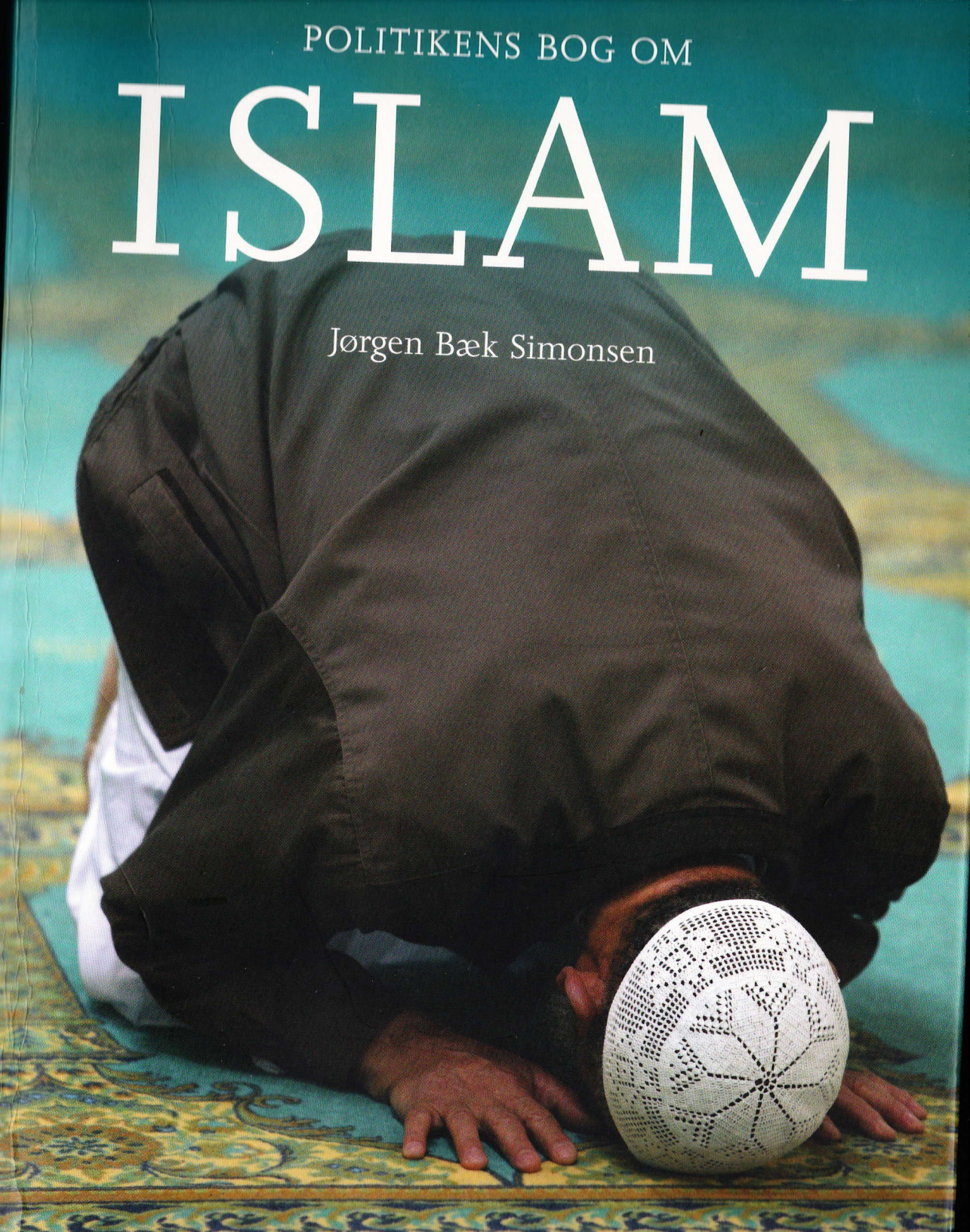


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Kapitel 10: Islam i Sydostasien

Chapter 10: Islam in Southeast Asia

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Southeast Asia, “a region below the winds”, is a crossroad of world and local beliefs, but is today home to about 230 million Muslims, almost half of the region’s population (550 million, in 2002) and about 20 percent of the world’s estimated 1.6 billion Muslims. Today more Muslims (88 %) are living in Indonesia (234 million people) than in any other country of the world. There are 58 percent Muslims in Malaysia, 67 percent in Brunei, 14 percent in Singapore, and about 5 or less percent in the predominantly Christian Philippines and East Timor and in the predominantly Buddhist Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma. Viewed from the centers of Islam, the Middle East, Southeast Asia is geographically peripheral, but it has demonstrated a crucial region that needs to be understood in its own dynamics within changing socio-cultural and political circumstances.

Islamization in Southeast Asia, either as a whole or in any of its parts, is not an unchecked, linear, uniform process, but rather one that “waxed and waned, that took its strength from an irregular pattern of pulses over centuries”.¹ Islam in Southeast Asia has been influenced to varying degrees by Arabs, Indians, Persians, Chinese, and later by local peoples themselves. Southeast Asian Islam becomes unique in its history and expressions. Through various scholarly networks and modes of transmission, Islam has penetrated Southeast Asia generally in a peaceful manner, although some political coercions and wars did occur. As a result of multi-interpretability of the Qur’an and the Prophet Muhammad’s tradition and complex nature of human history, Islam has become complex, diverse, and dynamic; In Southeast Asia, it continues to be generally moderate if seen from accommodative and adaptive attitudes towards various local, ethnic, national, and global cultures. These generalized characteristics of Southeast Asian Islam should not lead us to ignore the various internal and external forces.

Islam in Southeast Asia has long been connected to international maritime trade especially before the arrival of European colonial powers in the sixteenth century. From that century, the region experienced various colonial encounters, which had not only shaped socio-political but also religious and cultural expressions. The strategic geographical location of the region, the high growth of its population, the fertile soil, as well as the adaptive character of most of its people have contributed to the fact that it is a Southeast Asian country, Indonesia, that we have the most populous Muslim country in the world and yet pluralistic.

¹ A.H. Johns, “From Coastal Settlement to Islamic School and City: Islamization in Sumatera, the Malay Peninsula, and Java”, *Hamdard Islamicus*, IV, 4, Karachi, 1981, p.5.

In recent decades, there has been an Islamic resurgence in Southeast Asia: the growing popularity of Muslim women's dress, increasing mosque construction and attendance, increasing sales of translated and local written books and magazines on Islam, proliferating use of Islamic symbols, growing number of local pilgrims to Mecca, and greater interest in the formalization of Islamic law and Islamic banking. However, at the same time, liberal strands of Islam emerged to counter-argue political and symbolic dimensions of Islam. Thus Southeast Asian Islam has now witnessed the struggle within as much as the struggle between it and the others. This contemporary phenomenon has taken new issues, but the struggle itself has long existed between Muslims in the region for centuries. In order to understand Muslim change and complexity in the region, we need to trace various ways of Muslims' propagation and local conversion to Islam before we come to an analysis of how Islam is interpreted in modern Southeast Asia and suggest some characteristics of Southeast Asian Islam.

Patterns and Development of Muslim Propagation and Conversion

Before Islam, from the first to fourteenth century, Indian civilization had dominated Southeast Asia in terms of religions (Hinduism, Buddhism), arts, customs, and language.² Later on, the decline of Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms (such as Srivijaya and Majapahit) from the fourteenth century collided with and to some extent stimulated the rise of Islamic kingdoms in Sumatera, Malay Peninsula, and Java.³ The questions of whence, by whom, and by which route Islam came to Southeast Asia has been scholarly debated, and most theories are not necessarily contradictory. Some suggest that Islam was first carried by Arabs from Gujarat and Malabar in the fourteenth century. Others mention early evidences of Islamic influences in the region from the 11th century and more later from the fourteenth century (Trengganu). In 1281 Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta claimed to have seen an Islamic king, the Sultan of Sumatera named Malik al-Zahir, a follower of the Shafi'i legal thought and Sunni theology, but was still surrounded by "infidels".⁴ Others mention Bengal, Coromandel, South India, Persia, China, and Arabia as origins of Islam in Southeast Asia.⁵ The theory of Arabia as the first origin was maintained by Malay and Indonesian scholars in a conference in 1963 concluding that according to sources which they had Islam entered for the time in Indonesia during the first century of the hijrah (seventh/eighth century of the Christian era) and directly from Arabia.⁶ Arab *ulama* (many bearing the titles Sayyid or Sharif), either directly from Arabia or through India and other places, played the crucial role in Islamizing local rulers and peoples. As a Dutch Snouck Hurgronje said, "Arabs who lived in South India, especially those who passed for descendants of the Prophet under the name of Sayyid or Sharif, later found a

² G. Coedès, *Indianized States of Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1968), pp.15-6.

³ J.G. De Casparis & I.W. Mabbett, "Religion and Popular Beliefs of Southeast Asia Before c.1500", *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, vol.1, part 1, ed., Nicholas Tarling, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.330.

⁴ Coedes, *Indianized*, p. 231; G.W.J. Drewes, "New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia", reprinted in Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, and Yasmin Hussain (eds), *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), p.16.

⁵ See G.W.J. Drewes, "New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia", reprinted in Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, and Yasmin Hussain (eds), *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), pp.15-7; Michael Feener, "A Re-examination of the Place of al-Hallaj in the Development of Southeast Asian Islam", *Bidragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 154, 4, 1998, pp.571-92.

⁶ A. Hasymy, *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia (Kumpulan Prasaran pada Seminar di Aceh)* [the History of the Arrival and Development of Islam in Indonesia (Collection of Preliminary Reports to the Aceh Conference)] (Bandung: al-Ma'arif, 1989), p.7.

welcome opportunity to demonstrate their organizational ability. As priests, priest-princes, and as sultans they often put the finishing touches to the formation of the new realms.”⁷ Muslim networks, individually or collectively (such as in Sufi order), were developed across geographical, ethnic, and class boundaries. Thus, South Asian Islam was connected to the Hadhramaut in Yemen; the Hadhramaut was connected to Singapore, Malaya, and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Despite the various explanations of origin, it is argued that assisted by the regular monsoon wind and sea trade networks, Islam came first to the ports, such as Pasai, Malacca and the east coast of Malaya, Makassar, Aceh, east Java, Champa, and others, before penetrating the interior of the islands. The coastal city-states became first centers for the transmission of Islamic ideas to the peasant interior, usually comprised of a fortress, royal compound, mosque, site of learning, and a commercial area. The Islamic scholars (*ulama*) of various origins and the converted rulers played their roles in the administration of the Islamic law concerning religious duties, the legal formulation of trade contracts, and in the expansion of Islam into the wider realms.⁸

Bearing the complex process of Islamization in mind, one can see several but not necessarily exclusive patterns of the ways in which Islam arrived in the region and how it is spread during the centuries. The first pattern is a top-down pattern, that is when Muslim preachers and teachers converted Hindu, Buddhist, or animist local kings. This pattern of Islamization involves political reasons. For example, an Arab preacher Sayyid ‘Abd al-Aziz succeeded in converting Parameswara, the founder of Malacca (14-15th centuries) to Islam. The king converted to Islam by proclaiming the *shahada*, adopting an Islamic name “Sultan Muhammad Shah”, and married a Muslim woman. This conversion by a ruler was probably in a response to create more favorable climate for trade, by creating trade regulations, thus attracting more Muslim traders to come to his newly built port. With Islamic conversion, Malacca became a greater commercial center and a powerful nucleus of Islamic expansion in a significant part of Southeast Asia until its seizure by the Portuguese in 1511. Arab preachers also converted the Sulu Sultans in the Philippines in the second half of the 14th century.⁹ From the early Islamization in the 16th century, first in the Sulu islands and then in Maguindanao, local kings had adopted and adapted Arab and Persian titles for their claim of legitimacy and prestige.¹⁰ A ruler’s conversion marked membership of the wider Islamic world of *Dar al-Islam* (house of Islam), thus increasing political legitimacy amongst subjects and widening the economic network. Islamic networks were further strengthened by a marriage linkage, either between previously Islamized kings and newly Islamized Hindu or Buddhist kings.¹¹ Rulers in Mataram, South Sulawesi, Buton, Lombok, Sumbawa, Magindanao, and southern Borneo adopted Islam.

⁷ Snouck Hurgronje, *Verspreide Geschriften*, VI, p.7, in G.W.J. Drewes, “New light New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia”, reprinted in Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, and Yasmin Hussain (eds), *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), pp. 8-9.

⁸ A.H. Johns, “Islam in Southeast Asia: Problems of Perspective”, in *Readings on Islam*, pp.20-2; *Sejarah Melayu*, 1612, p.76, in Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, vol.II (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), p.133.

⁹ See Azyumardi Azra, “The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian ‘Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century”, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1992, pp.16-45.

¹⁰ Cesar Adib Majul, “An Analysis of the “Geneology of Sulu””, *Readings on Islam*, pp.48-57.

¹¹ Coedes, *Indianized*, pp. 245-6.

Islam was expanded not always peacefully. Islamization by arms occurred when a Muslim ruler tried to defeat a non-Muslim ruler such as in the case of the Mataram kingdom.¹² Another example is when the ruler of Gowa waged a war (*musu' selleng*) against the rulers of Bone, Soppeng, and Wajo, who had not converted to Islam in the 17th century.¹³ Gowa ruler conceived Islam of a political ideology, influenced by the Persian idea of the ruler as “a representative of God on earth (*khalifatullah fi al-ardh*), which he believed gave him a mandate to convert everyone on his reach. This violent episode of Islamization shows how Islamization involves not only religious, but also economic and political reasons and implications.¹⁴

As a result of political expansion of Islam, Muslim polity became characterized by syncretic ideas: Indian, animistic, Arabic and Persian concepts of kingship as reflected in ceremonies, titles and rituals. Malay people often referred themselves as the servants of the *raja*, a Sanskrit term for the king, or the *sultan*, a medieval Arabo-Persian term. Local rulers changed their titles, such as Sultan Alauddin (1593-1639), Sultan Malikussaid (1639-53), and Sultan Hasanuddin (1653-69). These sultans owned and patronaged the land and the law, although part of the law was influenced by Islam. The *Undang-undang Melaka*, the Law of the Malacca, for instance, indicated that law was associated with the kings. “The Ruler was the expounder on earth of laws”, as a 14th century Trengganu inscription tells us. The Ruler of Pasai adopted the title Sultan and proclaimed himself as “God’s shadow on Earth” (*zil Allah fi al-alam*), and the Rulers of Kedah, Trengganu, and Johor “Helper of the World and of the Religion” (*Nasir al-dunya wa al-din*). The Sultan of Pahang claims himself as the ruler “disseminating both Islamic and customary law”, the latter called *adat*. Javanese rulers, such as Sultan Agung (1603-46), also acquired the title of Sultan. Taking such titles would give them privilege of being linked to the Prophet Muhammad, superior to the Buddhist concept of *bodhisattva*, the Buddhist enlightened being who renounces nirvana in order to remain in this world and assist the spiritual liberation of his fellow beings. Another medieval political idea which was mystical was the Perfect Man (*al-insan al-kamil*) embraced by some Malay rulers of Malacca and Aceh. Kings wished to portrayed themselves as the power of temporal and religious realms and becoming perfect men. However, from the 18th century onwards, more fundamentalist *shari’a*-minded Muslims, such as the Wahhabi followers from Arabia, came to challenge such mystical and other local beliefs deemed to be *shrik* (un-Islamic).¹⁵

The second pattern of Islamic propagation and conversion is when independent teachers or traders preaching, settling, building mosques and spaces for teaching-learning. The “from below” pattern of propagation involved preaching institutions such as mosques, but later on learning spaces such as *pondok*, *surau*, *pesantren*, or *madrasah* which became wider in the nineteenth century. *Pondok* was organized in a simple

¹² In Merle Ricklefs, “Islamization in Java: Fourteenth to Eighteenth Centuries”, *Readings on Islam*, p. 39.

¹³ Leonard Y. Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka*, pp. 33-4.

¹⁴ Leonard Y. Andaya, *The Kingdom of Johor 1641-1728: Economic and Political Developments* (Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1975); Leonard Y. Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka: A History of South Sulawesi (Celebes) in the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), p.35; Christian Pelras, “Religion, Tradition, and the Dynamics of Islamization in South Sulawesi”, *Archipel* 29 (Paris: Association Archipel, 1985), p. 125; Chamber-Loir, “Datu ri Bandang”, p.139.

¹⁵ A.C. Milner, “Islam and the Muslim State”, *Islam in South-east Asia* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983), ed. M.B. Hooker, pp. 34-49; A.C. Milner, “Islam and Malay Kingship”, *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, pp. 25-31.

manner, not only in Kelantan but also in other parts of the Malay world. In general, *pondok* has three elements: teachers and pupils, place of learning, and objects of learning. Some *pondoks* are bigger and more organized than others. One *pondok* may have both teachers and the executive board (*pengurus*), the latter being for administrative functions. In the *pondok* system, teachers were always powerful. Knowledge and power were intertwined: possessing traditional Islamic knowledge meant power and authority among Muslims across ethnic and regional lines. Places of learning may consist of mosque, the teacher's house, boarding for pupils, and land to cultivate because agriculture was part of their daily life. As for the objects of learning, the syllabus was designed by the teachers and it may have goals, curriculum, and more importantly Arabic textbooks (*kitab*). The method of teaching and learning was either individually (called *sorogan* on Java) or by group (*bandongan*), which involved the reading or recitation of the texts by the teachers, which was then followed by the pupils. Most of the times, the pupils had to memorize (*hafazha*) the texts (such as the Qur'anic verses, *hadith*, Arabic grammars and sayings) and had to recite them in front of the teachers. It was not until quite recently that the system of *halaqah* was introduced in which the pupils themselves learned together what the texts contained and to discuss whether they understood the texts appropriately, but this system does not mean that the pupils discuss whether the content of the texts was right or wrong. Thus, structurally and culturally, *pondok* is hierarchical in the sense that teachers are regarded as the highest authority in the system. It is religiously conservative in the sense that classical Islamic knowledge was to be preserved by memorization rather than to be studied analytically.¹⁶

The ways in which these teachers transmitted their knowledge to the local people during the nineteenth century are not very clear, but some general explanation can be provided. Teaching the regular, generally young, pupils was different from teaching the wider community, generally adults, who came to the mosques or *surau* at certain times such as at the times of prayer. For the pupils, teachers used Arabic grammatical texts to teach Arabic and asked the pupils to memorize, understand, and apply the grammars when reading the texts. They used a Malay language in Arabic script called *jawi* in some of the works and the pupils had to learn it. As for the surrounding local community, the teachers interacted with them through sermons (*khutbah*) on Fridays and every day after the morning and evening prayers. The teachers primarily used the mosques to disseminate Islamic teachings for the local general audience, but used their *pondok* to disseminate Islamic traditional knowledge (*tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, *tasawwuf*, etc) especially for the pupils interested to become future teachers. However, the pupils could attend whichever *pondok* they wanted and could move from one *pondok* to another when they felt they had gained whatever they could from their teacher. The *pondok* did not issue *ijaza* (certificates) but a student could demonstrate that he had known Arabic or other Islamic sciences from particular *ulama*.¹⁷

Many of the teachers were wandering Sufi that came to Southeast Asia as followers of one or more orders (*tariqah*). There were Persian, Indian, Arab, Malay, Sumatera, Brunei, Ternate, and other locals.¹⁸ In Java, the well known early carriers of Islam were the *wali*

¹⁶ See for example, Mastuhu, *Dinamika Sistem Pendidikan Pesantren*, Jakarta: INIS, 1994.

¹⁷ Muhamad Ali, "Transmission of Islamic Knowledge in Kelantan", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol.LXXIX, part 2, 2006, p.40.

¹⁸ S.Q. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, (Singapore: the Malaysian Social Research Institute. Ltd., 1963), A.H. Johns, "Sufism as a Category in Indonesian Literature and History", *the Journal of South-East Asian*

sanga or the nine saints during the 15th and 16th centuries. They represented diversity in Javanese Islam for each saint had uniqueness in teaching and character. There was a continued debate between Islamic orthodoxy and pre-Islamic Javanese beliefs to the extent that some of Sufi masters who believed in pantheism, the unity of God and men, such as Sheikh Siti Jenar and Ki Cabolek became martyrs.¹⁹ Some saints were more mystical or less legalistic than others. For example, one of the nine saints, Sunan Kalijaga, demonstrated a tolerant, accommodating character in his preaching by using *wayang* –the Hindu-Budhist shadow puppet. Sunan Kalijaga represented “a symbol, a materialized idea...the bridge between two high civilizations, two historical epochs, and two great religions, the meaningful link between a world of god-kings and ritual priests.”²⁰ On the other hand, Sheikh Siti Jennar represented a liberal mystic Islam, which was then condemned as a heresy by the other eight saints. ‘*Islam Mutihan*’ (white Islam) was then recognized as referring to the eight saints, whereas ‘*Islam Abangan*’ (red Islam) to syncretistic Sheikh Siti Jennar. Here there was a contestation between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Beneath such competition, eclecticism of beliefs remained the rule: Islam and local beliefs, mysticism blended with pre-Islamic beliefs.

The acceptability of Islam in Southeast Asia was due to its ability to tolerate numerous pre-Muslim beliefs and practices. The signs of conversion varied from people to people, but generally the converts had to fulfill some basic religious duties (prayer, fasting, giving alms, pilgrimage to Mecca) and to abandon pre-Islamic deities, pork and alcoholism and to perform circumcision.²¹ The search for conformity to the *shari’ia* continued, but it varied from preacher to preacher and from people to people. The peoples might be strict or less strict, but no stories of Muslims destroying temples and statues are reported. Muslim converts were introduced one god, but they kept worship older gods, spirits, and ancestors. Among the ulama, there were those with a *shari’a* oriented mindset, those with a Sufi focus in *tariqah*, and those who tried to reconcile Sufism and *shari’a*.

Consequently, two general types of Islam can be discerned in early period of Islamization: the mystical and the legalistic. Some religious elites would tend to mysticism (which accommodated existing spirit beliefs, such as the ideas of holy man and supernatural power), but the majority adhered to legalistic Islam because the latter provided indigenous peoples with a greater certainty in terms of legal, private issues. In addition, legalistic (*shari’a*-minded), was strengthened by the Islamic judges (*qadis*) playing important roles in assuring the application of Islamic law, on behalf of the *sultan*. In the Philippines, the close links with Melaka, Palembang, Johor, China, Brunei, and later with Middle Eastern countries, make the *shari’a*-minded more prevalent. In some areas, however, local tradition (*adat*) and Islamic law (*shari’a*) went hand in hand in some Islamic communities such as in Sumatera Barat. Generally speaking, some would have been more rigid than others. Some looked more rational, whereas others more textual, and so forth.

This was due to the fact that Islam allows for some local interpretation. Islam became the religion of nearly all Javanese in the period after the fourteenth century largely because it

History, July, 1961, vol. 2, no.2.; A.H. Johns, “Muslim Mystics and Historical Writing”, in *Historians of South-East Asia*, ed. D.G.E. Hall, London, 1961, p.40; A.H. Johns,

¹⁹ Ricklefs, “Islamization of Java”, p.39.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.27.

²¹ Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, vol.II (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 141.

adapted successfully to the main configurations of pre-existing Javanese religion. It did not fundamentally alter the mystical theme; it gave it yet another vocabulary, a new range of explanations and illustrations, a new set of powerful ritual phrases. It gave greater richness to Javanese religion without requiring the complete abandonment of older ideas. Thus Java came to be a Muslim society, but one in which Islam was only a part of the vast cultural heritage. It is argued that the acceptability of Islam in Java was owing to Sufism. As Woodward put it, “Javanese Islam is unique not because it retains aspects of pre-Muslim culture and religion but because of the degree to which Sufi concepts of sainthood, the mystical path, and the perfection of man are employed in the formulation of an imperial cult.”²²

The third pattern is more elitist when teachers or writers propagated Islam through writing literature on legal, political, and cultural issues in Arabic and/or local languages such as Malay. Among the prominent Sufi writers were Hamzah Fansuri (d.1590), Nuruddin ar-Raniri (d.1658), Abdurrauf as-Singkili (d.1693), and Muhammad Yusuf al-Maqassari (d.1699), who demonstrated the influences of Arab and Indian Sufis.²³ Hamzah Fansuri was influenced by Ibn al-Arabi ideas, presenting himself as someone united with God: “Hamzah is poor and naked; A sacrifice, just as Isma’il; Neither Persian nor Arab’ Yet in constant union with the Eternal One.”²⁴ Other Sufis attempted to criticize his pantheistic ideas. Nuruddin ar-Raniri, a son of Malay mother living in Aceh and Hadhrami Arab father living in Gujarat, a master of Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Malay, and Acehnese, wrote some 30 books. Instead of theosophy, ar-Raniri preached Ash’ariyya theology, Shafi’i legal thought, but embraced the Qadiriyya and Aydarussiyya orders, trying to harmonize mysticism and obedience to the shari’a. In one of his works, *Sirat al-Mustaqim* (the Straight Path), he explains various matters, such as ablution, prayers, alms, fasting, pilgrimage, sacrifice, and other rituals. In other works, he criticizes *wujudiyah* (pantheistic) followers and other “Muslim splinter groups” as heretic and *mushrik* (polytheistic). Ar-Raniri even issued a fatwa (opinion) declaring the pantheistic followers as infidel (*kafir*).²⁵ Another scholar Abdur Rauf al-Singkili also tried to reconcile *ilm zahir* (outer knowledge) and *ilm batin* (inner knowledge), or shari’a and Sufism, criticizing the pantheism of Hamzah Fansuri, but reminded other Muslims of the danger of accusing others as infidel.²⁶

Southeast Asia witnessed the rise of more popular reformism in Arabic and local journals from the early twentieth century. In Kelantan, for instance, *Pengasuh* (the Guidance), written in Jawi, contained information and reformist ideas, such as criticizing pre-Islamic beliefs such as “witchcraft”, “black magic”, offerings during the harvest, and the like, which they saw as the signs of Malay “backwardness” and argued for religious reform and hard work. The writers were concerned with such various matters as Malay

²² Mark R. Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1989), p.242.

²³ Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, vol.II (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), p.135; Azyumardi Azra, “The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian ‘Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century”, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1992, pp.346-458.

²⁴ See Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), p.108.

²⁵ Azyumardi Azra, “The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian ‘Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century”, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1992, pp. 351-70.

²⁶ Azyumardi Azra, “The Transmission of Islamic Reformism”, pp.408-10.

education, ethics, language, history, and politics.²⁷ The reformist ideas were brought by graduates from Cairo directly to Kelantan or indirectly through the west-coast of the Malay Peninsula. These graduates were familiar with such journals as *al-Urwatul Wuthqa* (Strong Tie) pioneered by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, *al-Manar*, *Al-Imam*, *al-Ikhwan*, and *Saudara*. *Al-Manar* was published in Cairo from 1898, *Al-Imam* in Singapore from 1906, *Al-Ikhwan* in Pulau Pinang from 1926, and *Saudara* in Pulau Pinang from 1928. Although these journals were not read by the ordinary Muslims (*awwam*) in Kelantan, these were influential in the scholarly circle.²⁸ The impact of Malay-Arabic Islamic literature was undoubtedly significant in not only the dissemination of the reformist ideas of *shari'a*-Sufism reconciliation, but also in the maintenance of the connection between Mecca-Madina, Cairo, India, and Southeast Asia.

Such adoption of Islamic reformist ideas by Southeast Asian Muslims indicates the selective borrowing and creative adjustment characteristic of many Southeast Asians from the pre-colonial to the present times. Despite connections between the Middle East, Europe, and Southeast Asia, much pre-Islamic tradition was retained. Pre-Islamic cultural legacies such as the *wayang* (shadow-puppet) and Hindu god Visnu, coexisting with Islamic elements, continued to thrive. Javanese Muslims liked the idea of appropriating powers from various often conflicting sources. The nineteenth century version of the *Babad Tanah Jawi* (Javanese chronicle) says, “at the time many Javanese wished to be taught the religion of the Prophet and to learn supernatural powers and invincibility.”²⁹

In South Sulawesi, the Bugis had their unique worldview, as reflected in the epic of *La Galigo*.³⁰ The epic contains the wide range of knowledge important to the Bugis court and the villagers. It contains, for example, the practice of “feeding the gods” (*mappanré déwata*), a ritual ceremony before the marriage, aimed “to invite the Gods to descend to earth in order to give their blessings to the bride and groom.”³¹ The *La Galigo* features several godly couples living in heaven and in the underworld, and narrates the activities of these god-rulers who become the progenitors of the royal families in South Sulawesi. The *La Galigo* also contains information on the religious practices and rituals of the transvestite *bissu* priests who acted as shamans mediating humankind with the world of spirits and gods.³² As in many other Muslim societies, Bugis believed in gods, practiced shamanism, and believe in Allah.

Because the old belief was “animistic” and “polytheistic”, three ulama from Sumatera who came to South Sulawesi preached the court about Islamic doctrine of *tauhid* (Oneness of God), but tried to use a local term for a supreme God (*déwata séuwaé*) and

²⁷ Ramli Haji Ahmad & Che Zaharah Che Hassan, “Pengasuh”, Khoo Kay Kim (ed.) *Beberapa Aspek Warisan Kelantan, II*, Kota Bharu: Perbadanan Muzium Negeri Kelantan, 1983, pp.110-30

²⁸ Mohd. Radzi Othman & O.K. Rahmat, *Gerakan Pembaruan Islam: Suatu Kajian di Negeri Perlis dan Hubung Kaitnya dengan Malaysia*, Pulau Pinang: Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1996, p.220.

²⁹ In Ricklefs, “Islamization of Java”, p.40.

³⁰ The original content of *La Galigo*, Koolhof suggests, is non-Islamic. But in later period, Bugis conversion to Islam brought about an additional element in the tradition of the convert, such as the mention of one God, *Kitaq Porokani* (the Koran) and Muhammad. Koolhof also argues that the epic was popular in the villages as well as in the court because it is recited on occasions of births, building of a new house, weddings, or the beginning of the planting season. Christian Pelras, *Manusia Bugis*, 2006, p.62-6; Sirtjo Koolhof, “The ‘La Galigo’: A Bugis Encyclopedia and Its Growth”, *BKI*, 155, 3, 1999, pp.370, 380-4.

³¹ Sirtjo Koolhof, “The ‘La Galigo’: A Bugis Encyclopedia and Its Growth”, *BKI*, 155, 3, 1999, p.366.

³² Christian Pelras, “Religion, Tradition, and the Dynamics of Islamization of South Sulawesi”, *Archipel*, 29 (Paris: Association Archipel, 1985), pp.82-4, 108.

related Muhammad to the La Galigo epic hero *Sawérigading*.³³ The La Galigo polytheistic belief was seen as contradictory to Islamic monotheism, but in order to facilitate the local acceptance of the concept, the ulama used the local term and gave it a new meaning.³⁴ They combined Allah with a local noble term, *karaeng*, so it became *karaeng Allah ta'ala*. They introduced the people to mysticism (*tasawwuf*), logic (*mantiq*), the relationship with God (*munajat*), and rituals such as the *tarawih* (evening prayer at the month of Ramadhan), and *nisfu sya'ban* (prayer at mid-month of *sha'ban*).³⁵ They introduced the new monotheistic concepts in light of the old terms and to introduce new religious practices.³⁶

Islam became widely accepted in Southeast Asia because of it being a portable universal faith as opposed to the system of local spirit-worship. International maritime commerce provided a necessary precondition for conversion on a large scale. The other reasons were the association of the new religion with wealth, the military success, the healing potentiality and the writing. At the same time, conversion to Islam underwent obstacles, related to dietary such as pork and alcoholism, sexual morality, and belief in spirits.³⁷ Islamization was neither a sudden nor a smooth process. In this long and unfinished process, local tradition and ethnicity continued to play its role.

Islam and Local Tradition

The interaction between Islam and the tradition (*adat*) has led to Islamic plurality. In such Muslim societies as Aceh, Gayo, the southern Batak areas, and Minangkabau, it is common to find Islamic ritual styles defined as ancient ancestral *adat* and local custom lauded as part of Allah's plan for the world.³⁸ In southern Philippines, during the fasting month of Ramadhan, while waiting for the midnight meal, Muslim young men make and play with bamboo cannons (*pola*), similar to those found in Christian areas during the Christmas season. After the 15th day of the fast, some Muslims practice *kapanolay*, which is making smoking or chewing betelnut allowable without nullifying one's fasting.³⁹ In Kelantan, Malaysia, the traditional practices remained strong, especially in the village and remote areas. The term for local culture during the twentieth century, like in Sulawesi, is *adat* or *urf tempatan*. The term *adat* and *urf* are Arabic terms but have come to be used for local tradition and culture in opposition to *sharia* or *agama* referring to the religion of Islam. These latter terms include various aspects of life, but they have also been narrowly defined as Islamic law and legal system (*fiqh*). In Kelantan, *adat* has become a crucial element in Malayness and has been institutionalized in *Majelis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu*. In South Sulawesi, *adat* and *sharia* have become integrated and are celebrated in the saying, "tradition [*adat*] is based on *sharia* and the

³³ Henri Chamber-Loir, "Dato ri Bandang. Legendes de l'islamisation de la region de Célèbes-Sud", *Archipel* 29 (Paris: Association Archipel, 1985), pp. 117, 120.

³⁴ Sirtjo Koolhoof, "The 'La Galigo': A Bugis Encyclopedia and Its Growth", *BKI*, 155, 3, 1999, pp. 367-8.

³⁵ Henry Chamber-Loir, "Dato ri Bandang", pp. 143-50.

³⁶ One may call this "localization", or "self-Islamization", as in Wolters' term "self-Hinduization". This is in his phrase, "what happened when foreign materials were originally localized". Wolters, "*History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*", p.55,

³⁷ Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, vol.II (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), p.151.

³⁸ Rita Smith Kipp & Susan Rodgers (eds), *Indonesian Religions in Transition* (Tucson: the University of Arizona Press, 1987), p.13.

³⁹ Nagasura T. Madale, "Ramadhan as Observed in Lanao", Peter Gowing (ed.), *Understanding Islam and Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988), p.80.

sharia is based on the Koran.” (*adat bersendikan sharia and sharia bersendikan kitabullah*)”.⁴⁰ Adat commonly refers to different traditional practices, the most popular being the shadow puppet (*wayang Siam*), the ritual drama (*main puteri* and *makyong*), and the traditional ritual specialist or magician (*bomoh*).⁴¹ The *wayang* tradition which consisted of *wayang Jawa*, *wayang Gedek*, and *wayang Siam*, indicated foreign influences (Siam, Sumatera, Java), but the Kelantanese practiced it its local dialect and variations.⁴² The ritual drama (*main peteri*) is a healing theatrical ritual performed by a magician (*tok peteri*); *makyong* is more a play or an entertainment.⁴³ The specialists of these practices continued to appeal to the villagers, although the strict *ulama* challenged them or the specialists themselves synthesized pre-Islamic and Islamic practices. The strict local *ulama* saw these various traditional practices as “un-Islamic”, but the puppeteers said the *wayang*’s message is derived from Islamic sources, and the performances are often held during Islamic festivals such as at the Prophet’s Birthday and the end of the fasting month (*idul fitri*). Part of the local *ulama* seemed to be ambivalent when they condemned the *wayang* as singul while proudly note the vitality of Kelantan’s *wayang* and its being Malay identity marker vis-à-vis the others.⁴⁴ Thus, Islam, cultural eclecticism, and ethnic diversity were interwoven.

As a result of long and continued interaction of different cultures, linguistic assimilation between local language and Arabic, Indian, Chinese, and other influences has become the norm. Some Sanskrit words became Malay and Indonesian, such as *puasa*, for fasting, *neraka* for hell, *shurga* for heaven, *tuhan* for god, and *agama* for religion, and many Arabic words became localized, such as *hukum* for law, *shura* for consultation, *adil* for just, *rakyat* for people. Cultural transformation influenced by Islamization in Southeast

⁴⁰ For more discussion on the meaning of *shari’a*, *fiqh*, and *adat*, see Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of Holy Koran* (Maryland: Amana Publications, 1989), p.263; Wael Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunni Usul al-Fiqh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.12; Khalil ‘Abd al-Karim, *Al-Judhur al-Tarikhyya lil-Sharia al-Islamiyyah* (Cairo: Sina lil-Nasr, 1990), pp.15-9, 85-9; Benhard Dahm, “The Role of Tradition in Historical Developments in Southeast Asia”, *Archipel*, II, 57 (Paris: Association Archipel, 1999), p.17.

⁴¹ The different types of tradition are practiced in southern Thailand, Patani, Trengganu. A puppeteer can also become a magician or curer (*bomoh*), dispensing speels (*jampi*), amulets (*azimat*), and advice. The puppeteer also can act as mediums (*tok peteri*) or spirit guides (*tok minduk*). Barbara S. Wright, “The Role of the Dalang in Kelantanese Malay Society”, Sharon A. Carstens (ed.), *Cultural Identity in Northern Peninsular Malaysia* (Athens: Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series Number 63, 1986), pp.29-30.

⁴² The Kelantanese society thus became diversified in terms of their religious and cultural beliefs and practices. Some continue to belief in sprits and taboos (*pantang larang*); others are the *bomoh* and *dukun* who practice the speels (*mantera*) and offerings (*sajian*); and still others were the strict *ulama* who emphasized Islamic teachings who still became the majority. See Mohamed Anwar Omar Din, “Unsur-unsur Hindu-Buddha dan Islam dalam Kebudayaan Kelantan: Analisis Tulisan Asing dan Sumber Tempatan”, *Warisan Kelantan*, vol.XIV (Kota Bharu: Perbadanan Muzium Negeri Kelantan, 1995), pp.103-39.

⁴³ *Peteri* originally means healing the sick by fixing the sick part of the body, although it is also said that *peteri* means the princes (*puteri*). The main *peteri* contained references of gods, ghosts, and spirits. Omar Fariuk Bajunid (ed.), *Pengantar Kesenian Kelantan* (Kuala Lumpur: Asrama Za’ba Universiti Malaya, 1989), pp.37-.53; Zuhari bin Daud, “Main Peteri: Satu Cara Perubatan Tradisi”, *Warisan Kelantan*, vol.II (Kota Bharu: Perbadanan Muzium Negeri Kelantan, 1982), pp.102-4; Hamidah bt. Yaacob, “Hiburan Tradisional Kelantan”, *Warisan Kelantan*, vol.II (Kota Bharu: Perbadanan Muzium Negeri Kelantan, 1982), pp.53-60.

⁴⁴ I will come to this tension between the *ulama* and the puppeteers in Chapter IV on sermons and edicts. At this point see Barbara S. Wright, “The Role of the Dalang in Kelantanese Malay Society”, Sharon A. Carstens (ed.), *Cultural Identity in Northern Peninsular Malaysia* (Athens: Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series Number 63, 1986), pp.32-33.

Asia involved not only language, but also ethnicity (such as ethnicization of Islam), gender relations, social class relations, family, food, dressing, and so forth.

The view, prevalent in the colonial era, that Islam was simply “a thin flaking glaze” on the indigenous Southeast Asian peoples is no longer tenable. Islam changed Southeast Asian religious and cultural landscape, and made it diversified. But the view that Islam changed everything is not tenable either because various complementary if not conflicting orders of things work in the minds and lives of many Southeast Asian Muslims. At the same time, Muslims are confronted with the increasingly diverse interpretations of Islam as time moves toward directions quite different from the old ages.

Islam, Colonialism, and Reformism

The different colonial powers, Portuguese in Malacca, the Dutch in Indonesia, the British in Malay, the Spanish and then the Americans in the Philippines, shaped different characteristics of transmission and socio-political application of Islam in each places. Conflicts but also collaborations marked the colonial period in Southeast Asia. Islam served as a source of resistance against the infidel colonizers in Aceh, Banten, Java, Sulawesi, Sulu, and others. Islam shaped Southeast Asian nationalisms, thus “Islamic nationalism”. The Spanish and later the Americans in the Philippines led to resistance movement among the “moros”, Muslims in the south, not only against the Spaniards and the Americans, but also the Christian Filipino whom they saw their enemies.⁴⁵ However, colonialism shaped Islam in various and complex ways in Southeast Asia. The Dutch in Indonesia and the British in Malaysia shaped modernization of Islamic organizations, education, and legal system, albeit in varying ways and degrees.⁴⁶ The British and the Dutch had different policies toward Islam in Malay and Indonesia respectively. Generally speaking, the British colonizer did not interfere much in the administration of justice among its Malay subjects and left the task to the sultans, the ulama, and the pre-colonial indigenous leaders. It also treated Islamic jurisprudence as the principal source for legal procedures among its Malay subjects. For example in one rural state in Malaysia, thanks to the modern administrative reforms sponsored by the British, a whole new class of *ulama*, *imams*, and *kadis* (judge) was organized and recognized. The Council of Religion in Kelantan was of significance because of its involvement in many areas of activity related to mosques, cemeteries, *zakat* (alms giving) *waqf* (religious endowment), *nazr* (an expressed vow to deed property), and education.⁴⁷ With the Sultan’s permission, the Council opened a modernist school *Madrasah Muhammadiyah*, offering subjects in English, Arabic and Malay. In contrast to many *pondok* which were privately administered, the *Madrasah Muhammadiyah* was governed by the Council.⁴⁸ Many of the students continued their education at the Malay College in Kuala Kangsar, at the Penang

⁴⁵ Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.470-83; Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: the Umma below the Winds* (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Syed Serajul Islam, *The Politics of Islamic Identity in Southeast Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Thomson Learning, 2005), pp.27-32.

⁴⁶ Moshe Yegar, *Islam and Islamic Institutions in British Malaya 1874-1941* (Jerusalem: the Magnes Press, 1979), pp.1-258.

⁴⁷ Moshe Yegar, *Islam and Islamic Institutions in British Malaya: Policies and Implementation*, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, the Hebrew University, 1979, pp.93, 212.

⁴⁸ Moshe Yegar, *ibid*, pp.249-50; Roy F. Ellen, “Social Theory, Ethnography, and the Understanding of Practical Islam in South-east Asia, in M.B. Hooker (ed.), *Islam in South-East Asia*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983, pp. 80-1.

Free School or at the SITC (Sultan Idris Training College).⁴⁹ Conditioned by the British intervention, the bureaucratization of Islam, codification of Islamic law, modernization of Islamic teaching and publishing of journals, became part of the whole process of transmission of modernist Islamic knowledge to the local population.

On the other hand, the Dutch colonial administration interfered much in the administration of justice among its Muslim subjects. They also codified the *adat* (local tradition) law, and made it the main reference in this administration, limiting the domain of the Islamic jurisprudence. This divergence in colonial style has led to significant differences between contemporary Malaysia and Indonesia. The autonomy of the various states of Malaysia federation is much larger than those of the various parts of the Indonesian Republic, especially in Islamic matters. The administration of Islamic justice is much more developed in Malaysia than in Indonesia. Another difference is that Malaysia has adopted Islam as the state's religion, whereas Indonesia has not.⁵⁰ Different types of colonial modernization and different networks of Islamic reformism brought Southeast Asian Islam into a new dynamic in the era of nation-states and globalization. From the early twentieth century, Muslims in Indonesia had been organizationally pluralized with the rise of the economy-oriented Sarekat Islam (1912), the modernity-oriented Muhammadiyah (1912), and the tradition-oriented Nahdlatul Ulama (1926), providing alternatives to religiously neutral nationalists and socialists of the time.⁵¹ The Islamic organizations were influenced by Middle Eastern Islamic reformism, but the dynamic was local and national. Islamic reformism, meaning the idea of revitalizing Islam in new settings for all fields of life, originated from Mecca, but also, especially from the 19th century onwards, from the University of Al-Azhar, Cairo. Muhammad Abduh was the leading reformist who has influenced Islamic reformism in Southeast Asia. Reformists call for a return to the Qur'an and the Hadith and the promotion of *ijtihad* (reasoning), rather than *taqlid* (imitation). Muslim reformists generally believed that Islam was not confined to God-human relationships but included social relationships such as politics, the economy and other societal matters.

The meaning of Islamization of a social or ethnic group "not as a single act of conversion but a long process toward greater conformity and orthodoxy" can only satisfy the Islamic reformists, such as the Muhammadiyah. Islamization thus means a struggle to bring *adat* elements that are regarded as contradictory to Islam into conformity with Islam. For traditionalists, represented by the Nahdlatul Ulama, Islamization signifies a struggle for a greater compromise between *shari'a* and *adat*. The Muhammadiyah regards Islamization as a struggle to maintain, in the face of this adaptive flexibility, the identity of Islam not just as religion in general but as the particular directives communicated by God to mankind through the preemptory prophecies of Muhammad. The Nahdlatul Ulama, on the other hand, defines Islamization as an effort to adapt a universal, in theory standardized and essentially unchangeable, and unusually well-integrated system of ritual

⁴⁹ Barbara Watson Andaya & Leonard Y. Andaya, *A History of Malaysia*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001, p.240.

⁵⁰ See Moshe Yegar, *Islam and Islamic Institutions*, 258 pp; Aqib Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985, 260 pp; Johan H. Meuleman, "the History of Islam in Southeast Asia: Some Questions and Debates", *Islam in Southeast Asia: Political, Social, and Social Challenges for the 21st Century*, eds K.S. Nathan & Mohammad Hashim Kamali (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005), pp. 22-38.

⁵¹ Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp.1-244.

and belief to realities of local, even individual, moral, and metaphysical perception.⁵² Yet, both movements regard Islamization as a gradual process.⁵³

Although the reformism has focused more on rational-legal interpretation (*ijtihad*) and religious purification, it has actually had far-reaching social and political repercussions. During the Dutch colonial era, Islamic modernism not only transcended ethnic boundaries but also served as the rallying point of anti-colonialism (or Islamic nationalism). Islamic modernists' involvement in the political sphere greatly challenged the Dutch colonial regime which attempted to restrict political Islam while allowing cultural Islam. Unlike the Malay states in which Islam and politics were less connected because the British did not attempt to restrict the Muslim's pilgrimage, nor were suspicious of the small number of Islamic modernists, Indonesia provides a different case where Islamic modernism and politics were closely linked. Compared to Islamic modernism in Egypt which did not develop into a unified movement, Islam modernism in the Malay-Indonesian world served as a solid modernizing agent in educational, social, cultural, and political fields. Islamic modernism in the Middle East and later in Indonesia provides some historical references and ideological underpinnings of contemporary radicalism, characterized by the close relationship between religion and political activism.⁵⁴

Another type of Islamic reformism is pan-Islamism., which has attracted Muslims in Southeast Asia at least since the 19th century, which made British and especially Dutch colonizers worried about for its potential threat to their colonial dominance.⁵⁵ However, pan-Islamism which continued to exist to the present, such as what the *Hizbut Tahrir* (Party of Liberation) advocated, has always gained minor support among Muslims in Southeast Asia especially since the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century. They see Islamic nationalism, secularism, and democracy as contradictory to Islam.

Islam in Post-Colonial Southeast Asia

The complexity and diversity of Islam in Southeast Asia today are attributed to the complex history of its preachers, networks, and inhabitants as outlined above. But the so many strands of Islam in modern Southeast Asia from the late colonial to the postcolonial eras are also caused by various factors. As in other places, Islamic texts allow multi-interpretations; what is believed to be fundamental by one group has been contested by other groups, and what is not fundamental in religion continues to be contested. In the modern times, Islam becomes even more dynamic because more networks emerged, not only Middle East, India, Pakistan, China, but also the Western countries.

Islam and Everyday Life

The broad category of non-pious/non-strict and pious/strict religiosities are found everywhere in Southeast Asia, in different and changing terms (such as *abangan* for the non-pious, and *santri* for the pious in Java). In terms of ritual, there are always Muslims who do not perform daily prayers, alms-giving, fasting or pilgrimage to Mecca. There are

⁵² Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Developments in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1968), p.14-5.

⁵³ Muslim Abdurrahman, "Beri-Islam secara Kultural", *Republika*, 27th June 2003

⁵⁴ See Giora Eliraz, *Islam in Indonesia: Modernism, Radicalism, and the Middle East Dimension* (Brighton and Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2004), 142 pp.

⁵⁵ Anthony Reid, "Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia", *the Journal of Asian Studies*, no.26, vol.2, Feb 1967, pp.267-83.

those Muslims who believe in One supreme God, but still believe in little gods. Muslims in Southeast Asia care much about rites of passage from birth, marriage, to death, with rituals associated with both Islam and non-Islamic elements. Performing pilgrimage (*haji*) provides a source of identity within various layers of an Islamic community. The fifth pillar of Islam has immense personal and social significance. A Muslim who has performed it is socially conditioned to wear the white skull cap denoting the *haji* status. The *haji* becomes not simply religious, but relates to social identity and organization.⁵⁶

In terms of dietary, there are Muslims who do not conform to the traditional restrictions. Muslim dressing has varied according to various interpretations; and has been shaped by global, local, and Islamic cultures. Many Muslim women wear hijab (*kerudung, jilbab*) in various models, but others do not, because they do not want to wear it, they do not know why they should, or they know that wearing it is not religious obligation. For many, Muslim dress constitutes an identity, religious piety, and or resistance.⁵⁷

Private aspects of Islam are often manifested in the public sphere as well. Many Muslims do not have a clear conception of separation between the private and the public. For example, marriage and prayer not completely private matters, because people are used to have these rituals publicly. Thus, Islam becomes associated with social identity as well, if not even the more important for many. They learn the idea of Muslims as the best nation (*khairu ummah*) and God's vicegerant on earth. A Muslim might have not performed daily prayers every day or read the Qur'an, but he or she will rise against what they see an assault against the Prophet Muhammad as in the case of a Danish cartoon of Muhammad. Although most saw the cartoon as an insult, some attempted to call for more rational responses.

In contemporary Indonesia, the Qur'an remained the most readable book among Muslims, but this does not mean that they understand the meaning as not all know Arabic. For some Muslims, memorizing and reciting the Qur'an served not only a spiritual but also social and political purpose. Emotion plays a role in the process of Muslim engagement with the Qur'an. Moods and motivation play a crucial role not only in preserving the recited Quran, but also in revitalizing the Muslim community. The reciters are to obey an orthopraxy – the right way to perform the recited Qur'an, and to meet such expectation. What motivates the act of Qur'anic recitation competition was various: having fun, glorifying Islam, participation, winning, and contributing to the national development. The national competition was hoped to increase belief and piety of the Islamic community as a resource for the New Order's national development. Although such competition was at times contested by some Muslim groups who regarded it wasteful and ceremonial in the face of such a more significant work as the practical implementation of the Qur'anic teachings, and by those who viewed woman's voice to be indecent for public (*aurat*), these and other objections seemed to decrease by the mid-1990s when more

⁵⁶ William R. Roff, "Social Science Approaches to Understanding Religious Practice: the Special Case of Hajj", Virginia Hooker & Norani Othman (eds), *Malaysia: Islam, Society, and Politics* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003), pp.38-9.

⁵⁷ See Kees van Dijk, "the Indonesian Archipelago from 1913 to 2013; Celebrations and Dress Codes between International, Local, and Islamic Culture", in *Islam in the Era of Globalization: Muslim Attitudes towards Modernity and Identity*, ed. Johan H. Meuleman, London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, pp.51-69; M. Quraish Shihab, *Jilbab Pakaian Wanita Muslimah* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2006), 190 pp.

justifications were offered, such as countering perceived and real Westernization and glorification of Islam through *da'wah*.⁵⁸

Social differentiation based on religious tendencies changes. Traditionally, Javanese are divided into syncretistic *abangan*, which combines pre-Hindu, Hindu, and Islamic elements and pious *santri*.⁵⁹ But such binary opposition is not static; there are grey culture areas where an *abangan* becomes pious, where the pious Muslim participate in *abangan* ritual tradition, and where no label is used. The *moderen* Muslim believes that Islam is a total way of life even more than the *kolot*. The *moderen* believes that secular science should be part of the Islamic worldview, whereas the *kolot* does not always believe to be so. In various ways, the *moderen* could be theologically more totalistic than the *kolot*. Some of the ritualistic beliefs and practices are considered as contested (*khilafiyya*) because they are merely branches (*furuiyyah*) rather than the fundamentals (*ushul*) of the religion. They see the branches of religion including the recitation of the phrase of the intention (*niat*) in the prayer, the recitation of the Koranic passages to the death body, and other ritualistic matters. Some religious organizations and schools of the *santri* often combine traditional and modern elements. In other cases, the so-called *moderen* practice the rituals that the *kolot* did and vice versa. Some people reject this divisive categorization, and instead try to promote “one Islam” or a “Muslim unity”.⁶⁰

Ethnicity remains important for many Muslims. Inhabitants of Arab origin can nowadays be found in all Southeast Asian countries, with the exception of Laos. The vast majority lives in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. The dynamic Islamization process, woven with less orthodox Indian and Persian ideas, more orthodox Arab influences, and more economic oriented Chinese cultures provided conditions for post-colonial multicultural Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore.⁶¹ In Singapore, the Malays”, William Roff writes, “had for centuries tended to look upon all Arabs, whatever their origin, as the direct inheritors of the wisdom of Islam, and on Sayyids in particular...as possessed of unexampled piety and religious merit.”⁶² Religious charisma remains often associated with ethnic origin.

In Southeast Asia, most Arabs have become citizens of the new nation states. The Arab minorities had become oriented towards the society in which they participated. Most Arabs were descendents of mixed marriages, who no longer spoke Arabic and who identified themselves more with the country in which they lived than the country from their forefathers had originated. In some countries, the degree of integration is higher than in others.⁶³ Muslims of Chinese origins are minority, but are localized. When asked in 1979, Junus Jahja, a Chinese Muslim prominent leader, who was born and had lived for

⁵⁸ Anne M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Qur'an in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2004); Muhamad Ali, “Perfection Makes Practice: A Book Review”, *American Journals of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol.23, Summer 2006, no.3, pp. 98-100.

⁵⁹ Clifford Geertz, *Religion of Java* (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), pp.7-14; Koentjaraningrat, *Kebudayaan Jawa* (Jakarta: PN Balai Pustaka, 1984), pp. 310-18;

⁶⁰ Muhamad Ali, “Categorizing Muslims in Postcolonial Indonesia”, *Moussons*,, pp.

⁶¹ Mohd. Taib Osman, “Islamization of the Malays: A Transformation of Culture”, *Readings on Islam*, pp.44-7.

⁶² William R. Roff, “the Malayo-Muslim World of Singapore at the Close of the Nineteenth Century”, *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXIV, 1964, p.80.

⁶³ Huub de Jonge and Nico Kaptein, “The Arab Presence in Southeast Asia: Some introductory Remarks”, *Transcending Borders: Arabs, Politics, Trade, and Islam in Southeast Asia*, eds Huub de Jonge and Nico Kaptein, Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, p.3.

long in Indonesia, expressed his self-identity: “I am a Muslim, an Indonesian, and a Chinese.”⁶⁴ This personal statement illustrates not only how an individual can be Islamic, nationalist, and ethnic. For Java, there are more examples of Muslims of Chinese origin. Lombard and Salmon talked about the family of Surabaya who converted to Islam and assimilated into the surrounding Javanese society to the point of “forgetting” their origin. There was a report suggesting the existence of *kampung peranakan* (local-born Chinese village): “As the *Parnakkangs* (*sic*) have become Mohammedans or are by birth, they live more in the style of the country than in the Chinese way. Their job is generally fishing and the navy, hiring themselves out of sailors or skippers of entire vessels...they are whiter than the normal to be Javanese but not as white as the Chinese. They marry Javanese women; this results in mixed blood which becomes less so from generation to generation.”⁶⁵

Islam and Politics of Identity

Islam, as other religions, is prone to politicization. Muslim groups promote various ideas of Islamic society and Islamic politics. Muslims in Southeast Asia live with multiple layers of identities: religion, ethnicity, organization, political affiliation, and so forth. Islam has been used for state legitimacy, political interests, economic benefits, and other purposes. From pre-colonial to the present times, Islam served as a source of identity. The term *kafir* in opposition to *Islam* has been referred to the Dutch colonizers, the British colonizers, and other European colonizers, but also to Christians, Buddhists, and other non-Muslims. Muslims created religious boundaries in order to maintain Islamic identity and reaffirm superiority. In Indonesia, Muslims also waged war against communists they labelled as anti-Islam.⁶⁶

The fact that Muslims are majority in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei, does not make these countries subscribe to similar forms of the relationship between Islam, the state, and politics. Indonesia is not an Islamic state, nor a purely secularly state, but it endorse the Pancasila as its state philosophy. Malaysia is not an Islamic state, but the constitution stipulate that Islam is the state’s religion, yet recognizes religious plurality. Brunei is an Islamic monarchy, and states Islam as its official religion, but it has both Islam and civil laws. Unlike Indonesia, which has about 230 million people, Malaysia has only about 26 million (Malays about 56 percent, Chinese 25 percent, Indian 8 percent). Unlike Indonesia, which subscribes to *Pancasila* (five pillars of state-ordained ideology) as the state philosophy, Malaysia gives Islam an official status, while recognizing religious diversity. In Malaysia, religion and ethnicity are closely interwoven. To be Malay one has to be Muslim. If a Chinese or Indian wants to be fully integrated into Malay society, he or she should speak Malay and adhere to the Malay religion. In Malaysia, there is a strengthened identification of Islam with Malayness.⁶⁷ Therefore, Islam continues to comprise the major line of religious demarcation between the Malays and non-Malays.

⁶⁴ Junus Jahja, “Saya Muslim, Indonesia, dan Keturunan Tionghoa”, in “Da’wah dan Asimilasi”, *Masalah Tionghoa dan Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Jakarta: Yayasan Ukhuwah Islamiyah, 1982), p.10-11; Junus Jahja, “WNI Tanpa Beban”, *Islam di Mata WNI* (Jakarta: Yayasan Haji Karim Oei, 1993), p.162.

⁶⁵ Denys Lombard and Claudine Salmon, “Islam and Chineseness”, *The Propagation of Islam in the Indonesian-Malay Archipelago*, pp.183-200; Muhamad Ali, “Chinese Muslims in Colonial and Postcolonial Indonesia”, *Explorations*, vol.7, no.2, Spring 2007, pp. 1-15.

⁶⁶ Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam.....; Ismatu Rofi*, ...

⁶⁷ Hussin Mutalib, *Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp.31-6.

There exists an "ethnicization of Islam" and Islamization of ethnicity in Malaysia, a process not present in Indonesia.

A wider Islamic solidarity – with models of Islamic movements in the Middle East and in Pakistan, has fueled similar movements in Southeast Asia, but their expressions are certainly diverse. It should be noted that Islamic revivalism is not theoretically and politically a unified movement. Despite common concerns such a return to the ‘purity of Islam’, perceived internal crisis and external threats, there are significant differences amongst the Islamist groups. In the Philippines, there was Darul Islam Movement, led by Islamic graduates from the Middle East, with Wahabiyya model. In Malaysia, Darul Arqam was revivalist, but more concerned with economic and social activities. The Muhammadiyah, inspired by Wahabiyya –didn’t go further into fundamentalism. The Nahdlatul Ulama –initially as a response to the Muhammadiyah, was established by kiyai (Islamic scholars) in the villages; they were more socio-religious movements, and thus were not radical in character. Yet radical Islam emerged, unsatisfied with the existing Islamic organizations. What causes Islamic radicalism then? Besides literal interpretation of Islam, radical Islamists were mostly led by Arab descents. For example, the Army of Holy War, *Lasykar Jihad* was led by an Arab Ja’far Umar Thalib, the Front of Islamic Defenders, *Front Pembela Islam*, by Habib Rizieq Shihab, the Council of Indonesian Islamic Fighters, *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*, by Abu Bakar Ba’ashir), and the Community of Muslim Brothers of Indonesia, *Jamaah Ikhwan al-Muslimin Indonesia* by al-Habshi. Economic deprivation, cultural gap (Western educated – Middle Eastern educated, educated and non-educated), connection with international network, were factors contributing to radicalism. Governments’ suppression and ban on political groups could create radicalism. For example, as Ferdinand Marcos declared Martial Law, and Suharto oppressed against Islamic public activities and banned Islamic media, radicalism flourished. Disillusionment and frustration have resulted in Islamic radicalism.

As Islam-state relationship and legal issues were interwoven, the problem of what law should govern Indonesians in general and Muslims in particular became existent in the forms of tensions or compromises. In Indonesia and Malaysia, Islamic law is more concerned with private matters (marriage, inheritance, and the like), and some commercial dimensions (e.g. Islamic economics, influenced by wider Islamic economic thought, sponsored by Organization of Islamic Conference from the 1980s) and only applied to Muslims. Although there was localization of Islamic law in Southeast Asia, colonial-influenced civil laws and customary laws are to coexist with some aspects of the Islamic law. Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, Singapore all have separate Islamic Courts, apart from the national civil courts. They also have departments for religious affairs in charge of Islamic rituals and calendars, Islamic education, mosques, alms-giving, pilgrimage, and other religious personal and familial affairs not relating to system of justice.⁶⁸

However, despite the rejection by the majority, there are always some Islamic groups in Indonesia and Malaysia who continue to push the national and local government to implement the fuller system of the Islamic law. More recently, with decentralization and regional autonomy in Indonesia, some provinces and districts adopted the idea of constitutionalization of Islamic law, but most argue that such idea has become a political

⁶⁸ See M.B. Hooker, “Muhammadan Law and Islamic Law”, *Islam in South-East Asia*, ed. M.B. Hooker (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983), pp.160-82.

commodity, rather than a purely religious motive. In Malaysia, Kedah and Trengganu accepted the idea of implementing a strict Islamic law, although the implementation of shari'a criminal law (*hudud*) has not come to implementation because it contradicts with the federal law of the country. Most ordinary Muslim Malaysians do not know what constitutes an Islamic state. However, many could not oppose an Islamic state. One liberal group, Sisters in Islam, oppose the enactment of the hudud legislation in Kelantan and Trengganu, but feared of being charged as being against Islam or an infidel. The contestation of what an Islamic state and the Islamic law are supposed to mean continues in Malaysia.⁶⁹

In Southeast Asia, Islamism is commonly associated with Salafism, but Salafism is not always political. Most Salafists are religious in orientation, rather than political. To illustrate, there are Muslims who endorse Salafism, but support secular parties such as Golongan Karya – the leading party during President Soeharto (1967-1998). A number of Salafist organizations, such as the Party of Liberation (*Hizbut Tahrir*), the Mission Association (*Jamaah Tabligh*), and the Indonesian Holy Fighters Council (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*), are not interested in formal politics through democratic channels because they believe that Islam is a trans-national religion. Yet, although Hizbut Tahrir in Indonesia always speaks of 'Islamic State' or 'Islamic trans-national leadership' (Caliphate), they do not promote these ideas through participation in political parties. A radical organization, *Jama'ah Islamiyah*, linked with the terrorist Al-Qaida, is a secret society working underground and never appeals to many, let alone the majority because of their violent ideology. These marginal radical groups have negative views toward pluralism and democracy and subscribe to conflict vision of clash of civilizations. Such radical ideologies originate from international radical influences, rather than from localized Islamic tradition.

However, most Islamists in Indonesia are politically moderate, participating in democratic process, now represented by Islam-oriented political parties, such as the National Development Party (PPP), The Crescent and Star Party (PBB), The Reform and Star Party (PBR), and Prosperous and Justice Party (PKS). In the 2004 parliamentary election, these Islamic parties constitute about 20 % of an electorate of 113 million. Islamist movements are originally religious and moralist. They attempt to purify what they see as the corrupted Muslim society due to negative impacts of Westernization and to correct the government policy failures. They fight against corruption, pornography and other forms of moral decadence, using different missionary means (*da'wa*). Yet, many of these Islamists began to believe that Islamization would not succeed unless they participate in political process as opportunities allow them to do so after the collapse of the authoritarian New Order in 1998. They now turn to be political, but want to participate in a democratic process. They learned from moderate Muslim clerics, such as the Egyptian Yusuf Al-Qardhawy, that democracy and Islam are not incompatible. Most Islamists are concerned about Islamic international problems, but they do not turn into anti-nationalists. International events such the American war in Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict become the major concern of Islamists, but they do not make these issue into domestic electoral agenda, partly because they know that all Indonesians oppose the war in Iraq and reject the Israeli occupation in Palestine. None of the political leaders dare to speak otherwise. The rise of politically moderate Islamism in contemporary Indonesia

⁶⁹ Patricia Martinez, "Islam, Constitutional Democracy, and the Islamic State in Malaysia", *Civil Society in Southeast Asia*, ed. Lee Hock Guan (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004), pp.27-48.

should be explained in local and national contexts. The de-politicization of Islam during the New Order period (1967-1998) has proved effective in preventing Muslim societies in Java and outer islands from turning into political Islam which promotes the idea of an Islamic State or the implementation of Islamic Law. The appeal of the state ideology of *Pancasila* (five pillars) and of patriotism among the Muslim majority remains strong. Some Islamist activists even assert that to be good nationalist and to be a devout Muslim is not contradictory. For most Muslims in Indonesia, to love one's country is part of faith.

In Indonesia, the predication of Islam is more complicated due to a greater variety of variables involved, including ethnicities, nationalism, modernization, democratization, and globalization.⁷⁰ In the village of Tegalreso, for example, social politics of New Order government (1966-1998) had a significant impact on religious life. As a result of floating mass policy where political parties were not allowed to establish offices at the district levels, meaning de-politization of rural communities which in turn reduced the risk of religious polarization, religious division of pious *santri*-non-pious *abangan* distinction became blurred. From 1945 independence to 1965, the presence of political parties also influenced religious life. Nationalism, communism, and Islam gained their own followers in Tegalreso. In the New Order period, orthodoxy became strengthened. Almost all people in Tegalreso became Muslim. In some people's view, "in the last twenty years, Tegalreso has now become more 'Islamic' than previously."⁷¹

The mainstream Islam in Malaysia remains moderate. Current Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi asserted that Malaysia is not taking the path toward extremism. This public diplomacy does not necessarily mean that no struggle has taken place within Muslim groups in the country. Muslims are usually called "moderate" by becoming "democratic" and "modern". When compared to Indonesians, Malaysian Muslims have fewer religious organizations, but they are educationally and technologically becoming more "modern". In Michael Peletz's words, Malaysia is "Islamic modern".⁷² Ethnic prejudices and in-group feelings may still be present in Malaysians' daily lives. Interestingly, although the government privileges given to Malays in the field of education, business and public administration to bring them up to the level of the other ethnic groups, called *Bumiputera* (the people of the soil), they have managed to ensure political stability and economic advancement. Differences and prejudices have not turned into social unrest or riots, which could harm stability and progress. After the 1969 riot there has not been any significant racial, ethnic or religious unrest as is so common in Indonesia's Kalimantan, Maluku and Java.

While major Islamic organizations (Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam, and more) have colored the face of Indonesian Islam, fewer Islamic organizations are present in Malaysia although there are some religious orientations like NU (more conservative old faction/*Kaum Tua*) or like Muhammadiyah (more reformist young

⁷⁰ See for example, Robert W. Hefner, "Islamization and Democratization in Indonesia" in Robert W. Hefner & Patricia Horvatic (eds.), *Islam in an Era of Nation-states: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), pp.75-127; Dale f.Eickelman & Jon W.Anderson (eds), *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999);Johan Meuleman (ed.), *Islam in the Era of Globalization: Muslim Attitudes towards Modernity and Identity* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002),

⁷¹ M. Bambang Pranowo, "Partai Politik dan Islamisasi di Pedesaan Jawa", in Saiful Muzani,*Pembangunan dan Kebangkitan Islam di Asia Tenggara* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1993), pp.178-95.

⁷² Michael G. Peletz, *Islamic Modern: Religious Courts and Cultural Politics in Malaysia* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp.20-1.

faction/*Kaum Muda*). Traditionalism, neo-traditionalism, modernism, neo-modernism and even Islamic secularism are also present in Malaysia.

The *dakwah* movements, such as *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* (Malaysian Islamic Youth Organization, ABIM) with the slogan "Islam first, Malay second", have played an important role in shaping religiosity of contemporary Malays. The current popularity of headscarves among Malay women, the importance of *halal* (permissible) food, the popular use of Arabic names, the establishment of Islamic banks and universities, and other Islamic projects show an increasing "Islamic hegemony", as the outcome of both civil and state Islamization programs.⁷³

There are now fewer major political parties in Malaysia than in Indonesia. Most Malays, Chinese and Indians are for the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), while the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party (PAS) gained its major support in the state of Kelantan, less in Trengganu and Kedah, and even less in other states. The Dominance of UMNO in Alliance (Barisan Nasional) assures privileges for Malays. Mahathir Mohammad introduced the concept of the "new Malay" which implies a transformed Malay identity with a high economic profile and a Malay with increased religiosity.⁷⁴

The struggle between "political Islam" and "cultural Islam" has also taken place in Malaysia. There are still differences between the Islam of PAS under Nik Abdul Aziz and the Islam of UMNO under Mahathir Mohammad and now Abdullah Badawi. PAS keeps criticizing the kind of Islamization of UMNO. Recently, when Abdullah Badawi and some groups promote a Civilized Islam' (Islam Hadhari), emphasizing cultural, economic, and scientific approaches to Islam for Malay competitiveness and prosperity, PAS leaders challenge this by promoting "Islamic Civilization" (*Hadharah Islamiyyah*), which stresses that Islam is a totality of life. PAS has often blamed UMNO of marginalizing Islam as the complete way of life.⁷⁵

PAS development is dynamic and changing according to local and global contexts; its political programs are not necessarily "extreme" when compared to the Taliban in Afghanistan or other reactionary groups elsewhere. PAS can today be compared with the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia, although the former is more actively promoting the enactment of the *hudud* (criminal) legislation particularly in Kelantan. Anwar Ibrahim, now being marginalized, for example, has expressed his agreement with some of PAS' ideas of promoting discourses on social justice and clean governance.

Apart from UMNO and PAS, more liberal Muslims continue to challenge conservative and more political Muslims. Sisters in Islam and smaller non-government organizations have recently considered promoting values such as human rights, religious tolerance and substantive religiosity. A few publications have also been promoting more colorful interpretations of Islam. In addition, TV programs and art performances show a combination of tradition and modernity. Modern and postmodern cultures using Islamic

⁷³ Hussin Mutalib, *Islam in Malaysia: From Revivalism to Islamic State* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1993), pp.1-12.

⁷⁴ Barbara Andaya and Leonard Andaya, *A History of Malaysia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2010), pp.1-5.

⁷⁵ Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, *Islam Hadhari: A Model Approach for Development and Progress* (Selangor: MPH Publishing, 2006), pp. 2-5; Abdul Hadi Awang, *Hadharah Islamiyah bukan Islam Hadhari* (Kuala Lumpur: Nufair Street, 2005), pp.1-10.

themes are also present. The struggle also continues against such problems as corruption, vote-buying, moral decadence, social injustice and human rights violations. Thus, although the government has played a moderating role in ethnic and religious affairs, and has served as an agent of modernism, the time will tell whether it too will succumb to even greater Islamic measures.

The nation-state that retained the old type of medieval political system is Brunei Darussalam. The government is dominated by Malays, but the economy by Chinese, with modern projects westernized. Islam has become the national religion, and there is a freedom of worship as some 40 percent of the populace is non-Muslim. It has the Department of Religious Affairs, but focusing solely on Islam. The government remained supportive of the Palestinian struggle and refuse to grant work permits to any foreigners known to be Jewish. The sultan the supreme authority of both politics and religion. Most Brunei Malays seem to continue to respect the office of the Sultan. There has not been open conflicts. Reciting spells, bomohs healing the sick and providing charms against evil spirits (hantu). Three main principles of educational policy in Brunei: appreciation of the Malay Islamic Monarchy concept and the Islamization of knowledge, to maintain a national ideology, and bilingualism (Malay and English for the academic and commercial success at the international level). They are encouraged to don traditional Malay Islamic clothes. Women are given equal access to most public professions, such as education, police, the armed forces. Islam is seen as a means for maintaining the status quo rather than forging radical changes in society. But Islamic law and British secular law were coexistently used. Secular laws applied to everyone, except for certain cases covered by Islamic law such as divorce between Muslims. Islamic law applies only to Muslims, with the policing, and offenders are charged in Islamic courts. The common offences are khalwat (intimate contact between unmarried men and women) and eating, drinking or smoking in public from dawn and sundown during the fasting month of Ramadhan. The government constantly emphasizes the need to Islamic piety in private and public life, keeping the people away from politics. The sultan issue warnings against Islamic extremism, seen as deviationist and aimed at destroying their pure belief. Halal food is strictly implemented.⁷⁶

Muslims as minority offer a unique picture of Southeast Asian Islam. Muslim minorities in the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, Burma, and Cambodia, are confronted with a choice between integration and secession, full of conflicts, but also compromises, and cooperations. In the Philippines, Muslim Filipinos' struggle became more intense with non-Muslims after the coming of Spaniards from the sixteenth century and northern Filipinos afterwards to the present. Beginning of the end of the sixteenth century, the Spaniards and the Sulunese (Tausug), but called "Moros"/Moors by the former, were engaged in centuries of wars before the Muslim sultanates acknowledged Spanish sovereignty. From the early twentieth century, Americans waged military campaigns to pacify "Filipino Muslims".⁷⁷ Islam in the Philippines is an old and divided community. Somemillion Muslim Filipinos are divided into some ten ethnolinguistic groups,

⁷⁶ David Leake, Jr., *Brunei: The Modern Southeast-Asian Islamic Sultanate* (Jefferson, North Carolina, & London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1989), vii, pp.91-2, 147-50

⁷⁷ Peter G. Gowing, "Moros and Khaek: the Position of Muslim Minorities in the Philippines and Thailand", *Readings on Islam*, pp.180-2; R.A. Kern, "The Propagation of Islam in the Indonesian-Malay Archipelago: Borneo and the Philippines", trans. H.M. Froger, in Alijah Gordon (ed.), *The Propagation of Islam in the Indonesian-Malay Archipelago* (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 2001), pp. 66-71.

differing in languages, degree of Islamization, contacts with the non-Muslim world, dress, customs, arts and other aspects of culture. Rivalry also exists between and within their groups based on political and/or economic factors. There are traditionalists and modernists. They are also divided into secessionists who want complete independence, ideologues who want justice, equity and religious freedom, and some just plain outlaws. Different factions (Moro National Liberation Front/MNLF, More Islamic Liberation Front/MILF, and Abu Sayyaf faction) have different goals and strategies. However, earlier inter-sultanate rivalry in northern Sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao caused internal disunity amongst themselves –due to provincial power struggle, although generally speaking Bangsa Moro’s long resistance has used Islam as rallying point. Primary issues were thus confined to whether Bangsa Moro gained full independency or greater autonomy. Furthermore, the intervention of OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) in their movements (viewing MNLF as akin to PLO in Palestine) makes it in a unique situation compared to other Islamic movements in Southeast Asia. Muslim Filipinos viewed themselves as part of a global Muslim community.⁷⁸ Despite wars and conflicts, as in other Islamic communities, Muslim Filipinos conducted their religious education and produced their rich and unique arts, literature, and festivities, in which Islam and local cultures were blended.⁷⁹

Muslims in Southern Thailand is another example of ethnic minority fighting to preserve their identity through political activities related to cultural revivalism. The Malay society (*khaek*) in Thailand is economically underdeveloped, isolated from the Buddhist Thais mainstream, but saw themselves as part of a great Malay community in Southeast Asian and the Islamic world. Thai education imposed and Malay education to be desired from the early twentieth century in the region were seen diametrical in terms of religion, language, and culture. The Thai government and the southern Thai Muslims have yet to work out a balance between preserving national unity and celebrating ethnic and religious diversity.⁸⁰ Since the 17th century to the present, Thai kings had created a post for a Muslim advisor for Muslim affairs, and today Muslims in Thailand had *shaikh al-Islam*, the grand teacher of Islam called *Chularajamontri*, who presides a national council of Islamic affairs, having various tasks such as issuing fatwas, administering mosques, fixing dates for the Islamic festivals, issuing certificates of halal food, and other tasks.⁸¹ There is no bridging the chasm between Muslim minorities that aspire to independence who are unwilling to live under non-Islamic rule, and the majority governments that are unwilling to relinquish their sovereignty over the areas.⁸² But Muslim minorities can live peacefully and fruitfully under the rule of non-Muslim authority so long as religious toleration and plurality are respected. Religious pluralism does not necessarily pose an obstacle to the process of national integration of a nation-state.⁸³

⁷⁸ Peter G. Gowing & Robert D. McAmis, “Introduction”, *The Muslim Filipinos*, eds Peter G. Gowing & Robert D. McAmis (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1974), ix-x;

⁷⁹ Nagasura T. Madale (ed.), *The Muslim Filipinos: A Book of Readings* (Quezon City: Alemar-Phoenix Publishing House, 1981), pp. 172-232.

⁸⁰ Surin Pitsuwan, *Islam and Malay Nationalism: A Case Study of the Malay-Muslims of Southern Thailand* (Thammasat University, 1985), pp.3, 78, 282-3; Michel Gilquin, *Les Musulmans de Thaïlande* (Paris & Bangkok: IRASEC, 2002), pp.34-5.

⁸¹ Michel Gilquin, *Les Musulmans de Thaïlande* (Paris & Bangkok: IRASEC, 2002), pp.63-4.

⁸² Moshe Yegar, *Between Integration and Secession: the Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Burma/Myanmar* (Maryland: Lexington, 2002), pp.381-2.

⁸³ Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, “The Historical Development of Thai-Speaking Muslim Communities in Southern Thailand and Northern Malaysia”, in *Civility and Savagery: Social Identity in Tai States*, ed. Andrew Turton (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), pp.162-77.

In Cambodia, Muslim minorities, mostly Chams, have been struggling to practice their religion amidst political upheavals, such as the genocide by Pol Pot regime during the period 1975-79, because belief in Allah is not compatible with submission to the Angkar, the supreme organization of the Khmer Rouges. However, they could today live more harmoniously in a Buddhist milieu. Muslims had mosques, imams, schools, and teachers of different educational backgrounds, including Cairo, Medina, Kelantan, and India, although their contact with Malays revitalize their religion. They have also asked assistance from the Islamic world and organizations, such as the Organization of Islamic Conference. In a statement in 1974, the Central Islamic Association of the Khmer Republic sought to maintain the observance of Islamic education, to assure unity of muslims, to propagate Islam, to organize, work towards peace, and offer help to those wishing to do pilgrimage and other religious obligations.⁸⁴

Singapore is a unique example of how Islamic moderation could be made possible by a politically and economically secular environment. It is commonly held that global modernity has nothing to do with tradition and religion. But if one more closely observes, religious lives can be interrelated to the ways in which a country modernizes itself in economy and education. Singapore remained one of the most tightly controlled, though nominally democratic, states in Southeast Asia. With a total population in 2000 of four million -- 77 percent Chinese, 14 percent Malay and 8 percent Indian -- Singapore faced sensitive issues relating to ethnicity, though there was little overt unrest. The Constitution of the State of Singapore of 1963, states that the Government shall exercise its functions in such manner as to recognise the special position of the Malays, who are the indigenous people of the State, and accordingly it shall be the responsibility of the Government to protect and promote their political, educational, religious, economic, social, and cultural interests and the Malay language.⁸⁵

With a highly urban character and its predominantly Chinese population, Singapore became Southeast Asia's most thriving entrepreneurial state and a major regional -- and global-communications center by the early 1990s, though it was done at some cost in personal liberties, self-expression and stringent controls continued on information and the media. However, where (mostly Malay) Muslims constitute a minority living in a society undergoing far-reaching secularizing changes, some 68 mosques stand as an important bulwark of Muslim identity and community integrity. Though the main function of a mosque is as a place of prayer, the mosque plays a variety of roles. Many such satellite mosques have also madrasah (modernized Islamic schools) and pre-school centers. Mosques also provide diverse services, mostly religious, educational, social and economic ones. Religious development and economic modernization seem to support each other. Islamic organizations such as PERGAS (Union of Singapore Islamic Teachers) and MUIS (Council of Islamic Religion in Singapore) have been actively engaged in educational and social activities. PERGAS believe that it is obligatory to obey a non-Muslim leader officially appointed via a democratic and legal process in matters

⁸⁴ Seddik Taouti, "The Forgotten Muslims of Kampuchea and Viet Nam", *Readings on Islam*, pp. 193-7; the Islamic Association of the Khmer Republic, *The Martyrdom of Khmers Muslims*, Phnom Penh: Islamic Association of the Khmer Republic, n.d., p.49.

⁸⁵ Ahmad bin Mohamed Ibrahim, *The Legal Status of the Muslims in Singapore* (Singapore; malayan Law Journal Ltd, 1965), p.72.

that do not contradict the religion and the principles of universal justice.⁸⁶ Singapore has conditioned MUIS, for example, to have a vision of reaching towards "a community of excellence that is religiously profound and socially progressive." MUIS further spells out the desired attributes of the Singapore Muslim community with respect to socio-religious life, namely to hold strongly to Islamic principles while adapting itself to changing contexts.

Muslim communities in Singapore are moderate in their religious beliefs and practices, and "progressive" in terms of economic and social behavior. Singapore used to be the center for Islamic publication in Southeast Asia. Although they are conservative in religious belief and practices, they are against radicalism and terrorism.⁸⁷ For example, a Singaporean Malay Muslim woman said, "We as Muslims should not be defensive about the misperceptions linking Islam to terrorism; it is our responsibility to explain that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism; if the terrorists claim themselves as Muslims they have misinterpreted some of the Koranic verses; but for us the terrorists are not truly Muslims because the meaning of Islam itself is peace."⁸⁸ Singapore provides a case in which Muslim minorities can actually live peacefully and prosperously in a secular, globalized country. Despite the imminent threats posed by Southeast Asian terrorist networks, Islam in Singapore can coexist with economic and political secularism.

Thus, much of Islamic politics became more nationalized and localized within respective countries. Islamic resurgence, or revivalism in the world has been localized and nationalized in Southeast Asia.⁸⁹ Although such developments as the Iranian Revolution and conflicts in the Middle East have had influences on Southeast Asian religious resurgence, national and local developments are not insignificant: the issue of the implementation of Islamic law at the national and or at the provincial level, the corrupt and weak government, the failure of mass education, the family, sexuality and other moral issues, business and economic issues, have received no few attention among the Islamic resurgents. In various ways, Islamic resurgence emerge as a response to what they saw as failed secularism and the threat of neo-colonialism.

Concluding Remarks: Characterizing Islam in Southeast Asia

Islam in Southeast Asia is both Islamic and local. Islam in Southeast Asia cannot be said as less Islamic than in the Middle East simply because it is geographically peripheral. Muslims are divided into those who are trying for conformity with what they see as orthodoxy, those who feel comfortable with the local tradition and realities, and those who are trying to reconcile between authenticity and changing modernities. The characteristics of Islam in Southeast Asia can be seen from various viewpoints depending on the observer. Some generalized features may be helpful, however. Islam in Southeast Asia was brought by various Islamic preachers, traders, and teachers from different origins: Arabia, India, Persia, China, and later on from other Southeast Asian regions, throughout centuries, which resulted in the emergence of various Islamic strands:

⁸⁶ PERGAS, *Moderation in Islam in the Context of Muslim Community in Singapore* (Singapore: PERGAS, 2004), p.290.

⁸⁷ Muhamad Ali, "Islamic moderation in Singapore thrives in a secular environment", *The Jakarta Post*, Friday, August 26, 2005.

⁸⁸ Muhammad Haniff Hassan, *Muslim...Moderate...Singaporean*, Singapore: PERDAUS, 2003, pp.3-29.

⁸⁹ See Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvath (eds.), *Islam in an Era of Nation-States* (Honolulu: the University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1997), pp. 3-31.

legalistic, mystical, or mixed. Sufism was important in easing the acceptance of Islam among the local people who believe in spiritual life, but shari'a-minded teachings influenced by Islamic legal thoughts, especially of Sunni Shafi'i, and the emphasis on the fundamentals of religion, brought about strict observance. The primary modes of transmission of Islam in Southeast Asia include preaching, teaching, and writing, although trade and intermarriage occurred in the early centuries of Islamization. In the contemporary era, Southeast Asia witness Islamic popular preaching, mass education, book translations of Islam from the Middle East, South India, as well as the West, contributing to the greater plurality of Islam and its organization in the region. The multi-interpretations of Islamic sources, the various receiving cultures, the kinds of Islam that came, and the domestic and global contexts in which Islam is practiced are some of the reasons why Islam has become so diverse in Southeast Asia.

Generally speaking, Islam in Southeast Asia from the early on to the present is moderate in the sense that radical ideologies and violence do not constitute normal realities. Islamic moderation has been shown by Muslim Indonesians, Malaysians, Singaporean, Brunei, but also by Filipinos, Chams, Thais, and others. The conflicts between Muslim minorities and the majority, either Buddhist or Catholic, were more political than religious, although religious boundaries and ethnic politics are interwoven. Radical ideologies have also emerged in Southeast Asia, such as pan-Islamic caliphate movement, but attract few followers, because most of them tend to be pragmatic and realistic. The liberal Muslims emerged to respond to fundamentalists, thus creating Islam especially in Indonesia and to a lesser degree in Malaysia, more colorful and dynamic. Muslims in Southeast Asia are therefore divided into those who see Islam as a total way of live, and those who see Islam as a cultural religion than political ideology. Power struggles occur among Muslims. Fragmentation (lack of unity) in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia has become the norm. Yet, domestic politics contributed to the kind of Islam being expressed. In Indonesia vocal, aggressive minority on one hand, and passive, silent majority on the other makes it easy for outsider to regard Indonesian Islam as moving towards radicalism. In the Philippines, Islam has become the focus of international concern, because of their struggle against what they view as oppression and colonialism. Radical Islamic fundamentalism remains marginal in contemporary Indonesia and Malaysia. It is the Muhammadiyah and NU, which have accepted the state's ideology of *Pancasila* ("Five Pillars" consisting of divinity, humanism, unity, democracy, and social justice) as the middle way between Islamic state and purely secular state, that continued to play a moderating role in the political sphere. In other words, Islamization process in Indonesia is not contradictory with the process of Indonesianization.