THE ROLE OF ISLAM IN MALAYSIAN AND INDONESIAN POLITICS: A COMPARATIVE SURVEY

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By

NARAYANAN GANESAN, B.A.

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AUTHOR: Narayanan Ganesan, B.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Gordon P. Means

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the different roles that Islam plays in Malaysian and Indonesian politics. Whereas Islam serves to identify and distinguish Malays from the other ethnic groups in Malaysia, Indonesian Islam reinforces a centre-periphery or Java-Outer Islands dichotomy.

Islam's importance in Indonesia derives from the fact that approximately ninety percent of the country's population is Muslim, albeit many of them are not zealous practitioners. In Malaysia, on the other hand, Islam is important because it is used as a barometer to identify ethnic Malays who comprise approximately fifty-five percent of the population. Apart from being the ethnic majority, Malays wield most of the political power in Malaysia. Additionally, Islam is the official religion in Malaysia.

Public policy responses toward Islam in both countries are substantially different. Indonesian public policy, which derives its precedent from Dutch colonial administration, only tolerates Islam as a private religion. Malaysian public policy toward Islam is at once supportive and suppressive. The government has to promote it as the country's official religion and outbid an Islamic political party. Also, the government has to direct Islamic revivalism so that the country's delicate inter-religious and inter-ethnic harmony is maintained.

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N. Ganesan

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INTRODUCTION

Few subjects have recently received as much publicity as Islam. There are a variety of reasons contributing to this sudden surge of interest in a religion that was for a long time never seriously considered. Very specifically, the formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960, the ousting of the Shah of Iran by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979, and the bloody and protracted war between Iran and Iraq that began in 1980 have led to this sudden interest.

Islam has also received little attention in western academia. The primary reason for this disinterest is the Eurocentric nature of western academic inquiry. The identification of Islam as an anti-Christian philosophy has exacerbated the disinterest. Finally, Islam, which espouses a unified socio-political, economic, and legal system poses a potential threat to the western weltanschauung that is accustomed to keeping the secular apart from the sacred. The threat derives from the ability of religious leaders to undertake tasks that would normally be assigned to secular political leaders or administrators.

There is little doubt that Islamic communities all over the world have a tremendous power potential. However, much of the realization of this potential is marred by divisions within these communities. Perhaps the most serious division is the one that exists between the Sh'īa and Sunni variants of Islam. Also, there is the tension between orthodox and modernist Islam. Whereas the

former advocates a highly legalistic and bookish form of Islam, the latter favours practices that express the spirit of Islam. Hence, the modernist school constantly advocates a reassessment of Islamic precepts to suit present needs. Islamic modernism is largely derived from the teachings of Muhammad Abduh from Cairo's Al Azhar University at the turn of the century.

Islam is important in Malaysia and Indonesia for a variety of reasons. Firstly, Muslims comprise fifty-five percent of the total population in Malaysia and ninety percent in Indonesia. Indonesia's overwhelmingly Muslim population is however seriously disunited. On the other hand, in Malaysia, the Muslims are a fairly monolithic bloc, since the ethnic Malay identity has traditionally gone hand-in-hand with the Muslim identity. Hence, whereas the Islamic community in Malaysia is fairly united, in Indonesia it is badly fragmented. Owing to serious fragmentation, the political power potential of Indonesian Islam is negligible. By contrast, the Malaysian Islamic community has and wields tremendous political power. Much of this power is used to distinguish ethnic Malays from non-Malays especially since politics in Malaysia is predominantly racial.

Both the Malaysian and Indonesian governments are keenly aware of the political power that can be generated by appeals to Islam. Indonesia has chosen the secular option of depoliticizing Islam. As for Malaysia, the situation is more problematic. Firstly, Islam is the official religion of the country. Secondly, the government has to promote Islam without offending the substantial

non-Malay minority since Muslims are also Malays. Thirdly, it has to outbid the platform of an Islamic political party. Finally, it has to manage and direct Islamic revivalism that is presently sweeping the country from disbalancing inter-ethnic and inter-religious unity. Admittedly, public policy formulators in Malaysia have a very delicate task to perform. Indonesia has much lesser responsibilities.

This thesis explicates the role of Islam in the political development of Malaysia and Indonesia from initial importation of the religion to the present day. The first chapter is a broad survey of Islam. It examines Islam as an action-oriented religion that provides a total blueprint of how to live as a Muslim, both privately and publicly. The chapter also includes a description of the Islamic view of law and state. A brief description of the obligations required of Muslims and the major branches within Islam and their differences are also surveyed.

The second chapter begins with a broad focus on Southeast Asian Islam before a discussion of the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam. Because Islam underwent a revivalist period in both these countries at the turn of this century, the second chapter also examines Islamic revivalism, in Southeast Asia first, and then in Malaysia and Indonesia. The study of revivalism in both countries is sub-divided into the ideological and socio-economic levels. Also, revivalism that occurred prior to independence is treated separately from revivalism that occurred after independence.

Chapter three begins with an examination of Islamic revivalism at the political level in Indonesia and Malaysia. The political nature of revivalism is examined in relation to the formation of religio-political parties. Public policy responses to Islamic revivalism in both countries are then studied. Policy responses seek to identify the thrust of public policies in Malaysia and Indonesia in relation to the role of political Islam in domestic politics.

The fourth and final chapter is a comparative survey of the role of Islam in Malaysian and Indonesian politics, from initial importation up to the present day. In the first instance, Islam will be treated in relation to geography, history and ethnography. The next section examines the impact of colonialism on Islam. Following the colonial influence will be an examination of the revivalist period at the turn of the century. The final section will trace the post-independence development of Islam up to the present time.

The chronological and comparative survey of the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam leads to an examination of public policy responses toward Islam in both countries, beginning from the colonial period up the the present time. The chapter will culminate with projections into future trends on the impact of Islam on domestic politics.

With regards to organization, chapters one and four will be treated thematically. Islam will be the theme for the first

chapter and a comparative treatment of Malaysian and Indonesian Islam will be the theme for the last chapter. As for chapters two and three, Malaysia and Indonesia will be treated separately.

Two important points are necessary at this juncture. The first point is that only secondary sources have been used for the chapter that surveys Islam. Secondly, with regards to projections into future trends on the role of political Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia, political, economic and social stability has been assumed. Finally, to familiarize the reader with the non-English words that have been used in the thesis, a glossary has been compiled. It appears at the end of the thesis before the bibliography.

lotes:

. - See for example Edward W. Said, Orientalism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978)

CHAPTER ONE

ISLAM - A SURVEY

Religion has been characterized in sociology as a set of beliefs and values with corresponding institutional arrangements. Typically, it is a series of evolving responses to situations judged by its practitioners to fall outside the realm of rational understanding or empirical verification. Hence, religion provides a frame of reference for conceiving a supernatural order with a bearing on man's activities.[1] Usually, along with this framework, values determining how one's life is to be led and how one relates to his fellow men are included as well.

A practitioner of Islam will not take too kindly to the sociologist's definition of a religion. The reasons for his reactions are numerous. To begin with, the Muslim would argue that the dictates of God are beyond the conception and comprehension of mortal man and finite thought. Beyond that, the cornerstone of Islam is, obedience and submission. To question the will of God is not part of Islam's practice. Instead, it is a religion that engages its practitioner in action. A Muslim is not a Muslim because he has an understanding of his faith. Instead, he is so because he is bound to the will of Allah. It is exactly this overarching sense of duty to the faith which distinguishes a Muslim from a practitioner of some other religions. As well, the dictates of Islam collapse traditional Western distinctions between the

secular and sacred, or the public and private realms. In fact, it would be truer to say that Islam has never acknowledged such distinctions. As a result, Islam's sway over the life of a Muslim and his unquestioning adherence to its precepts are mutually reinforcing. They provide not only individual identity, but group identity as well. Hence, whether for a Muslim or for the Islamic community, religious intensity operates at two levels - firstly in its action-oriented attitudes and secondly, in its embrace of all areas of life.

In revealing the words of God in the Koran, Muhammad has been acknowledged as having continued the Judaeo-Christian tradition. In fact, the final deliverer on Judgement Day aside, Muslims would argue that Muhammad represented the culmination of the tradition. Islam is to Muslims a primordial religion that has been revealed at intervals. From Adam to Muhammad, from the history of many religions, is derived Islam - the one true and primordial religion.[2] Differences in earlier interpretations are ascribed to historical circumstances and the distortions of the teachings of the earlier prophets. Islam can be said to be premised on this theological view of religions. As a result, Muslims subscribe to one God (Allah), one prophet (Muhammad), one primordial religion (Islam) and one book of revelations (the Koran).

This chapter concerns itself with the nature of Islam. First and foremost, Islam will be introduced as a way of life, a cultural system which goes beyond the confines of religion as

nderstood in the Western sense of the word. After that, three undamental schools of Islamic thought - Sh'īa, Sunnī and Sufī ill be introduced. Following an outline of these schools there ill be an appraisal of Islamic notions of law and state and how hey are understood by Muslims. The obligations (or 'Five Pillars of Islam' as they are sometimes referred to) of Muslims will be highlighted as well, followed by a discussion of contemporary Islam, with particular emphasis on the challenges it has to confront today. It is hoped that this first chapter will serve as a prelude to a discussion of the Southeast Asian variant of Islam in the next chapter. Thus, this chapter seeks to familiarize the reader with some of the fundamental tenets of Islam as well as give the reader a 'feel' for the tone, texture and temper of the religion.

Islam - A Way of Life

Unlike Christianity which has the birth of Christ as its starting point, Islamic history 1 A.H. (622 A.D.) begins with the setting up of the first Muslim political community. It is interesting to note that God's revelation to Muhammad preceded the setting up of this community. Hence, Islamic history begins at Medina where Muhammad formed his first political community as opposed to Mecca where the revelation took place.[3]

From its very inception, the link between God and Muslims was defined in terms of religious behaviour. Islam advocated

righteousness through actions and sought to unite all actions within the framework of religion. It is in this regard very different from Western thought. For the secular Western man, the Greek ideal of rationality stemming from man's intellect is the link between man and the general scheme of things.[4] The following parts of this section will be devoted to an understanding of Islam as an essentially action-oriented religion and how these actions pertain to every realm of a Muslim's life.

The dictates of the Koran to the Muslim are clearly worship and submissiveness. Islamic theology concerns itself with directives for leading the good life. It not only makes a Muslim dutybound to accept the faith but meticulously prescribes how it should be practiced and proscribes actions counter to Islam. It emphasizes the will of God - a will that must be obeyed as a religious act. It is a religion made up of responses, demanding action. As Kenneth Cragg eloquently notes.

> Its genius has always been in the realm of response to the Divine claim rather than with disquisition into the Divine character. There is no merit in excessive curiosity. Direction is more important than conjecture. Religion has to do with action rather than analysis. 5

One characteristic of Islam is a concern for this worldliness - a preoccupation with how a good life ought to be led in this world in preparation for the next. The Divine injunctions are therefore very particular even in this world in showing how a Muslim ought to conduct his life by himself and in relation to fellow Muslims.[6] As a result, a strong devotion to the Islamic community

has been an inevitable development. This strong sense of loyalty has inspired a concern with an ideal society, and with affirmative moral action.

Existence then, even in this world, is centred around an intense action-oriented need to realize the ideal society. The means by which the ideal is achieved is through a meticulous compliance with the will of God as revealed in certain sources (to be elaborated upon later). Through guidance, Islam offers the discipline required in the establishment of the ideal community. For a Muslim, it would be no exaggeration to state that "conformity with the will of God is the whole raison d'etre of humanity."[7] The conformity expected of the Muslim lies in the ritual and social duties set forth in the Koran and revealed by Muhammad's sayings and actions.

Considering the Muslim's concern for adherence to Islamic precepts and given Islam's concern with this - worldliness, it comes as no surprise that Islam views religion as an activity embracing everything within the human context. It provides a unity of vision that is noticeably absent in the Western tradition. The latter usually distinguishes at the least, between secular and sacred. Reflecting Islam's insistence on viewing religion as an over-arching way of life is the Arabic word din, the equivalent of "religion" but also meaning "a whole way of life."[8] The range of activities that Islamic precepts cover include what the Western world would classify to be hygiene or etiquette.

Islamic righteousness therefore encompasses all fields of human existence - political, moral, social, religious, economic and

legal. In being a unified way of life, religion absorbs what would otherwise be deemed secular. It provides a comprehensive blueprint for existence. As a result, in Islam politics and religion are enmeshed, or are rather viewed as "two sides of a single coin".[9]

Two things stand out in the way Muslims understand Islam. First, God's visions and commandments are not prone to the distinctions of time, territory and culture. To put it differently, Islamic commandments have a universality that is not bound by time or place. Secondly, there is the assertion that in being a Muslim, the practitioner of Islam fulfills his station and status in life. Muslims recognize God's will as one that is not only in their best interests, but more importantly, as one that will enhance their true being.[10]

Major Sects in Islam - Sh'īa, Sunnī and Sufī

To being with Sh'īas, they differ doctrinally from the Sunnī (the two major sects) primarily in terms of their relationship to Shari'a (Islamic law"). The Sunnīs generally acknowledge the Shari'a as the final arbiter in all religious matters, as opposed to the Sh'īas who view the continuity of Islam in terms of a series of Imams (religious leaders). Sh'īa subscription to the authority of Imams is premised on the belief that these holy men are "in lineal relation to Muhammad and only through them did the faithful in each generation stand within the authentic truth."[11] For the Sunnīs, Muhammad, being

the fountainhead of all religious revelation, had all the essential criteria of Islamic dogma set out in the Shari'a. It is worthy of note that in their beliefs, the Sh'īas never questioned the authority of the Koran, but rather saw its vitality renewed through Imams.

Over the course of time, the Sh'īa Muslim community has increasingly focussed its attention on the Imam and his leadership as essential agents in the salvation process. It was felt that men without the necessary charismatic leadership would be prone to bad decisions. Stemming from the doctrinal position that asserts the Imam's intermediary role is the concept of messianism that the Sh'īas also subscribe to.[12] Messianism holds that final deliverance derives from a supernatural leader or one ordained by God. This belief dates back to 700 A.D., when the Muslim community thought their Imam was concealed rather than dead, and that at the appropriate time, he would return as the Deliverer (Mahdi) of Islam.

Sh'īas resent the fact that one of their leaders, 'Ali - a caliph during the Golden Age of Islam - has not been acknowledged by the Sunnīs and two Surahs (verses) supporting Sh'īa claims to Ali's rightful place in Islamic history have been removed.[13] Besides, given the prominent role of the Imams in Sh'īa Islam, Sh'īas have always contended that the difficult sections of the Koran require illumination and elaboration that only the Imams are qualified to provide.

The Sunnīs, unlike their Sh'īa counterparts, emphasize the

Islamic community instead of the Imam as the "guardian and guarantor of the Shari'a."[14] However, Sunnī ulama (learned experts) have been able to preserve their role as interpreters of Islamic law. Whereas the authority of the Imam is supreme among the Sh'īa, that of the Caliph is supreme among the Sunnīs. The right of non-obedience toward caliph, which the Sh'īas exercised in the first two centuries of Islam owing to their dissatisfaction over the treatment of Ali, was never acknowledged by the Sunnīs. Instead, the Sunnīs have always been obedient and dutybound to the dictates of the Shari'a which is based on the precedents of Muhammad's system of rule, which later became institutionalized in the caliphate.

Where the Sunnīs emphasize the Islamic community, the Sufīs stress the individual. Sufīs strive to achieve a pure soul through understanding God's love. God's power can therefore be said to have been downplayed. Sufīsm is renowned for its resistance to externalities In forging the pure soul that the Sufī saw as essential to the practice of Islam, the Sufī became detached from this - worldliness, whether it was fortune or calamity.[15] However, by the same token, the Sufī was also little interested in the historical role of Islam. The Sufī challenge of love and devotion stood in stark contrast to the traditional Islamic notions of submission to the will of God as dictated in the Koran and a punctilious practice of it.[16] Sufīsm effectively escaped the wrath of the Muslim community by speaking in terms of inner conscience, while the Koran only dictated external and observable actions. Hence, the Islamic community was unable to check Sufīsm.

Sufīsm's break from Islam was not total. For example, the doctrine of the Mahdi was adopted from the Sh'īas. Nonetheless, Sufism's departure from the dictates of traditional Islam are sufficient enough to warrant the label of heretics. From its very beginning, Sufīsm evolved in a cliquish fashion and often comprised a closed set of disciples who were guided by a leader. In its attempt to achieve direct communion with God, Sufīsm viewed life as a continuous movement from one station to another until the divine was achieved. Its popularity allowed it to establish itself as a "religion within a religion."[17]

Apart from the religious popularity, Sufīsm offered a whole host of social activities that satisfied the uneducated. It provided an effective channel for their social needs. Many of the Sufī orders are known to have engaged in ritualistic activities that included singing and dancing. At the political level, with the decay of the Islamic Empire beginning in the 11th Century, Sufīsm privided a personal identity to displaced Muslims. Sufī orders did not accept the austere and sometimes tyrannical control of the Ulamā (religious leaders). Hence, Sufīsm was also a political reaction to Islamic organization.[18]

Despite the deep-seated cleavages that Islamic history has undergone, one fact must be borne in mind to understanding the evolution of the religion. The fact is that underlying this divisiveness is a unity. In fact, if anything, paradoxically enough, it was unity that led to division. It is indeed, as Kenneth Cragg notes,

"A family quarrel" that concerns "the fundamental issues of authority and community."[19] The divisiveness is a barometer of the intensity of the faith and reflects the zeal of its participants. For all the seeming disruptions, it expresses the religious community.

Law and State in Islam

If Islam can be described as a way of life for the Muslim, the same label can be attached to Islamic law. Islam as a religion, as we noted earlier, does not distinguish separate realms of action. Likewise, nothing falls beyong the bounds of Islamic law. If Islam is an action-oriented religion, so are its laws. The Muslim community of believers are bound by the authority of God, as manifested in its laws, in all spheres of life. Hence, whether for purposes of analysis or practical application, law and religion are one and the same in Islam.

The sacred law for Muslims is the Shari'a or "right path of action."[20] It is sacred and all-embracing. It has ultimate jurisdiction and governance over all areas of a Muslim's life. The essence of Islam being regulation, law is an integral part of the religion. Were it not for the Shari'a, the basis of Islamic obedience could be undermined.

Shari'a is both ethical and ritualistic. From time to time, a term that preceded Shari'a is employed. This term if Fiqh, which translated into English, means understanding. During its earlier stages, the Islamic community employed Fuqaha' or legalists who were conversant with Islamic jurisprudence which was legitimized as being congruent with Divine Will. Fiqh has two component elements. The

first element is the notion of direction that stems from God and the second, submission, that stems from the practicing Muslim.[21]

Islamic Shari'a is not derived entirely from the Koran. Rather, it is augmented by four other sources. Within the Koran itself, the Medinan Surahs provide for the daily governance of Muslims. To supplement these, recollections of Muhammed's sayings and actions have been compiled by some of his relatives, earlier companions and close followers. His sayings are referred to as the Hadith or 'Traditions'and his actions comprise the Sunnah or 'the trodden path.'[22] The two other supplementary sources are ijma and qiyas. The latter is a reference made to deductive analogy. Typically, cases from the past of a similar nature are drawn out as precedents for decision-making. Ijma is rather different and corresponds to Western notions of democracy.[23] It involves the consensus of the Islamic community or Ummah. Muslim jurists believed that the collective wisdom of the Ummah was less susceptible to wrong decisions than individual jurists. The final source for legal precedence derives from the Khalifah al Rashidun - 'the right - guided caliphs.' Reigning from 632 to 661 A.D., the four caliphs (Abu Bakar, Omar, Osman and Ali) represent the Golden Age of Islam.[24] Succeeding Muhammad, all four of them acquired a reputation for judicious rule.

Given the wide variety of sources from which Shari'a is derived and the enormous territory occupied by the Muslims from the middle of the 7th Century, the administration of Islamic law became a formidable

task. Besides, Islamic jurisprudence itself was represented by four schools of thought and legal precedent. The least rigid of the four, the Hanafite school, exercised jurisprudence in Turkey, India, and Central Asia, while Shafi'ism prevailed in the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. North Africa was represented by Malikism and by far the most austere - the Hanbali school established itself in Saudi Arabia.[25] All that the Shari'a represents today and the commentaries of the four schools of jurisprudence were recorded. Towards the middle of the 9th Century, Shari'a became codified. Following codification, in accordance with the ijma of Islamic scholars, Ijtihad or independent judgement, was halted. Hence, Shari'a acquired a more rigid form and secured its place in Islam as a stable form of jurisprudence.

Having outlined the all-embracing nature of the Shari'a and having traced how Muslim jurisprudence evolved and was codified, a few observations are pertinent at this juncture. First and foremost, it must be realized that owing to its strict adherence to Islamic and as a result God's commandments, the Islamic state, unlike the Western state, does not perform an intermediary role. Hence, an Islamic state does not exercise sovereignty as popularly understood. Sovereignty derives from God and those who oversee His dictates are merely executors of the Divine Will.[26] As a result, supreme power rests with God. Besides, owing to the fact that the Islamic community, which is bound by the will of God and is not bound by Western notions

of territorality, the Islamic state can be said to transgress the geographical boundaries of nation states.

Secondly, in ascribing the origins of Islamic law to God, a strong argument can be made that it has universal applicability, regardless of the barriers of colour, race, sex, language, or nationality.[27] Hence, the legality of the Shari'a is not in dispute. Being the benevolent God that Allah is, and given his jurisdiction over the affairs of this world, it can be readily argued that the Shari'a, notwithstanding its codification in the 9th Century, is intended for eternal guidance. Hence, for a Muslim, the charge that the Shari'a is outdated is both offensive and a denial of God's eternal nature.

The most obvious criticism of Shari'a is that it is legalistic. It involved a codification of dictates from various sources. The socio-moral values on which the Koran, Hadith and the Sunna are premised were not explained. As a result, as Fazlur Rahman contends, "the legal literature of Islam has a bookish smell."[28] To conclude, Islamic law is the exercise of God's Will as outlined in the Koran and supplemented from other sources. It is inseparable from the religion and is action-oriented. It has a supreme authority vested with God and transcends geographical boundaries and time. All these aspects pose definite problems for Islam as a functioning religion in the contemporary world.

The Five Pillars of Islam

The five obligations that a Muslim has to fulfill are dictates of the Koran. Duties towards Islam at the one level represent the submission of a Muslim's will to that of God, at another they establish the solidarity and well-being of the Islamic community.

At the heart of Islamic worship and the first pillar of Islam is Salāt or public worship. The worship itself comprises a variety of actions such as standing and bowing. Besides exclamations of praise, a Muslim is required to touch the ground with his forehead. This form of prayer is symbolic of his recognition of the "supreme might and majesty of God."[29] The Salāt itself is preceded by physical purification. When a group of Muslims gather in holy communion to worship Allah following the lead of an Imam, the Muslim brotherhood is given identity. Under normal conditions, a Muslim would be expected to perform the Salāt five times daily - at dawn, midday, afternoon, sunset and evening.

The haj or pilgrimmage to Mecca is the second pillar. The haj involves a number of ceremonies, including kissing the famed Black Stone. Like the salāt, the haj increases the solidarity of Muslims, especially since they represent very diverse regions and cultures. The third pillar, the fast (sawm), occurs during the month of Ramadān.[30] From half an hour prior to sunrise until half an hour following sunset, Muslims have to refrain from smoking, drinking, eating and sexual intercourse for an entire month. Besides being a

test of endurance, the fast is an indication of Islamic piety, since the fast inadvertently affects the efficiency and productivity of Muslims.

The fourth pillar is Shahāda or the confession of faith. This act involves repeating the line "There is no god but God; Muhammad is the messenger of God."[31] The confession is not only an acceptance of Islam, but symbolises total submission. The final pillar is zakāt or almsgiving. Somewhat analagous to the Christian tradition of tithing, zakāt is the Islamic community's way of looking after its poor and dispossessed. Although it exists as a tax in certain Islamic countries, the amount is usually left to individual conscience.[32]

Islam and Contemporary Developments

There is little doubt that Islamic civilization is presently entering a new era. This new era has been characterized by a resurgence of Islam through the world and by the call for setting up Islamic states. There are however, factors in the history of Islam behind these revivalist trends.

Beginning in the 11th Century through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, Islam has experienced a substantial decline in power and prestige. The Golden Age of the Ummayad and Abbasid Caliphates, however, remain in the minds of the Muslims, attesting to the glory that Islam once achieved. However, when the west acquired areas that were once under the proud banner of Islam and embarked on rapid industrialization, the Islamic world became

introverted and ulamās became chiefly interested in either maintaining or promoting their own interests. As a result, the functions that they had traditionally performed for the Muslims became watered down.[33] Hence, the Islamic community was effectively left without leaders who could help Islam adapt to changing conditions.

In its historical context then, the present revivalism is contending with both a decadence within the community and a rather unsympathetic response from without.[34] The long history of wars between Christendom and the Ottoman Empire have left the West with certain stereotyped images of Islamic society - uncouth, barbaric, and backward. It is precisely in the light of these confrontations that the present revivalism has to be understood. On the one hand, the emerging puritanism seeks a reassertion of past glory and a return to the true spirit of Islam that the onslaught of the West had stifled. On the other hand it is involved in adapting itself to the present in order to realize its potential as a force to be reckoned with. The realization of this potential cannot occur without some kind of recourse to mutual assistance amongst the countries involved, especially those flushed with the wealth of petro-dollars.

For an adequate response to its present predicament, a reformulation of Islamic doctrine is certainly a prerequisite. The key to this reformulation lies in a total and systematic reappraisal of the Koran and its legal precepts. Since, as was suggested earlier, Muslims have punctiliously practiced their

religious precepts without understanding its socio-moral thrust, a re-evaluation would have to identify this thrust and formulate laws of current applicability or workable in the present climate. Thus, two things are needed - an understanding of the thrust of the Koran and a systematic structure of new laws, and an understanding of the present socio-historical background for such legislation to function effectively.[35] As Fazlur Rahman suggests, the analogical reasoning of the qiyās should be re-activated as the instrument for ijtihad. Professor Rahman's contention is that whereas Islam began as a tabula rasa and constructed a social fabric that adapted well in its time, its past fabric requires rejuvenation to deal with the vastly changed situation of today.[36] In having to contend with a fairly established social fabric, laws derived from the clean slate state of affairs are no longer applicable.

Regardless of how it intends to reassert itself and whether Islam has outlived its times, one thing is certain - that a redefinition of the Shari'a will cause tremendous discontent and conflict within the Muslim community. Firstly, it goes against the traditional grain of obedience and submission to what has already been revealed, enacted and codified. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the Muslim would argue that God's message transcends the finite bounds of time and civilization. However, if a change is not made, the outcome could be even more disastrous, especially since the Islamic community is international and is bound by the Shari'a.

Besides, countries with a predominantly Western weltanschauung will resist the Islamic treatment of secular and religious authority as one and the same.

NOTES

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[2] Jacques Waardenburg, "World Religions in the Light of Islam", in Afred T. Welch and Pierre Cachia (eds.). Islam: Past Influence and Present Challenge (Edinburgh: University Press, 1979), p. 246.

[3] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Islam in Modern History (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 15-16.

[4] Ibid., p. 17.

[5] Kenneth Cragg, The House of Islam (Belmont: Dickenson Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 7-8.

[6] Smith, op. cit., p. 39.

[7] Cragg, op. cit., p. 6.

[8] W. Montgomery Watt, What is Islam? (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 3.

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[10] Cragg, op. cit., p. 11.

[11] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[12] Watt, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

[13] Cragg, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

[14] Smith, op. cit., p. 76.

[15] Ibid., p. 37.

[16] Fazlur Rahman, Islam. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1966), pp. 130-31.

[17] Ibid., p. 150.

[18] Ibid., p. 151.

[19] Kenneth Cragg, op. cit., p. 81.

[20] Ibid., p. 46.

[21] Ibid., p. 45.

[22] Jansen, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

[23] Ibid., p. 24.

[24] Ibid., p. 25.

[25] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

[26] Farooq Hassan, The Concept of State and Law in Islam (Washington: University Press of America, 1981), p. 34.

[27] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[28] Fazlur Rahman, Islam, op. cit., p. 29.

[29] Watt, op. cit., pp. 185-86.

[30] Ibid., p. 187.

[31] Ibid., pp. 187-88.

[32] Ibid., p. 188.

[33] Ibid., pp. 166-67.

[34] Smith, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

[35] Fazlur Rahman, "Islam: Challenges and Opportunities" in Welch and Cachia, Islam: Past Influence and Present Challenge, op. cit. p. 326.

[36] Fazlur Rahman, Islam, op. cit., p. 214.

CHAPTER TWO

ISLAM-THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN VARIANT

Totalling approximately 140 million people, the Muslim community of Southeast Asia is predominantly concentrated in an archipelago that begins in Southern Thailand and stretches through Malaysia and Indonesia as well as the Southern Philippines.[1] Culturally this geographical expanse is not a monolithic block. The area has also been subjected to a variety of influences - indigeneous as well as foreign. Of the latter, the Indian and Hindu-Buddhist traditions are the most conspicuous.

Evidence of a Muslim civilization dating back to the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are derived mostly from grave-stones uncovered in Indonesia. The earliest of these is from Page in Indonesia which has been dated at 1297.[2] Another found at Gresik in east Java dates back to 1419 and one found in Pase, north Sumatra has been traced to the first half of the fifteenth century. Leran in Java has yielded another tombstone that dates back to 1391. Two other inscriptions attest to an early Muslim civilization - the Tralaya insciptions, dated between 1376 to 1475 and the famed Trengganu inscriptions from peninsular Malaysia, which is dated between 1386 and 1387. There has been considerable controversy as to where the early Muslims came from or the route they took.[3] However, it is generally accepted that Islam was imported into the region by Indian and Arab traders and spread through a trading network.

When Islam was first imported into Southeast Asia, it was predominantly a court phenomena. Trading was essentially conducted

at the courts and this accounts for how local indigeneous rulers familiarized themselves with Islam. Owing to the fact that foreign trade was in the hands of Muslims, the earliest trading ports in the region reflected a similar 'culture and ethos'.[4] Slowly, this nascent Islamic culture was transmitted inland. This process of diffusion from the coastal areas to the interior was accomplished through kinship systems.[5]

Prior to the advent of Islam, the inhabitants of Southeast Asia practiced either animism or animism combined with Hinduism and Buddhism.[6] However, conversion to Islam did not entail the displacement of the earlier belief systems. Instead, Islam underwent adaptation. The particular form of Islam that was transported to the region - Sufī mysticism - facilitated the emergence of a syncretic blend of Islam that is peculiar to the region. Sufism's emphasis on forging a mystical personal relationship with God and its transcendentalist view of God are crucial to an understanding of the eclecticism of early Islam. In fact, Islam combined with adat (customary practices) in a variety of ways, depending on the tone and temper of the earlier communities. This process of reassembling the indigeneous weltanschauung ensured or at least superficially provided harmony for what would otherwise have been conflicting paradigms:

> Often the complementarity is subtle and complex, deflecting and resolving much potential conflict. Inconsistencies tend to be resolved through metaphysics, minimized and sometimes not even recognized.7

Apart from its eclecticism there are a few other factors which gave Islam the ability to spread quickly. Firstly, in comparison

to the self-denying and hierarchical Hindu and Buddhist doctrines, Islam appeared oriented towards a more equalitarian set of values. As well, it provided the Muslim community with an identity that went beyond the confines of geography and ethnicity. This community incorporated both urban and rural elements.[8] Besides, it was politically and economically expedient for local rulers to convert. Politically, the local rulers appropriated the position of the caliphs of the Middle-East and economically, they were favoured by Muslim traders. In addition to the expression of an ummah, rival powers could also be opposed under a common banner.[9]

If the earlier Hindu-Buddhist tradition of Southeast Asia influenced Islam, so did the European domination of the region, which began in the early sixteenth century. Whereas Malaya was colonized by the Portuguese and more importantly the British, Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch. This colonial period transformed Islam even further. Firstly, the colonial countries administered the region along European constitutional and political lines. As a result, power usually filtered from a metropolitan area. The authority that was conferred on administrators from these metropoles was territorially defined.[10] These administrators ensured that Islam's status was reduced to that of a religion. In other words, Islam was privatized and a sharp distrinction was drawn between religion and politics. Hence, instead of being 'a way of life' and transcending distinctions between private and public affairs and secular and sacred authority, Islam became secularized. Finally, colonization brought with it bureaucratization. To enforce the

European view of Islam as a private affair, very specific aspects of Islam pertaining to family law were codified and administered by courts, also along European lines. Likewise, the collection of alms and the building of mosques were also publicly administered. With regards to law and order, secular jurisdiction applied. All in all, the role of Islam was effectively reduced to a private religion. As well, it was administered by secular authorities.[11]

The third phase (the first being initial conversion and the second European domination) that Southeast Asian Islam went through can be best described as a purification process. At the turn of the twentieth century, with improved communications, more Muslims from the region could perform the _haj_. As a result of their exposure to the purer and less syncretic variants of Islam that existed in the Middle-East, these pilgrims sought to change Islam as it existed in Southeast Asia. Also at this time, reformist trends were coming out of Cairo's Al-Azhar University[12] - one of the foremost centres of Islamic scholarship. Especially influential at Al-Azhar was Muhammad Abduh, whose teachings were to transform Southeast Asian Islam. Abduh's tracts were published and widely circulated in Malaysia and Indonesia.

Abduh's teachings rapidly gained popularity and adherents to his philosophy became known as the _Kaum Muda_ (Young Faction), in contrast to the indigeneous rulers and their traditional village - trained _imams_ - _Kaum Tua_ (Old Faction). The _Kaum Muda_ advocated two kinds of reform - _ijtihad_ and purification.[13] Extremely contemptuous of the syncretic nature of Southeast Asian Islam, the

reformists urged a return to Islam as decreed by the Koran. They accused the Kaum Tua of inculcating taklid buta (blind obedience) to the existing variant of Islam. In advocating ijtihad, the reformists were however caught in a curious paradox. While seeming to propagate orthodox Islam, they were actually being influenced by the modernist tide of Islamic reformism, because the truly orthodox do not practice ijtihad but a highly legalistic and 'bookish' form of Islam.

Nothwithstanding the divisiveness within the ummah, Islamic reformism resulted in the religion taking deeper roots in the region - a development that was to have significant consequences. One of the repercussions of heightened Islamic consciousness was that the religion began to evolve a new political consciousness as well. The banner of Islam united the nationalist and anti-colonial movements of both Malaysia and Indonesia. The fight against European domination was also increasingly viewed as a fight of Muslims and Christians.

The following sections will treat the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam separately. Although the Southeast Asian variant of Islam was syncretic, it was not consistent in its syncretism. Hence, regional variations of Islam are common. Owing to this difficulty as well as differences at the individual level, trying to employ a behaviouralist typology to analyse traditional Muslim society would be superficial and deceptive at best. For any behaviouralist framework to be useful, individual patterns of behaviour would have to be well-defined and consistent.[14] Suffice it to say, neither of these criteria are applicable to Malaysian and

Indonesian Muslims.

Following the differentiated treatment of Indonesian and Malaysian Islam, the focus will shift to Islamic revivalism in Southeast Asia. Revivalism will then be treated as it pertains to both countries. This chapter will present the problem of Islamic revivalism at the ideological and socio-economic level, leaving the political manifestations of revivalism and governmental responses to them for the next chapter. Before examining revivalist trends and the reasons for them, we require an historical insight into the peculiarities of the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam to place present day developments in perspective.

Islam - The Malaysian Variant

Islam's entry into Malaya did little to alter the political structures that were already existent in the Malay States. The sultans (rulers) were still considered legitimate by the Malays, though instead of being considered the reincarnation of Indra according to Hindu religious doctrines, they viewed themselves as caliphs instead.[15] With the conversion of the sultans, the diffusion of Islam was greatly facilitated. Through persuasion and at times coercion, neighbouring court circles converted as well. Aside from setting the example first, the fear of royal sanctions also served as a catalyst in the process of diffusion.[16]

Notwithstanding the acceptance of a new and alien religion, much of the adat that wasalready existent was preserved. So for instance, alongside Muslim religious practices, the worship of ghosts, saints,

and spirits (walis) as well as holy places (keramat) were kept in tact. Likewise, the imam existed side by side with the bomoh or pawang - religio-magical men who cast spells and warded off evil spirits.[17] Many of these incongruous practices were possible largely because the sultans affirmed them as Islamic. The imams who should have been capable of recognizing them as deviations were ill-prepared to do so. Leadership in religious matters was, after all, not assumed by experts in Koran or shari'a.[18] Hence, the prerogative of labelling adat as Islamic or congruent with the teachings of Islam rested solely with the sultans. As a result, the sultans themselves were largely responsible for the syncretic nature of Malaysian Islam.

The administration of Islam in Malaysia was hierarchical. At the highest level was the sultan - the supreme authority on religious matters in his state - a position that was held even after the British colonized the country. The sultans administered the religion with the help of advisory councils. The highest representative of each sultan in matters of religious doctrine was the mufti - an official empowered by the sultan to preserve orthodoxy. However, at the administrative level, a wholly separate court system existed.[19] These shari'a or kathi courts came under the jurisdiction of a chief kathi (judge). At the district level, there were subordinate district kathis, manning their own courts.

Prior to British colonization, Islamic institutions were highly localized and self-sufficient. The size of the masjid (mosque) or surau (prayer house) was a reflection of the wealth of the kampong

(village).[20] A religious committee comprising the elders of the village appointed the imam - someone who was thought to be either extremely devout or conversant with the Koran.

It is apt at this juncture to highlight some of the attractions that Islam held for the Malay at the village level. To begin with, the concept of Melayu (Malay) was mutually exclusive and often entailed hierarchical and status considerations, an example of which is the penghulu (village chief). Islam did not recognize this hierarchy and was more concerned with a horizontal spread. The role of the sultan could easily be equated with that of the Islamic caliph. Hence, Islam fostered a sense of communal solidarity. Besides that, it provided a self-sufficient blueprint for the conduct of daily life.[21]

The communual solidarity of Islam is especially important when trying to understand the Malaysian case. Solidarity at the village level was provided by the various rites demanded by Islam. Over time, events that were important prior to the onset of Islam also acquired a religious tinge. Birth, death, planting, harvesting and indigeneous festivals began to be viewed in Islamic terms. Because Islamic activities were designed to physically solidify the ummah, it served to integrate and identify the village community. Hence, Islam at the village level served the important and useful function of conflict alleviation.[22]

The advent of the British in Malaya changed Islam substantially. British interests in Malaya were designed to tap the local resources, especially tin and rubber. However, a stable and viable political system became a prerequisite to this venture. As well, a moral rationale was required to legitimize the whole

enterprise.[23] This rationale came in the form of a concern to protect and preserve traditional Malay society. Despite the obvious contradiction of the avowed policy, they began restructuring traditional Malay society.

Through a system of indirect rule, the British appointed residents, who would oversee the administration of affairs at the state and federal levels. This method of ruling necessitated circumscribing the political power of the sultans. Nonetheless, the British acknowledged the sovereignty of the sultans on matters "touching Malay religion and Custom".[24] Having had the scope of their activities drastically reduced, the sultans attended to religious matters more intensively. Owing to this concentration of effort on the part of the sultans, the administration of religious affairs became much more refined, with the religion itself becoming enmeshed in the religio-cultural identity of the Malay community. From the recognition accorded to their religion by the British, the Malays eventually felt the country to be legitimately their own. Hence, the Islam of the past that used to define community acquired the political dimension of conferring "legitimate domicile rights."[25]

British policies towards Islam were in part inspired by their experiences in India. The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 had made the British acutely aware of the fact that seeming disruptions to indigeneous beliefs and practices had the potential to unleash xenophobic violence.[26] Therefore, the British took care in not allowing Malays to perceive their religion as being undermined by colonization. Besides, support for Islam was also calculated to win

them the allegiance of the sultans - a political expediency designed to minimize friction. However, the British were also careful in segregating secular civil administration from Islam. By doing this, they effectively secularized Islam and brought it indirectly under the control of secular administrators as well. Where secular civil courts were established to uphold administrative law, they allowed sharia' courts to perform the same function for religious matters.[27] Hence, unwittingly, the British condified Islamic law.

In their earnestness to be in the good books of the Malays, the British raised the consciousness of the Malay community in a few ways. Firstly, in creating laws to protect and preserve Malay society and culture, they instilled in the Malays a certain legitimate claim to the country once their rule expired. Furthermore, in recognizing the sultans as administrative intermediaries, they prepared the traditional rulers for political power in a way that the other ethnic communities were not groomed. Finally, in recognizing the sultans as guardians of Islam, they gave the Malays a heightened sense of religious identity. These observations are not meant to suggest that the Malays did not feel their rights to the country to be mutually exclusive much earlier. However, British rule performed the task of legitimizing earlier assertions. In fact, the Malays were keenly aware of their religious identity for centuries. This identity is reflected in the term used for conversion to Islam - masok Melayu, which literally means to enter the Malay community.[28] The polarization of religion along ethnic lines was aided by Islam itself, which distinguishes between believers and infidels (kafir) and,

dar-al-Islam (the place of Islam) and dar-al-harb (the abode of infidels).[29]

Another factor that heightened Malay ethnic consciousness was the influx of non-Malay migrant workers. These migrants were predominantly Indian and Chinese. The Indians were brought in by the British as labourers and rubber tappers, while the Chinese were predominantly engaged in tin-mining activities. By the middle of the nineteenth century, some of these migrants, especially the Chinese, had become affluent. Fearing economic and political domination by these 'aliens', the Malays were quite adamant in not having their special rights and privileged status curtailed.[30] The interweaving of religious and ethnic identity culminated in the Merdeka Constitution of August 31, 1957. Among some of the pro-Malay-Muslim policies that were codified were the status of the sultans, the endorsement of Islam as the official religion of the country and restricted citizenship rights for non-Malays.[31]

Fears of ethnic polarization culminating in communal violence were borne out in 1969. In the wake of racial violence following a Chinese electoral victory procession, the constitution was suspended for twenty-one months and emergency rule was declared. In diagnosing the cause of Malay unrest as relative economic deprivation, the Malaysian government embarked on a policy to restructure Malaysian society so that the Malays would have a thirty percent slice of the national economic pie. Called the New Economic

Policy (NEP) and instituted in 1970, the government's desire is to achieve "a target goal of thirty percent Malay ownership and participation in all categories of commercial and industrial activities by 1991".[32] With Islam being one of the distinguishing characteristics in the legal definition of a Malay, the NEP is also a shot in the arm for Muslims.

Islam - The Indonesian Variant

If Malaysian Islam can be described as a religion that adapted itself to pre-Islamic Hindu-Buddhist beliefs and values, the same can be said of Indonesian Islam. Indeed, with the exception of a few virgin pockets in Sumatra, Borneo, and the Celebes, Islam, when imported into Indonesia in the fourteenth century, encountered one of the richest religio-cultural heritages in Asia.[33] Although the Hindu-Buddhist Javanese state of the Majapahit Empire had waned in political power, its religio-cultural roots had already been deeply embedded in Indonesian society. Together with the indigeneous belief and value systems, Indic "theories of cosmic truth and metaphysical virtue" had already shaped a distinctive civilization.[34] Hence, whereas Malaysian Islam was adaptive, Indonesian Islam was appropriative.

Typical of the Southeast Asian variant of Islam, Indonesian Islam was initially imported through a network of trading ports, especially those that were involved in the spice trade around the Straits of Malacca and the Java sea.[35] From foreign traders, the task of spreading the message fell into the hands of local Indonesian traders. However, unlike Malaysia, it took approximately three centuries for Islam to filter its way inward, from the coastal concentration areas. Therefore, Indonesian Islam can also be described as having been gradualistic in winning converts and incomplete.

In a very real sense then, Indonesian Islam, as mentioned earlier, never engaged in outright conversions. If anything, Java

converted Islam. Through the centuries, Javanese culture had always exhibited a particular resilience. It had adopted certain elements of Hinduism and Buddhism before, would adopt certain elements of Islam and later, certain elements of European civilization as well.[36] Clifford Geertz eloquently summarizes the Javanese modus operandi as:

> adaptive, absorbent, pragmatic, and gradualistic, a matter of partial compromises, half-way covenants, and outright evasions. The Islamism which resulted did not even pretend to purity, it pretended to comprehensiveness; not to an intensity but to a largeness of spirit. 37

The task of absorbing, reconciling, and rejecting elements of Islam did not pose a serious problem to practitioners of pre-Islamic Javanese culture. This ease was owing to a variety of reasons. Firstly, as it was brought by Indian traders, Islam had already been 'blunted inwards' by Indian mysticism.[38] To this blunting process must be added its minimal contrast to the earlier religious culture, which comprised an admixture of Hinduism, Buddhism, and animism. As well, severed from Middle Eastern orthodoxy, Indonesian Islam was left to charter its own peculiar course. As a result, Indonesian Islam or rather, Javanese Islam, entailed only superficial changes to existing religion - a name change from a Hindu Raja to a Muslim sultan and some other symbolic adjustments.

As was the case with Malaysia, Islam appears to have held a few attractions for the Indonesians. When first imported in the fourteenth century, there was a political motivation for accepting Islam. At this time, the authority of the Majapahit Empire was weakening and potential Hindu-Javanese successors were warring for

political power.[39] Conversion to Islam meant that the coastal vassal states could unite ideologically to become independent - a task that was made easier by the fact that most of the early Muslims were traders and therefore, financially well-off. In addition to allowing the new converts to unite their financial resources, Islam conferred a certain status on trading as a means of livelihood[40] - a validation process that was noticeably lacking in Hinduism. Malacca in Malaysia even had a preferential duty system for Muslims. Islam therefore provided a positive outlook on trading activities, while the ummah provided the necessary international trading links. Furthermore, Islam demanded that Muslims be treated equally, which again suited the new merchant-converts well. With regard to external threats, joining the ranks of the ummah was also politically expedient. Beginning with the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and the Dutch in the seventeenth, Western traders were keen to appropriate the lucrative spice trade.[41] Conversion meant that the nascent Muslim community was better prepared politically and economically to defend its interests against the westerners. As well, conversion also took the battle to the ideological level, of Islam versus Christiantiy.

Apart from the modernism espoused by the Kaum Muda in Malaysia at the turn of the twentieth century, Malaysian Islam has been relatively homogeneous in the past - a homogeneity that is accentuated by the Malay-Muslim combination of ethnicity and religion and the role of the sultans. This concept of homogeniety is noticeably absent with the Indonesian variant of Islam. In its

syncretic combinations, Indonesian Islam gave birth to three very distinct categories of Muslims.[42] The _abangan_ and the _santri_ are by far the two most dominant variants and are usually held to be representative of the Indonesian Muslim population. On the other hand, the _abangan_ and the _prijaji_ comprise the more secular and syncretic variants of Indonesian Islam while the orthodox variant is represented by the _santris_.

Most Indonesian Muslims practice Islam rather superficially. They have no extensive knowledge of Islam as expounded in the _Koran, hadith_ or _shari'a_. Despite being conscious of their Islamic identity, these _Muslim statistik_ (statistical Muslims) are more Javanese than Islamic in their practices. Their Hindu-Buddhist-animist culture is cloaked in a superficial veneer of Arabic phrases.[43] _Muslim statistik_ are of the _abangan_ and _prijaji_ variety, predominantly centred in Java. Geographically and ethnically, orthodox Muslims are usually non-Javanese. The most conspicuous enclaves of _santri_ Islam are found amongst the Sundanese of West Java, the Achehnese of North Sumatra, the Minangkabau of West Sumatra and the Bugis of Southern Sulawesi.[44] The Achehnese and the Minangkabau are by far the most staunch and a variety of reasons account for this. Firstly, the areas they lived in were not heir to a religious tradition prior to the entry of Islam. Secondly, both these areas have large Arab trading communities. Finally, Islam was allowed to consolidate itself undisturbed in these areas for almost five centuries.

Owing to the fact that Indonesian Islam began as a syncretic religion, the distinctions between _abangan_, _santri_ and _prijaji_ involved a stress on particular aspects of the faith. So, for instance,

the abangan are known to stress the animistic elements of Javanese syncretism. The abangan variant is commonly found amongst the Javanese peasants. The santris emphasize the Islamic aspects of Indonesian Islam and are usually to be found amongst the trading communities. The prijaji variant emphasizes the Hindu aspect of Indonesian Islam and its adherents are common in the bureaucracy. As Clifford Geertz observes, these distinctions are not Weberian ideal-types. Instead, they are distinctions the Javanese themselves recognize and abide by.[45] But, in practice, the Javanese can be ranked on a scale.

The abangan can be further distinguished by their fascination for rituals and ritualistic details. They are relatively unconcerned with doctrine. The abangan are also known to emphasize the family as the most important social unit. Meticulously concerned with details, the abangan adhere to unwritten rules of Islamic propriety. Evidence of this concern is reflected in the slametan - a socially integrative feast that is held at all 'life-crisis' situations, including birth, death, puberty, marriage and crop harvests.[46] A slametan is usually accompanied by the recitation of some poorly-understood Koranic verses as well as thanks-giving to spirits. The Malaysian equivalent of the slametan is called a kenduri.

If the abangan variant can be described as ritualistic, the santri variant can be labelled doctrinaire. Santris are eminently legalistic and conscientiously perform the dictates of the Koran. Santris themselves can be further sub-divided into

scripturalists and modernists, a discussion of which will be deferred to a later juncture. Unlike the abangan, the santri emphasize the ummah. For the santri, the ummah is viewed as a series of larger and larger concentric circles that are bound by Islam.[47] The santris are steadily gaining influence, although their membership is to be found predominantly amongst the traders and craftsmen. Most towns usually have a kauman (santri quarter), close to a mosque and a market.[48]

Whereas the abangan have a fascination for ritualistic details, santris of the scripturalist persuasion adhere strictly to Islamic prescriptive details. The emphasis is on performance of Islamic prescriptions and a corresponding avoidance of the religion's proscriptions. Behaviour that is commensurate with Islamic teaching is held to be the route to salvation.[49] Scripturalists adhere to the faith as 'a way of life' and are concerned with Islamic activities of a this-worldly nature, although the inspiration for these deeds is derived from conceptions of the life hereafter. The action-oriented nature of Islam is clearly visible with scripturalists. Rather than viewing Islam in terms of individual faith, they advocate and observe the practices demanded by the religion. Hence, scripturalists are eminently legalistic and their most common form of identity is the ummah.[50] This variant of the santris are the most numerous and they range from peasants and traders to professional religious officials. Contrary to abangan practice, santri scripturalists do not adhere closely to rituals. Instead, they emphasize individual actions and strict observance of the Five Pillars. Scripturalist belief in the value of action is premised

on their claim that individual choices and actions are what lead to salvation or damnation. These fundamentalists, as they are sometimes called, see a spiritual reward that will be conferred if self-help within the ummah is strong. Fundamentalist santris do not take part in or host slametans and reflect a distinct distaste for mysticism.

The santri modernists, like the scripturalists, acknowledge the superiority of Islam as a guiding principle in life. However, the modernists are more keen on behaviour that is concurrent with the moral and social spirit of Islam. Hence, where scripturalists are legalistic, modernists are dogmatic. Modernists are committed to redesigning Islamic practices without altering the spirit of the religion. They are willing to accord Islam a more secular role in life and emphasize the rational aspects of the religion. So for instance, they claim that circumcision is required by Islamic law only to prevent genital infection. Modernist santris see in Islam a fertile set of values for the conduct of everyday life in the modern world.[51] Their community is comprised mainly of rich peasants, bureaucrats and traders.

For all its divisiveness and disunity, three stages can be discerned in the development of Indonesian Islam as well (the same observation was made in the Malaysian case). From the inception of the Indonesian ummah in the fourteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century when Islamic revivalism occurred, Indonesian Islam underwent its first stage-one that was characterized by

fragmentation within the ummah as well as a gradualism before the ummah even emerged. This first stage is eloquently summaried by Clifford Geertz as a collage which had:

> ...at the heart, geographically as well as socially, the civil service version of Madjapahit exemplarism; along the margins and in the interstices, Indonesianized renditions of mediaeval Islam, now occult and emotional, now dogmatic and puritan; and under, or behind, or around them both, the syncretistic fold religion of the mass of the peasantry which at once drew upon them, naturalized them, and resisted their intrusion. Never really reconciled to one another, these various strands were anyway reasonably well contained in a system which was less a synthesis than a sort of spiritual balance of power, a balance of power which rested on the kind of each-to-his-own arrangements which are possible in a society which is still more an assemblage of peoples and a collection of status groups loosely interrelated...[52]

Not only did Islam fail to produce a unified state, it also did not evolve a legal culture as well. Much of this inability was owing to the strength of pre-Islamic Hindu-Indonesian and ethnic Javanese culture. Rather than supplanting a civilization, it appropriated one and in the process of that appropriation, made some additions and modifications. However, in the coastal states, a metropolitan superculture did exist. Nonetheless, the necessary institutions to weld the country as a whole were noticeably absent. Somewhat akin to the situation in Malaysia, this structure was established and set in motion by the Dutch.[53]

The second phase occurred in the middle of the nineteenth century, as more and more Indonesians began to perform the haj. Coming into contact with the more orthodox Muslims from the Middle East, the returning Indonesians advocated modernist reform. They were extremely critical of the orthodox santri version of Indonesian

Islam and filtered liberal and humanistic ideas into Islamic doctrines and practices.[54] As well, the reformist ideas of Mohammad Abduh from Al-Azhar in Cairo were also disseminated to Indonesian Muslims, just as it had happened to their Malaysian counterparts. The third stage occurred at the time of Indonesia's independence in 1945. This final stage involved the ummah's actions in trying to relate Islam to a modern world and a predominantly secular and western-oriented political system. Unlike Malaysia, Islam was not made the official religion of Indonesia. Hence, whereas pre and post independence Islam in Malaysia involved a smooth transition and minimal changes for the protection of Malay-Muslim rights and privileges, Islamic assertion in Indonesia was effectively nipped in the bud. The way was paved for the abangan-santri dichotomy to polarize, especially since the new political leaders were mostly Javanese-centric abangans. Hence, the most noticeable difference between the Malaysian and Indonesian ummah is that with the former, the threat is mostly non-Muslim whereas in the case of Indonesia, the threat to Islam is within the ummah. However, increasingly, the Malaysian ummah has undergone serious division, as the next section will indicate.

Islamic Revivalism in Southeast Asia

The roots of Islamic mobilization in Southeast Asia can be traced back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The source from which these ideas emanated is clearly the Middle East.

Islamic reassertion called for a return to shari'a for Sunnis. For the shari'a to be effectively implemented, the Islamic faith had to be purged of its accretions.[55] Propagated by the followers of Abdal-Wahhab in Arabia, the reformers (commonly referred to as the Wahhabis), urged the ummah to deny the caliphs the role of acting as intermediaries between man and God (Muslim and Allah). There was also the call to end mysticism and saint-worship within the ummah. The ideas of the Wahhabis can be traced to the teachings of the Ibn Taymiya, a fourteenth century Muslim thinker. In proposing that the ummah be ruled by shari'a, the Wahhabis offered an alternative option for Southeast Asian Muslims, who were ruled by the Hindu rajas of Southeast Asia.[56] However, the Wahhabi influence in Southeast Asia was only indirect.

The ideological inspiration to return to a purer version of Islam was augmented by the technological developments that took place in the nineteenth century. Internal markets in Southeast Asia grew, exposing the local ummah to foreign Muslim influences. As well, the introduction of the steamship enabled more Muslims from the region to perform the haj. The pilgrimage to Mecca again exposed local Muslims to the international Muslim community. The influential teachings of Muhammad Abduh from Al Azhar resulted in returning pilgrims preaching Islamic modernism. These Muslims acquired a new role within the ummah as educationalists and opened up boarding schools and formed associations to complement existing local institutions for propagating an awareness of Islam.[57] The members of this new

factions (Kaum Muda) preached the removal of all human schemes between the Muslim and Allah.

Technological progress had two other profound implications or perceived implications for the ummah. Islamic scholars were increasingly recognizing the fact that rapid socio-economic change was destabilizing the ummah. This destabilization came in the form of an increasingly secular attitude towards life. As well, the ummah was also beginning to realize that the morality of the west was not commensurate with its material achievements. To put it differently, the west was seen as trading off morality for material benefits.[58] Both these perceptions were compounded by the value-free nature of western science. Islamic revivalists urged for a much more engagē version of science premised on Islamic doctrine.

There was a religious dimension to the conflict between the ummah and the west as well. The spread of Islam in Southeast Asia coincided and eventually came into conflict with Christian proselytization efforts in the region.[59] Hence, the centuries-old strife between the Ottoman Empire and Christendom was transported to Southeast Asia. Since many of the colonialists were Christian as well, the conflict had strong overtones of nationalism. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the later years of Islamic revivalism, especially in the twentieth century, went hand in hand with nationalism. This admixture of motives further boosted Islamic revivalism.

The manifestations of Islamic revivalism can be understood in two stages. The first stage was the revivalism that occurred

during colonial or pre-independence days. At this time, Islamic revivalism was generally characterized by a two-pronged approach - one anti-colonial, and the other, anti-western and in the process, anti-Christian as well.[60] This is not to suggest that a call for reform within the ummah itself did not exist. It merely performed a secondary function. Following independence, revivalism manifested itself primarily within the ummah. Anti-western notions were carried on, but appear to have acquired a secondary role. The most important reasons for this change in attitude was the secular and generally Western-oriented nature of the post-independence political leaders of both Malaysia and Indonesia, as chapter three will suggest.

Two caveats are required at this juncture, prior to a differentiated treatment of Malaysia and Indonesia. Firstly, although the process of revivalism will be studied at the ideological and socio-economic levels, it is often very difficult to distinguish the two, especially since the reasons for the current revivalism ignores such clear-cut boundaries. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the reasons for revivalism and manifestations of it are often difficult to keep analytically apart as well. Both caveats being mentioned, we can now begin.

Islamic Revivalism in Malaysia

Pre-Independence Revivalism at the Ideological level

The earliest ideological roots of Islamic revivalism in Malaysia can be traced to the consolidation of British rule in

Malaysia. The British, who were Christians, made Muslims place a distinction between believers and infidels. As well, at a larger level, the community of believers were kept apart from the community of infidels. The autonomy in matters pertaining to religion and custom that the British allowed the sultans to keep meant that every Malay state has its own ummah. To stem British expansionist policies, the Malay sultans, beginning in the nineteenth century, enacted shari'a law in their own states.[61] This move enabled the ummah to consolidate and identify itself with the sultans and against the British. However, Malay-Muslim politics in Malaya were of a low intensity.

Towards the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the ideas of the Wahhabis and the Islamic modernism of Al-Azhar had filtered into the Malaysian scene. The resulting factionalist disputes between the Kaum Muda and the Kaum Tua have been described earlier. Much akin to the old dispute between the shi'a and the sunnis, the ideological fight between the followers of the modernist and the orthodox school raised the level of Islamic consciousness. To these developments must be added two other important supranational developments. The first was the call for pan-Islamic revivalism, which also stemmed from Egypt[62] and India in the Caliphate movement up to World War I. The other ideological thrust of revivalism was the pan-Malayist movement. Pan-Malayism called for a union between Malaysia and Indonesia. Although the union was never realized, its advocates established a base for

Islamic reformism.[63] But in Indonesia, most of the adherents were secular, left-wing and mixed ethnicity with Marxism.

Perhaps the most important dimension of early Islamic revivalism has to do with the fusing of distinctions between Muslim and Malay. Increasingly, Islam came to be associated with a communal and ethnic identity. This identity deepened as the Malays began realizing that the relatively new Chinese and Indian immigrants were prospering and establishing their own communal identities (see appendix 1 for ethnic representation in Malaysia). At the turn of the twentieth century, the Malays were barely a majority whereas they were the sole inhabitants of the country a few centuries ago.[64] Hence, the search for a Malay identity was intensified and naturally, so was practice of the Islamic faith. The creation of a distinct identity required raising some dimension of primordial attachments.[65] Whereas the ummah was ideally supposed to be universalistic, in Malaysia it acquired an ascriptive-orientation. Islam became the barometer by which 'Malayness' was measured.

The confusion of the Malay and Muslim identity requires some elaboration. The ideological significance of Islam is not measured by a comparison with other religious faiths. Instead, religion is used as a barometer to distinguish Malays from non-Malays, albeit there exist small numbers of Indian and Chinese Muslims. Hence, an appeal to Islam in Malaysia constitutes an appeal to the Malay community as opposed to the ummah.[66] Malaysian politics has to be understood in terms of ethnic considerations and the Malay-Muslim identity is an indication of the impact of ethnicity on the Malaysian political process.[67]

Post-Independence Revivalism at the Ideological level

The best point for takeoff for this section would be a continuation of the discussion of the communal nature of Malaysian politics.* A few points need to be restated. The Merdeka Constitution of 1957 legally defined a Malay as a Muslim and effectively legalized the polarization of Islam along ethnic lines. The constitution, which specifically grants a privileged status to the Malay community (a policy that was initiated by the British) ensured that a Malay who disinherits Islam would also forfeit his special legal privileges.[68] With legal recognition, Islam conferred upon the Malays an identity that was equivalent in status to a communal identity. Hence, it comes as no surprise that masok Melayu and masok Islam are synonymous. In effect, Islam has merely served to buttress a communal identity. More importantly, it has allowed ethnocentric and communally-oriented Malay politicians to utilize Islam for Malay political mobilization. The other effect of this blurred distinction is that Islam, which could have been utilized to weld together an inter-ethnic ummah, has been kept within the confines of a communal identity.[69]

If the constitution of 1957 welded the Malay and Muslim identity into one, the racial riots of May 1969 heightened communal consciousness, especially amongst the Malays. The riots steered the political course of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO - one of the three parties in the Barisan Nasional - a federal alliance

* See appendix one for ethnic breakdown of the Malaysian population.

group that is comprised of the representatives of the three major ethnic groups) towards a pro-Malay instead of a pro-Malaysian course.[70] The orientation of Malaysian Islam along communal lines was also solidified.

The most overt manifestation of Islamic revivalism in Malaysia is dakwah, which literally means to call or invite. The invitation can be understood to mean 'the duty of Muslims to call mankind to Islam'.[71] Gaining prominence in the latter half of the 1970's the dakwah movement was initiated by two groups which were active on two fronts. The first group to preach dakwah were the Arabic and the religiously-educated and the second, were youths who were educated in the English and Malay mediums.[72] The former group was active locally and the latter, locally as well as abroad, especially since the Malaysian government began sponsoring many Malay students abroad, notably in North America, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. Dakwah has an essentially missionary purpose and is aimed at winning converts to Islamic ways.[73] Followers of dakwah are opposed to materialism, which they identify with the west. The other 'enemies' of dakwah adherents are communists, socialists, and the infidels or unbelievers. The west is especially held in contempt for a variety of reasons: moral dacadence, godlessness, colonial and neo-colonial practices, scientific practices and its aggressive educational system.[74] The west is sometimes identifies as syaitan (the devil incarnate). Generally speaking, dakwah followers are opposed to western methods and practices and call for an ideological

war. They claim that Islam offers an alternative form of knowledge that is premised on divine inspiration (wahyu), as opposed to Western science, that subscribes to empiricism. Dakwah members have also urged the government to replace British laws with Islamic laws and restructure the education system along Islamic lines.[75] The popularity of dakwah amongst university students, both at home and abroad, is often diagnosed as the result of being suddenly thrust into an urban and alien environment, which accentuates the search for a collective and communal identity. In a very real sense, dakwah is an assertion of Malay identity as much as a religious identity.[76] However, dakwah writings and doctrines have a tremendous range in diversity.

At the government level, Islamic revivalism has also made itself felt, albeit at a level of much lower intensity. Many of the government's policies are in effect aimed at deflecting the challenge of the Islamic fundamentalists - an issue that will be examined in chapter three. For now, suffice it to say, Malaysia has moved ideologically much closer to the Middle East. The growing exchange of government leaders and the hosting of the Fifth Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference attest to the policy shift. However, ideological identification has been restricted to the less revolutionary Islamic states - a policy dictated by the fact that both neighbouring Philippines and Thailand have revolutionary and insurgent Muslim groups.[77]

Pre and Post-Independence Revivalism at the Socio-Economic level

At the socio-economic level, Islamic revivalism has to be understood in communal terms. The growth and relative prosperity of the Indian and Chinese communities and the process of modernization which displaced much of the traditional way of life set the stage for a consolidation of Malay identity premised along religious lines.

To begin with, British administration, in addition to bringing in improved communications and technology, served to weld the Malay community together. Apart from rallying behind the sultans who symbolized traditional authority, the British were protecting and promoting the development of a Malay identity. Since religion was one of the component elements of Malay identity, it was inevitable that the growth of Malay identity went hand in hand with the growth of Islam.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Malays who lived in the urban areas of Malaysia were becoming increasingly exposed to urban life. The competitiveness of the market system and the heterogeneity of trades and the values it promoted led the Malays to strengthen their primordial loyalties.[78] The process of modernization in ethnically divided societies usually results in ethnic communities redefining their boundaries. Instead of displacing their ethnic identity, and adopting a secular-universalistic-achievement orientation, the Malay community increasingly became introverted, especially since the other ethnic communities were faring better under the new conditions. Worse still, ethnic identity

became defined in terms of an interest group. Hence, modernization gave the Malay community its impetus to consolidate and articulate itself as an interest group, both offensively and defensively.[79]

If British administration, the influx of large immigrant communities and modernization historically gave Malays their sense of an exclusive identity before independence, the Merdeka Constitution of 1959 and the racial riots of 1969 strengthened it. By defining a Malay the constitution promoted and legalized the Malay identity while the riots intensified communal boundaries and Malay consciousness. After the riots, refining the definition of 'Malay' has fallen into Malay hands. Islamic revivalism and dakwah in Malaysia has to be understood in these terms. Islam is not being asserted merely for Islam's sake. Rather, Islam helps distinguish the Malay from the non-Malay.

What are some of the manifestations of revivalism at the socio-economic level? Mosque attendance has increased significantly, especially among the youth. Forums, seminars, lectures and conferences on Islam are well-advertised and attended. In terms of dressing, many Malay men and women are dressing like their Arab counterparts by using long flowing robes that conceal physical configurations well. Some of the more radical followers of dakwah have cast away objects of a material nature, like television and radio sets.[80] At the level of the mass media, there is more focus on Islam while films and nightclubs that contribute to moral debasement have been restricted. Two out of the five obligatory prayers are broadcast daily over television. The Islamic syllabus in all government schools was

restructured and Islam was made a compulsory subject for all Muslims in 1979.[81]

To conclude the section on Malaysia, Islamic revivalism in Malaysia has to be placed within a communal context. It is a reflection of the search for a Malay identity and within that, the search for a Muslim identity.[82] Islamic reassertion also has repercussions on the government's policies towards Islam, especially since the constitution recognizes Islam as the official religion of the country. The task of reconciling Islamic fundamentalism as an assertion of Malay identity, is twofold.[83] The first is the threat of an erosion of their constitutional rights and the second, is the possibility of the outbreak of another racial riot that will upset the current racial arithmetic and communal equilibrium.

Islamic Revivalism in Indonesia

Pre and Post-Independence Revivalism at the Ideological level

Unlike the Malaysian case, Islamic revivalism in Indonesia does not need to be distinguished in two stages. A variety of reasons account for this decision. Firstly, Indonesia does not have the democratic tradition of Malaysia. The state sponsored Pancasila (to be elaborated upon in chapter three) policy does not recognize Islam as the official religion. The policy restricts itself to belief in one God. Secondly, the Muhammadiyah - the orthodox Islamic party in Indonesia has been banned for some time now and the predominantly abangan and Javanese - centric politicians of Indonesia have taken adequate measures to ensure that the santri do not gain political predominance. Additionally, Indonesian political leaders are much more autocratic and have no qualms about

suppressing Islamic fundamentalism forcibly. Finally, all the recognized Islamic political parties in Indonesia have endorsed their allegiance to Pancasila, thereby restricting the scope of their own activities.

Islamic revivalism in Indonesia began in the nineteenth century. The santri scripturalists concluded their break with the earlier syncretic past and urged for a return to the uncompromising purism of the shari'a. Coming under the influence of the pan-Islamic movement and the revivalist tide from Al-Azhar, Indonesian Islam increasingly became anti-Indic.[84] Islamic revivalism was also being increasingly equated with anti-colonialism. The battle between the Christians and the Muslims and the believers against the infidels actually resulted in physical violence. During the sixty years between 1820 and 1880, four major santri uprisings took place against the Dutch. Likewise, beginning in 1873, the Achehnese engaged the Dutch in battle for thirty years.[85] Santrism firmly established itself as a dissident and radical religious and political ideology by 1900. The santris effectively ended what used to be a syncretic religion derived from an amalgation of Islamic and pre-Islamic beliefs and practices.

The influence of Islam on Indonesian nationalism was much more severe than in Malaysia. Ideologically united, Islamic teachers inspired numerous sporadic localized revolts against the Dutch. Although the santris considered themselves exclusive within the Indonesian ummah, Islam served to unite the various ethnic groups

in identifying a common enemy - the Dutch.[86] The Dutch responded in kind by suppressing Islamic revivalism, raising the consciousness of the ummah against its Christian and kafir overlords. The unity of the Indonesians against the Dutch was so strong that even secular nationalists joined the ranks of the ummah, leaving questions pertaining to the role of religion after independence to be settled at a later date.[87] In the early days of Sarekat Islam even the Marxists joined the Muslims to form a common front.

Islamic revivalism underwent a curious phase during the Japanese occupation at the time of the Second World War. The Japanese expansionist plans of Dai Nippon sought to incorporate Indonesia and as a result, the Japanese had studied Islam since the 1920's. Aware of the ummah's resistance to the Dutch, the Japanese wooed the Muslim leaders of Indonesia. Promising a Japanese liberation from Christian rule, the Japanese pointed out the similarities between Shintoism and Islam, forecasting a Greater Japan centred around an Emperor - Caliph.[88]

The Japanese were keen on exploiting the agricultural potential of Indonesia, as the Dutch had done before them under the Culture System. However, Japanese recognition of Islam entailed a quid pro quo arrangement on their part in recognising Muslim leaders and propagating the Islamic faith. Therefore, unwittingly, the Japanese consolidated the Indonesian ummah and by the end of 1944 had reshaped the configurations of local political brokerage by elevating the status of Islam.[89] Hence, in trying to win allies

and mobilize anti-Dutch sentiments, the Japanese revived the ideological basis of the ummah.

As noted earlier, the end of the second World War and the granting of independence led to the role of Islam being circumscribed to that of a private religion. Also, Islam in Indonesia is more of a divisive than uniting force. Against the military muscle of the Javanese abangan, and prijaji who assumed political power in Indonesia, Islamic revivalism had no chances of continuation after the Japanese occupation ended. However, recently, there have been indications of a revivalist trend in Indonesia. Mosques, religious schools and associations are again beginning to sponsor a wide range of cultural and religious activities. As well, urban Indonesian youth are being recruited to man these institutions. These new leaders are trying to combine modernization and religious orthodoxy to arrive at a new formula to sustain Islam.[90] Attesting to the new wave of revivalism was the Tanjongpriok incident of September 1984 when Muslim fundamentalists engaged the army and police in open combat. It must be noted at this juncture that Indonesian Islam, unlike its Malaysian counterpart, has had a long history of militant violence against the Dutch. Hence, revivalism has the potential to become militant again, especially since precedence has already been set.

Pre - and Post Independence Revivalism at the socio-economic level

Much akin to the Malaysian situation, Islamic revivalism in Indonesia at the socio-economic level occurred as the result of

the rapid changes that modernization and urbanization entail. Contrary to the Malaysian situation, ethnic communities and identities did not polarize. An Indonesian was identified as one regardless of the region he came from or the religion he practiced. However, whereas many of the traditional means of coping with life were breaking down, Islam offered a set of rigid and well-defined social practices to abide by. 'Fired by defensive pride' in their heritage, Indonesian intellectuals argued for the adoption of Islam.[91] Convinced of the moral superiority of Islam which stood in stark contrast to the moral debasement of the west, Indonesians sought a moralistic code to guide their lives and found it in Islam.[92] Besides, there were very few ideologies that could have contended with Islam to fill the vacuum.[93]

If pre-independence Islam provided a rudder in the storm of social change, it continues to do so. Islam may have lost its political significance in Indonesia, but it still continues to provide direction at the personal and spiritual level for members of its ummah. There has been a noteworthy increase in Islamic legalism, both scripturalist and modernist. The last ten years has witnessed an increasing religious consciousness which is reflected by the turnouts at Mosques for prayers and Koran-reading sessions.[94]

The increase in the popularity of Islam, especially in urban areas is also owing to the wide range of social activities that mosques in Indonesia organize. As Sidney Jones observes,

mosques in Indonesia cater to diverse interests - from kindergartens and womens' associations to boy scout troops and basketball teams.[95] Hence, Islamic revivalism in Indonesia is quite different from that occurring in Malaysia - in the case of the former, the emphasis is more social and religious whereas in the case of the latter, it is political and more importantly, communal.

Appendix One

Indonesia's total population in 1971 was 118,367,850. This included 103,579,496 Muslims, 5,151,994 Protestants, 2,692,215 Catholics, 897,497 'Other Christians', 2,296,229 Hindus, 1,092,314 Buddhists, 972,133 Confucianists and 1,685,902 other religious adherents.

Source: Biro Pusat Statistik (Central Bureau of Statistics, Jakarta)

Malaysia's population in 1970 was 10,452,309, including 8,819,928 in West Malaysia, 654,943 in Sabah and 977,438 in Sarawak. The population figures in West Malaysia included 4,689,379 Malays, 3,126,336 Chinese, 934,030 Indians and Pakistanis and 70,183 others. See Malaysia 1971 Official Yearbook, p.23.

Quoted in Noer Deliar, "Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia: A Preliminary Study", Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs Vol. 9, No. 2, July-Dec. 1975.

Footnotes

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[6] Gordon P. Means, "The Role of Islam in the Political Development of Malaysia", Comparative Politics 1(2), 1969, p. 267.

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[10] Hooker, op. cit., pp. 13-4.

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[12] James Peacock, Muslim Puritans: Reformist Psychology in Southeast Asian Islam, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 18.

[13] An extensive treatment of the conflict can be found in Judith Nagata, The Reflowering of Malaysian Islam: Modern Religious Radicals and Their Roots, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

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[19] Ibid., p. 449.

[20] Means: "The Role of Islam in the Political Development of Malaysia", op. cit., p. 269.

[21] Nagata, op. cit., p. 5.

[22] Means: "The Role of Islam in the Political Development of Malaysia", op. cit., p. 270.

[23] W.R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 12.

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[25] Ibid., p. 386.

[26] Means, "Malaysia: Islam in a pluralistic society", op. cit., p. 448.

[27] Ibid., pp. 448-9.

[28] Ibid., p. 450.

[29] Ibid., p. 451.

[30] For a comprehensive treatment of the rights and privileges involved see Gordon P. Means, "Special Rights as a strategy for development: The case of Malaysia", Comparative Politics 5 (1), 1972, pp. 29-61.

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[35] Clifford Geertz, "Modernization in a Muslim Society: The Indonesian Case", in Robert N. Bellah (ed.), Religion and Progress in Modern Asia, (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1965), pp. 97-8.

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[37] Geertz, Islam Observed, op. cit., p. 16.

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CHAPTER THREE

ISLAMIC REVIVALISM AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL AND PUBLIC POLICY RESPONSES TO REVIVALISM

Whereas the previous chapter treated Islamic revivalism at the ideological and socio-economic levels, this chapter will treat it at the political level. Political revivalism will be examined strictly within the framework of party formations of a distinctly Islamic membership and weltanschauung. As with the earlier chapter, following a general treatment of both countries in this section, Malaysia and Indonesia will be treated separately. The second half of this chapter will then deal specifically with public policy responses to Islamic revivalism.

Just as the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam differ markedly in the roles they perform within their respective societies, so does political Islam. The abangan santri dichotomy in Indonesian Islam is clearly observable with regard to party formation as is the Malay-non-Malay dichotomy in Malaysian Islam. Indonesian Islamic parties are in a sense regional in their formation and strength, although the Sarekat Dagang Islam was initially formed as a reaction to Chinese business interests. On the other hand, Malaysian Islamic parties have a much more ethnic flavour, especially since all Malays are inevitably and defined legally as Muslims. This difference however cannot be overstated because the Partai Islam Se Malaysia (PAS) is essentially rooted in the two northern states of Kelantan and Trengganu. One basic similarity between party formations in both countries is the tension

between the orthodox and modernist variants of Islam.

At least with regard to party formation, Indonesian Muslims were much more active than their Malaysian counterparts and started much earlier as well - at the turn of the century. The number of parties that have been chosen and the unequal length of the sections dealing with Malaysia and Indonesia will serve to illustrate this point (a total of five prominent parties will be examined in Indonesia while only two will be examined in Malaysia). By contrast, Malaysian Islamic parties were active only after the Second World War and even then, initially espoused Malay ethnic rather than religious interests. Of the two parties that are popular in Malaysia, one is sponsored by the government, leaving only one opposition party. However, this lack of political organization is somewhat compensated for by other associations such as the Muslim missionary organizations.

Can evidence of this nature be used to justify the claim that Indonesian Muslims were initially more politically conscious? It is an especially difficult question to answer because religiosity and political consciousness cannot be measured on scales. Besides, Indonesia is many times larger than Malaysia and has a population that is approximately ten times the size of Malaysia as well. However, a strong argument can be made to the effect that Indonesia has had a longer intellectual and political tradition. Furthermore, Indonesian independence was achieved as a result of fighting and negotiations whereas Malaysian independence was achieved almost

exclusively through negotiations. Hence, the political climate of Indonesia was more conducive to the politicization of its citizenry.

All the above observations are entirely passe today, and ironically enough, for all its political fervour in the past, the Indonesian ummah's political activities have been severely curtailed. Secular Javanese-centric abangans and prijajis who run the Indonesian government have sought to divorce Islam from politics and obstruct Islamic political activities. Soekarno's presidential decree that outlawed the Indonesian Islamic party Masjumi in 1960 for alleged involvement with a rebellion in the Outer Islands a few years earlier spelled the end of political Islam. The government sponsored Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Parmusi) is heavily steered by the government and devoid of political punch. Nahdatul Ulama, the other popular Islamic party in Indonesia is conservative, rural-based, and has accepted secular religiosity to ensure its survival. The potential for political Islam to re-emerge is definitely there, although the military's predominance and its high-handed methods will make it an extremely costly enterprise.

If Indonesian Islam is devoid of political punch now, the reverse is true of Malaysian Islam, where the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) and PAS compete for the Muslim votes. Owing to the fact that both these parties are political parties, religious issues have been politicized. Since claims for religious legitimacy is essential for both parties because approximately fifty percent of the population is Muslim, the two parties try to outbid each other.

As well, whereas Indonesian public policy towards Islam derives from a Dutch precedent, the Malaysians had no such clear policy precedent from the British who left the administration of Islam in the hands of the Malay sultans.

Islamic Revivalism at the Political level in Malaysia

The United Malays National Organization (UMNO)

The earliest stirrings in the formation of Islamic political parties in Malaysia, as noted earlier, began shortly after the Japanese surrender in 1945. In fact, it was the left-wing and ethnocentric Malay Nationalist Party (MNP) - formed in October 1946,[1] that had the earliest religio-political arm catering to Muslim interests. Apart from the party leadership's desire to unite all ethnic Malays in the region (Pan-Malayism), the MNP established the Pan Malayan Supreme Religious Council (Majlis Agama Tertinggi Sa-Malaya - MATA) in March 1947. Hizbul Muslimin (Islamic Party) which was established in 1948 also derived its legitimacy from the MNP.[2] From its inception, Hisbul Muslimin's objectives included the task of making Malaysia an Islamic state.

The ethnic flavour of the MNP's lobby resulted in the popularity of both MATA and Hizbul Muslimin amongst the Malays. However, both parties came to an abrupt end in August 1948 when the British authorities detained the president and seven executive members of Hizbul Muslimin under internal security regulations that permitted detention without trial.[3] The reason offered by the British was that Hizbul Muslimin's activities interfered with the

State of Emergency which was declared against the outlawed Malayan Community Party (MCP), which was then engaging in guerilla activities.

The emergence of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) at the palace of the Sultan of Johore[4] in May 1946 by a group of prominent Malay politicians heralded a new era in Malay politics. From then on, it was UMNO that became the premier Malay political party, safeguarding and furthering both Malay and Muslim interests. UMNO interest in wanting to retain the privileges that the Malays had been accorded by the British before the Japanese invasion led to its endorsement of the Emergency declared by the British. However, towards the end of the decade, UMNO became increasingly interested in securing independence for Malaysia. In order to achieve this political goal, it had to accommodate non-Malay interests. It became imperative for UMNO to reconcile the party's interests and membership with those of the non-Malays, especially the Chinese and to a lesser extent, the Indians. Hence, UMNO, with independence in mind, allied with the Malayan Chinese Association in 1953 and adopted a formal constitution in 1954.[5] A year later in 1955, the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC) joined the ranks of UMNO and MCA, by now collectively called the Alliance party.

The goals of UMNO are identified in the party's statement objectives which were drawn up in 1949. The four principal objectives include the maintenance of an efficient political organization, working towards the country's independence, the advancement of the peoples' political, social and economic well-being as well as maintaining "the excellence of the Religion of

Islam and to propagate the same."[6] Generally modernists with a western orientation, the early UMNO leaders were fearful that Islam might impede the socio-economic changes they desired for the country. Hence, early UMNO discussions focussed on Islamic principles that were viewed as incompatible with economic development.[7] So for instance, some of the earlier resolutions adopted legitimized government-sponsored lotteries, the payment of interest for savings and the like.

UMNO's predominant position in the Malaysian political scene was illustrated by the 1955 elections for home rule. It then dominated the newly-formed Alliance party and its prestige was rising rapidly. The ruling Alliance party secured fifty-one out of the fifty-two seats in 1955, and gained an equally impressive victory after independence in 1957. Throughout the next decade, it figured very prominently in the local political scene. The Alliance package to the Reid Constitutional Commission in 1955 proposed to make Islam the official religion of the country.[8] However, it specifically indicated that religious freedom would be maintained and that the country would be administered on a secular basis. To keep the Muslims vote intact, UMNO promoted Islam in a variety of ways which were initially mostly symbolic, ranging from the erection of mosques to the sponsoring of Koran reading competitions. Additionally, the moral requirements of Islam were stressed. Following precedents set by the British, the administration of Islam in the various states remained the prerogative of sultans. However, with increasing pressures to centralize the administration of Islam and the threat from PAS, the first federal initiative came in 1968 with the

establishment of a Malayan National Islamic Council.

By having forged the Alliance and successfully secured independence, UMNO considerably increased its political clout. However, the inclusion of the MCA and the MIC into the Alliance also meant that UMNO's pro-Malay and pro-Muslim policies had to be somewhat diluted. PAS gestures to woo the Malaysian ummah, however, required UMNO to co-opt the former's platform. Hence, UMNO politicians had to walk the political tight-rope of wooing the Malay-Muslim vote without jeopardizing the Alliance coalition. The specific policies that UMNO generated to counter PAS will be discussed in the latter half of the chapter under public policy responses since the Alliance government has fielded a large majority of the candidates to parliament since independence.

The Partai Se Islam Malaysia (PAS - Pan Malayan Islamic Party)

The Partai Se Islam Malaysia was originally founded in 1948. Its initial name was Persatuan Islam Sa-Tanah Melayu (this can be translated into English as Islamic Association of Malaya or Malay soil). Original PAS membership was derived from a variety of sources representing Malay ethnic and religious interests: ex-members of UMNO's religious department, ex-members of both Hizbul Muslimin and left wingers from the Malay Nationalist Party, rural religious elites and some members from insignificant Malay opposition parties that rose against UMNO.[9] PAS opposes UMNO on a clearly Islamic platform and has since its inception has argued against secular Islam. At various times, PAS leaders have expressed the

opinion that Islam in Malaysia should be extended beyond its status as a private religion to dictate the state's economic and political affairs. The religious appeal of PAS is extremely powerful, as the election results of 1959 demonstrated, when it won in the northern states of Kelantan and Trengganu, securing half the Malay votes in both states.[10]

The election victory of 1959 was the culmination of structural and constitutional changes that were initiated in 1954. The five thousand strong membership of 1952 was not impressive at all. Hence, organizational changes were introduced in 1953 and the constitutional changes were endorsed at the meeting of the party's General Assembly in August of 1954. The most important changes were as follows: the first aim was to secure independence from the British, and the second, to achieve the ideals of Islam.[11] The platform of wanting to institute an Islamic government immediately was defeated at the General Assembly meeting. Other resolutions included the call to form an Islamic brotherhood to achieve the party's goals. Also, PAS expressed its willingness to co-operate with other organizations to secure democracy and human rights as long as these organizations were not opposed to Islam. PAS also endorsed the need for a Minister of Religion at the national level to co-ordinate Islamic activities.

PAS's view on the nature of the Islamic state it seeks to achieve is somewhat puritanical. If it had its way, it would ultimately like to see an expansion in the role of the present shari'a courts to take over what is presently administered by secular civil courts.[12] As well, the legal system would be buttressed by morality laws and enforced by 'moral policemen'.

What this effectively means is the blurring of distinctions between the realm of private and public actions - a Western importation according to Muslim fundamentalists. PAS is also noted for its anti-western stance in its renunciation of corrupting western importations, especially "dancing, wild music, diverse forms of sexual licentiousness, gambling, and the social consumption of alcohol."[13] Its Islamic reformism achieved some success when its resolution to ban the serving of alcohol at official functions was endorsed in parliament. However, another resolution urging that Friday be made a public holiday was defeated in parliament. The party's views on the relationship between Islam and the political structure of the state has remained ambiguous. Although it frequently claims to support democracy, the ascriptive proviso that ultimate power must be retained by Muslims is contradictory.[14]

The astounding success that PAS achieved in the 1959 elections (forty-one out of fifty-three seats in the two state Legislative Councils and thirteen out of sixteen seats in parliament for Kelantan and Trengganu)[15] clearly suggests that an appeal to Islam can harness tremendous political power. However, the party's power base is located in areas that are predominantly rural, agro-based and somewhat economically backward. However, even in these areas, its power base had gradually declined, beginning as early as 1959 when it was defeated in Trengganu by the Alliance party. Its support from Kelantan's Malay electorate declined from fifty percent to thirty percent in 1978 - the year when it opted out of a five year coalition with UMNO that began in 1973. Since then, PAS has

suffered from factionalism within the party, defections to UMNO, and charges of corruption. Today, PAS is trying to regain the confidence of the Malay electorate. Its platform is now openly anti-government. Part of its latest strategy is also to tap the political resources of the rapidly growing private organizations catering to Islamic revivalism. Considering the popularity of these organizations in recent years, the government is concerned that its own share of the Islamic vote is not undermined by PAS. For now, the threat posed by PAS to the Alliance government is serious - serious enough for the government to upgrade and enlarge its sponsorship of Islam.

Private Dakwah Organizations

The word dakwah means to call or invite.[17] Dakwah activists are those engaged in missionary activities to further the cause of Islam, both among Muslims and non-Muslims. Beginning in the 1970's, Malaysia has witnessed the growth of such privately sponsored religious activities. The sponsorship is undertaken by private organizations that have their own financial and administrative resources to further such activities.

Of all the dakwah organizations in Malaysia, by far the largest and most important is the Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM - Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia). Unlike PAS, ABIM, which was founded in 1971 by students from the University of Malaya, has a predominantly urban and middle-class base.[18] The founding members have strong ethnic (Malay) and religio-political convictions.

ABIM seeks to further social causes through the propagation of Islam. It is the most academic of all such movements and runs its own secondary schools "combining a secular examination - oriented curriculum within a solid Islamic framework."[19]

ABIM's key theme is the sufficiency of Islam as a total way of life. Although it delegates Islamic rituals to a secondary position in its curriculum, ABIM followers tend to follow their Middle-Eastern counterparts in matters of religious observance. So for instance, female ABIM followers often wear a partial veil while the men grow a short beard and sometimes wear Arab robes and turbans. They are critical of the syncretic variants of rural Islam and hence pose a challenge to traditional religious elites. However, ABIM is known to be a covert ally of PAS, probably owing to the latter's Islamic platform. Recent estimates place the strength of ABIM at thirty-five thousand.[20] It has eighty-six branches throughout the country. Apart from running schools and conducting classes on Islam, ABIM also runs a number of Islamic leadership training camps and publishes both a Malay and an English language magazine every month, although the government has restricted the circulation of these publications to members only.

ABIM is only one of the three influential dakwah organizations, the other two being Darul Arqam and Jamaat Tabligh. Organizations of this sort are vehemently anti-Western and often oppose material development as well, There is not only a tremendous political power potential within these organizations but the potential to become reactionary as well, judging by an incident

that occurred in Kerling on August 19, 1978.[21] Called the 'Kerling Temple Incident', the event aroused a tremendous amount of negative publicity for religious radicalism, when a group of five Malay men donning traditional white robes were caught desecrating a Hindu temple. A vigilante group of five temple guards killed four of the intruders in an ensuing fight. Subsequent investigations revealed that up to August that year, at least twenty-eight such incidents had occurred. What disturbed the government and the non-Islamic communities was not only the legal and political implications of the publicity and trial, but more importantly, the fact that all the five Muslims involved in the incident were well educated (one of them was even a University lecturer!)[22] and belonged to or had been associated with dakwah activities.

To sum up this section on the political aspect of Islamic revivalism in Malaysia, it must be remembered that in the main, the political struggle is between PAS and UMNO. PAS's support is derived primarily from the rural and agro-based states of Kelantan and to a lesser extent, Trengganu, where rural religious elites have significant political influence as well. PAS also has some support in the other two northern states of Kedah and Perlis, which are largely rural and agro-based as well. UMNO's support base is both urban and rural. Its lengthy tenure as the government party and its coalition Alliance-government has won credibility over the years for its moderate policies, especially since it also has to take into account the interests of MCA and MIC. UMNO's control of the mass media outlets has also served it well.

The political appeal of Islam does not derive from an inter-religious conflict. Instead, it derives from the larger Malay-non-Malay dichotomy. Political appeals to Islam are directed primarily towards the Malay community. Such appeals constitute an attempt to emphasize a separate identity and interests.[23] Religious appeals are meant to persuade the Malays to safeguard their special status in the country. However, the religio-political tug-of-war between PAS and UMNO may indicate a divisive trend within the Malay community. It is highly unlikely that such devisions will persist in the wake of an external threat, from the Chinese for instance.

Islamic Revivalism at the political level in Indonesia

The Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII)

Initially founded in 1911 as a co-operative association of Javanese traders in Solo, the Sarekat Dagang Islam (Islamic Trading Society) was motivated primarily to ward off Chinese business interests that were steadily encroaching on traditional Javanese industries, especially batik (a very specialized indigenous clothing that was hand printed) and kretek (Indonesian clove cigarettes).[24] The Chinese Revolution of October 1911 and the proclamation of the free Republic of China by Dr. Sun Yat Sen also led to an attitude of superiority on the part of the Chinese, who were pressing the Dutch to confer the equivalent of an European status on them.[25] Together with the Chinese business threats, batik merchants were also ill-treated by the nobility of Solo. Hence, a second reason for the founding of the party was to unite Javanese merchants against their nobility.

Shortly after its formation, the Sarakat Dagang Islam changed its name to Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association). The early years of Sarekat Islam was taken up by administrative and organizational matters. When the leadership had drawn up a constitution and decided on the party's organizational structure, it blossomed. The party was at its peak between 1916 and 1921.[26] However, its peak years were influenced by other considerations as well. Modernist Islamic thought was emerging from Egypt at this time, inspiring members of Sarekat Islam who were beginning to be threatened by aggressive Christian missionaries. Hence, Sarekat Islam was slowly transformed from an economic co-operative to a religio-nationalist organization. This shift in its orientation led to some anti-Chinese riots in Surakarta and Surabaya in 1912.[27] The Dutch government responded by banning the party for a few months. It was following this incident that the party reconstituted itself under the leadership of intellectuals as Sarekat Islam in September 1912. Also, Sarakat Islam was infiltrated by Communists until the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was formed. Then, the Islamic character could come to the fore. The second name change to PSII was instituted in 1929.

Were it not for Dutch policies, Sarekat Islam could have harnessed much political support. Cautious towards the organization's activities following the riots of 1912, the Dutch refused to grant corporate status to the party. Hence, although the various branches of the party were officially recognied by 1914, the headquarters of the various branches of the party were officially recognized by 1914,

the headquarters of the party was unable to co-ordinate activities at a national level.[28] This policy initiative had costly political implications for the party, since its moderate leadership's authority was being increasingly undermined by a Marxist faction. Hence, in order to co-opt its leftist-factions, Sarekat Islam was forced to steer a leftist course, especially since it was popular with urban labourers and rural peasants. However, notwithstanding its altered course, it gained in popularity and by 1919 had united twenty-two labour unions and won over seventy-seven thousand members.[29] By then the party's total strength was two-and-a-half million. This peak period was short-lived because by 1921, the central leadership disagreed with the Marxist-oriented factions and chose to emphasize Islam instead of socio-economic issues.

The final blow came in 1926 and 1927 when the communist factions staged a rebellion against the Dutch, which the central leadership did not sponsor. The leadership felt that socio-economic grievances could be better expressed through non-political channels. The Dutch suppression of the rebellion and the new religious course of Sarekat Islam diminished its membership to about twelve thousand by 1929,[30] which was also the year the party changed its name to PSII, to reflect its new orientation. After 1929, PSII waned in political significance, losing many of its members to the Muhammadiyah, another modernist Islamic party.

Muhammadiyah (Associaton of the followers of Muhammad)

Like PSII, the Muhammadiyah was also inspired by the Egyptian reformist movement in Islam. However, unlike the PSII, the Muhammadiyah was not opposed to the Chinese and the Dutch. Rather, it was directed against the orthodox santris within the Indonesian ummah. Hence, from its inception in November 1912, the Muhammadiyah attracted members from the urban middle class-merchants, tradesmen, teachers, petty landowners, and manufacturers.[31]

The Muhammadiyah's avowed aims were social and religious. Its religious aims were furthered through education. The party thus established institutions for religious meetings and tabligh (religious lectures). It raised Islamic issues for discussion and published books, periodicals, brochures and newspapers.[32] The Muhammadiyah also set up waqf (endowments) and sponsored the building of mosques. The social side of its activities were concentrated on the running of clinics, and looking after the poor and dispossessed - the non-political aspects of Islamic culture. The Muhammadiyah's social efforts unwittingly furthered the political cause of Islam by raising the ummah's level of religious consciousness. Hence, in its own way, it contributed to political nationalism.[33]

Primarily drawing its strength from Jogjakarta and slowly becoming popular in the other urban areas of Java, the Muhammadiyah's strength in 1925 was estimated at a mere four thousand. Notwithstanding its small membership, the organization's credibility was reflected in its achievements - it ran fifty-five schools with a total

enrolment of four thousand students, two large medical clinics as well as an orphanage and a poor house.[34] 1925 signalled the expansion of the party's membership. By branching out to Sumatra and the Outer Islands, within a span of five years it increased its membership to twenty-four thousand. By 1959, it had reached one hundred and fifty-nine thousand.[35] The Muhammadiyah has a solid reputation as the representative of a moderate wing of Islamic reformism and continues to engage in a broad range of social and educational activities. By 1963 it was running four thousand and six hundred schools, which included colleges and teachers' academies.

Nahdatul Ulama (Renaissance of Ulama)

Nahdatul Ulama or NU as it is usually referred to, was formed on January 31, 1926.[36] Confronted by the increasingly militant Islam of the Sarekat Islam from its communist factions, the Dutch endorsed the formation of NU, since it represented the santris and their ulamas, who subscribed to the orthodox variant of Javanese Islam and resisted modernist influences. Kiyahis (rural religious leaders) and ulama spearheaded the NU. These religious leaders were well-connected with the rural and orthodox santris through the peasantren (religious schools). Because the NU subscribed from the very beginning to the orthodox variant of Javanese Islam, the party membership was inclined towards the Javanese.

Legitimacy for the NU was derived primarily from its support of the peasantrens. The patron-client bonds of the rural

areas which were buttressed through marriages have left NU's kiyahis influential. Common pursuits of the santris like trade and agriculture have also brought NU adherents together. Prior to the Indonesian goverment's monopolization of the pilgrimage to Mecca, NU members served as pilgrimage brokers. Preparations for the pilgrimage and welcoming ceremonies which were arranged by NU kiyahis consolidated their leadership role.[37] Hence, there is a sense in which NU members look towards their kiyahis for guidance in every aspect of life. As a result, the NU membership is very loyal to their religious leaders, whose orthodoxy prohibits them from preaching militant Islam.

During and after the Japanese Occupation of 1945, the NU was a part of a larger Islamic party (Masjumi). In 1952, the NU withdrew from Masjumi and became a full-fledged political party, instead of a religious organization that it started off as.[38] Despite its being a new actor in the political arena, it fared very well for itself in the 1955 general elections. Its mass peasant base made it the third largest party in Indonesia at the time. Today, after having gone through all the trials of Indonesian politics[39] and with increasing pressure from its bureaucratic members (recruited when it directed the Ministry of Religion in the 1950's) and its powerful youth organization, the NU continues to remain conservative and traditionalist. Its political style has been described as 'rustic'[40] and its sentiment rural and anti-urban. Hence, it poses very little threat to the present establishment and continues to

survive today, legitimizing the government's claim to preserving Islam and accommodating itself to a very secular and Javanese variant (santri) of Islam. The NU has often been accused by fundamentalists of having yielded to government pressure to depoliticize the kind of Islam it preaches.

Masjumi

Unlike the three parties examined earlier, Masjumi was a post Second World War party. Formed in November 1945 at a congress for Indonesian Muslims, it had a short life span of fifteen years before it was banned by President Soekarno. All the important religious and social Islamic organizations in Indonesia pledged their affiliation to Masjumi, declaring it to be the only Islamic political party in Indonesia.[41] Together with the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) and Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), Masjumi became one of the leading contenders for Indonesian votes during the period of Parliamentary Democracy. However, the ummah's political unity under the Masjumi banner was extremely brief. In 1946, a traditionalist and active organization in Central Sumatra from the pre-war days declared itself as a political party. Perti, as this party was called, was active in the fields of education and social work. In 1947 there was yet another fissure. The PSII which had faded into the political background, was revived by some of its leaders and finally in 1952, Nahdatul Ulama broke away from Masjumi as well. Hence, although Masjumi was inaugerated as a very powerful political party, its hold on the Muslim electorate was shaky from the start.

Masjumi began as the heir to the modernist tradition in Islam and continued the trend that the Muhammadiyah and the PSII had started. Its strength was derived from the Sumatra, South Sulawesi, West Java and the north coast of Java.[42] Whereas West Java is ethnically non-Javanese, the north coast has a distinctive cosmopolitan flavour to it. From the very start, Masjumi support was in the main from the Outer Islands - an important observation since it was the rebellion of the Outer Islands that finally led to its abolition.

Since Masjumi was created during the 'Revolutionary' period in Indonesian politics, its first aim was to secure independence. Following independence, its second aim was to create a state based on Islamic principles.[43] As a Republican party during the period of Parliamentary Democracy, Masjumi was fairly successful in fielding candidates to high political positions. So, for instance, Mohammad Natsir - prime minister in 1950, Sukiman - prime minister in 1951, and Burhanuddin Harahap - prime minister in 1955 were all from Masjumi.[44] Between 1953 and 1955, when Ali Sastroamidjojo of the PNI was prime minister, the country was severely mismanaged economically, and there were widespread allegations of corruption. Appointments were made on the basis of party affiliations, much to the disenchantment of Outer Islanders, since PNI support was primarily derived from ethnic Javanese.

In the general elections of 1956, Ali was re-elected into office, this time with the support of Masjumi. His tarnished image did not improve and in 1957, led by military commanders, many Outer Islanders demanded his resignation.[45] Ali's refusal prompted

many of the regions to cut off all relations with the central government in 1958. The ensuing revolt in Sumatra and Sulawesi became known as the PRRI - Permesta revolt (PRRI - Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia = Indonesian Republic Revolutionary Government, Permesta - Perjuangan Semesta Alam = all-inclusive struggle).[46] The revolt, while initiated by military leaders, drew the support of some Masjumi political leaders as well. Earlier on in Acheh in 1953, PUSA (Persatuan Islam Sehuruh Acheh = all Acheh Islamic Scholars Association) led some disturbances over economic grievances and what was thought to be an under-represented Masjumi in parliament. PUSA's affiliation to Masjumi was widely regarded as harmful to the party's fortunes. Disturbances had also occurred in Sulawesi.

When asked by President Soekarno to condemn the Masjumi leaders implicated in all the above uprisings, Masjumi cabinet members refused to do so.[47] As a result, in 1959, Soekarno outlawed Masjumi, dissolved the Constituent Assembly, and instituted rule by Presidential decree. Although Masjumi was banned, Nahdatul Ulama remained as a political party. NU's accommodative stance legitimized Soekarno's stern actions. It also prevented him from being branded un-Islamic or a Communist sympathiser. As the banner of Guided Democracy was being raised, that of the Masjumi was lowered, never to be unfurled again - a decisive defeat for political Islam in Indonesia.

Partai Muslimin Indonesia(Parmusi)- Indonesian Muslim Party

Following the Communist (PKI) coup of 1965 and the anti-coup that was carried out by the army with the help of the Muslims until 1968, the army felt inclined to accommodate the interests of the Masjumi party that Soekarno had dissolved during the period of Guided Democracy. In the meantime, the major contenders for power were the army, the PNI, and NU, all of which had repesentation in Suharto's New Order cabinet. The formation of Parmusi was delayed until February 1968 also because the Suharto government refused to allow Parmusi to be led by ex-Masjumi leaders.[48]

Parmusi's new leadership was heavily screened by the government. Hence, the militant leaders of the defunct Masjumi party were unable to hold any positions in Parmusi. Appeals to revive Masjumi failed. Likewise, the efforts of Muslim youth to found a new party to accommodate their interests (Partai Demokrasi Islam Indonesia - Indonesian Islamic Democratic Party) were futile because of government opposition.[49] Finally,the government also turned down a request for Indonesian Muslims to hold a national congress in 1968.

From its inception, Parmusi was heavily steered by the Suharto government. After all, if it were not for government approval, Parmusi would never have been formed. The initial struggles for leadership in Parmusi also led to government intervention. In the elections of 1971, Parmusi leaders who ran for parliamentary positions were screened by the government, leading to accusations that only pro-government leaders were allowed to contest.[50]

Hence, Parmusi's political punch was non-existent from the very start, unlike Masjumi or for that matter, even NU. Besides, the various religio-social organizations that came under the Parmusi umbrella never really looked to the party's leadership for guidance. As a result, centralized co-ordination of Parmusi's activities was hampered.

If Masjumi inherited the modernist tradition in Indonesian Islam from the earlier Muhammadiyah and PSII, Parmusi inherited it after Masjumi's abrupt end. However, the difference was that although splinter groups broke away from Masjumi, it had a relatively stable and committed membership. The same cannot be said of Parmusi, which comprises a collage of disparate social and religious groups.[51] Whereas organizations like Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah were spontaneous, Parmusi was government-sponsored from the very start. The formation of Parmusi in 1968 and later on the United Development Party (PPP) in 1977, which was also an Indonesian government initiative reflects attempts by the government to co-ordinate and co-opt Islam.

Perhaps the most striking feature of political Islam in Indonesia is its disunity. Statistically, Muslims comprise ninety percent of the population - a percentage that is definitely not reflected in their political status and involvement. Although today the Javanese-centric abangans and Prijajis are ill-disposed towards towards giving santri Muslims a slice of the political pie, they are not to be blamed entirely. Muslim political parties in Indonesia

have consistently exercised a kind of exclusivism that has not been in their interest. The failure of early organizations like PSII, Muhammadiyah and NU to tap the political potential of the nationalist awakenings at the turn of the century allowed the PNI to easily dominate the articulation of social and economic grievances at the national level, increasing their clout in the process. The NU's conservative stance and rapid accommodation of Panca Sila (Guided Democracy) left it unfit to perform the role of a formidable political opponent to PNI. The disbanding of Masjumi and government screening and interference in Parmusi left the latest heir to the modernist tradition politically impotent. The PNI effectively died in the 1965 coup and the army became the main political contender after the ranks of the PKI were bloodily decimated in the anti-coup of 1965. Hence, despite the strength of its ummah, Islamic parties have always maintained the stance of a minority in Indonesian political life.[52]

Within the ummah itself, there is a tremendous amount of disunity. The dichotomy between abangans and santris, orthodox and modernists, purists and syncretists, as well as Javanese and Outer Islanders represent some of the deeper cleavages in the ummah. Those whose beliefs and practices are incompatible with that of other Muslims seek to establish their own identity, tending towards exclusivism rather than alliances. Added to these cleavages is the fear of secular nationalists that Muslims would like to see a state based on Islamic principles. Suspicions of this nature have also excluded Indonesian Muslims from a larger political role.

Indonesia's political history has also been harsh to the course of Islam. The years of parliamentary democracy between 1950 and 1957 witnessed seven coalition cabinets and an uneasy truce between the Masjumi and the secular nationalists. The PRRI - Permesta Revolt, the dissolution of cabinet and the entry of Guided Democracy dealt the decisive blows to political Islam. The banning of Masjumi was also a blow to Outer Islanders, since Masjumi had represented their interests. The Javanese were able to consolidate their political supremacy. The army also became a leading political actor. Because of its role against the Dutch in the Revolutionary period, its suppression of the PRRI-Permesta revolt, and the 1965 PKI coup, the army's political participation and credibility sky-rocketted. Besides, President Suharto himself was an army general. The formation of Golkar (Golongan Karya - a 'functional' party created by Suharto) during the New Order era also served to siphon off Muslim votes in elections.

Both the 1971 and 1977 elections yielded landslide victories for Golkar, although the party structure was different in 1977, when all the Muslim parties were merged to form PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan - Development United Party).[53] The Muslim PPP combines the membership of PSII, NU, Parmusi and Perti. The other two parties were Golkar and the newly formed Indonesian Democratic Party which draws its political strength from ex-Christian and nationalistic parties. Amid claims that some two to three million of its voters were left out in East Java owing to malpractices by the

government, the PPP significantly beat Golkar in Jakarta, the capital city. This victory is attributed to economic grievances, corruption, unemployment, unfair applications of law and an ambivalent attitude towards Islam.[54]

To conclude, political Islam has tremendous power potential, although the ummah is divided over a number of issues. For Indonesian Muslims to play a substantial political role, their organization must resolve differences and formulate political, economic and social goals and show how the Islamic faith can achieve these goals. In other words, the ummah has to work out a blueprint on the relevance of Islam in relation to contemporary Indonesian life. Indonesian Muslims are a formidable force, especially in the Outer Islands. Hence, to disregard them in national development policies would be injurious to the whole country.[55]

Public Policy Responses to Islamic Revivalism

The most striking similarity in Malaysia and Indonesia's public policy responses to Islamic revivalism is the desire of both governments to depoliticize Islam. Ideally, both countries would not only like to circumscribe the political role of Islam but where possible, reduce its significance to that of a private and individual affair. Whereas this desire amongst Malaysian politicians, especially those from UMNO, derive largely from the need to fulfill the political expectations of a significant non-Muslim minority, the primary reason of Indonesian politicians is different, in that it derives from the desire of the Javanese

abangan, the bureaucratic prijajis, and the military commanders to maintain their pre-eminence within the country. Also, the western framework within which the political systems of both countries operate require a secular approach to politics. After all, both countries are democracies, albeit the Indonesian system is much less flexible and the president's powers are enormous. The ummah in both countries offer stout resistance to this prescribed apolitical role. They would like to see Islam gain political significance.

In the main then, public policy responses try to bridge the differences between differing expectations. The task of Indonesian politicians has been made substantially easier owing to a variety of reasons. Firstly, the Dutch had established a clear precedence in administering Islam. Secondly, the political role of Islam was circumscribed after Masjumi was banned. The present PPP, despite its popularity (it won 30 percent of the total votes in the 1982 general elections)[56] derives its legitimacy from the government and is therefore forced to steer a moderate course. Finally, Javanese pre-eminence in the government makes it difficult for orthodox santri Muslims who are mostly Outer Islanders to stage a political comeback in government. Attempting a comeback would definitely incur the wrath of the military which is known for its high-handed techniques as the anti-coup of 1965 demonstrated. Additionally, the fear that Muslims would desire a state based on Islamic principles has also made the government suspicious of revivalism.

The situation in Malaysia is different in that Islam has been thrust to the forefront of the political scene. In having opted for Islam as the official religion of the country at the time of independence, earlier leaders have set a trend for present politicians. They have little option save to make themselves appear to be the guardians of Islam - a difficult task to perform without incurring the wrath of the ethnic minorities owing to the polarization of religious identity along ethnic lines. The government's added task of redistributing the economic pie to upgrade the status of Malays has also to be reconciled with the non-economic inclinations of Islamic morality. In the midst of these complications, the government have to contend with a political party that runs on an Islamic platform. The successes of PAS in the 1959 state and general elections has left the government on its guard. As if a competitor is not enough, it has to direct the private dakwah organizations lest they become radical and intolerant of their non-Muslim fellow citizens. To top it all, British administration during the colonial days did not leave the federal authorities with precedents of any kind. The growing popularity of dakwah activities requires federal intervention. Leaving the various sultans to manage Islam within their own states would no longer suffice as an adequate policy response.

The above-mentioned problems are some of the most fundamental ones facing the formulators of public policy in Malaysia and Indonesia. The Malaysian task is admittedly much more complicated and difficult. The following sections in this chapter will examine the public policy responses generated by the Malaysian and

Indonesian governments. In the main, the thrust of policy initiatives will be identified. The word thrust is used to refer to the general direction of policy initiatives - direction and dilution of political Islam, for instance. As with the earlier sections, Malaysia and Indonesia will be treated separately. It is hoped that these last two sections will complete the basis for the historical and comparative enquiry on the role of Islam in the politics and public policy of Malaysia and Indonesia.

Public Policy Responses to Islamic Revivalism - The Malaysian Case

Islam in Malaysia has become increasingly institutionalized and bureaucratized at the national level - a recent development that took place over the last twenty years or so. Prior to that, the administration of Islam was restricted to the state level. The reason for the autonomous administration of Islam by the individual states was largely a result of British colonial policies. In fact, before the advent of the British, even state level administration of Islam was absent. Islam initially existed side by side with the royalty and there was little interaction, except for the sultans' symbolic support of it.[57] Although the royal courts were associated with Muslim traders and merchants, the sultans were more keen on exercising their royal privileges than tapping the political potential of Islam.

The British entry into Malaysia altered the significance of Islam and the role of the sultans as its guardian. With the implementation of the British residential system of government, the sultans performed the role of intermediaries between the British and the Malays. In order to give some form of recognition to the

sultans, the British allowed all matters pertaining to "Malay Religion and Custom" to be administered by the sultans within their states.[58] Deprived of their traditional role as rulers, the sultans concentrated on their new prerogatives and nurtured the growth of Islam. The British on their part, encouraged the sultans by promoting Islamic education and preventing Christian missionaries from proselytizing Malays. Hence, British tolerance of Islam unwittingly catered to the consolidation of Islam through administrative means.[59]

Within each Malay state the creation of a centralized administration for Islam and a legal system to supplement it began in 1884. By 1920, all the states had their own Islamic administration as well as Islamic courts. By the end of the Second World War, these administrative mechanisms had been designed according to European norms.[60] Hence, by the time of independence, the sultans were viewed by the Malays not only as their traditional rulers, but also as the protectors and patrons of Islam within their states. Responsibility for the conduct of religious affairs was vested within state councils. During independence in 1957, as noted earlier, Islam was made the official religion of the country as a whole. Prior to that it had been the official religion of each Malay state.

It is precisely at the time when Islam was declared to be the official federal religion that the problem of administering it appeared. The endorsement of Islam as the state religion within a western-style and secular parliamentary democracy was a contradiction

that had to be solved. Muslims have always rejected the separation between church and state, urging rather a full implementation of Islamic principles.

The Malaysian government has to reconcile this aspect of Islam with the religious toleration that it promised the other ethnic communities at the time of independence.[61] Because Malays are inevitably also Muslims, special considerations given to Muslims meant special considerations to Malays. Hence, religious interests go hand-in-hand with ethnic interests. Owing to this cross-cutting of religious and ethnic identity, the government's protection and promotion of Islam can be viewed as an ascriptive privilege directed towards the Malay community. The special privileges accorded to the Malays on the basis of their religion cannot be disbanded because the government's political support rests on it. Therefore, a "political realignment" is out of the question. It is within this framework of special rights that the Malaysian government has to continue maintaining its power base without endangering its relation with the ethnic minorities.[62]

If 1957 resulted in an uneasy truce, so did the year 1969, when racial riots broke out. An overplayed Chinese electoral victory procession in Kuala Lumpur, the capital city, angered the Malays, leading to a bloody racial riot. The prime minister declared a state of emergency and ruled with the help of a National Operations Council for twenty-one months beginning in May of that year. When things returned to normal in 1971, the government identified the primary cause of the riot as "the relative economic deprivation of

the Malays compared to the non-Malays".[63] To redress this deprivation, it launched the New Economic Policy, (NEP) which had two principal objectives - the eradication of poverty for all Malaysians and "the restructuring of society so that the present identification of race with economic functions would eventually be eliminated."[64] In order to meet the second objective, the government's scheme called for policies that would enable Malays to have a thirty percent share in the domestic economy within twenty years, by 1991. The resulting policies called for a thirty percent Malay employment at all levels and in all industries. The government has since 1971 launched many quasi-government corporations and joint-ventures with local and foreign companies to achieve the targetted goal. With the identity of Malays being intricately woven with their identity as Muslims, the NEP turned out to be another shot in the arm for the Malaysian ummah.

After having made all these concessions, the Malaysian government is still threatened by the wave of revivalism that is sweeping the Malay-Muslim community. There are a few reasons as to why Malaysian politicians consider the situation problematic. Firstly, many of the present leaders are Western - trained secularists, who envisage their power base being eroded if the state is to be based on Islamic principles.[65] There are also those who fear that an Islamic state would lead to the disbandment of Malay special rights. This disbandment would undermine the political platform of the present leaders as well. The government is also trying to prevent Islamic fundamentalism from setting the clock backwards for

Malays with regards to economic progress. Finally, fundamentalism would destabilize the racial harmony that is presently holding the country together. For these reasons, the government has felt compelled to respond to Islamic revivalism with public policies.

One of the most obvious thrusts of Malaysian public policy towards Islam is its promotion of the religion. The government, especially through UMNO, has gone to great lengths to demonstrate its role as the guardian of Islam. Towards this end, they are trying to outbid PAS in making Islamic appeals. UMNO has relinquished its reputation as a secular party and is now claiming that the promotion of Islam had always been one of its primary goals. Today, UMNO represents itself as "Malaysia's oldest and the world's third largest Islamic party."[66] Dr. Mahatir, the party's president and Malaysia's prime minister since 1981, has declared on numerous occasions lately that "UMNO's struggle was based on Islam, and that its three objectives were protecting Malay rights, Islam and the country."[67]

As part of the government's plan to upgrade its promotion of Islam, many measures are already underway. Some of the economic measures in favour of Islam are the establishment of the Malaysian Islamic Development Foundation, and approved proposals for the setting up of an Islamic Insurance Company and Islamic pawnshops. Other proposals under consideration include a ban on gambling and the deduction of zakat from income tax liabilities.[68] Earlier in 1982, parliament passed the Government Investment Act and Islamic Bank Act, approving the formation of an Islamic Bank (Bank Islam Malaysia) that was opened in July 1983. Federal liquidity require-

ments for local banks (ratio of loans to capital reserves) have been waived in this instance and the bank will neither offer interest to depositors nor charge interest on loans. Whereas big investors will qualify for profit-sharing dividends, project loans will be subject to "equity participation", whereby the bank will be jointly responsible for the financial success or failure of a business venture.[69]

Some of the other measures designed to promote Islam include the decision to upgrade kathis to the level of magistrates and shari'a courts to the level of civil courts. With effect January 1, 1983, Malaysia has banned the importation of non-halal (kosher) beef. An Islamic Teachers Training College has been established while provisions have been made for an International Islamic Youth Complex and an International Islamic Youth Camp.[70] The increased use of the Arabic script and the suspension of meal plans at all public primary schools during the fasting month have also been implemented. At the symbolic level, closer ties have been established with Middle-Eastern countries and the traditional method of sighting the moon for the Islamic New Year has been approved. The Red Cross has also been renamed the Red Crescent.

The mass media (government monopolies) have also been used to propagate Islam. There has been an increase in the number of programs devoted to Islam while two of the five daily prayers are broadcast.[71] A sterner attitude towards corrupting influences from the west was also adopted. This included the banning of rock concerts

and X-rated movies and the entry of hippies into the country. Penalties for drug-related offences were also stiffened. Finally, the Islamic syllabus in all government schools was revised and Islam was made a compulsory subject for Muslims.

To crown all the aforesaid efforts, lately the government has vigorously promoted dakwah activities. In doing so, it is not only trying to undermine private dakwah organizations, but more importantly, to raise its esteem in the eyes of Muslims and claim credit for encouraging Islamic activities.[72] Many of these measures have not been voluntarily forthcoming. Instead, they are being employed to woo the Muslim vote and prevent reactionary elements from directing the various dakwah groups.

UMNO's recent promotion of Islamic activities is premised on two assumptions. The first assumption is that PAS, which has a religious party platform, will try to tap the political potential of the present revivalism. The second assumption is that misdirected revivalism would not work in UMNO's political favour. Since both assumptions threaten UMNO's Malay support, which forms the basis of its dominance within the Alliance party, it is especially keen to co-opt PAS's religious platform. Towards that end, it has gone beyond the promotion of Islam to the outright co-optation of PAS members. For instance, it co-opted two PAS members from Trengganu with the help of the state sultan in 1961 and widely publicized the event.[73] Following that, large sums of federal money were pumped into Trengganu. Significantly enough, PAS lost Trengganu in the same year. Similarly, during the 1969 elections, the Alliance

government offered to invest $548 million in Kelantan if UMNO secured an electoral victory there.[74] However, this second attempt was unsuccessful and PAS retained its hold on the state.

Between 1973 and 1978, the Alliance government successfully lured PAS into a grand coalition, co-opting the party's stronghold on the northern states. When it became apparent that PAS was trying to influence Alliance members to join its ranks, PAS was ejected.[75] Perhaps the best example of UMNO's co-optation process was demonstrated in March 1982, when it recruited then ABIM president Anwar Ibrahim and thereby raised its Islamic credentials.[76] In April the same year, Anwar contested as an UMNO candidate and won a parliamentary seat. He was subsequently appointed the deputy minister for the Islamic Religious Affairs section - a portfolio within the Prime Minister's Department. In September the same year he was named as head of UMNO Youth and made one of the five vice-presidents of UMNO.

UMNO's promotion of Islam and the co-optation of influential political opponents is only part of the Alliance government's present strategy. Where such measures fail or where there is the possibility of dakwah activities becoming violent, as was the case with the Kerling Temple incident, then it regulates and controls such activities.

The most important regulatory device for Islamic activities in Malaysia has been the increasing centralization of these activities at the national level. Initially established in 1969 under the

chairmanship of the prime minister, the National Council for Islamic Affairs is comprised of representatives from the various states.[77] It monitors Islam at the federal level. However, the advisory capacity within which the council operates has made enforcement difficult. Besides, it is not constitutionally empowered to override the prerogatives of the state sultans on matters involving Islam. Hence, although it is a policy co-ordinating body, the council's decisions are not enforceable. Nonetheless, Islamic administration at the federal level has been considerably tightened. These measures include intelligence gathering and the establishment of two specialized units within the Prime Minister's Department - the Islamic Research Centre and the Islamic Training and Dakwah Institute.[78] As well, effective from 1978, both the Ministries of Defence and Education have streamlined their Religious Affairs Section. Finally the Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia (YDIM: Islamic Propagatory Foundation of Malaysia), a statutory board with members directly appointed and supervised by the Prime Minister, monitors dakwah activities at the national level.[79] YDIM publishes a monthly magazine for its officers and its employees organize talks and seminars. Religious training classes are also a feature of YDIM.

The centralization of the religious bureaucracy at the national level was made easier by a constitutional amendment that was passed in parliament.[80] This amendment created a Federal Territory by redrawing the boundaries of the state of Selangor where the capital city is located. In addition to facilitating the setting up of a national religious bureaucracy, the Federal Territory weakened the link between royalty and religion. In 1981 the Malaysian

government passed the Societies Amendment Act to circumscribe the political involvement of Islamic groups.[81] From that year any organization that tries to influence any aspect of government policy or administration was forced to register itself as a political organization. The new act also allows the government to control the foreign links or such organizations and amend their rules and regulation if the government considers it necessary. It would appear that this new act is specifically directed against ABIM, especially given its Middle-Eastern links and criticism of government policies pertaining to Islam.

Apart from centralizing the administration of Islam, the Malaysian government has also moved to take over religious education. It now runs all religious schools and has promised to improve both their standards and facilities.[82] It is planning to commission an Islamic University and has restricted the teaching of Islam within the various states to those issued with a tauliah[83] (official letter of approval).

These then are the public policy initiatives that have been undertaken by the Malaysian government to ward off the threat of Islamic revivalism to undermine its political legitimacy which is in the main, derived from Muslims. The attitude of the government is perhaps best described as one of ambivalence.[84] On the one hand it promotes Islam and on the other, is increasingly subjecting it to bureaucratic controls at the national level. This apparent contradiction appears to be its only option in having to satisfy both its Muslim and non-Muslim electorate, on which it relies for

its legitimacy. Given its broad range of policy options - from promotion and co-optation to control and coercion, the Malaysian government is likely to manage its threat well. The situation requires very skillful politicians and the Alliance government has indeed managed its task very well. Malaysia's polyethnic setting requires nothing less than such a precarious political balance.

The Malaysian government's attempts at managing the challenges of the current revivalist trend has indeed yielded fruit. UMNO's skillful manipulation of Islamic symbols and its timely promotion of Islam has made it a difficult opponent for PAS as the 1982 election results suggest, where the latter won only five parliamentary seats and eighteen state seats, all in the northern states of Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah, and Perlis.[85] UMNO's electoral victories are well-deserved, though a complacent attitude after having secured these votes could prove detrimental to its interest. The inevitable outcome of these religious struggles have been a massive religious bureaucracy at the national level - a significant policy shift from the country's colonial heritage. At least in the case of Malaysia, there are policy mechanisms for Islam to express itself politically. The Indonesian case is significantly different, as the next section will illustrate and as a consequence, potentially more prone to a violent outburst.

Public Policy Responses to Islamic Revivalism - The Indonesian Case

The foundations of Dutch Islamic policy in Indonesia were derived primarily from the recommendations of one of their colonial administrators who was conversant with Islam. Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, the administrator, proposed a two-pronged approach. Whereas the first prong was toleration - conditio sine qua non to pacify Indonesians who were overwhelmingly Muslims, albeit of an acculturated Islam, the second thrust was the use of force on "all those trends that bear or tend to bear a political character".[86] Hence, although Snouck advocated religious toleration at the individual level, he proposed that interferences from Muslim communities outside Indonesia be "nipped in the bud".[87]

Indonesia, like Malaysia, had two legal systems prior to the advent of the Dutch. There was Islamic law and adat or traditional customary law. Dutch policies in Indonesia actively favoured and furthered adat law to prevent the ummah from gaining political significance as well as to secularize Islam. As a result, the Dutch worked closely with adat chiefs instead of ulama.[88] Adat chiefs did not see religious laws as a critical element of their rule. Together with the adat chiefs, the Dutch also preferred the aristocratic prijajis who followed Hindu cultural practices and manned the bureaucracy since the days of the Majapahit Empire. The prijajis were suspicious of the leaders of modernist Islam in Indonesia, whom they feared might usurp their established administrative roles.[89] The Dutch, like their Indonesian policy formulators after independence, favoured traditionalist over modernists: the traditionalists were content with observing religious duties. To

consolidate their preference for local chiefs, the Dutch Indies government introduced legislation in 1937 to curtail the jurisdiction of shari'a courts.[90] Henceforth, waqf and inheritance disputes were referred to civil courts that derived precedence from adat law instead of Islamic law.

The Dutch also checked the political punch of Islam through policies relating to peasantrens - the traditional stronghold of the kiyahis. A decree promulgated in 1905 required all religious instructors to obtain written permission from the Regent or his representative.[91] This authorization would indicate the kind of Islamic teachings that a kiyahi was allowed to conduct. Additionally, such religious teaching had to conform to the model prescribed by the regent. The kiyahi was also to keep an updated list of all his pupils to be made available to the district authorities and monitor the activities of students who came from outside the region. The task of supervising the kiyahis often fell into the hands of adat chiefs who were the Regent's representative. These chiefs saw to it that only a private and depoliticized Islam was taught in the peasentrens. When the tide of Islamic modernism swept Indonesia in the 1920's and 1930's, many kiyahis with modernist inclinations were banned from teaching and often exiled to the more remote islands.[92]

To monitor the political activities of the Indonesian ummah, the Dutch maintained a large number of informers. The institution of perintah halus (gentle order) led to the Dutch assuming a wide range of arbitrary powers.[93] On the claim that they were working in the interest of peace and order, the Dutch, through

the Governor-General, could deny an Indonesian residence in certain parts of the country. Alternatively, particular places for residence could be assigned. Although perintah halus made provision for those accused of violating the peace to have an adequate hearing and defence, these provisions were usually ignored.

With regards to proselytization, the Dutch, unlike the British, actively encouraged Christian missionaries to preach to Muslims. Christian missionaries were even given financial aid.[94] On the other hand, Muslims were barred from preaching to animists. Also, while Christian insults at Muslims were condoned by the Dutch, if Muslim writings were thought to be offensive to Christians, the Dutch suppressed them swiftly. Hence, Dutch policies in Indonesia were actively anti-Islamic.

The Dutch were also indirectly responsible for the nationalist movement in Indonesia falling into secular hands. The Dutch Colonial Administration, sent promising local students to the Netherlands, where they acquired a secularist outlook.[95] Impressed with the technical and economic achievements of the west, these students usually regarded Islam as the obstacle to modernization and the reason for Indonesia's colonial status under the Dutch. Impressed with Kemal Ataturk and Reza Pahlavi who secularized Islam, these returning scholars favoured Javanese values over Muslim ones. Hence, the Soekarno era in Indonesia opened with a bias in favour of Javanese secularism.

Owing to the fact that Indonesia, unlike Malaysia, did not have a smooth transition towards independence, certain political

developments that occurred during the years between 1945 and 1949 have to be highlighted at this juncture. Many of these developments were pertinent to Indonesian Islam as well as public policy responses to Islam in the post-independence years. The revolutionary phase in Indonesian history began on August 17, 1945, two days after the Japanese surrender when Soekarno and Hatta proclaimed the formation of the Republic of Indonesia, with Soekarno as the president and Hatta as his deputy.[96] With a Central National Committee of 135 men and a cabinet, Soekarno managed to establish a functional government that was given the support of almost all of Indonesian society. Large quantities of arms were secured from the Japanese to ward off a possible Dutch return.

The British were the first Allied troops to land in Indonesia. Shortly afterwards, the Dutch followed suit. Large scale fighting between Indonesians and the Dutch soon erupted, especially in Java, Sumatra, and Bali. British and American pressure to halt the fighting led to the signing of the Linggadjati Agreement in November 1946.[97] Under the terms of the agreement, the Dutch recognized the Republic's de facto authority over Java and Sumatra. They also agreed to co-operate with the Republic towards independence, that was to be granted within a Netherlands-Indonesian Union by January 1949. However, in July 1947, widescale fighting erupted again and this time with the help of the United Nations, the Renville Agreement was signed; validating the earlier accord but with the Republic acknowledging its weaker military position.[98] A United Nations Security Council intervention in January 1949

ordered the Dutch to grant Indonesia independence and led to a Round Table Conference at the Hague; which subsequently culminated in complete sovereignty.

During the four turbulent years after the Second World War, the struggle for leadership between the secular and Muslim nationalists was buried, owing to their united opposition against the Dutch. The real question as to whether independent Indonesia would be based on Islamic principles or not was left to be answered after independence was achieved. In the meantime, the technicalities associated with elections, the frequent change of governments, and stalling by political parties to gain a stronger platform, delayed parliamentary elections for five years more, up to 1955.[99] In the midst of these developments, two changes took place within the ummah. As observed earlier, Musjumi had broken up. Also, political agitation that would be later on associated with the Masjumi was breaking out in the Outer Islands. The two distinctive political cultures that Indonesia had been the historical heir to - the Javanese aristocratic tradition and the Islamic entrepreneurial tradition were becoming clearly defined.[100] Whereas the former favoured a secular or pantheistic state and was vehemently anti-Dutch, the latter favoured a state based on Islam and tended to be more anti-Chinese. The Javanese tradition also tended towards nativism.

If 1960 spelled the end for parliamentary democracy and political Islam, it also marked the beginning of what is popularly referred to as the Soekarno era. There is a very real sense in which Soekarno's over-arching Panca Sila[101] state ideology determined

the future of political Islam. The Soekarno era effectively institutionalized the most basic political problems of Indonesia - the centre - periphery conflict between Java and the Outer Islands and the desire of the Javanese to assert and institutionalize what they considered to be a superior culture and people over the other disunited ethnic counterparts.

It was Soekarno's political skills that made Panca Sila appear to be a viable option for the country. He was a member of the elite pre-World War Two nationalist movement and needed no further credentials. He had proclaimed Indonesian independence when the Japanese had left and had negotiated with the Dutch. The Javanese viewed him as a national symbol and he effectively manipulated political symbols to create an almost mystical aura around him.

Soekarno was undoubtedly well-qualified by Indonesian standards to be the country's political leader. The Javanese family spirit and their concept of bapak (father figure) and bung (elder brother) allowed Soekarno to use these names to gain an almost familial kind of reverence and respect from his followers. Hence, it was only natural that the Javanese thought that he deserved special powers and considerations to fulfill his responsibilities.[102] The Hindu-Buddhist Javanese tradition enhanced Soekarno's residential istana (Palace) conferred a traditional political status as well, including claims that he was the heir to mystical powers. Soekarno utilized all these symbols to enhance his political powers considereably. He never feared assuming responsibility and was a skillful politician

in using the army and the Communists to check each other's power.[103] Finally, he was endowed with an admirable oratorical ability - an endowment that he used tactfully to sidestep political confrontations and forward his ideas on Panca Sila. Soekarno's justification for a state policy was that Indonesian politics up to 1959 was based on ideological orientations, he proposed that Indonesians adopt a functional attitude towards politics.[104]

Soekarno's state policies were definitely anti-Islamic. He continued the role of the earlier Dutch administrators in secularizing Islam and making it a private affair. The banning of Masjumi and the adoption of Panca Sila, which made belief in the omnipotence of God as the first principle, dashed the hopes of the ummah for Islam to perform a political role. What Soekarno considered to be the greatest shortcoming of Islam was the takhlid (blind obedience) mentality of its adherents. Like the modernists at the turn of the century, Soekarno argued that closing of the Bab al-Ijtihad (the gate of personal effort) was the greatest blow to Islam since its laws were derived from the four orthodox schools without an enquiry into their appropriateness.[105] Soekarno, like the Dutch-trained secular nationalists, was fearful that political Islam could hinder modernization efforts. For Soekarno, if Islam was to have a political role, it first had to make up for the thousand years that society progressed after its laws were drawn up. Also, if Indonesia was to have a political system based on Islamic values, then Soekarno's political manoueverings would be constantly monitored by ulamas and kiyahis - a thought that he did not relish.

The Panca Sila state ideology during the Soekarno era was completed when he coined the NASAKOM slogan, with which he incorporated the three parties in Indonesia that influenced political life - the Nationalists - Nasionalis, the religious groups - Agama, and the Communists - Komunis.[106] Armed with a new political symbol, he dominated the Indonesian political scene again until the Gestapu (1965 PKI coup), when it appeared as if political Islam in Indonesia was being revived. The ummah's pent up anger at having been deprived of its political power found a channel in the anti-coup when it joined the military in killing an estimated 200,000 communists.[107] However, the ummah's renewed hopes were short-lived. Together with the secular Javanese abangans and prijajis, the army dislodged Islam from the political arena again, when Suharto rose to power under the New Order between 1966 and 1967.

Within the geographical confines of Southeast Asia, the predominance of the military in the political system in Indonesia is paralleled only in Thailand. The military involvement in Indonesian political life dates back to the revolutionary war against the Dutch. Shortage of weapons and inadequate training led Indonesian soldiers to engage in guerilla warfare against the Dutch. The result of such warfare was that the roles between civilian and military life were rapidly blurred.[108] At the same time, these fighters required the support of the local populace to sustain their war effort. In return, Indonesians often looked forward to military leaders to identify and formulate political decisions. Hence, the army and the civilians in Indonesia became involved in a symbiotic relationship.

The ranks of the Indonesian military, especially in the higher echelons, clearly reflect the ummah's abangan - santri - prijaji distinctions. The Javanese are heavily overrepresented, while the reverse is true with the santris. By the 1960's between sixty and eighty percent of the army were comprised of Javanese, especially in the officer corps, which was dominated by the prijajis.[109] Every since the PRRI - Permesta Revolts, the army has been suspicious of Muslim aspirations and has firmly held a secular view of political life. The territorially - based army endorsed Soekarno's Panca Sila after the uprising was suppressed although elements from the army were involved in the uprising as well. Hence, it came as no surprise that the army was stoutly opposed to parliamentary democracy - it had neither a stake nor a committment to the system. The compromise arrived at was a democratic system within which the army, together with the President, wielded enormous power. Also, Panca Sila secularized Islam. This secularization went well with the military leaders who had always seen Islam only as useful in maintaining the morals and morale of their troops.[110]

There were a few other reasons that contributed to the growing strength of the army and a corresponding decline in the strength of the Indonesian ummah. Firstly, during the 1960's the army, under Soekarno, acquired large quantities of arms. These arms were used in the annexation of West Irian and in the Confrontation[111] against Malaysia that was aimed at creating a larger Indonesia. Also, the army was increasingly becoming entrenched within the Indonesian commercial elite. Economic privileges were

officially established as rewards for senior officers first in 1958 when the multinational companies in Indonesia under Soekarno, placed central martial law administrators on the management staff of Dutch firms as a reward for their service.[112] Soekarno's Panca Sila Cabinet appointed Nasution as Minister of Security and Defence Affairs and Nasution in turn saw to it that seven senior army officers were made ministers.[113]

Firmly entrenched in Indonesian politics since 1945, the army's influence has continued to grow. Soekarno's use of the army to suppress the PRRI - Permesta Revolts and his reliance on it for political support increased the army's stature. The only other contender for political power was the PKI, that was removed from the political scene following the coup. Suharto, who came into power in 1967, unlike Soekarno, cannot hope to derive his political legitimacy from charisma and the manipulation of symbols. Instead, he identifies with the military and continues to rule along the lines of Soekarno. With the removal of Soekarno and the PKI, the army and the state sponsored functional Golkar party are the political heirs to the throne in Indonesia. Since the support of the latter derives from the former, the army has been left as the major contender in the political arena. However, recent economic development and human resource management plans have made bureaucrats become influential in policy-making decisions.

Under the New Order era, military leaders make national policy decisions and employ military men to administer them. The army leadership claims the dual role of preserving Indonesian

sovereignty (a task that they battled for against the Dutch) and for developing the institutions that will lead to the smooth transition back to civilian government.[114] There is little indication today that such a transfer of political power will take place. The role of Islam under the New Order era has also been curtailed because Nasultion was an orthodox *santri* Muslim who observed Islam punctiliously. Additionally, he also had a *santri* entourage, some of whom were well-placed. With his departure in 1966 and Suharto's rise, what little *santri* influence was left in the army has been gotten rid of.[115] Hence, Nasution's old guards can no longer influence military or national policies towards Muslims.

With a government that is dominated by the Javanese and the army, what then are the state's public policy responses towards Islam? To begin with, unlike its Malaysian counterpart, the Indonesian government is neither obligated by law to exclusively promote Islam nor interested in doing so. Whereas the Malaysian government has been literally cornered into promoting Islam, in Indonesia no such pressures exist. If anything, national leaders would be keen on promoting a semi-secular Javanese way of life that has often been branded a religion owing to its rich socio-cultural heritage.

The identification of Islam with the Outer Islands and the *PRRI - Permesta* revolts has done the Indonesian *ummah* much harm. For a brief while during the anti-coup when it joined forces with the military in decimating the PKI, it looked as if the *ummah*

would regain a place in the political system. The military under Suharto soon clamped down on any such aspirations. The sponsorship of Parmusi was not so much an outlet for Islam as it was a way of monitoring the ummah's activities. The formation of the PPP during the 1977 elections was a similar tactic. The NU, which is a staunch supporter of Panca Sila today, is also a member of the PPP. In consolidating the diversified political membership of the ummah, the Indonesian government can claim credit for uniting the ummah. However, the assumption underlying the union stems from the desire to monitor the ummah's activities better.

Although there remains little need for the ummah to be co-opted, Indonesian public policy is slightly inclined towards co-optation. For the most part, it is aimed at suppressing whatever political aspirations the ummah may still have. One can even venture so far as to say that the entire ummah has been co-opted "in so far as Muslims no longer strive openly for an Islamic state."[116] At the individual level, the government has offered material inducements to Islamic leaders and their followers. This is usually done through business opportunities and government appointments or financial aid to selected peasentrens.[117]

Suppression of political activities, whether Islamic or non-Islamic gradually became institutionalized during the Soekarno era. Soekarno's criticism of political parties for dividing Indonesians and the army's use of force against regional insubordination sowed the seeds for suppression to become a regular feature of Indonesian government policy. Also, as new claimants to power, the military was less willing to admit political parties

as competitors into the political arena.[118] The introduction of martial law after the Gestapu coup worsened matters. Arrests and detentions without trial became commonplace and the constant fear of being arbitrarily detained for being a security threat discouraged many Indonesians from participating in political activities and depoliticized them.[119] Press censorship is severe and pledges of loyalty to a secular nation state and Panca Sila are expected of journalists, teachers, students, and civil servants. Also, the government has increased the mechanisms to inculcate the Panca Sila ideology within its populace.[120] Peasentrens and kiyahis slowly see their influence waning, though it is often difficult to police some of the far flung Outer Islands. Peasentrens are increasingly becoming integrated into the secular system of public schools. Perhaps the greatest blow is the fact that rulings handed down by the highest Islamic courts in the country can be appealed and challenged at the secular Indonesian Supreme Court.[121]

Deriving its legitimacy from the first principle of the Panca Sila - Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa (Divine Omnipotence), Islam, as with all the other recognized religions in the country (Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, and Buddhism), is overseen officially by the Ministry of Religion.[122] The aims of the ministry are as follows: the organization and maintenance of elementary and secondary religious schools, to further religious practices and beliefs that are important to the state and society; to direct individual and social religious services; to direct and administer religious property and tithes; to offer information and guidance on religious matters including resolving questions pertaining to

faith; to administer religious courts and religious institutions of higher learning and to organize and administer all pilgrimages, including the haj.[123] The Ministry of Religion has an impressive task to perform. The not so impressive part of the task is that the military performs many of these tasks on behalf of the ministry, leaving it as little more than a rubber stamp. Although the ministry does organize the haj and occasionally issues fatwahs (an Islamic statement that offers religious guidance or resolves a dispute). Fatwahs are binding on the ummah. The Ministry itself has been called a battleground for traditionalists and modernists.[124] Drawn from peasentrens and madrasahs, officials of the Ministry have demonstrated very little in the way of administrative abilities.

If outright suppression is the reality of political life in Indonesia, what has become of its ummah? The Indonesian ummah has indeed lost much of its political significance to Golkar - the functional political party that was the brainchild of Soekarno. Since the 1971 elections, Golkar has been slowly nurtured to become a mass-based party. Golkar functions within a triadic administrative formula where economists play the role of policy makers, with the armed forces acting as a stabilizer and the bureaucracy as implementers.[125] Golkar campaigning and institutions are maintained and supported by KOKAMENDAGRI (Korps Karyawan Kementerian Dalam Negeri - Corps of Functionaries of the Ministry of Home Affairs) and the Ministry of Defence and Security, which gives Golkar access to all the administrative and security apparatus of the Indonesian military.[126]

Beyond the administrative taks, Golkar representatives conduct massive intelligence gathering operations and are also empowered to detain people without trial. Hence, it is little wonder that Golkar has had landslide victories in the 1971, 1977 and 1982 elections. Pre-election coalition making and patronage are also used to harness the vote of the Muslims.

Although Golkar was created to become a mass-based political party to woo votes for the government, it is a political party only minimally. It is usually activated at the time of elections and then slowly recedes into the background when the military assumes control again. Because Golkar was tailored to suit the needs of Suharto's New Order government, its prospects of ever wresting political power from the military is extremely dismal.[127] This is so especially since Golkar ultimately relies on the army for its own survival. Strangely enough, whatever former PKI supporters that are left in Indonesia have all voted for Golkar. This is potentially dangerous for the ummah because it redraws the abangan-santri polarization within the community, since PKI voters were predominantly Javanese.[128]

To conclude the section, political Islam in Indonesia, unlike Malaysia, has been cast into the role of a dissident philosophy. The ummah's attempts during the revolutionary phase in Indonesian history to create an Islamic state and its involvement with regional uprisings have left it discredited. Additionally, the ummah is viewed with constant suspicion by the governing military elite. The persistence of the abangan-santri dichotomy and the

predominance of Javanese-centric military leaders leaves little hope for a united ummah, at least in the near future. The election results of 1971 yeilded all the Muslim parties less than thirty percent of the total votes cast. The same results were true with Parmusi in the 1977 elections. Under the PPP banner, the Muslim vote remained constant in the 1982 elections. On the other hand, the parliamentary elections of 1955 yielded all the Muslim parties a total of forty-four percent of the votes.[129] These results reveal more than Golkar's success and the government's ability to use the force required to gain an electoral victory. It also reveals extreme fragmentation within the ummah, which if continues unhealed, will leave little space for political Islam to re-emerge as a viable option in Indonesian politics. Perhaps the main problem is that other issues like food self-sufficiency supercede the Islamic definition of needs and priorities in Indonesia.

A country the size of Indonesia requires extensive participation of its populace for any developmental policies to yield fruit. Considering that Muslims comprise ninety percent of the population, any serious policy initiative cannot ignore them. Suppression instead of co-operation by the military can continue, but only at the risk of economic stagnation.[130] As for the political implications of Indonesian public policy towards religion, there is the looming threat of a violent showdown, because the country does not have the mechanisms to resolve a conflict between Panca Sila and Islam - ideologies that are equally sacred to its adherents.[131]

If pent up frustrations are channelled into violence as against the PKI in 1965, but this time against the army -exactly what happened in the Tanjong Priok incident of 1984, the present religio-political balance will be upset.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Means, Malaysian Politics, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

[2] John Funston, "Malaysia" in Mohammed Ayoob (ed), The Politics of Islamic Reassertion, op. cit., p. 168.

[3] Ibid., pp. 148-9.

[4] Johore is the southernmost state in the Malay peninsula and has the oldest monarchy. Peninsular Malaysia comprises nine states and the two territories of Penang and Malacca. All the nine states have royal families and on a rotational basis, one of the sultans is appointed the Yang Dipertuan Agung or Supreme King for a period of five years. Together with the prime minister and parliament, he helps administer the country. The present Agung is from the state of Johore and has the reputation of being a fiery politician. On the basis of their traditional authority, sultans are held in high regard by the Malays in Malaysia, especially the traditional and rural Malays.

[5] John Funston: Malay Politics in Malaysia: A Study of UMNO and PAS (Kuala Lumpur: Heineman, 1980), pp. 44-5. Funston's book offers the most comprehensive treatment of both parties to date.

[6] Ibid., p. 87.

[7] Ibid., pp. 146-7.

[8] Funston, "Malaysia", op. cit., p. 169.

[9] Ibid., pp. 168-9.

[10] Ibid., p. 169.

[11] Funston, Malay Politics in Malaysia, op. cit., pp. 94-5.

[12] Ibid., p. 148.

[13] Ibid., pp. 148-9.

[14] Ibid., p. 149.

[15] Means, "The Role of Islam in the Political Development of Malaysia", op. cit., pp. 278-9.

[16] Funston: "Malaysia", op. cit., p. 169.

[17] The most succinct treatment of dakwah activities in Malaysia can be found in Lyon Margo's article, "The Dakwah Movement in Malaysia", Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs 13 (20),

December 1979, pp. 34-45. For a more comprehensive treatment of dakwah activities and the organizations involved in them see Judith Nagata, The Reflowering of Malaysian Islam: From Peasant Roots to Religious Radicals. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984)

[18] Judith Nagata, "Islam revival and the problem of legitimacy among rural religious elites in Malaysia" Man, Vol. 17 (1982), p. 49.

[19] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[20] Funston, "Malaysia", op. cit., p. 174.

[21] Ibid., p. 179.

[22] See for example Simon Barraclough, "Managing the Challenges of Islamic Revival: A Regime Perspective", p. 960.

[23] K. J. Ratman: "Religion and Politics in Malaya" in Robert O. Tilman (ed.): Man, State and Society in Contemporary Southeast Asia, op. cit., p. 361.

[24] George McT.Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 28.

[25] Roeslan Abdulgani, Nationalism, revolution and guided democracy in Indonesia (Centre for Southeast Asian Studies: Manash University, 1973), p. 2.

[26] Daniel S. Lev, The transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957 - 1959, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 102-3.

[27] Kahin, op. cit., pp. 66-8.

[28] Ibid., p. 70.

[29] Ibid., p. 75.

[30] Ibid., pp. 94-5.

[31] Abdulgani, op. cit., p. 2.

[32] Noer Deliar, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 75.

[33] Kahin, op. cit., pp. 87-8.

[34] Howard M. Federspiel, "The Muhammadiyah: A Study of Orthodox Islam", Indonesia 10, (October 1970), pp. 57-8.

[35] Ibid., p. 58.

[36] Abdulgani, op. cit., p. 6.

[37] Noer Deliar, "Contemporary Political Dimensions of Islam in M.B. Hooker (ed.), Islam in Southeast Asia, op. cit., p. 194.

[38] Herbert Feith, "Indonesia" in George McT.Kahin (ed.): Governments and Politics of Southeast Asia (2nd edition), (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), p. 205.

[39] Indonesian politics can be broadly divided into four phases. The first 'Revolutionary' period was from 1945 to 1949 when the nationalist movement waged war against the Dutch after declaring independence following the Japanese surrender in 1945. 1950 to 1959 is referred to as the period of Parliamentary Democracy when political parties competed for representation. Following Soekarno's presidential decree that dissolved the Constituent Assembly, the years between 1960 to 1965 are referred to as the period of Guided Domocracy. The abortive Communist coup of 1965 led to Soekarno's downfall. Folliwng the anti-coup when President Suharto usurped power (1966 to 1967), a new phase emerged. This last phase which is continuing today is called the New Order.

[40] Harold Crouch, "Indonesia" in Mohammad Ayoob (ed.), The Politics of Islamic Reassertion, op. cit., p. 55.

[41] Noer Deliar, "Contemporary Political Dimensions of Islam", op. cit., p. 185.

[42] Allan A. Samson, "Islam in Indonesian Politics", Asian Survey 4 (1968), p. 1002.

[43] Kahin: Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 157.

[44] Deliar, "Contemporary Political Dimensions of Islam",op.cit. pp. 188-9.

[45] Ibid., p. 189.

[46] Ibid., pp. 189-90.

[47] Ibid., p. 190.

[48] Crouch, "Indonesia", op. cit., p. 201.

[49] Deliar, "Contemporary Political Dimensions of Islam", op. cit., p. 192.

[50] Ibid., pp. 193-4.

[51] Allan A. Samson, "Religious Belief and Political Action in Indonesian Islamic Modernism" in William R. Liddle (ed.), Political Participation in Modern Indonesia, (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1973), p. 135.

[52] Rosihan Anwar, "Islam and Politics in Indonesia"in Robert O. Tilman (ed.), Man, State and Society in Contemporary Southeast Asia, op. cit., pp. 116-8.

[53] Deliar, "Contemporary Political Dimensions of Islam", op. cit., pp. 194-5.

[54] Ibid., p. 195.

[55] Anwar, op. cit., pp. 125 and 131.

[56] Susumu Awanohara, "On the defensive in the Panca Sila state...", Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 127, No. 3, (January 24, 1985), p. 31

[57] See for instance Mosheh Yegar, Islam and Islamic Institutions in British Malaya: Policies and Implementation, op. cit., p. 261.

[58] A succinct account of how Islam was initially bureaucratized by the British can be found in Gordon P. Means, "The Role of Islam in the Political Development of Malaysia". A more comprehensive state by state and stage by stage treatment is to be found in Mosheh Yegar's book.

[59] Yegar, op. cit., pp. 265-6.

[60] Ibid., pp. 266-7.

[61] Gordon P. Means, "Public Policy Toward Religion in Malaysia", op. cit., p. 402.

[62] Ibid., pp. 404-5.

[63] Gordon P. Means, "Special Rights as a strategy for development: The case of Malaysia", op. cit., p. 59.

[64] Ibid., p. 59.

[65] Mohamad Abu Bakar, "Islamic Revivalism and the political process in Malaysia", op. cit., p. 1051.

[66] R. S. Milne and Diane K. Mauzy, "The Mahathir Administration in Malaysia: Discipline through Islam", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 56, No. 4 (1983-4), pp. 278-9.

[67] Ibid., p. 279.

[68] Ibid., p. 281.

[69] Ibid., p. 282.

[70] Ibid., p. 281.

[71] Funston: "Malaysia", op. cit., pp. 181-2.

[72] Abu Bakar, op. cit., p. 1050.

[73] Funston, Malay Politics in Malaysia, op. cit., p. 58.

[74] Ibid., p. 59.

[75] Milne and Mauzy, op. cit., p. 280.

[76] Ibid., p. 279.

[77] Barraclough, op. cit., pp. 969-70.

[78] Ibid., p. 970.

[79] Lyon, op. cit., p. 39.

[80] Ibid., pp. 40-1.

[81] Barraclough, op. cit., p. 971.

[82] Ibid., p. 970.

[83] Funston, "Malaysia", op. cit., p. 184.

[84] Abu Bakar, op. cit., p. 1050.

[85] Milne and Mauzy, op. cit., pp. 286-7.

[86] Harry Benda, "Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and the foundation of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia", Journal of Modern History, (1958), p. 342.

[87] Ibid., p. 342.

[88] Daniel S. Lev, The transition of Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics 1957-1959 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 209. Lev's coverage of the turbulent years that led to the institution of Guided Democracy is both tight and comprehensive.

[89] Noer Deliar, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 314.

[90] Noer Deliar, The Administration of Islam in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 43.

[91] Deliar, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 175.

[92] Deliar, The Administration of Islam in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 26.

[93] Deliar, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 211.

[94] Ibid., p. 313. This information is rather controversial and Professor Means suggests that mission competition was checked by 'area' agreement. Also, Muslims were apparently allowed to preach to the animists, especially the Karo from Sumatra.

[95] Howard M. Federspiel, Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University Modern Indonesia Project, 1970), p. 85.

[96] Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), p. 8. Feith offers an excellent account of Indonesian politics during the turbulent revolutionary period.

[97] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[98] Ibid., pp. 10-12.

[99] Federspiel, Persatuan Islam, op. cit., pp. 154-5.

[100] Feith, Decline of Constitutional Democracy, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

[101] Panca Sila - Five Principles of State. The first principle is the belief in the unity and omnipotence of God. This first principle reflects Indonesia's commitment to all religions as opposed to only Islam, which is the case with Malaysia's official policy. The other four principles are humanitarianism, national unity, democracy, and social justice.

[102] Satyavati Djaveri, The presidency in Indonesia: dilemmas of democracy, (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1975), p. 15.

[103] Ibid., p. 239.

[104] Daniel S. Lev, "Political Parties in Indonesia", Journal of Southeast Asian History VIII, No. 1 (March 1967), p. 54.

[105] Boland, The struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia, op. cit., pp. 126-7.

[106] Ibid., p. 102.

[107] Allan A. Samson: "Islam in Indonesian Politics", op. cit., p. 1014.

[108] Harold Crouch, The Army and Politics in Indonesia, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), p. 25. Crouch's book offers the most substantive treatment on the role of the military in Indonesia to date.

[109] Ibid., pp. 36-7.

[110] Howard M. Federspiel, "The Military and Islam in Sukarno's Indonesia" Pacific Affairs, Vol. 46, No. 3 (1973), pp. 409-410.

[111] Crouch, The Army and Politics in Indonesia, op. cit. p. 345.

[112] Lev, The Transition to Guided Democracy, op. cit. p. 69.

[113] Herbert Feith, "Indonesia" in Kahin (ed.), Politics and Governments of Southeast Asia, op. cit., p. 214.

[114] Federspiel, "The Military and Islam in Sukarno's Indonesia", op. cit., pp. 417-8.

[115] Ibid., p. 419.

[116] Boland, The struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia, op. cit., p. 161.

[117] Crouch, "Indonesia" in Ayoob (ed.), The Politics of Islamic Reassertion, op. cit., p. 206.

[118] Eliseo J. Rocamora, Nationalism in search of ideology: Indonesian Nationalist Party 1946-1965, (Quezon City: Philippine Centre for Advanced Studies, University of the Philippines, 1975), p. 8.

[119] Lev, The Transition to Guided Democracy, op. cit.,p. 63.

[120] Feith, "Indonesia", op. cit., p. 215.

[121] Sidney R. Jones, "It Can't Happen Here: A post-Khomeini Look at Indonesia", op. cit., p. 319.

[122] Deliar, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 8.

[123] Ibid., p. 19

[124] Deliar, The Administration of Islam in Indonesia, op. cit., p. 77.

[125] R. William Liddle, "Evolution from Above: National Leadership and Local Development in Indonesia", Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. XXXII, No. 2, (February 1973), p. 304.

[126] Ibid., p. 290.

[127] Rocamora, op. cit., p. 370.

[128] Jamie Mackie: "Indonesia since 1945 - Problems of Interpretation in Audrey Kahin and Benedict Anderson (eds.), Interpreting Indonesian Politics: thirteen contributions to the debate, (Ithaca: Cornell University Modern Indonesia Project, 1982), p. 126.

[129] Crouch, "Indonesia", op. cit., p. 205.

[130] Samson, "Islam in Indonesian Politics", op. cit., p. 1017.

[131] Jones, "It Can't Happen Here", op. cit. p. 321.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF ISLAM IN MALAYSIAN AND INDONESIAN POLITICS: A COMPARATIVE SURVEY

Islam has had a formidable influence on the political history of both Malaysia and Indonesia. The fact that ninety percent of the Indonesian populace and little over fifty percent of the Malaysian populace is Muslim attests to the continued significance of Islam in both countries. This observation provides some indication on the power potential of Islam as a tool for mass mobilization. There is abundant evidence that this potential is being well tapped by both government and opposition politicians in Malaysia. In Indonesia, on the other hand, the potential continues to exist. However, efforts at tapping this power would be far more problematic in view of Javanese pre-eminence in Indonesian politics and the unwillingness of the firmly established army to allow competitors into the political arena.

This chapter seeks to identify the similarities and differences between the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam and their impact on domestic politics. Owing to the fact that Islam has existed in both countries for approximately six centuries, historical time frames have been chosen to simplify the task. In the first instance, Islam will be treated in relation to geography, history and ethnography. The next section will examine the impact of colonialism on Islam. Following the colonial influence will be an examination of the revivalist period at the turn of this century.

The final section will trace the post-independence development of Islam up to the present time.

The chronological and comparative survey of the Malaysian and Indonesian variants of Islam will lead to an examination of public policy responses towards Islam in both countries, beginning from the colonial days up to now. The chapter will culminate with projections into future trends on the impact of Islam on domestic politics. Hence, this chapter will be sub-divided into three major sections: the first treats Islam from its importation up to the present time, the second treats public policy responses from colonial days to now, and the final section identifies future trends on the role of political Islam in both countries. For purposes of organization, the comparative survey will treat the similarities before the differences.

Similarities and differences between the Malaysian and Indonesian Variants of Islam

Similarities and differences owing to History, Geography and Ethnography

The most apparent similarity between the two variants of Islam is the manner in which it was introduced. Imported by Arab and Muslim traders in the late thirteenth century, Islam was initially introduced at trading ports before filtering inland. Owing to royal monopolies on trade, Islam began as a court phenomenon. The popularity of Islam at its early stages derived from economic and political advantages for converts. Converts found favour at the courts of sultans. Also, new trading privileges went hand-in-

hand with conversion. Islam enabled the nascent local trading communities to unite against foreign intrusions into the lucrative spice trade as well. Finally, kinship ties allowed for the rapid decentralization of Islam from the trading ports. Malacca in Malaysia and Acheh in Indonesia played a critical role in the spread of Islam.

Prior to the advent of Islam, the indigeneous peoples of both Malaysia and Indonesia practiced animism or animism with an admixture of Hinduism and Buddhism. Islam, which denied the vertical stratification of the earlier indigeneous weltanschauung made itself more appealing. Sometimes coming into conflict with customary laws and tradition, Islam inevitably reconciled itself to existing belief systems. The syncretism which Islam allowed itself depended on the strength of the earlier traditions. The final outcome was therefore usually dependent on the tone and temper of particular areas and communities. Lastly, it is worth noting that both countries were heir to the Sufī tradition of the Sunnī sect - perhaps the most important reason for the syncreticism of early Southeast Asian Islam.

As for early differences, Islam appears to have established itself somewhat earlier in Indonesia. Indonesia, which was heir to a much firmer Hindu tradition, appears to have contributed more from its earlier civilization when embracing Islam. It was noted in chapter two that Indonesian Islam was appropriative and Malaysian Islam adaptive. It is the lack of a rich heritage which made Islam less appropriative in Malaysia. Hence, the existence of a strong

indigeneous culture in Indonesia prior to the advent of Islam has allowed Indonesian Islam, expecially the Javanese variant, to be far more syncretic than Malaysian Islam.

With regard to differences arising from geography, Indonesia's archipelago status made the penetration of Islam much more gradual - a process that spanned three centuries. Malaysia's peninsular status on the other hand, made the transmission of Islam far easier. Indonesia's geography also accounts for the somewhat isolated enclaves of orthodox Islam in areas relatively insulated from Java and colonialism. North and West Sumatra and Southern Sulawesi are good examples of such insulated areas. Geography has also made the Indonesian ummah much more disunited and divisive. There are significant differences in Islam in different regions of the country. The unity of the Indonesian ummah is therefore superficial.

Whereas geography made the diffusion of Islam in Indonesia slower, ethnography seems to have made it easier. The appeal of Islam was universal, especially since an Indonesian was considered a native regardless of the region he represented, albeit the Javanese have always considered themselves exclusive and superior. By contrast, Malaysian Islam evolved to confer an identity on the indigeneous Malays to distinguish themselves from the later settlers - Chinese and Indians. Since Indonesian Islam was not used to distinguish one community from another or as a criterion for differentiation, the ummah appears to be a less monolithic bloc. The Indonesian ummah is quite badly divided and the abangan, santri,

and *prijaji* variants of Islam attest to this disunity. The range of ethnic diversity in Indonesia compounds the regional diversity of Islam. By contrast, the use of Islam to reinforce an exclusive Malay identity has made the Malaysian *ummah* ethnically and culturally more monolithic. Also, the use of Islam as a criterion for communal differentiation has gone against the universality of Islam.

Similarities and differences arising from the Colonial Period

As for similarities deriving from the colonial experience of both countries, the most noticeable feature is the precedent set by colonial authorities in treating Islam as a secular and private religion. The idea of Islam as providing a complete blueprint for existence was denied. The Dutch in Indonesia as well as the British in Malaya administered their colonies along European constitutional and political lines. The authority conferred on administrators was also territorially defined. Islam's status was effectively reduced to that of a private religion. However, certain aspects of Islam were codified. Notwithstanding codification, the administration of some of these laws was delegated to *kathi* courts. *Kathi* courts existed side-by-side secular courts in both countries. The collection of alms and the raising of funds for mosque building was administered jointly. The legacy of the Henrician reformation that separated church from state and divorced secular authority from sacred authority was gradually entrenched into the *ummah* of both countries. Where there was a possible collision course, secular authority reigned supreme.

The British unwittingly allowed Islam the opportunity for mass mobilization. Their system of indirect rule made local sultans play an intermediary role in the administration of Malaya. When the sultans were given free rein on matters pertaining to Malay religion and custom, they capitalized on their newly acquired status as guardians of Islam and Malay tradition. With the displacement of their earlier political powers, these sultans expanded and refined on their newly acquired role. Sultans helped to forge Islam as one of the primary criteria for measuring 'Malayness'. Also, the British, with the concessions that they granted to the Malays, gave the latter the impression that the country was legitimately theirs. The importation of foreign labour by the British also heightened Malay ethnic and religious consciousness.

If the British favoured Islam, the Dutch certainly did not - at least not when it transgressed the boundaries of private religiosity. The inhabitants of the santri enclaves in Indonesia who waged numerous wars against the Dutch caused the latter to treat orthodox Islam as a radical and dissident philosophy that required suppression. In suppressing these uprisings the Dutch did two things - firstly, they entrenched the Java - Outer Island dichotomy, and secondly, they set a militant precedent for Indonesian Islam. Both these outcomes would be repeated over and over again in Indonesian political history.

The period of Islamic reformism at the turn of the century had profound effects on the Malaysian and Indonesian ummah. The contributions of technology - the opening of the Suez Canal and the introduction of steamships enabled more Muslims from both

countries to perform the haj. Exposure to the less syncretic Middle-Eastern variants of Islam was inevitable as was the exposure to Islamic modernism. Cairo's Al-Azhar University - the traditional interpreter of Islamic theology won many converts through the teachings and tracts of Mohammed Abduh. Converts to modernism challenged the orthodox Muslims on their return home and gave rise to the Kaum Muda and Kaum Tua factions in both countries.

Beyond dividing the ummah, reformism also raised the political consciousness of Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia. The local ummah united itself against foreigners and the struggle against the colonizers evolved a new religious dimension. The disenchantment was often viewed as a conflict of Islam versus Christianty. It was also at this time that local Muslims evolved an anti-materialist social consciousness. Muslims in both countries were dissatisfied with the fact that the material achievements of the West seemed to be at the expense of moral principles, especially as viewed from the colonies and from a Muslim perspective. If anything, technology was seen as undermining morality.

The most striking difference between the two variants of Islam during the revivalist period has to do with the formation of religio-political parties. The Indonesian ummah appears to have evolved a political consciousness much earlier than its Malaysian counterpart. Additionally, the number of such parties that the revivalist era gave birth to attest to a more vibrant ummah in Indonesia. As for Malaysia, Islamic parties were primarily a post-

Second World War phenomenon. Whereas Indonesian Islamic parties were regional in strength and formation, Malaysian parties reflect a distinct ethnic flavour and composition. The exceptions to this observation are Sarekat Dagang Islam in Indonesia which was initially formed as a reaction to Chinese business interests and PAS in Malaysia, which is anchored in the rural and agro-based northern states of Kelantan and Trengganu. Finally, Islamic revivalism in Indonesia received a boost when the Japanese wooed the Indonesian ummah to mobilize anti-Dutch sentiments during their occupation.

Similarities and differences arising from the Post-Independence Period

The similarities during the post-Independence period are few. In the colonial tradition, the first post-independence leaders of both Malaysia and Indonesia prescribed an apolitical role for Islam. Whereas Indonesia's President Soekarno was an astute pragmatist who kept his power by making politically influential organizations compete against each other, Malaysia's Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman was an English-trained Western secularist. Although the two leaders had different motivations, both of them set precedents in their treatment of Islam as an essentially personal religion. Additionally,they also enforced the European practice of applying secular jurisdiction to religious issues. Although the Tunku (a title affixed to his name to indicate royal lineage) made secular political appeals,succeeding politicians had difficulty toeing his line, largely owing to the identification of Malay ethnicity with Islam, as the next section will indicate. As for Soekarno, the

precedents of politics in a secular tradition has been kept intact. This continuation has much to do with the state's avowed Panca Sila policy - an issue that will be treated more closely when public policy responses are examined.

Differences regarding the role of Islam in post-independence Malaysian and Indonesian politics are numerous. Firstly, Malaysia's Merdeka Constitution identifies Islam as the official religion of the country. The constitution also provides for legal privileged status of Malays in view of the fact that they are the indigeneous people or bumiputera (literally translated to mean sons of the soil). The privileged status of Malays was enhanced following the racial riots of 1969. Malaysia's affirmative action programme for Malays is akin to an affirmative action programme for Muslims, since the ethnic and religious identity is often used interchangeably. Given the use of Islam as a barometer for measuring 'Malayness', Islam is a powerful sentiment to harness the political power of the ethnic Malays. The idea of an inter-ethnic ummah is not encouraged by Malays. Hence, what the British unwittingly started was codified in the constitution of 1957 and heightened after the racial riots of 1969. The religio-ethnic imprint of the Malay community appears to be a permanent feature of Malaysian politics.

Unlike Malaysia, Indonesia does not have an official state sponsored religion. Instead, Panca Sila guarantees the five most popular religions in the country. The Indonesian state's appeal to religion is therefore more universal than exclusive. Indonesian leaders in the past have also been much more autocratic. Their

willingness to depoliticize Islam stems from the fear of Outer Islanders gaining a foothold in domestic politics. Indonesian leaders have tremendous pride in their Javanese ancestry and tradition. For them, if they had to subscribe to a state religion, it would almost inevitably be Javanism. Santrism has no place in the national political scene. As noted in the last chapter, the banning of Masjumi in 1960 spelled the demise of political Islam. However, Islam remains as a movement of protest.

The relative insignificance of Islam in Indonesian politics is largely a result of the turbulent nature of the country's post-independence political climate. Whereas Malaysian independence was achieved primarily through negotiations, Indonesian independence was secured through both fighting and negotiations. The army justified its prominent role in domestic politics as a result of the fighting and eventually displaced all other contenders for power, including Islam. Also, the PRRI - Permesta Revolts damaged not only the image of Masjumi, but Santrism, the Outer Islands, and Islam as well. Hence, in a very real sense, the course of Indonesia's political history has been harsh to Islam. After 1960, under the exeptional circumstances surrounding the anti-coup of 1965, Islam gained national prominence. However, this prominence was short-lived. When President Suharto took office in 1967, Islam was once again relegated to the backwaters of Indonesian politics. Henceforth, politics would become exclusive to the military establishment. To ease the political pressure from the ummah and to pay lip service to Islam, Parmusi and PPP were created. The superficial unity

imposed on the ummah by the creation of Parmusi in 1968 and PPP in 1977 reflect the Indonesian government's desire to co-ordinate and co-opt Islam. The Japanese tried to create a similar unity when they occupied Indonesia during the Second World War to mobilize anti-Dutch sentiments. All three attempts have been rather unsuccessful. However, symbolically, such measures are useful. An ambivalent attitude will allow Indonesian policy formulators to use Islamic yardsticks for disciplinary purposes when the need arises.

Whereas Indonesian Islam has been dislodged from the local political scene, Malaysian Islam has been pushed to the forefront. The long history of equating Malay ethnicity with Islam has made this outcome inevitable. If Malay interests are to be protected and promoted, Islam would have to be treated likewise. However, the use of Islam to differentiate ethnic communities is only one reason for the recent resurgence of Islamic activities in Malaysia. PAS's religio-political platform has left the Alliance coalition government with little option save to promote Islam. Allowing PAS to snatch the Islamic electorate would spell the demise of UMNO, whose support base is almost exclusively Malay and as a result, Islamic as well. The politicization of Islam is also the result of the fundamentalist dakwah movement that has surged in popularity over the last decade. Since dakwah is primarily an urban middle-class phenomenon, UMNO's support base, which is predominantly urban middle-class, has also been threatened. To outrightly suppress dakwah would be sacriligious since the constitution identifies Islam

as the country's official religion. Failure to act would result in an erosion of UMNO's power base. Hence, UMNO has to at once encourage and weaken Islamic fundamentalism.

UMNO's political predicament with both PAS and dakwah reflects a larger political problem - the maintenance of a sensitive and somewhat uneasy truce between the various ethnic communities. Since Malaysian Islam has a politico - communal impetus, the government, while trying to promote Islam, must also take the other ethnic communities into consideration. Indonesian Islam, on the other hand, is far easier to administer, since it has a socio-religious impetus. However, this impetus is only the result of having undermined the political thrust of Islam. Whereas the Indonesian state can justify itself for not exclusively promoting Islam on the basis of its Panca Sila ideology, Malaysia has to exclusively promote Islam because it has become a primary tool for political mass mobilization as well as being the country's official religion.

Public Policy responses to Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia: A Comparative Survey

The most striking similarity between the policy responses of both Malaysia and Indonesia towards Islam is the desire of both governments to depoliticize it. The assumptions underlying such a policy initiative are however different. The Malaysian government would like to depoliticize Islam in order to secure its political power base and to pacify its significant non-Malay minority. By contrast, Indonesia would not only like to, but has to a great

extent succeeded in depoliticizing Islam in order that the Javanese and the military establishment maintain a pre-eminence in domestic politics.

The official desire to deprive Islam of its political significance has to be squared against the ummah's expectations - to see Islam gain political significance in Malaysia and to see Islam regain political significance in Indonesia. In the main, public policy responses towards Islam in both countries try to mediate this tension between differing expectations. To better achieve such a delicate task, both countries have fashioned a broad range of policy options that range from promotion to suppression. However, the sensitive nature of the Malaysian situation has enabled the government to refine its policy options. The Indonesian situation is qualitatively different because the promotional aspect is usually symbolic.

Differences between the policy responses of both countries towards Islam are numerous. To begin with, Indonesian public policy towards Islam derives direct precedence from the Dutch. The two-pronged Dutch policy of tolerating private religiosity and suppressing political religiosity has been carried on by the Indonesian administrators. Both Soekarno and Suharto have been wary of political Islam. The Tanjong Priok incident of 1984 attests to the New Order's official response towards political Islam. Malaysia, on the other hand, has had no precedents from the British. The British residential system delegated the task of administering

Islam to the individual state sultans. Hence, Malaysian policy responses are a recent phenomenon - beginning with the special privileges of Malays, royal prerogatives, and the establishment of Islam as the official religion at the time of independence in 1957 to the assembly of a massive religious bureaucracy at the national level over the last decade-and-a-half.

Whereas Malaysia has to officially promote Islam, no such responsibilities exist in Indonesia. Panca Sila allows Indonesian policy formulators to adopt a low-keyed approach to Islam. Malaysia's promotion of Islam, on the other hand, was made even more necesary in the aftermath of the 1969 racial riots. Upgrading the status of Malays entails religious education as well, especially since Islam is one of the criteria contributing to the ascriptive Malay ethnic identity. The Malaysian government has committed itself to the creation of an economic and business infrastructure to upgrade Malay status. The affirmative action policies that seek to address domestic imbalance in the economic status of Malays is an extremely costly venture. This cost is separate from the religious bureaucracy that has been fashioned to monitor Islamic activities. The Malay and Muslim identity, which is synonymous, poses problems for the other ethnic communities, who view the religious and economic expenditures as one and the same. Although both policies are ascriptive and directed towards Malays, religious education is a defensive policy mechanism that is meant to dissuade Malays from becoming intolerant of the other ethnic groups. Economic expenditure, on the other hand, is an offensive policy mechanism

that is meant to upgrade Malay status. Hence, there is a sense in which economic and religious expenditure are one and the same and a sense in which they are not. The similarity resides in a common beneficiary and the difference in the assumptions underlying the policy initiatives.

The massive and ever growing religious bureaucracy in Malaysia is in stark contrast to Indonesia's Ministry of Religion. The bureaucracy in Malaysia is as much a commitment to the constitution and harnessing of Malay support as it is an effort to offer policy options for the revivalist and fundamentalist trend that appears to be sweeping the country. Policy mechanisms in Malaysia are designed, in the final analysis, to deflect threats to the delicate racial arithmetic of the country. Hence, in so far as religious mobilization does not lead to situations like the Kerling Temple incident, Malaysian policy formulators can be accredited with having successfully managed the threat of Islam to undermine the country's social fabric. When there is the risk of destabilizing inter-ethnic harmony, Islamic fundamentalism is checked. Conversely, where there is the potential to outbid PAS and harness the support of the dakwah movement, Islam is encouraged. However, the encouragement cannot and probably never will be made at the risk of inter-ethnic disunity and strife. The memories of the 1969 riots have made policy formulators wary of inter-ethnic tensions.

In Indonesia, specific policy options to deflect the threat of political Islam do not exist, unless suppression can be considered an adequate response. On the other hand, the token gestures of having allowed the formation of Parmusi and facilitating the ummah

to unite under the banner of the PPP have provided some scope for Islamic political expression. Indonesian public policy responses towards Islam reinforces the centre-periphery and Java-Outer Island dichotomy, which roughly corresponds to the predominantly abangan-santri dichotomy within the country's ummah. As for Malaysia, public policy responses towards Islam reflect the inevitable Malay-non-Malay dichotomy which roughly corresponds to the ummah's believer-infidel dichotomy.

Finally, policy-making in Indonesia is both organized and administered by the military establishment, with the functional party Golkar harnessing political support during elections. Malaysia, on the other hand, employs civilians to staff and administer their policy-making institutions. The fact that many of these organizations are directly answerable to the Prime Minister's Office reflects the importance as well as potential danger of Islam as a political force. The danger resides in Islam's ability to heighten Malay consciousness to the detriment of the other ethnic communities. The potential threat of political Islam in Indonesia derives from a militant Islam to counter state-sponsored Javanism. Given the traditional centre-periphery and abangan-santri tensions in domestic politics and the ummah respectively, the possibility of a militant response cannot be discounted. After all, both the Dutch and Soekarno were confronted with the problem. However, a militant response by the ummah to gain political credibility will inevitably incur the wrath of the military - an organization that has acquired a notorious reputation for ruthlessly suppressing political dissension.

Besides, Islam cannot unite the Outer Islands since they are also strongholds of Christian, Hindu and animist cultures. The pockets of Islamic extremism are in Acheh and in Java, so there is a cross-cutting pressure on both the government and Islamic opposition.

Whither from here? A post -'85 look at Malaysian and Indonesian Islam

There is increasing evidence that political Islam in both Malaysia and Indonesia will chart a somewhat different course in the near future. In Malaysia, political Islam, is in the main, a struggle between PAS and UMNO for the Malay vote. However, PAS has recently made an inter-ethnic appeal for an Islamic state on the basis that the rights of the religious minorities can and will be protected if the party were to assume control of the government. Understandably, it is difficult for the Chinese and the Indians to seriously consider this proposal. The difficulty of such a blueprint is premised on the eminently legalistic and bookish nature of Islamic practices and law. However, by making public an offer of this nature, the political stakes have been raised. It is now incumbent upon UMNO to prove that a state premised on secular European law would serve as a better tool to mediate inter-ethnic interests and that state sponsorship of Islam as the official religion would suffice to further Islam. To lend credibility to this claim, it can cite its list of achievements in having promoted Islam, especially in the last decade. The organizational infra-structure at the national level to co-ordinate and direct Islamic

activities can be used as evidence to substantiate UMNO's policies with regard to Islam. Furthermore, it could draw on its plans and achievements in furthering the economic well-being of the Malays as evidence of its commitment to the Malay community. PAS's virtually exclusive religious platform can be substantially undermined by highlighting UMNO's total blueprint to upgrade Malay socio-economic status as well as religiosity.

The political stakes have also been raised in a second sense. The popularity of dakwah movements in Malaysia has caused the government considerable alarm. Whereas the Malay vote was traditionally split between PAS and UMNO, the influential nature of dakwah organizations means that the government must realign its past position. In a very real sense then, dakwah groups may very well be the holders of the new balance of power. Since these groups have always expressed sympathy for the cause of PAS, UMNO will have to constantly devise new schemes to lure the dakwah vote. The importance of realignment cannot be overstated because dakwah appeals to the same urban middle-class vote that UMNO appeals to. Hence, UMNO requires the dakwah vote. Additionally, this vote has to be lured with appeals to Islam - a difficult task to perform without incurring the wrath of the ethnic minorities. It remains to be seen if UMNO's successful past track record in preserving inter-ethnic harmony will work in its favour when Islamic appeals are being made to woo the dakwah vote.

All the above observations are symptomatic of a larger problem. Whereas the Malaysian ummah used to be a monolithic bloc,

welded together by a common ethnic and cultural identity, that unity may be breaking down. Even if the PAS and UMNO struggles are viewed as a continuation of the Kaum Tua - Kaum Muda dichotomy, the pull on the ummah exerted by dakwah groups is certainly a new phenomenon. Also, PAS's new inter-ethnic appeals go beyond the confines of Malay ethnicity. Together with all these divisions are the conflicts that have developed between the individual states and the federal government over the administration of Islam. Sultans, rightfully so, are beginning to think that federal measures are encroaching on royal prerogatives. These new trends indicate the once united Malaysian ummah to be fissuring from within.

There is yet another and perhaps more important dimension to these fissures. The old arithmetic that Malay equals Muslim appears to be breaking down in favour of a new one. This new equation reads that only a Malay who is a devout Muslim is a true Muslim. Malays who do not practice Islam seriously enough seem to be relegated to the status of minority communities or non-believers. In other words, there is a growing distinction between the Malay who is an adherent of the Islamic faith and one who is a Muslim by default. The latter group is lumped together with the non-Malays. This is the kind of equation that is emerging from dakwah interpretations of being a Muslim. If dakwah is indeed as pervasive and persuasive as it is being reported, then, this new definition of a Muslim may very well become the norm in the near future.

In the past, seeming fissures within the Malaysian ummah have been reconciled when external threats appear. So for instance, the ummah was vociferous in its demand for the continuation of special privileges for Malays at the time of independence. Likewise, when the NEP was first unveiled, there was jubilation within the Malay community. However, the jubilation was only a consequence of a bloody racial riot that threatened the Malay identity. Hence, there is evidence from the past to suggest that the ummah will regroup itself into a monolithic bloc if Malay identity or special rights are threatened. When the government's mandate of securing a thirty percent slice of the economic pie for the Malays runs out in 1990, it will be interesting to see if the ummah sets aside its grievances and consolidates to clamour for an extension of the mandate. To all intents and purposes, the luxury of hindsight does indicate such a consolidation to be the most likely outcome. However, if such a prediction does not come about, the Malaysian ummah may very well have fissured for good.

Finally, there is also growing evidence of militancy in both Malaysian and Indonesian Islam. The Kerling Temple and Tanjong Priok incidents may be reflective of a new trend in Islam.[1] However, the motivations behind such militant behaviour appear to be different. Whereas Islamic militancy in Malaysia usually reflects disenchanted inter-ethnic relations, militancy in Indonesia is primarily aimed at securing a political voice for Islam. Regardless of the assumptions underlying such militancy, Islamic militancy is indeed on the rise. Monitoring such incidents are somewhat difficult

because the governments involved usually censor comprehensive coverage of such events.[2] Hence, even if Malaysian and Indonesian Islam is taking a militant turn, the hypothesis would be difficult to verify. Lastly, it should be noted that Indonesian Islam has had a militant past against the Dutch. Hence, this precedent could be revived in the future.

NOTES

1. See for example Suhaini Aznan, "The battle of Memali", Far Eastern Economic Review, 130 (48), 1985; pp. 28-9. The article reports an incident in Kedah where a clash between government security forces and PAS supporters left 18 people dead. A total of 160 people were arrested after the incident and the government has banned religious lectures in all or parts of 6 states - Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah, Perlis, Perak and Penang.

2. Suhaini, Aznan, "Memali Revisited", Far Eastern Economic Review, 131 (3), 1986, pp. 14-5. Aznan's article provides some indication of the kind of government censorship that is involved in mass media coverage of religious extremism.

GLOSSARY

Words and Phrases

abangan - syncretic variant of Indonesian Islam that emphasises animism
adat - customary practices
agama - religious groups
Allah - God
Bab-al-Ijtihad - the gate of personal effort
bapak - father
batik - indegeneous hand-printed clothing
bomoh - religio-magical men who cast spells and ward off evil spirits
bumiputera - son of the soil
Dai Nippon - Greater Japan
dakwah - to call or invite/religious revivalists
dar-al-harb - the abode of infidels
dar-al-Islam - the place of Islam
din - way of life
fatwah - Islamic statement that offers guidance or resolves a dispute
fiqh - understanding
fuqaha' - Islamic legalists
Gestapu - 1965 Indonesian Communist coup
Hadith - sayings of prophet Muhammad
haj - Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca
halal - kosher
ijma - consensus of Islamic community
Ijtihad - independent judgement
Imam - Islamic religious leader
istana - palace
kafir - infidel
kampong - village
kathi - judge
kauman - santri quarter
Kaum Muda - Young Faction
Kaum Tua - Old Faction
kenduri - Malaysian socially integrative feast
keramat - holy place
Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa - Divine Omnipotence
khalifah al Rashidun - right-guided caliphs
kiyahi - rural religious leader
Kommunis - Communist
kretek - Indonesian clove cigarettes
madrasah - religious school
Mahdi - messianic deliverer
masjid - mosque
masok Islam - to enter the Islamic community
masok Melayu - to enter the Malay community
Melayu - Malay
Merdeka - independence
mufti - official empowered to preserve religious orthodoxy
Muslim statistik - statistical Muslims
nasionalis - nationalist
Panca Sila - Five Principles
peasantren - rural religious school
penghulu - village chief
perintah halus - gentle order

prijaji - syncretic variant of Indonesian Islam that emphasizes Hinduism
qiyas - deductive analogy
raja - king
Ramādan - Islamic fasting month
salāt - public worship
santri - orthodox variant of Indonesian Islam
sawm - fast
Shahāda - confession of faith
Shari'a - Islamic law
sh'īa - one of two major branches of Islam
slametan - Indonesian socially integrative feast
Sufī - mystical sect of Sunnī Islam
sultan - ruler
sunnah - the trodden path (of prophet Muhammad)
Sunnī - one of two major branches of Islam
Surah - koranic verse
surau - prayer house
syaitan - devil incarnate
takhlid buta - blind obedience
tauliah - official letter of approval to preach Islam
tungku - title indicating royal lineage
ulamā - Islamic learned expert
umma/ummah/ummat - Islamic community
wahhabis - followers of Abdul Wahhab in Arabia
wahyu - divine inspiration
wali - spirit
waqf - endowment
zakāt - almsgiving

Organizations, Associations and Interest Groups

Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM) - Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia
Bank Islam Malaysia - Malaysian Islamic Bank
Barisan Nasional (BN) - National Alliance
Golongan Karya (Golkar) - a 'functional' political party in Indonesia
Hizbul Muslimin - Islamic Party
Korps Karyawan Kementerian Dalam Negeri (KOKAMENDAGRI) - Corps of Functionaries of the Ministry of Home Affairs
Majlis Agama Tertinggi Sa-Malaya (MATA) - Pan Malayan Supreme Religious Council
Muhammadiyah - Association of the followers of Muhammad
Nahdatul Ulama (NU) - Renaissance of Ulama
Partai Demokrasi Islam Indonesia - Indonesian Islamic Democratic Party
Partai Islam Se Malaysia (PAS) - Pan Malaysian Islamic Party
Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) - Indonesian Communist Party
Partai Muslimin Indonesia (PARMUSI) - Indonesian Muslim Party
Partai Persatuan Pembagunan (PPP) - United Development Party
Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI) - Indonesian Republic Revolutionary Government
Perjuangan Semesta Alam (Permesta) - all-inclusive struggle
Persatuan Islam Sa-Tanah Melayu - Islamic Association of Malaya
Persatuan Islam Seluruh Acheh (PUSA) - All Acheh Islamic Scholars' Association
Sarekat Dagang Islam (SDI) - Islamic Trading Society
Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia (YDIM) - Islamic Propagatory Foundation of Malaysia

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