

RESPONSE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN MUSLIMS TO THE INCREASINGLY GLOBALIZED WORLD: DISCOURSE AND ACTION

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Resumen: Having itself grown out of a global orientation, Islam in Southeast Asia has gone global since its inception. Southeast Asian Muslims always welcome and participate in the globalized world, even though they are vigilant to the origin and aim of global action and design. Historically Southeast Asian Muslims faced globalization and colonialism with responsible criticism. Islam has found two major support-bases for its translation in Southeast Asia: the state and the autonomous religious leaders. With the increasing sophistication and penetration of Western colonialism, modern Muslim organizations gradually have taken over the social role of the defunct indigenous states and other institutions. Southeast Asian Muslims have shown their moral vision of the globalized world and their design to achieve it. In this article, emphasis is given to major trends in spirituality centered movement among Southeast Asian Muslims as represented by mass organizations, the reformed traditional institutions, and the more pronounced social movements in the region. Despite the fact that the state's hegemony and the ever presence of the *shari'a* at times interfere with and color the activities of these movements, they have undeniably demonstrated the viability and potential of spirituality centered movement in reshaping the rapidly changing and more globalized world of today.

Palabras Clave: action, globalized world, increasingly, muslims, Southeast Asian.

Having itself grown out of a global orientation, Islam in Southeast Asia has gone global since its inception. Southeast Asian Muslims always welcome and participate in the globalized world. What they, based on the pristine teaching of Islam on social responsibility, are critical to is closely related more to the origin and aim of global action and design.

Historically Southeast Asian Muslims faced globalization of colonialism with responsible criticism. Muslims continue to work for, in particular, morally correct global relations and exchange. As early as the 13th century, indeed, Islam has found two major support-bases for its translation in Southeast Asia: the state and the autonomous local leaders (*ulama*). This polarization continues until today. After the 16th century the scripturalist and *tariqa*-based institutions stimulated active and strong movements to implement a spirituality centered concept of community. With the increasing sophistication and penetration of Western colonialism since the dawn of the 20th century, modern Muslim organizations gradually have taken over the social role of the defunct indigenous states and other institutions, primarily to respond to the rapid change and at the same time pursue defense of the community. Although some, if not most, of them assume, if not take, the role of state, others insist on social and religio-cultural struggles.

"It is a large world; its inhabitants form a large community; Islam is in every sense a great affair. The Muslim in Lahore, or in Samarqand or Kano, does not feel isolated, but is vividly conscious of belonging to a living community spread across the globe"

(Wilfred C. Smith, *On Understanding Islam*)*

From the publication of Singapore's *al-Imam* in 1906 to the recent foundation of *Islam Liberal* in Jakarta, Southeast Asian Muslims have shown their moral vision of the globalized world and their design to achieve it. In this paper, emphasis is given to major trends in spirituality centered movement among Southeast Asian Muslims as

represented by mass organizations like the Nahdlatul Ulama and the Muhammadiyah, the reformed traditional institutions like *pondok* (Gontor) and *tariqa* (Naqshbandiya), and the more pronounced social movements such as the Sisters in Islam (Kuala Lumpur), the Aliran (Pinang) and Islam Liberal.

Despite the fact that the state hegemony and the ever presence of the *shari'a* at times interfere with and color the activities of these movements, they have undeniably demonstrated the viability and potential of spirituality centered movement in reshaping the rapidly changing and more globalized world of today.

INTRODUCTION

With the barrage of negative and discrediting Western press about recent Muslim terrorists, including those in Southeast Asia, it is ironic that my paper addresses the reverse –Islamic spirituality and globalization–. More specifically, it is obviously easier to argue the point from an apologetic standpoint; however, in this esteemed academic and serious atmosphere of our workshop we need to move forward to finding common grounds of interest in and shared benefit of having a just, peaceful and harmonious global world.

What is global about Islamic discourse? Is it not futile and self-contradictory to pose religion like Islam as a means to create a more convivial global world? Were Southeast Asian Muslims customers of ideas and practices offered by their teachers based in the Middle East and South Asia? What were the environments conducive to stimulate self-reliance and confidence in Southeast Asia in the last quarter of the 20th century? To answer the first part of these questions, it is necessary to examine how history shows that Muslims have been untiringly global actors.

Despite some historical deviation and partial aberration, Muslims strongly believe that their religion, Islam, fully commits to peace, harmony and brotherhood. Their brilliance in the classical period through political and military domination often sends wrong signals and messages concerning their own spiritual worth.

Recent complaints by several Muslim leaders in Southeast Asia concerning their being victimized and attacked by their own radicals or

terrorists should be taken seriously. For them recent terror attacks in the region do not belong to the pristine teachings of the religion and the ideological make up of their organizations. Such an aberration indeed forms an attack on their very *raison d'être*, identity and future.

Unlike Roy¹, Kepel² and Lewis³, who, in their own respective styles and emphasis, point out politicized Islam and its attending crisis in the contemporary Muslim world, Graham Fuller⁴ maintains the diversity of Islamist movements. The majority of these, he insists, continue to be moderate and even resolute to cooperate in the struggle for democracy.

In a powerful thesis of cultural encounters between Islam and the West, Hichem Djaït maintains anxious fears among Muslims about the collapse of their religion have been calmed. "The idea of cultural pluralism, of equal rights to self-development for all societies, ideas now accepted by open-minded people everywhere, allow Muslims to maintain a certain distance from their identity"⁵.

Among modern historians W.C. Smith is the most insistent on the importance of history to Muslims. Islamic history, especially the early part, belonged to them⁶. Optimism to life and to the world thus manifested in the global orientation of Muslim discourse and worldview. Not only did Muslims enjoy universal influence, they also positively looked to the wider world. Interaction and cooperation with the larger entities were launched in the 8th to 10th centuries. On this issue Max Weber has an interesting observation. He points out the major difference between early active worldly orientation of Islam and the latter contemplative Sufism, even though both share a strong universal orientation⁷.

Fazlur Rahman maintains that the inherent and pervasive beauty and strength of Sufi spiritualism must be given a proper place in Islamic domain, namely the *shari'a*⁸. The failure of formally accommodating Sufism had costed Muslims dearly in intellectual and social life.

Marshall Hodgson is consistent in maintaining the brilliant contribution of Islamic civilization to pluralism and universalism. Indeed, the cultural traditions which shouldered Islamic civilization comprised of diverse elements, "by no means restricted to Muslims"⁹.

Taufik Abdullah¹⁰ emphasizes the importance of political structure of various Muslim communities in Southeast Asia to the autonomy of socio-religious movements. In New Order Indonesia, political centralization and the *kratonik* structure of state and religion led toward autonomous growth of Islamic movements in non-political fields. In Malaysia and Brunei the formal link between state and Islam has determined the monopoly, or at least attempt to it, of all religious matters and activities.

It is clear to me that historically Muslims, like many other missionary religionists, have been active and even aggressive participants in the global world¹¹. At times religion and political considerations predominated, yet its success in founding worldview and civilization among diverse peoples and communities show its relevance to social change and accommodation. In Southeast Asia Islam has developed with particularly evolutionary rhythm and adjustment. The two-way process of Islamization or, in the reverse direction, indigenization has left a long term impact on Muslim religiosity in the region. Despite the strength of bureaucratic cooptation, Islam in Southeast Asia has seen much autonomy, thus nurturing non-political institutions of caliber and resilience as well as discourses and ideas relevant to pluralism, civil society and the global world. Today such institutions and ideas pave the way for new movements and updated agendas toward a closer and more harmonious world.

This paper addresses three major foci:

- Islamic discourse and historical experience: what is global about Islam and institutionalization of global orientation in Islamic South East Asia
- Non-state Islam in traditional South East Asia
- Recent Islamic movement.

Why these particular organizations and movements?

- Historically meaningful even if not always typical
- Representative of non-bureaucratic and non-political leaning
- Self-reliance and independent.

1. NON-STATE ISLAM IN TRADITIONAL SEA

The close link between the early phase of Islamization and the formal endorsement of Islam by rulers in the Malay World do not permit total separation between state and Islamic institutions¹². Only with the deeper penetration of Western powers and Western systems of administration, leading to weakening local powers, did autonomous religious institutions and leaders gradually, but vigorously, emerge. From quite early period, for example, the Muslim courts maintained the presence of the *ulama* and the Sufis. A few enclaves of strict religious communities grew led mainly by those potential leaders who found themselves in exile due to various outward reasons. In Java such enclaves became the bastions of autonomous leaders and centers of education of some sort. Unlike those religious functionaries who were associated with now weakened courts, the autonomous scholars needed to have some qualities to command wider following. Interestingly, roads to fame and piety took many difference courses: piety, magic, learning and social role. No ruler of some name ever emerged from among purely learning-oriented scholars in their own bastions. Despite their fame and influence in society, religious scholars remained teachers and local leaders. A few were given power when married to the ruling family.

In this background discussion, I bring up *tariqa* leaders and their institutions as an illustration of the major role of spirituality and globalization in Islamic movement within a traditional context. One of many interpretations concerning the early phase of Islamization in Southeast Asia points to the important role played by the Sufis. Through their tolerance, empathy and patience in dealing with the indigenous population, some of their religious messages went through and accepted by the local population. This was particularly so when it is understood that Sufis were known for their intensive spirituality and noble character, yet remained simple and adaptive to local conditions.

What is particularly relevant to my topic concerns Sufi institutions. The spread of Islam in the Malay world coincided with the emergence of Sufi brotherhood (*tariqa*) which, as Weber maintains¹³, enjoyed universal character and orientation¹⁴. Although for some such institutionalization has been considered the vulgarization of Sufi mystical tradition and

popularization of the refined thought, *tariqa* rapidly developed into a supralocal institution within the Muslim communities worldwide transcending diverse parochial social and political barriers. For quite some time before the 16th century, the Qadiriya *tariqa*, one of the earliest orders, had won adherents in Southeast Asia as can be seen in Hamzah Fansuri's reference around the century. The *tariqa* could be brought to Southeast Asia by pilgrims from the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina and by traders from the Indian Ocean ports. By the period the Qadiriya order won followings in the Middle East and South Asia.

The Qadiriya failed to sustain its spread in Southeast Asia as other more aggressive *tariqas* were introduced after the mid-17th century. Among the widely known *tariqas* in Southeast Asia include Shatariya, Naqshbandiya, and Sammaniya. The spread of these orders followed the same pattern, that is through pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, teachers and adepts introduced these orders throughout the Muslim lands. The Shatariya was introduced to Southeast Asia by a Jawi student from Aceh, 'Abd al-Ra'uf Singkel (d.1693), who had joined study circles in the two holy cities for almost two decades before returning to his homeland in 1661. The Shatariya won some support in Aceh and other places in the island of Sumatra and Java.

The Sammaniya order was introduced to Southeast Asia by Jawi students, especially 'Abd al-Samad Palembang (d. after 1788). He never returned to settle in Southeast Asia, even though his name belongs to one of the greatest older Muslim scholars of the Malay world. The Sammaniya interestingly took roots in the region from 'Abd al-Samad's homeland of Palembang and from there spread to other communities in the archipelago. The Sammaniya won wide support and at times and among some circles increasingly popularized into religious folk performances.

The largest *tariqa* in Southeast Asia, the Naqshbandiya (and its derivative Qadiriya wa-Naqshbandiya) spread among Southeast Asian Muslims due to the intensification of pilgrimage to Mecca after the last quarter of the 19th century. Its spread was facilitated by the Jawi students who returned home or instructed pilgrims during the hajj seasons to the order. One prominent Naqshbandi figure in this period was Ahmad Khatib Sambas (d.1875).

In addition to these three *tariqas*, others have been propagated with some local success.

Unlike the study in the scholarly circles, participation in the *tariqa* did not impose strict intellectual requirements, thus it could attract wider following. Indeed, the *tariqa* opened more opportunities for wider access to more intimate ties and stronger religious brotherhood based on the shared spiritual search and loyalty to *tariqa* leaders. For this reason alone, we see the dual development of the *tariqa* in contemporary Southeast Asia. On the one hand, *tariqas* have lost some segments of their followers in the countryside where more modern facilities for communication and entertainment become easily available. *tariqas* are no longer the only powerful breaker of the monotony of rural setting. On the other hand, among certain segments of urban Muslims, even the secularists and the educated, the *tariqa* offers them with alternatives to drug abuse, anomy, post-power syndrome, urbanization, and diverse psychosomatic problems.

Traditionally *tariqas* performed diverse roles in different Muslim societies, including political legitimacy, magical prowess, political resistance against the colonial powers, socio-economic networking and religio-spiritual brotherhood. What remains crucial in the revival of *tariqa* in Southeast Asia is related to social change, modernization and decline of traditional social arrangements leading to moral and emotional vacuum. Reformed or new *tariqas* have responded to this offering informality, personal acquaintance, and peace to the members.

2. POPULAR MOVEMENT: RELIGION AND SOCIETY IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

Examining current Islamic movements requires some knowledge of their historical backgrounds. Reformism among Muslims in Southeast Asia accompanied scripturalization and modernization. Scripturalization began in earnest with the writings of a few Acehnese scholars from the second half of the 16th century and the return of Southeast Asian students from the centers of Islamic learning in Mecca and Medina and other port cities in the Indian Ocean. The central messages of scripturalization in Southeast Asia focused on return to the pristine teaching of Islam and sticking to Islamic identity. Modernization in the wake of economic, political and administrative

changes resulted in Islamic reformism pursuing some elements of scripturalization and coming up with an emphasis of joining modern trend without compromising Islam. Despite the strong political tone of several early reformist movements, many emphasized the importance of how to live socially and religiously truly Islamic. Not only did the Sarekat Islam emerge in 1912 as a religio-political movement, but other vigorously socio-religious reform movements also emerged, including the Muhammadiyah (MUH) in 1911, followed later in 1926 by the Nahdatul Ulama (NU) as well as such an educational reform of the Pondok Modern Gontor (Gontor) in the same year.

The relevance of Islamic reformism to our discussion comes from its roots and approaches. Beset with major changes regionally and beyond, educated Muslims in Southeast Asia considered the time had come to take modern challenges and opportunities seriously. Better armed with modern disciplines and sophisticated education they regarded what they had inherited in the form of tradition and belief system as strong identity and foundation to participate in newly created opportunities. Yet, they also felt that their practiced religion was not satisfactory, intellectually and socially. Imbued with the Islamic reformism of the period introduced by their brethren in South Asia and the Middle East, a comparable replay of earlier scripturalization waves came to fore. At this juncture of socio-religious change, two important relevant issues manifested in relief: to bring tradition and religion into contact with modernity and at the same time to relate it to universal Islamic interpretation. Indeed, Islamic Southeast Asia has opted to go globalized. Now, let us come closer to these three examples: MUH, NU and Gontor.

In Indonesia, Muslims are conventionally divided into traditionalists and Wahhabi-influenced modernists. For most parts of the 20th century, the former were represented by NU and the latter MUH. NU was perceived as traditionalist, conservative and rural Javanese-based while MUH was regarded as modernist, innovative and urban-based with strong support in the urban centers of Java and in the outer islands of Indonesia.

Born during rapid changing colonial policies, MUH grew with two-pronged approaches. On the one hand, it emphasizes the importance of return to the pristine teaching of Islam through

the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition, getting rid of all superstition and religious accretions. Yet, interestingly, it strongly upholds modernity in social and economic views and actions. Politics per se was handily put aside making it more flexible and less suspect by the colonial authority. These characters successfully led MUH to a religious movement with proven achievements in the fields of social work, education, welfare and health, as can be seen in the mushrooming of MUH orphanages, schools, women mosques, universities and clinics/hospitals throughout Indonesian provinces.

NU emerged with determination to defend the characteristics of the accepted spirituality, lifeway and worldview. Today, NU retains influence within the Indonesian government and society through its accommodationist stance, inclusive approach and the emergence of a younger generation of innovative Islamic thinkers within its intellectual leadership. MUH has become domesticated, with a turning to Sufism while maintaining a commitment to reform within the framework of an essentially secular, multi-religious Indonesian society. Most devout Muslims (*santri*) in Indonesia today are affiliated with either NU or MUH, a significant fact as both organizations are moderate in character¹⁵.

Gontor, formally known as Modern Islamic School, emerged during the time of adjustment and rapid change. This background continues to be influential and inspirational for the institution.

The *élan* of Gontor came from youthful spirit of reform in the face of the deteriorating religious center and degenerating local community in the mid- 1920s. Education was taken as a means to reform and revive the lost vigor of village religiosity and worldly spirit. At the start the program was simple and direct aimed to educate village children and sow new energy and religious understanding for the adult. With the growth of participants and the intellectual sophistication of the Gontor organizers, a new stage of education began. Gontor then launched a more ambitious program of producing modern teachers in religion and society. Its aim was to produce students and teachers with noble character, sound body, broad knowledge and open mind. The major elements of teaching and education came in two major forms concomitantly: in classes and in practice as

teachers and students lived in the campus (*pondok*). Students thus learned and lived 24 hours as adepts and trainees. Strict discipline, the mastering of ethics, languages and diverse branches of knowledge, religious and general, and the nurturing of vision and ambition formed the core of daily training and motivation freed from any political agenda and party affiliation. Gontor insists and maintains its proactive stand toward all shades of political ideologies and parties. "It must stand above all parties and also for all parties"¹⁶. Gontor always emphasizes to its students to uphold honesty, moderation, self-reliance, Islamic brotherhood and liberty during their study and their future career in society.

In today's Indonesia Gontor has shown the relevance of open and liberal education sustaining balance between emphasis on Islamic character and participation in, if not anticipation of, global change.

3. THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION AND THE CONTINUING NEED TO SPIRITUALITY

The popular and mass organizations like MUH and NU often by necessity jumped into unfamiliar terrains or unavoidable stands, including politics and popular demands. Not surprisingly, some segments in the communities felt disappointed and thus opted to return to the pure mission and call for spirituality, pluralism or universalism. Mass movements for them failed to address the basic issues of humanity and their concerns were ignored. They considered themselves now new champions of wider causes. The Aliran, Sisters in Islam and Islam Liberal will be taken as examples of this trend.

If the two mass organizations MUH and NU represent the puritan in religious doctrine/practice and the urbanite in social orientation and the latter the more compromist in doctrine/practice and the bucolic in social orientation, the new groups totally came out of a new global world. Not only have they responded to external global pressures and challenges, but they also protest the slow and at times out of date steps of the mass organizations and even the state.

Aliran or National Consciousness Movement was founded in 1977 in Pinang, Malaysia by a group of diverse concerned individuals coming from multi- ethnic backgrounds. It is clearly and

formally non-Islamic organization. Why do I choose it in discussing Islamic movement? My primary consideration lies with the fact that Aliran accommodates many Muslim figures and also addresses pluralism, universalism and tolerance in the context of Islam, plural society and nation in Malaysia. Aliran is a social movement aims to "raise social consciousness and encourage social action that will lead to social justice"¹⁷. It claims to adhere to eternal universal values in order to realize social justice and humanity. Being a movement concerned with raising consciousness, Aliran has been vigorous in publication and IT production, including its currently struggling on-web magazine. Chandra Muzaffar, a leading founder of Aliran, claims, for example, that "it is possible for us to develop a modern, progressive, and accommodative school of Islam"¹⁸.

Like other women in the region, Muslim women have demanded better treatment and insisted on gender equality. Sisters in Islam (SIS) was founded in 1988 by "a group of Muslim professional women committed to promoting the rights of women within the framework of Islam" (Sisters in Islam 2003). Although the organization is more known for its publication, counseling, protest, demonstration, and training, Sisters in Islam has grown into a movement with quality and weight. It is feminist and at the same time Islamic as can be seen in its emphasis to promote the rights of Muslim women based on the Qur'anic principles of equality, justice, freedom and dignity. These principles then are formulated into objective and programs. Sisters in Islam aims:

- To promote and develop a framework of women's rights in Islam, which takes into consideration women's experiences and realities;
- To eliminate injustice and discrimination against women by changing practices and values that regard women as inferior to men;
- To create public awareness, and reform laws and policies, on issues of equality, justice, freedom, dignity and democracy in Islam.

In addition to dealing with current and diverse issues of emancipation, justice, democracy and equality, SIS has laid programs such as:

- To launch research and interpretation of textual sources of Islam
- To undertake advocacy for policy and law reform
- To encourage awareness raising and public education
- To formulate strategic planning and policy formulation.

In addressing Muslim response to globalization, a few will point out the growth of religious radicalism among Southeast Asian Muslims. Despite the continuing problem and scholarly inadequacy in understanding this issue, it is equally significant that in March 2001 a group of open-minded Muslims launched a movement of liberal thinking, known as *Islam Liberal* in Indonesian.

It is a story about young Muslim intellectuals, many of them coming from traditional, rural-based Islamic backgrounds, fluent in Arabic and well-versed in theological and legal debates, who are currently active in promoting what they call "liberal Islam" (Islam Liberal). They disseminate their ideas via books, syndicated columns, radio talks, public fora, circulars, the internet and socio/politico-religious activism.

Many of these young Muslim intellectuals, most of them not yet in their 40s, began their studies of religion when they studied at Indonesian-style Islamic boarding schools, the traditional *pondok*. According to the well-known journalist-cum-activist Goenawan Mohamad, most of them came from the provinces far away from Jakarta. Only very few of the leading members of the group have ever been to any school in the US or Europe. Older Indonesian Muslim thinkers exert a major influence on them, but paradoxically, it was their lives as students in the *pondok* that gave them the first exposure to the plurality of interpretations in Islam.

Despite its early beginning and amorphism, Islam Liberal has been consistent in propagating openness, ethico-religious spirit, pluralism, democracy, empowerment of the weak and the minorities, religious freedom and secularism. At the level of discourse the group has been aggressive in airing their ideas and visions, even at the bastions and fora of the exclusivists. More interestingly, the group has attracted diverse segments of the community, thus indirectly bring together students and disciples of former rival figures.

In a sense Islam Liberal manifests internal Islamic dynamism, since its emergence has been geared toward balancing, or rather countering, the increasing dominant discourse of fundamentalism and conservatism. Not surprisingly, its expression echoes more closely movement and thought of other religious and cultural traditions than other formal forms of Islam. For example, Islam Liberal upholds Islamic interpretation of democracy which supports and identifies with civic culture, including pluralism, equal opportunity, moderation, trust, tolerance, sense of community.

Reflection and Retrospect: The road and future of Islamic movement in Southeast Asia are not isolated from the wider contexts, Islamically, regionally and globally to mention only the scope and range. Yet it is clear that despite difficulties and mounting internal pressures, Islamic movements have contributed to, within the religious framework, link religion to plural and global entities with all their diversities. The strength of such approach lies with its definite frame and clear/public objectives. At the same time, problems and barriers should not be avoided but rather negotiated; after all; religion, including Islam, can be meaningful to humanity and life in general when it responds to human mind, needs and even dreams.

The diversity of Islamic movement clearly shows that Islam has been understood in a dynamic manner by its adherents, especially those in Southeast Asia. It is true that spirituality oriented social movements in Southeast Asia have competed for support with other movements, including scripturalist-Islamists, yet their emphasis on discourse, idea and concept of society, community and mankind has potential of sustainability and resilience with more concrete results.

The recent assertiveness of more Muslims in Southeast Asia concerning their innovation and uniqueness show the dynamics of their religiosity and spirituality imbedded in the local context and at the same time inspired by Islamic ideas and paradigm, not to mention their pre-occupation with globalization process and challenges.

From the straightforward implementation of conventional and modern ways in education to the radical and liberal approach to Islamic teachings, Southeast Asian Muslims have shown

the relevance of their spiritual precept and experience to create, even if not always materialized, livable and harmonious niche. They are not one, let alone united, but they share spirit and develop vision and agenda for communities and fellow mankind.

Let me share with you my brief reflection:

- In Southeast Asia, where political systems are still evolving and thus unsettled, social movements based on religion or spirituality will continue to offer promises, provide certainty and open opportunities for many segments of society.
- The renewed and intensified globalization allows social movements to respond more effectively and quickly adjusting to new challenges and opportunities than many other movements.
- Dynamism of and social movement among Southeast Asian Muslims must be considered and located within the context of global multiculturalism and "multiple modernities," in an Eisenstadian sense.
- The common emphasis on civility, openness and pluralism among these social movements paves the way for wider and more comprehensive dialogue and cooperation between cultures and nations. Dialogue and exchange cannot be dispensed with. Self-truism and absolutism thus find no place to expand and win global support. Indeed, Islamic concepts of being related, *dhu al-qurba and ta'aruf* ("to relate convivially to others" even in diversity) continue to inspire many Muslim activists for social movement.
- All these movements have emerged in response to challenges and pressing problems. The identification of common problems at the wider global level, including illiteracy, poverty, violence and environmental crises, potentially brings more collaboration for social movements.
- These movements have shown the value and strength of multifaceted approaches in dialogist encounters with others based on internal confidence and optimism. In a sense they pave the way for outward looking, bringing Muslims to the reality of the world outside thus preventing

fundamentalism and conservatism and ending the current tendency "to set apart from the Other." By opening up their own turfs and making gestures for dialogue and cooperation, they indirectly promote the de-demonization of others.

- Two leading Muslim liberal thinkers in Southeast Asia have insisted the only alternative to the increasing popularity of Islamist hardline militancy is to harness the objective Islamic discourse as reference in the people's daily lives and to recreate the conditions in which an open, tolerant and pluralistic society might emerge. At present many social movements, including those listed above, have shown the value and use of such discourse and preconditioning.

I wish this brief discussion serve as an example of what attending to socio- religious and human details can reveal and how it can contribute to the body of knowledge about Southeast Asian Muslims, their social movements and their participation and role in the globalized world.

NOTES

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¹ Roy, O., *The Failure of Political Islam*. London, I.B. Tauris, 1994.

² Kepel, G., "Islam Today: Social and Political Prospects", in Cerutti, F.; Ragionieri, R. (eds.), *Identities and Conflicts: The Mediterranean*. New York, Palgrave, 2001, 161-166.

³ Lewis, B., *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*. New York, Perennial, 2002.

⁴ Fuller, G. E., *The Future of Political Islam*. New York, Palgrave, 2003.

⁵ Djait, H., *Europe and Islam*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985, 5.

⁶ Smith, W.C., *Islam in Modern History*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1957 and *On Understanding Islam*. The Hague, Mouton Publishers, 1981.

⁷ Gerth, H.H.; C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1977, 269, 285.

⁸ Rahman, F., *Islam*. New York, Anchor Books, 1968, 315.

⁹ Hodgson, M.G., *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*. I vol. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1975, 90.

¹⁰ Taufik, A., "Islam di Alam Melayu: Kecenderungan Masa Kini, Tantangan masa Depan." A paper presented at *The International Seminar on Malay Civilization II*, August 15-20, 1989, Kuala Lumpur, 8-9.

¹¹ Since the cases which I employ and refer in this presentation come mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia, it has no claim of universal application, not even regionally. More specifically, Muslim minorities in Southeast Asia need to be addressed separately due to their unique approach and experience to live with the dominant groups and face intensive globalization. In this presentation, thus I have been unable to include them.

¹² Such a pattern of association should not surprise students of early Islamic caliphate when Islam formed the cornerstone of state and government. See Shaban, M. A., *Islamic History: A. d. 600-750*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972.

¹³ Gerth, H.H.; C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber...*, op. cit.

¹⁴ Johns, A., "The Role of Sufism in the Spread of Islam to Malaya and Indonesia". *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, 9 (1961), 143-61.

¹⁵ Desker, B., "Islam and Society in Southeast Asia after September 11". *Working Paper Series No.33*, Singapore, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2002.

¹⁶ Gontor, *Kenang-Kenangan Peringatan Delapan Windu Pondok Modern Gontor, 1926-1990*. Gontor, Darussalam Press, 1991, 23.

¹⁷ *Aliran*, <<http://www.aliran.com/>>.

¹⁸ Noor, F.A., "New voices of Islam". <<http://www.isim.nl>> accessed on December 21, 2003, Leiden, ISIM Publications, 2002, 46.