it has been an important source of modernist reform.
- mujtahid* Authoritative interpreter of the law; one who practices idjtihad.
- murid* Pupil, disciple or follower of a Sufi master.
- murtad* Apostate.
- nadzir* Supervisor of a school.
- nagari* Basic territorial unit of Minangkaban, approximately the size of an under-district, now more generally state, or a subdivision of a nation.
- Nasjiatul Aisjijab Juniors of the Aisjijah, the women's section of the Muhammadiyah.
- niat* Intention. A declaration to perform

- a religious act, pronounced audibly or mentally preceding the performance of the act.
- NIPNationale Indische Partij, National Indies' Party.
- NIVBNederlandsch Indische Vrijzinnigen Bond: Dutch Indies' Liberal Union, established in 1916. It aimed at 'association' of Indonesia and Holland.
- NPANew People's Army, a revolutionary Maoist group active in the Philippines, the organizational center of the communist insurgency.
- NUNahdlatul Ulama: Renaissance of Ulama, a traditionalist organization founded in 1926 and currently the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia.
- Nurul IslamLight of Islam, a reformist organization, set up in Pekalongau circa 1920 by Minangkabau traders, later transformed into a branch of the Muhammadiyah.
- Paderi, *padri*Name given to the radical puritanist group in the Minangkabau in the nineteenth century. The group fought *adat* chiefs, and later on also the Dutch, the war against the Dutch being known as the Paderi war.
- PAIPartai Arab Indonesia: Indonesian Arab Party, established in Semarang in 1934.
- Pancasila.....The philosophical basis for the Indonesian state set forth by Sukarno and agreed upon by the political parties present at the first drafting on an independent Indonesian constitutionl. See Jakarta Charter.
- PAPPeople's Action Party, the ruling party in Singapore since independence.
- ParindraPartai Indonesia Raya: Greater Indonesia Party, formed in 1935 out of a fusion of Persatuan Bangsa Indonesia (Unity of the Indonesian People) and the Budi Utomo (Noble Endeavour).
- ParkindoPartai Kristen Indonesia: Indonesian Protestant Party, founded in 1945.

- Partindo..... Partai Persatuan Indonesia: Unity of Indonesia Party, a splinter party of Gerindo, founded by Muhammad Yamin in Djakarta in 1939.
- Partai Katholik..... Indonesian Catholic Party, founded in 1945.
- Partai Murba Proletariat Party, founded in Indonesia in 1948.
- particuliere landerijen*..... Landed estates, large areas of land, especially in West Java, owned by private individuals whose ancestors purchased the lands during the period of the East India Company before 1800 or during the British occupation period in 1815. The administration of these estates was marked by arbitrary measures which often led to the suffering of the indigenous farmers living on the lands.
- Partindo Partai Indonesia: Indonesia Party, a party of religiously neutral nationalists, founded in 1931.
- PAS Parti Islam Sa-Melayu, United Malay Islamic Party, an opposition party in Malaysia.
- patih* In Indonesia an officer of the native civil service, chief assistant to a Regent.
- peasantren* Privately run Islamic school in Java or Sumatra. Usually associated with traditional teaching and a Sufi order.
- PEB Politick Economische Bond: Political Economic Union, a Dutch reactionary party founded circa 1916.
- Pendidikan NI Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia: Indonesian National (Political) Education Party, founded in 1932.
- penghulu* In Java: religious or marriage official. In Minangkabau and Malaya, *adat* chief, *suku* chief.
- perintah halus* Gentle order; disguised warning, an indirect order given by government authorities to the people for the improvement of the villagers such as in health and education; also an order or warning to reformists and

- nationalists to slow down their activities or to refrain from making statements considered to violate Rust und Ord, or 'peace and order.'
- PERKIM.....Islamic Welfare Association of Malaysia, engaged actively in seeking converts to Islam from among the Chinese and Indian populations.
- PermiSee PMI.
- PersisCooperative.
- Perti Persatuan Islam:.....Islamic Unity Party, a reformist association established in Bandung in the early 1920s.
- Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu BersatuUnited Malays National Organization, *UMNO*, formed in 1946 to oppose British plans for a Malayan Union. Currently the leading member of the coalition government which rules Malaysia.
- PGAIPersatuan Guruguru Agama Islam: Union of Muslim Religious Teachers, a reformist organization set up in the Minangkabau in 1920.
- Piagam Jakarta(Jakarta Charter) Philosophical basis for an independent state agreed upon by the political parties who prepared the first constitution for Indonesia. It was soon after replaced by the Pancasila, which removed any specific reference to Islam.
- PIIPartai Islam Indonesia: Indonesian Muslim Party, set up in Jogjakarta in 1938.
- pir*See *sheik*.
- PKIPartai Komunis India: Indies' Communist Party, a transformation of ISDV in 1920.
- PKUPenolong Kesengsaraan Umum: A social department of the Muhammadiyah, established in 1918.
- PMIPersatuan Muslimin Indonesia: Indonesian Muslim Union, also abbreviated to Permi. A social educational organization founded in Bukittinggi in 1930, it became a political party in 1932.
- PNIPartai Nasional Indonesia:

- Indonesian Nationalist Party, established in Bandung in 1927. See also Pendidikan NI.
- PO Persyarikatan Ulama: Association of Ulama, founded in Madjalengka in 1917.
- pondok* School for traditionalist Islamic religious instruction.
- PPKB Persatuan Perkumpulan Kaum Buruh Hindia: Indies' Federation of Labor Unions, established in 1919.
- PPP (Thailand)..... Pertubohan Persatuan Pembebasan, Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO), set up in 1968 by Tengku Biru.
- PPP (Indonesia) United Development Party, the officially recognized Islamicist party, representing a variety of Islamic political groups.
- PPPKI Permufakatan Perhimpunan Partijpartij Kebangsaan Indonesia: Council of Indonesia Political Parties, established in Bandung in 1927. This was changed into Permufakatan Politik Penedjar Kemerdekaan Indonesia: Political Council for the Achievement of Indonesia's Independence in early 1931.
- PPTI Partai Persatuan Tharikat Islam: Islamic Tharikat Union Party. A political party of *tarekat* followers, especially in Sumatra.
- priyayi* Javanese nobility, usually connected with government administration.
- PSII Partai Sjarikat Islam Indonesia: Indonesian Muslim Association Party, the name of the Sarekat Islam since 1929.
- PUSA Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Atjeh: All Aceh Association of Ulama, founded in Aceh in the 1930's.
- putihan* Javanese term for particularly religious Muslims who dress in white.

- qadi, kadi*.....Judge in a court specializing in judgements related to *Shari'a*.
- qanun*Islamic term for secular law introduced from the West, as opposed to *Shari'a*.
- qiyas*Analogy, a means of reaching judgements in Islamic jurisprudence.
- raja*King, ruler, derived from Sanskrit and used in the archipelago until the Persian title *sultan* was adopted.
- rakyat*Common people.
- ratu adil*Literally “just king,” the savior expected by Javanese Messianic movements.
- RISEAP.....Regional Islamic Organization of Southeast Asia and the Pacific.
- rust en orde*Peace and order, the slogan of Dutch colonial government in Indonesia.
- SAAMSarikat Adat Alam Minangkabau: Association of the *Adat* of the Minangkabau World, founded in 1916.
- Sabil-illahPath of God, an urban based Patani terrorist group formed after the large 1975 Muslim demonstrations against the Thai government.
- salaf as-salihin*The pious ancestors of Islam, members of the first generation of Muslims, usually considered to be the Prophet and his companions, their followers, and the followers of these followers.
- salafiyah*“pertaining to the pious ancestors,” the movement to return to the roots of Islam as a source of law and theology. However, by moving back beyond the body of Islamic traditional law this movement opened the door for acceptance of modern and innovative thinking, and is synonymous with modernism in Islam.
- santri*Student; pupil, of a pesantren or religious school in Java. Also devoted Muslim.

- Sarekat Islam See SI.
- Sayyid, Sayyed* Male descendant of Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet. It is used less precisely in Malaysia and the Indonesian archipelago for persons of Arabic descent.
- SDI Sarekat Dagang Islam: Muslim Trade Association, founded in Solo in 1911. See also SI.
- selamatan*..... See also *kenduri*, a particularly Javanese religious festival, usually coordinated to the Islamic calendar but with animistic and Hindu roots.
- semangat*..... Spirit, the generalized spiritual force believed to inhabit persons and objects.
- Sendi Aman Tiang Selamat Basis of Peace, Pillar of Happiness. A reformist organization in Maninjau which was transformed into a branch of the Muhammadiyah in 1925.
- Shadhiliyyah, Sufi order founded by Imam Abu'l-Hassan al-Shadhili.
- Shahadah..... Basic testimony of Islamic faith: there is no God but God, Muhammed is the messenger of God.
- Shaikh al Islam Grand Mufti in Turkey's Sultanate.
- Shari'a* The Divine Law, rooted in the Quran and Hadith.
- sheik, shaykh*..... Sufi leaders, spiritual authorities who have received their *ijazah*, or certification, from within one of the Sufi *tariqah*.
- Shi'ism The branch of Islam which developed out of those who believed that leadership of the Muslim community should belong to the descendants of Ali. Modern Shi'ism differs from the majority Sunni Muslim community in its belief that divinely inspired interpretation of the Quran continues through the earthly representatives of the last known descendent of Ali, who is now living hidden from the world in a special spiritual state of being.
- shirk* Associationism, specifically the making of anything equal to God. The greatest sin from an

- Islamic point of view.
- SISarekat Islam: Muslim Association, A transformation of SDI in 1911. See also PSII.
- silsila*The Sufi geneology showing the direct line of authorized teaching from a current *shaykh* back to one of the companions of the prophet through one of the founders of the Sufi orders.
- Sopotrisno‘Who Loves?’ The name of a women's organization in Yogyakarta in 1918 which was later transformed into the Aisjijah of the Muhammadiyah.
- STMSGSouth Thailand Muslim Students Group, in Thai: *Klum Nagsygsaa Muslim Phaagtaaj*.
- SufiA Muslim mystic who uses esoteric knowledge, methods of meditation and prayer beyond those enjoined upon all Muslims, and communal liturgies called *dhikr* to achieve oneness with God.
- suku*Extended family, tribe, ethnic group,clan.
- suku bangsa*Ethnic group; sometimes also suku.
- sultan*Persian title for a king or ruler which replaced the Indian title raja, or reduced it to a title of a lesser noble, in some Islamicized areas of the archipelago.
- Sunna, Sunnah*Practices of the Prophet.
- surau*Place for religious instruction in Central Sumatra: equivalent of Javanese *pesantren*. Also a prayerhouse.
- tabligh*Talk, lecture, usually on religious questions.
- talqin*Pronouncement of certain prayers for the dead during a funeral, a practice disputed by Islamic modernists because it was said to have no basis in the Quran or Hadith
- taqbil*Kissing the hand of another person when meeting him, it constitutes a sign of respect, a practice disputed by Islamic modernists because it was said to have

- no basis in the Quran or Hadith.
- taqlid* Adopting the already established fatwa and practices as final and as having an authoritative character.
- tariqah (plural turuq)* Spiritual path, in Sufism a religious order (that is, the followers of a particular spiritual path), or the body of sufi's who follow a particular pattern of ritual a particular type of metaphysical teaching.
- tasawwuf*..... Esotericism, the Sufi path, mysticism.
- tawakkul (Malay tawakal)* To rely on God.
- tawhid* Divine Unity.
- Tentara Nabi Muhammad..... Army of the Prophet Muhammad, the name of an organization established in 1918 as a reaction to insults to the Prophet by an article in the Diawi Hisworo newspaper.
- TNPRP Tentara Nasional Pembebasan Rakyat Pattani: National Liberation Army of the Pattani People
- 'ulama, ulama, (Sing.: alim, 'alim.)* Authorities on Islamic law, the Shari'ah, and its basis in the Sunnah and Hadith. In Southeast Asia usually it is used for a scholar with a traditional Islamic education and associated with traditionalist movements.
- UMNO United Malays National Organization. The Malay political party which struggled against British determination of the political structure of post-war Malaya, and which later became the leading member of the post-independence ruling coalition in Malaysia.
- usalli* Expression aloud of the *niat* (intention) of prayer, a practice opposed by modernist Muslims.
- usul* Roots, principles; frequently referring to *usul fiqh*, i.e., the methodology of Muslim jurisprudence, the science of the proof which leads to the

- establishment of legal standards in general.
- VolksraadPeople's Council, established in 1918.
- wahdatu'l-wujud*.....The unity of existence ,a central Sufi doctrine first clearly articulated by Muhyi'l-Din Ibnu'l-'Arabi (638 a.h.,1240 a.d). Although interpreted by some western scholars as pantheism, it is in fact a subtle doctrine which maintains the transcendence of God while insisting that everything has its reality only in God. This doctrine is one of the most prominent in Southeast Asian Sufi traditions.
- wali*Sufi Saint, or person renowned for their piety. The tombs of *wali* are believed to have a special baraqah or blessing associated with them.
- Wali Songo.....The nine saints, referring to the earliest propagandists of Islam in Java.
- WAMY.....World Assembly of Muslim Youth.
- waqf, wakaf*,Endowment, foundation, specifically land or property set aside according to Islamic law as a trust or endowment. Alienating waqf land for development purposes is a particularly sensitive religious issue.
- zawiyah (khanaqah in Persion)*..Sufi meetinghouse for *dhikr* and other ritual observances.

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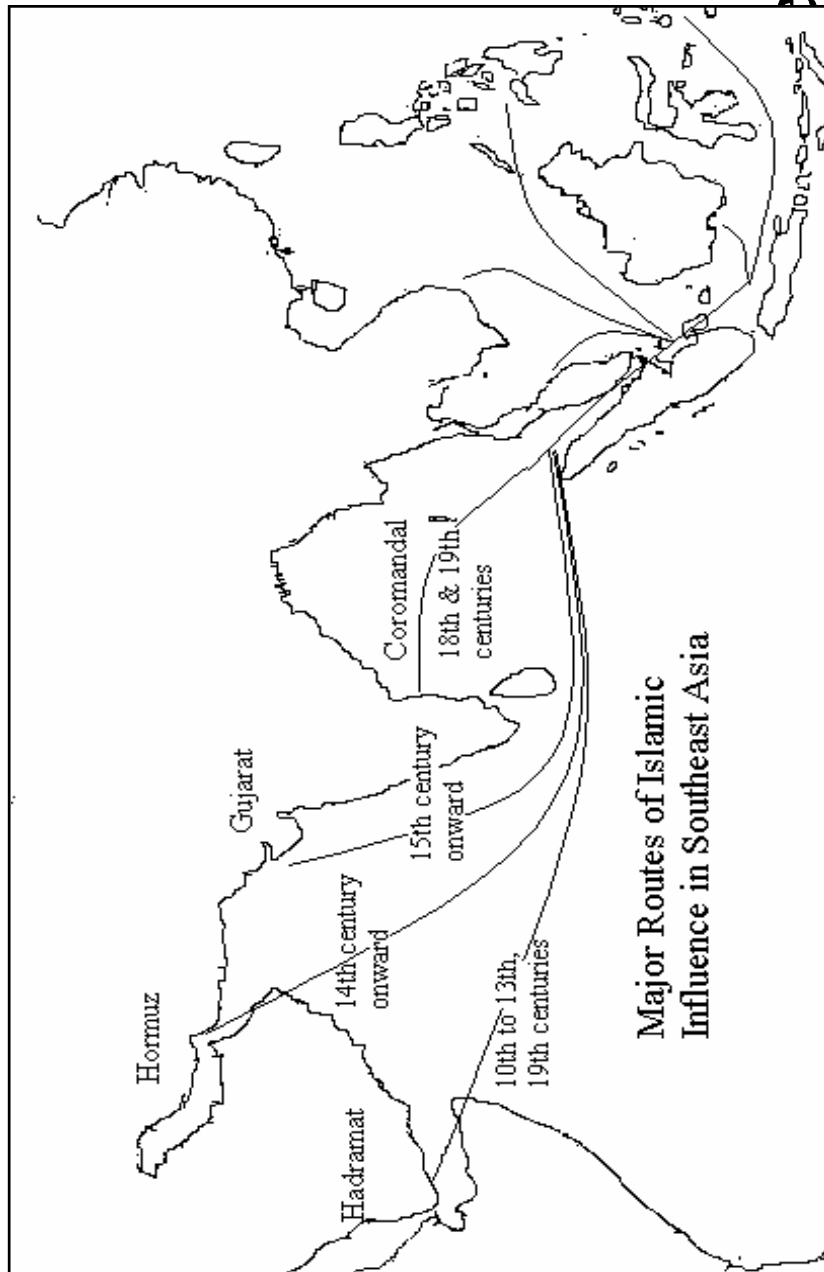
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MAPS



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Maps

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With study questions, a discussion guide, and an extended glossary and bibliography.

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ISBN: 1-890569-04-6

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Published jointly
by
The General Board of Global Ministries
of The United Methodist Church
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115
United States of America
and
The Methodist Church of Malaysia
69 Jalan 5/31
46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor
Malaysia

ISBN 1-890569-04-6

Printed in Malaysia

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Foreword

The material in this book was originally commissioned for a consultation of Methodist pastors sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church and organized by the Methodist Bishops in the Southeast Asian region. The purpose of the consultation, held in Kuala Lumpur in 1995, was to expose these religious leaders to a wide range of information about Islam, particularly in Southeast Asia. It has been published for a wider readership in the belief that an increased understanding of the history and religious setting of Southeast Asia will benefit all who wish to live in productive relationships with their Muslim neighbors.

Introduction

This book is designed as a basic introduction to Islam in Southeast Asia. While the focus is on Islam, the book is aimed at Christian readers, and therefore specific reference is made to Christian interactions with Muslims, and in the final chapters to issues in Christian-Muslim relations. Nonetheless the author has been guided in his writing by the rule which must be the touchstone of every authentic presentation of religious beliefs and cultures; the hope that Muslims will recognize themselves in what has been written and will understand it as an expression of respect and love.

In a work of this length it is impossible to be truly comprehensive, and at the end of each chapter suggestions for further reading are given. These point to the general or recent works which the author hopes will be available to most readers. A more complete Bibliography is available at the end of the book. Footnotes have been kept to a minimum, and are used to indicate either the source of quotations and data, or citations of opinions or observations not found more generally in the academic literature on the subject. Otherwise the material given represents either commonly acknowledged facts or the author's own interpretation of events.

Robert Hunt
Trinity Theological College, Singapore
May 1, 1997

Note on Spelling

The languages of Southeast Asia use a large number of Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit loan words in their religious terminology. The way in which these words are spelled varies from dialect to dialect and from era to era. In recent years English language publications in the region have tended to standardize their spelling in two directions. Arabic and Persian loan words are usually spelled in romanized forms that are found in English language publications in Europe or the U.S., rather than in the traditional Malay or Javanese spelling. Other religious terms are spelled according to the now standard Malay spelling which has been adopted by Indonesia and Malaysia. This convention is followed below, however the glossary indicates variant spellings which may be found in older publications, or which remain in common use. Neither Arabic nor Malay form plurals by the addition of “s” at the end of the word. The author has endeavored to use the most common plural form found in English language publications, whether this derives from Arabic or Malay.

The different ethnic groups in Southeast Asia which share a common linguistic and cultural heritage have a large number of common terms for social roles and relations. However, these vary in meaning from group to group. Their spellings also vary in older publications as regional pronunciation differences were incorporated into the spelling. In the text below standard Malay spellings for these terms have been used, but variations in meaning and spelling are noted in the glossary when appropriate.

Place name spellings follow those found in the present edition of the National Geographic World Atlas.

Islam in Southeast Asia

Robert A. Hum
GBGM
Books