

MAKING
MODERN
MUSLIMS

THE POLITICS OF
ISLAMIC EDUCATION
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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1

INTRODUCTION

THE POLITICS AND CULTURES OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Since the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the October 2002 Bali bombings in Indonesia, Islamic schools in Southeast Asia have been the focus of international attention. The young men responsible for the Bali attack, in which more than two hundred people died, had been students at an Islamic boarding school in East Java and had ties to the al-Mukmin boarding school in Central Java. Al-Mukmin is the home of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a senior Islamic scholar who is alleged to have been the spiritual leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), an underground organization that has engaged in a campaign of bombing and terror since 2000. In the 1990s, several JI militants had also attended an Islamic boarding school in Malaysia run by Ba'asyir and his colleague, Abdullah Sungkar (now deceased), at a time when both were in self-imposed exile from Indonesia.¹

The JI's campaign was not the only event to raise questions about the political temperament of Southeast Asia's fifty thousand Islamic schools. Since January 2004, Thailand has been rocked by a renewed

cycle of violence between state authorities and the Malay-Muslim population concentrated in the country's south. In 2004, students and teachers at two Islamic schools were accused of staging attacks on Thai government officials. In May 2005, al-Qa'ida documents were found at another school. In June 2007, radical separatists burned down eleven schools in Yala province and executed two female Thai teachers in front of one hundred children playing in the library after lunch.²

The discussion surrounding Islamic schools in the Philippines was no more placid. In 2000, the Muslim insurgency that has raged on and off since the 1970s flared up again after President Joseph Estrada ordered the armed forces to capture the rebel's main camp on the southern island of Mindanao. In addition to creating thousands of Muslim refugees, the assault provoked an unprecedented terrorist campaign in Manila and other Philippine cities. In 2003, the intelligence chief of the Philippines Armed Forces placed much of the blame for the terrorism squarely on Islamic *madrasas* (modern day schools). "[T]hey are teaching the children, while still young, to wage a jihad. They will become the future suicide bombers."³

Cambodia, too, has not escaped the Muslim-school controversy. Between 2002 and 2004, the JI military chief, Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, spent time in that Buddhist-majority country, reportedly visiting Islamic schools. His subsequent capture in Thailand led to additional arrests back in Cambodia at schools funded by a Saudi charity. Cambodian authorities alleged that militants had planned to turn their country into a staging ground for terrorist attacks on Western targets.

In Malaysia in early 2000, finally, armed militants linked to independent Islamic schools launched armed attacks on the national police. Following arrests in August 2001, investigators revealed that the militants had trained in Afghanistan and had returned to Malaysia as part of a campaign to bring the government down.

For a Western public that had long regarded Muslim politics in Southeast Asia as relatively moderate, these reports linking Islamic schools to terrorism caused anxiety and confusion. Policy analysts speculated that Southeast Asia was being transformed into a "second front" in an al-Qa'ida inspired campaign against the West.⁴ Concerns like these were not limited, however, to Western circles. In the Muslim-majority countries of Malaysia and Indonesia, officials intimated

that they too feared that some among their countries' Muslim educators were mixing violent jihadism into the curriculum. In October 2005, a few days after Bali was hit by a second terrorist bombing, the Indonesian vice president, Jusuf Kalla—a Muslim close to Indonesia's mainstream Islamic organizations—blamed the attack on militants from an unnamed Islamic boarding school and warned that the government was going to have to take action against schools promoting “irresponsible” actions. Weeks later, Kalla startled Muslim educators again when he announced that the government was preparing to fingerprint all students in the country's ten thousand-strong Islamic boarding school network (see Chapter 2).⁵

Against this unsettled backdrop, the purpose of this book is to shed light on the varieties and politics of Islamic education in modern Southeast Asia. The contributors aim to provide a sense of just where Islamic education is going by examining where, culturally and politically speaking, it has come from. The book focuses on schools in five countries: the region's two dominant Muslim-majority countries, Malaysia (60% Muslim) and Indonesia (87.8%), and three countries with especially restless Muslim minorities, the Philippines, Thailand, and Cambodia.⁶

The chapters are based on a research project that began in December 2004 and ended in January 2007. The initial research was funded by the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) in Seattle, Washington, a nongovernmental and nonpartisan research center that sponsors academic research on policy-relevant issues in the broader Asian region. During each of the two years of the project, NBR provided the five researchers with funds for research assistants and for a three- to four-week stay in Southeast Asia. All together, some twenty-five researchers were involved in the five-country project on which this book is based. All of the U.S. researchers were recognized Southeast Asia specialists, and all had backgrounds in the study of Islamic education. NBR's support also allowed me as project director to extend a research collaboration I had begun in 2002–2004, with Dr. Azyumardi Azra, then rector, and Dr. Jamhari, director of the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) at Indonesia's flagship Islamic university, the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University. My earlier collaboration with the PPIM, sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts, had sought to map variation in Islamic schooling across eight provinces

in this vast country.⁷ The new project included our collaborating on the conduct of surveys of educators at Indonesia's Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), modern day schools (*madrasas*), and colleges. The surveys were conducted in January 2006 and January 2007.⁸

NBR's aim in supporting this project was to contribute to informed public discussion of Islamic schooling in Southeast Asia. Coming from the fields of education, anthropology, and political science, the contributors shared NBR's interest in bringing public scholarship to bear on the topic of Islamic schooling. But we also felt that it was necessary to situate the research in a cultural and historical framework broader than present-day policy alone. In discussions of the Muslim world since 9/11, there has been a tendency on the part of Western commentators to view events primarily through the optic of their own security concerns. In a world of urgent threats and scarce analytic resources, this bias is understandable enough, and the chapters in this volume do not shy away from policy issues. Nonetheless, the contributors felt that if we allowed Western security concerns to set the entire research agenda we would lose an opportunity to understand the cultural concerns that Muslims themselves bring to their schools. We would also lose sight of the fact that Southeast Asian Muslims have been debating the proper forms of religious education and politics, not since 9/11, but since the late nineteenth century. In that century, much of the world entered what Theodore Zeldin has aptly called the "Age of Education."⁹ Few of the world's peoples have more seriously grappled with the question of exactly what modern education should be than Muslim leaders here in Southeast Asia.

In the remainder of this introduction, then, I want to do three things: provide an overview of the chapters that follow; examine the varieties and genealogies of Islamic schooling in Southeast Asia; and highlight the relationship between Islamic education in Southeast Asia and that in the Middle East. Although comparative research on Islamic education in Southeast Asia has been sparse, examination of the topic offers four benefits. First, it provides a useful vantage point from which to survey the development of Islamic culture and politics across the region and to take the political pulse of both. Second, it provides insights into the changing nature of state-society relations from the late colonial period to today, and the role of public Islam in that relationship. Third, education highlights the astonishing dynamism of

processes of Islamization in this region, which accelerated in the late nineteenth century and continue in diverse forms today. By the end of the twentieth century, religious developments had transformed a world area once known for its pantheistic syncretism into a region where doctrinally normative variants of Islam hold sway.

Fourth and finally, examination of the varieties of Islamic schooling in modern Southeast Asia allows us to appreciate the nature of the struggle for Muslim hearts and minds currently taking place across the region. The struggle has less to do with al-Qa'ida terrorism—a movement that demands everyone's attention at the moment, yes, but one that is so out of step with mainstream Muslim society here that it is bound to fail—than with Muslims' efforts to do what believers in other religious traditions have had to do in the modern era: determine just what is timeless and required in their tradition, and what must be reformed in a world where much that is solid melts into air.

CENTERING ISLAM

In an article published a half-century ago, the celebrated anthropologist of Indonesian Islam, Clifford Geertz, underscored the centrality of religious education in Muslim societies and the centrality of the Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*; also *pondok*, Ind. and Malay, lit. “hut, cottage”) in Muslim Southeast Asia. Using Java as his point of reference, Geertz observed, “There have been *pesantren*-like institutions in Java since the Hindu-Buddhist period (i.e. from the second to about the sixteenth centuries), and most likely even before, for the cluster of student disciples collected around a holy man is a pattern common throughout south and southeast Asia.”¹⁰ With the conversion of growing numbers of people to Islam, Geertz added, “what had been Hindu-Buddhist now became Islamic, a new wine in a very old bottle” (*ibid.*).

As Geertz's remark makes clear, scholars have long suspected that there were continuities between Islamic schools in Southeast Asia and their pre-Islamic predecessors. However, the wine-bottle metaphor leaves unanswered the question of just how much Southeast Asia's Islamic schools actually owe to Middle Eastern precedents, and how much they reflect pre-Islamic legacies. We lack the detailed local histories required to fully answer this question, particularly for the period from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, when Islam first spread

across much of the Malayo-Indonesian archipelago. Since Geertz wrote his article, however, two things have become more apparent: first, the historical development of Islamic schooling in Southeast Asia has stronger parallels with the development of Islamic education in the Middle East than Geertz imagined; and, second, Islamic education in Southeast Asia has for at least two centuries been marked by ceaseless change rather than old-bottle stasis. To appreciate the scale of this change requires that we understand how the advance of religious education in modern Southeast Asia compares with the development of Islamic schooling in the Middle East from earliest times to today.

Learning as Worship

Islam is a religion of the divine word, and religious study has long been regarded as an act of worship in its own right. “The study and transmission of the revealed word of God and the sayings of His prophet, and of the system of law to which the revelation pointed, are the fundamental service God demands of his creatures.”¹¹ For pious individuals, religious study usually begins with learning to read and recite—but not literally understand—the Qur’an. The Qur’an is the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (c. 570–632 C.E.) by way of the Angel Jibriel (Gabriel) between 610 and 632 C.E.¹² Historians of Islam believe that, while the Prophet was still alive, the Qur’an was not written down, but memorized and transmitted orally. Although scholars disagree as to exactly when the Qur’an was finally put into manuscript form, the most widely held view is that the recension took place not long after the death of the Prophet in 632 C.E., at the instruction of the caliphs ‘Umar (634–44) and ‘Uthman (644–56).¹³ It was around this same time that a lightly formalized educational institution appeared on the scene, dedicated to teaching individuals to read and recite the Qur’an.

Across the Muslim world, Qur’anic recitation has remained the model for elementary religious education to this day, including in modern Southeast Asia. In the Middle East, Qur’anic reading and recitation of this sort often take place in a small free-standing school known as the *kuttab* or *maktab*. Although in modern times the *kuttab* has occasionally been freighted with other educational missions (including, in several instances, teaching secular subjects),¹⁴ for the most

part the institution has remained true to its founding mission, serving as a school where youths learn Arabic script so as to read and recite the Qur'an. In modern Southeast Asia, elementary Qur'anic study is carried out in a similar fashion, in activities known as *pengajian Qur'an* (lit. "Qur'anic study").¹⁵ This instruction usually takes place in mosques, prayer houses (*musholla*, *langgar*), or teacher's homes, rather than a special-purpose building. In recent years, too, the religious classes provided by governments in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the southern Philippines have also included elementary Qur'anic instruction.¹⁶

Over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries C.E., the body of knowledge associated with the Islamic tradition became richer and more variegated than that of earlier generations. During these centuries, the hadith, the recorded and verified words and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, were gathered into standardized collections, which eventually became the second foundation on which Islam's authoritative traditions (Sunna) are grounded. The body of scholarship associated with Islam's legal schools (*madhabib*) was also composed during this period, although at first there were many more than the four Sunni schools that exist today (Shi'ism has its own school). The composition and standardization of Muslim jurisprudence (*fiqh*) were all part of broader processes whereby the law came to be more rationalized and systematic and scholars of the law came to play a more central role in religious education and public affairs.¹⁷

The expansion of the religious sciences also meant that the time required to become a learned scholar became greater.¹⁸ During the first part of this two-century period, most study took place in informal learning circles (Ar. *halaq*, sing. *halqa*) that met in homes, bazaar stalls, and, above all, mosques, under the direction of a master scholar (*shaykh*). By the end of the ninth century, however, mosques that provided advanced religious study also began to erect hostels for resident students. Even with this change, however, instruction still took place, not in classrooms, but in informal learning circles under the guidance of an individual scholar.

In the tenth century, a full three centuries after the Qur'an's revelation, some communities went further, establishing the first madrasas, free-standing schools for intermediate and advanced religious learning. The first of these institutions was founded in tenth-century

Khurasan in eastern Iran, but the innovation quickly spread westward into cities and towns in the Arab heartland. By the twelfth century, the madrasa had become “perhaps the most characteristic religious institution of the medieval Near Eastern urban landscape.”¹⁹ By the thirteenth century, the institution had reached Muslim Spain and India.²⁰ In many of these locales, madrasas educated not only religious scholars but much of the local cultural elite, including mathematicians, medical doctors, and astronomers.²¹

During these same first centuries, the madrasa complex gradually assumed a more or less standard form. Most madrasas came to have a mosque, dormitories, and classrooms, as well as a residence for the shaykh-director and a washing area for ablutions prior to prayer. Over time, many madrasas also erected mausoleums for the founding shaykh and his family. On the assumption that in death as in life the *shaykh* could intercede with God and serve as a channel for divine grace (*barakah*), many tombs became the object of religious pilgrimage (*ziyarah*). In traditionalist madrasas in the Middle East or South Asia, and in Southeast Asia’s pondok pesantren, pilgrimage to the shrines of great religious teachers is still common today.²² However, where modern Muslim reformists hold sway the practice is condemned and tomb complexes have been demolished or secularized as archaeological monuments.²³

Not long into the Middle Period in Islamic history (1000–1500 C.E.), the madrasa curriculum had also taken on a more or less familiar form. The larger schools provided instruction in Qur’an recitation (*qira’a*), hadith, Arabic grammar (*nahw*), Qur’anic interpretation (*tafsir*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principles of religion (*usul ad-din*), the sources of the law (*usul al-fiqh*), and didactic theology (*kalam*).

Notwithstanding this standardization, for most of history madrasa curricula continued to vary from school to school and region to region. Indeed, in general, the madrasa was a less formalized and corporate entity than its counterpart in the late medieval West, the university. Madrasas were funded by pious endowments (*waqf*, pl. *awqaf*), which were formally recognized in Islamic law. Its legal standing aside, the premodern madrasa never developed a board of governors, a centrally regulated curriculum, institution-wide examinations, or a corporate identity stronger than its master shaykhs. At its heart, religious learning remained “fundamentally and persistently an informal affair.”²⁴ It was

informal, not in the sense of being casual, but in its being anchored on the student's love and devotion to his teacher, rather than enrollment in a corporate institution. A student—all were male—could study with several teachers and at several different madrasas. His standing in the community of scholars would forever be defined, however, by the reputation of his teacher or teachers, not by a degree he received from some formal institution.

Some medieval madrasas, particularly those in the Islamic northeast (Turkey to India), also provided instruction in nonreligious subjects, including arithmetic, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and poetry. From the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine in the Arab Middle East and northern India were the most sophisticated in the world, and some madrasas excelled in the teaching of these, as they were known, “foreign sciences.” However, the very use of the phrase “foreign sciences” to refer to these disciplines of knowledge was indicative of their precarious standing in the madrasa curriculum. By the end of the Muslim Middle Period, most Middle Eastern madrasas provided little if any instruction in advanced mathematics, astronomy, or medicine.²⁵ Instruction in these fields had migrated out of madrasas into hospitals (long a stronghold of the nonreligious sciences) and the private homes of scholars. In fact, in many Muslim territories advanced instruction in these fields passed away entirely.²⁶

Herein lies one of the great ironies of the Old World's civilizational history. During what was Western Europe's Middle Ages, libraries and madrasas in the Middle East had preserved Greek works in philosophy and natural sciences lost to Christian Europe. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars in Spain and other Muslim lands translated many of these works into Latin. The transfer of the translated classics back to Western Europe sparked a revival of interest in the natural sciences and humanistic philosophy so strong that these subjects were given pride of place in the newly established universities of the West.²⁷ Although earlier preserved and studied by generations of Arab- and Indian-Muslim scholars, the same Greek works were gradually marginalized from most madrasa curricula. Indeed, by the end of the Muslim Middle Ages their place in Middle Eastern education as a whole was greatly diminished.²⁸ Jurisprudence had become the queen of the advanced religious sciences and the

centerpiece of madrasa education. More significant yet, many of the jurists (*fuqaha*) who interpreted God's law had come to view the study of philosophy and the foreign sciences as "useless . . . and disrespectful of religion and law."²⁹ The result was that the philosophy and natural science once so integral to Muslim intellectual life disappeared from many institutions of higher learning, not to be revived until the great educational transformations of the modern era.

Recentering Islam

The evolution of the madrasa curriculum during the Muslim Middle Ages was part of a broader recentering of Islamic knowledge and authority at that time. The recentering had two primary features, each of which anticipated changes in the economy of religious knowledge that were to take place in Southeast Asian Islam several centuries later. First, the rise of madrasas led to a relative standardization and homogenization of the knowledge and texts transmitted in institutions of higher religious learning. This standardization was facilitated by the collection and verification of hadiths; the creation of the main schools of Islamic law; and the repositioning of the law as the most authoritative discipline in advanced institutions of learning. By the fifteenth century, Richard Bulliet's statement about changes in the hadith tradition could be applied to the other core traditions of Islamic knowledge: "The upshot of this process was the development of a homogeneous corpus of authoritative Islamic texts that contributed greatly to a growing uniformity of Islamic belief and practice throughout the vast area in which Muslims lived."³⁰ A similar process of standardization and canonization would take place in Southeast Asia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the rise of new forms of Islamic schooling.

The Middle Ages' recentering had momentous implications, not only for texts and learning, but for religious authority as well. The spread of madrasas and the creation of a canon meant that one's standing among ulama now depended on mastery of key texts under a recognized religious master. In other words, the madrasa and the canon provided clearer criteria for defining just who was and who was not a religious authority. As in all traditions of knowledge, the effort to determine who should be included among the leadership also involved clarifying who was to be excluded. With the rise of ma-

drasas, the grounds for that exclusion became clearer, at least as far as the religious establishment was concerned. "The 'ulama . . . sought to restrict the ability of individuals who possessed only a modicum of intellectual training, or who might even be illiterate, but who nonetheless claimed considerable religious authority among the uneducated masses, to define for their audiences what was properly Islamic."³¹

It goes without saying that this "recentering and homogenization"³² of Islamic knowledge did not apply equally to all forms of learning and to all specialists of religious knowledge. The process of social authorization was most effective at the commanding heights of the Muslim community, among people responsive to madrasa disciplines. It is helpful to remember, however, that until the nineteenth century 98 to 99 percent of the population in the Middle East was illiterate, and most of it was rural.³³ Beyond the ranks of the ulama, then, less standardized streams of religious knowledge continued to flow, and most were considered Islamic by their custodians. Equally important, claimants to these nonstandard forms of esoteric knowledge (Ar. *'ilm*) were often held in high regard by the broader Muslim public.

Thus, for example, even in cities like late-medieval Cairo, well known for its many madrasas, there was no shortage of unconventional religious masters. A colorful case in point was the *shaykh ummi*, an illiterate religious teacher who claimed to obtain his Islamic knowledge, not from texts and gray-bearded scholars, but from visions of the Prophet and the depths of his heart. His religious language was "alien to the discourse of the jurists and the more learned Sufis"³⁴ Not far away in Damascus one encountered similarly unconventional religious figures, like the dervishes who "flouted social and religious norms: dressing in rags or (in some cases) not at all . . . ; deliberately disregarding cultic practices such as prayer; publicly indulging in the use of hashish and other intoxicants, and . . . piercing various bodily parts, including their genitals."³⁵ Notwithstanding the differences of time and space, the parallels between these unusual religious experts and the *dhukuns*, *bomohs*, and shamans of modern Muslim Southeast Asia are striking.

The point of this comparison is that, far more than was once realized by many Western scholars, there are striking parallels between the recentering of religious authority made possible through the development of Islamic education in the medieval Middle East and processes

taking place in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Southeast Asia. For obvious historical reasons, the expansion of religious education and the creation of a public Islamic culture in Southeast Asia lagged well behind that of the Middle East. However, in the nineteenth century, when Southeast Asia was finally drawn into deeper dialogue with global Muslim civilization, the schools that emerged and the cultural processes that unfolded bore a striking resemblance to those seen earlier in the Middle East. In particular, the spread of new forms of religious schooling in Southeast Asia played a central role in the creation of networks and discourses for stipulating in a “disciplined” manner just who was a religious authority and what counted as Islam.³⁶

The early phases of the recentering of Islam in Southeast Asia were not exactly like those in the Muslim Middle East, however, because they were constrained by cultural and political realities peculiar to modern Southeast Asia. These included the late arrival of Islam in the region, the role played by the indigenous state in Islamization, and the shock and awe of a European colonialism even more disruptive in its impact there than in the Middle East.

ISLAMIZATION AND EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Against this Middle Eastern backdrop, one might be tempted to conclude that madrasas were the vehicle that carried Islam to Southeast Asia. After all, from early on Southeast Asian Muslims appeared to engage in elementary Qur’anic study similar to that provided in the Middle Eastern *kuttab*. However, the history of Islam in Southeast Asia argues against such a conclusion. The reason for caution is that, until the nineteenth century, Southeast Asia had no broad-based institutions for intermediate or advanced education in the Islamic sciences comparable to those that had existed in the Middle East for almost a thousand years. To put the matter bluntly, the first centuries of Islamization in Southeast Asia were characterized by a dearth of centers of advanced Islamic learning, the public’s limited familiarity with the details of Islamic law (the *shari’a*) and, a few fervent periods excepted, a socially circumscribed role for the custodians of God’s law, the *ulama*. Notwithstanding the relative poverty of formal educational institutions, early modern Southeast Asia developed an Islamic public culture of a sort. But the key elements in that culture were produced and reproduced through the medium, not of

organized religious schooling, but of religious ritual sponsored in its most exemplary form by sultans and kings.

Islamization's Plural Faces

Arab Muslim merchants had traveled through Southeast Asia on their way to southern China at least since the eighth century. Mass conversion to Islam took place only several centuries later, however, much of it during the period the historian Anthony Reid has aptly called Southeast Asia's "Age of Commerce," from 1450 to 1680.³⁷ During these centuries, conversion followed the trade routes undergirding the commercial boom taking place in this maritime region, with the first large-scale conversions occurring in or around mercantile ports. In this early period, Southeast Asia was still a panoply of Hindu-Buddhist states, island chiefdoms, and tropical forest tribes. The checkered nature of Southeast Asian society, and the fact that Islam did not arrive on the heels of horse-mounted Arab or Turkic armies, guaranteed that conversion to Islam was a patchwork process, occurring swiftly in some areas and slowly or not at all in others. Until the early nineteenth century, centers of advanced religious learning were few, and advanced study in the Islamic sciences played only a marginal role in the Islamization of the populace.

Islam's first centuries in Southeast Asia displayed two features that were to influence the nature of Islam well into the modern era. First, at the towering heights of political society, Islamization assumed a "raja-centric" face, in the sense that rulers were central both to the initial conversion process and to the exemplary public culture constructed in its wake. The annals of Islam's early period in the region abound with accounts of how a dream, cure, or otherwise supernatural event led a local ruler to embrace Islam, typically after encountering a mystical shaykh. After the miracle, the ruler commanded his subjects to accept the new faith as well.³⁸ The ruler's centrality in religious affairs is also seen in his intervention in scholarly disputes.³⁹ Above all else, however, the ruler's pivotal place in Islamic life was expressed in great public ceremonies, which gave visible form to his claim to be the axis, not only of the secular polity, but of the Muslim community as well.

A raja-centric profession of Islam was not something unique to Southeast Asia; in fact, it was typical of the "Persianized monarchies"⁴⁰ found across the Asian-Muslim world from Central Asia and

India to the Malay archipelago. In these societies, “Far from being in ideological conflict with Islam, kingship found new ways to express its transcendence in Islamic terms.”⁴¹ One of these ways was to limit the social spheres to which the shari’a was applied, or to highlight those aspects of the law that buttressed the authority of the ruler.⁴² Another way in which rulers expressed their exemplary religiosity was by sponsoring scholarly learning circles at the court or royal mosque. The importance of these royally sponsored learning circles was heightened by the fact that beyond the palace the infrastructure for advanced religious education was woefully undeveloped. In some places, especially in Java, the resulting imbalance of power between ruler and ulama led to occasional “satirizing of shariah-mindedness.”⁴³ In a few instances the imbalance even led to the violent persecution of ulama imprudent enough to challenge the ruler’s religious and political prerogatives.⁴⁴

The fact that the heights of Islamic culture tended to be raja-centric is not to say, as one used to hear in Southeast Asian studies, that Islam was no more than a “veneer” on an otherwise Hindu-Buddhist substratum. The veneer metaphor overlooks the sociological fact that, unlike in India, where much of the non-Islamic infrastructure survived the Muslim conquests, the temples and monasteries of Hindu-Buddhist worship in island Southeast Asia experienced a near-total collapse in the centuries following local rulers’ conversion to Islam. (Bali was the great exception.) Just prior to the Islamization of its courts in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the kingdoms in Java’s heartland are estimated to have had some two hundred centers of Hindu-Buddhist monasticism and learning. With the notable exception of a small Hindu Javanese enclave in a corner of mountainous East Java,⁴⁵ not one of these institutions survived into the modern era.

Another reason the veneer metaphor is misleading is that it overlooks the fact that, from early on, some among Southeast Asia’s small community of Islamic scholars had ties to a broader Islamic ecumene and were familiar with the standards of religious observance upheld in other Muslim lands. Many in the scholarly community may have been members of Sufi orders, or were independent ulama influenced by Sufi ideas. The more heterodox among these adepts may have had little interest in the shari’a or (more plausibly) understood its meaning in a mystical or analogical manner. However, as Martin van Bruinessen, Th. G. Th. Pigeaud, and Anthony Reid have all demonstrated, there

were legal digests of a more or less orthodox Sunnism from early on in Southeast Asia's Muslim period, and in the seventeenth century rulers in several kingdoms attempted to enforce aspects of the law.⁴⁶

Although there were whirlpools of legal-minded Islam, and the towering heights of public culture were officially Islamic, the broader landscape of knowledge remained variegated, to say the least; popular religious knowledge, in particular, continued to flow through a twisting variety of cultural streams. In some parts of Muslim Southeast Asia, pre-Islamic traditions of exorcism, artistic performance, and spirit cultism survived well into the twentieth century. Court-sponsored rituals of guardian- and ancestral-spirit veneration, like the Malay and Javanese rulers' annual offerings to spirits of the sea, showed that even the exemplary bearers of official Islam were eager to tap this spiritualist well.⁴⁷ In this rich religious landscape, Malay *bomoh* and *pawang*, Javanese *dhukuns*, and southern Sulawesi's transgendered priests (*bissu*) all managed to find a place for themselves.⁴⁸

There was a cultural price to be paid, however, if these non-ulama traditions were to survive. It was that they be identified, not as Hindu or Buddhist or otherwise non-Islamic, but as forms of spiritual knowledge (Ar. *ilm*; Ind. *ilmu*) that in some sense were compatible with or even encompassed by Islam. Although some ritual specialists occasionally transgressed this stipulation, over time the arrangement created a political economy of knowledge quite different from that of Hindus in India or Jews and Christians in Syria after the Muslim conquests. Even after Muslims had captured the commanding political heights, the adherents of these non-Islamic religions were still able to maintain a non-Islamic identity, consolidate what remained of their religious institutions, and continue cultural exchanges with religious fellows beyond their own territory. The custodians of nonstandard esoterica in Muslim Southeast Asia, however, were obliged to downplay or even sever their ties to any broader ecumene, thus becoming just one among the many specialists of occult arts operating in a community called Islamic.⁴⁹

As an infrastructure for reformed Islamic education was put in place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the claim that these non-ulama traditions were actually Islamic was to be put to a new test; growing numbers of popular ritual specialists were to fail. Like their Middle Eastern counterparts a few centuries earlier, Southeast Asian Muslims were about to experience an education-leveraged recentering

of religious knowledge and authority. Ironically, the process in Muslim Southeast Asia was hastened by the advance of Western colonialism.

Colonial Era Recenterings

The fact that the ruler was “was the primary object of loyalty”⁵⁰ and that the landscape was cross-cut by multiple streams of religious knowledge does not mean that no one in Muslim Southeast Asia was familiar with the Islamic sciences and, in particular, Islamic law. Although some Western scholars once believed that in the precolonial era Muslim kingdoms did not have Islamic courts or judges (*qadis*), recent research makes it clear that Islamic judges applying aspects of the shari’a operated for brief periods in early modern Melaka, Aceh, West Java, Brunei, Makassar, and Sulu.⁵¹ In a comprehensive analysis, Anthony Reid has observed that the application of the shari’a peaked in the early seventeenth century, a period that coincided with the acme of state absolutism across the region.⁵² However, as Michael Peletz has recently argued, the fact remains that for the period extending from the coming of Islam to the rise of Western colonialism, most rulers applied the shari’a selectively if at all, and most disputes beyond elite circles were handled by local notables drawing on customary regulations (some of which had Islamic elements) rather than a distinct body of religious law.⁵³

More fundamentally, and again contrary to what specialists of Southeast Asian Islam once believed, a broad network of schools providing advanced learning in jurisprudence and the Islamic canon does not appear to have been solidly in place until well into the nineteenth century. Western scholars of Southeast Asian Islam had once thought otherwise, in part because indigenous manuscripts composed for courtly audiences, like Java’s *Serat Centhini* (written in the early nineteenth century, but based on older materials) and Sunda’s *Sejarah Banten*, make reference to institutions of Islamic learning said to date back to the seventeenth century. An earlier generation of Western scholars took these references as proof that institutions for advanced Islamic learning similar to today’s pondok pesantrens were already widespread in seventeenth-century Southeast Asia.⁵⁴

The weight of evidence today, however, suggests that schools for intermediate-to-advanced Islamic learning began to appear in significant numbers only toward the end of the eighteenth century, and

became widespread only in the final decades of the nineteenth. Indeed, schools for specialized study in the Islamic sciences reached remote corners of Muslim Southeast Asia like the southern Philippines, Cambodia, and Sulawesi even later, in the first half of the twentieth century. Prior to this time, a small number of scholars from these areas may have traveled overseas for study, to other parts of Southeast Asia or the Hijaz in Arabia. But their ability to reshape public religious culture back in their homelands was limited.⁵⁵

Developments in the sultanate of Banten in northwestern Java illustrate how much things changed in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the spread of new and more formally organized religious schools. Along with Aceh, Malacca, Patani, Brunei, and coastal central Java, Banten was long renowned as one of the more comprehensively Islamic of Southeast Asian territories. If one expected any area in Southeast Asia to have had a network of religious schools early on, then, Banten would be such a region. As early as 1638, Banten's ruler acquired the title of Sultan from the Grand Sharif of Mecca, and in the seventeenth century the kingdom imported a qadi-judge from the holy land as well. In a thoughtful and important review, however, Martin van Bruinessen has shown that even in Banten a network of boarding schools (*pesantrens*) for advanced study did not begin to be built until the mid-eighteenth century, and it did not become extensive until a century later. Prior to that time, in-depth religious study was offered only in court and urban settings, usually under the patronage of the ruler. Wandering religious scholars, including itinerant Arab traders, may have also passed through courts and towns and provided occasional instruction in a religious text (*kitab*) or two. For the most part, however, in Banten and other parts of Java, "rural *kiais* [*shaykhs* who direct boarding schools] and *pesantrens* are a relatively recent phenomenon."⁵⁶

Historical data from other self-consciously Islamic parts of Southeast Asia, such as Aceh, West Sumatra, Patani, and South Sulawesi, suggest that in these regions, too, the spread of schools for advanced learning was a modern development. The process probably began in the late eighteenth century in West Sumatra and Patani, and more than a century later in South Sulawesi and Kalimantan. Certainly there were modes of Islamic learning prior to the late eighteenth century, not least of all of a Sufistic and folk-ritualistic sort. No doubt, too,

there may have been Middle Eastern or South Asian scholars who occasionally visited these areas and shared bits of knowledge with local scholars. However, until the modern period, these scholars' impact on public Islamic culture was also limited.⁵⁷

The spread of schools for advanced Islamic learning was finally spurred on by three developments. First, reform movements emphasizing the need to purify Islam of irreligious innovations had gained ground in Arabia and other parts of the Middle East to which Southeast Asian Muslims traveled. Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's reformist jihad in eighteenth-century Arabia was the most influential of these Middle Eastern movements, but it was not the only one.⁵⁸ An efflorescence of reformist scholarship in southern Thailand's Patani district, and the Padri War in West Sumatra, showed that the Arabian winds of religious reform had begun to blow across Southeast Asia.⁵⁹

The second development spurring school development was the greater ease of travel to the Middle East and within Southeast Asia itself as a result of the expansion of European rule in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Already in the 1820s, pilgrimage from Singapore and Malaya to Arabia was on the rise; the flow of pilgrims surged after the opening of the Suez Canal in November 1869.⁶⁰ Although as yet few Philippine or Cambodian Muslims made the journey, pilgrims from Singapore, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and southern Thailand traveled in such large numbers that, in 1885, the Dutch scholar and government officer Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje concluded that Jawa (the name given to Southeast Asians in the Arab lands) formed the single largest community in the holy city.⁶¹ In 1927, 64,000 pilgrims from the Dutch Indies and British Malaya made the hajj, comprising a full 42 percent of the foreign total.

Here, then, was the historical and sociological ground for the establishment of a new network of schools and, with it, a fundamental recentering of Southeast Asian Islam. Whereas, in its first centuries, processes of Islamization in Southeast Asia had been stimulated by contact with Muslims from India, Arabia, and southeastern China, "once significant numbers of Indonesians had started making the pilgrimage...it was predominantly returning pilgrims and students who steered the process."⁶² And they did so typically by establishing religious schools based on prototypes encountered during travel and study in the Middle East.⁶³

The effects of heightened travel to the Middle East were seen not just in education and pilgrimage but in the growth of new print media. In 1884, the Ottoman rulers had established a government press in Mecca that published books in Arabic and in Malay under the supervision of a respected Patani scholar, Ahmad. B. Muhammad Zayn al-Patani.⁶⁴ Combined with new models of religious education to which pilgrims were also exposed in Arabia, these publications had a powerful influence on Islamic education back in the Jawi lands.

The third development fueling the spread of Islamic schooling was the crisis of authority caused by the deepening penetration of colonial rule into Southeast Asian society. In southern Thailand's Malay provinces, the Thai government was ratcheting up its controls over the Muslim population. In the East Indies (today's Indonesia), the Dutch were completing their conquest of the archipelago, often, as in Aceh, through long and bitter military campaigns. In some of these territories, the foreigners' cooptation of native rulers caused a legitimation crisis of such proportions that the popular classes began to look to the newly ascendant ulama rather than to indigenous rulers as champions of native welfare. Thus, for example, the networks provided by boarding schools and Sufi brotherhoods supplied much of the social organization for the peasant rebellion that swept West Java in 1888.⁶⁵

In Cambodia and the Philippines, the situation of the Muslim minority was quiet by comparison with some parts of Southeast Asia, but these regions, too, were about to be shaken by twentieth-century programs of colonialism and nation building. In Malaya, finally, the 1874 Pangkor Engagement between the British and Malay rulers was ostensibly premised on a principle of noninterference in Islamic affairs. Under the terms of the agreement, the British assumed responsibility for the colony's political, economic, and foreign affairs while leaving control of "Malay religion and custom" to the sultans and their regional chiefs. Rather than freezing the status quo, the agreement opened the way to British-sponsored immigration by Chinese and Indians, a development that eventually threatened to make the Muslim Malays a minority in their own lands.⁶⁶

Although the precise course of events varied by country, then, the half-century from 1870 to the 1920s marked a turning point in the recentering of Islamic learning and authority in Southeast Asia. With the qualified exception of the Philippines (which appears never

to have had a pondok tradition and saw the establishment of madrasa day schools only after the Second World War), new religious schools were now being established in the countryside as well as in towns. The schools became one of the nuclei for the pietistic movements that were to sweep Muslim Southeast Asia in the twentieth century. The revitalization was also to lead to the suppression of many of the folk variants of Islam for which Southeast Asia had once been renowned.

The orthodox turn did not do away, however, with divisions in the Muslim community. Across much of the region there was a new and bitter rivalry between “Old Group” (Kaum Tua) traditionalists associated with Islamic boarding schools and “New Group” (Kaum Muda) modernists intent on building madrasas. The contest was to create a political and educational legacy that has endured to this day.

THE ABODE DIVIDED: NEW GROUP AND OLD GROUP ISLAM

The competition between New Group and Old Group Muslims was a Southeast Asian version of a contest that raged in broad expanses of the Muslim world at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. In Southeast Asia, the division was exacerbated by the new political economy of religious culture. The key features of that political economy were rapid urban growth, the appearance of new print technologies, and above all else, the intensified effort to devise an effective Muslim response to the unrelenting advance of Western colonialism.

Islam Detached from Place

New Group reformists tended to live in Southeast Asia’s newly developing urban centers, including Singapore, Penang, Batavia, and the major towns of West Sumatra and Central Java.⁶⁷ By contrast, like the boarding schools they championed, Old Group traditionalists were predominantly rural or suburban residents living in areas not yet drawn into the multiethnic macrocosm emerging at the borders of the colonial economy. From their urban bases, New Group Muslims rallied to a more universal profession of Islam, one relatively “detached from any particular place”⁶⁸ and less closely tied to ethnically defined religious leaderships.

Modern ideas of Islamic reform had become popular among Southeast Asians studying in Mecca in the 1880s and 1890s and in Cairo a

few years later. However, in the Middle East at this time, the Jawi community's debate over reformist ideas had not yet assumed the polarized form it was to take on back in colonial Southeast Asia in the 1910s.⁶⁹ When the rivalry finally reached the archipelago, the major issues over which the two sides argued focused on what counted as true religious knowledge, and how and by whom it was to be transmitted.

Influenced by the ideas of the great Middle Eastern reformists Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897) and his most celebrated disciple, the Egyptian Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), New Group Muslims emphasized the clarity and perfection of the Qur'an and the Sunna, and the need to purge Islamic traditions of all unacceptable innovations (*bid'a*). Among the practices reformists saw as inappropriate were several dear to the hearts of Muslim traditionalists: faithful reliance (*taqlid*) on the study of classical religious texts (*kitab*s); affiliation with an established school of Islamic jurisprudence (*madhab*); the recitation of a catechism (the *talqin*) to the deceased immediately after burial; the utterance of an expression of intent before one's daily prayers; and pilgrimage (*ziyarah*) to the burial sites of Muslim saints.

New Group reformists also differed from Old Group traditionalists on several less doctrinal but still pressing issues. The former were keen on women's education, although this reform was soon adopted by traditionalists in the Dutch Indies and British Malaya (see Chapter 2, this volume). The modernists also promoted the study of science and technology, both of which they saw, not as Western creations, but as products of a human reason whose use God had intended for all humanity. New Group Muslims also made ready use of newspapers and journals, organized themselves into educational and welfare associations on the model of Western citizens, and replaced the traditionalist scholarly costume of sarong and tunic with ties and Western pants. On the vital question of women's dress, the reformists tended to be more conservative than the already modest traditionalists. New Group enthusiasts promoted long-sleeved and more flowing (rather than tight-fitting) tunics, long skirts, and a more encompassing veil.

On matters of local custom, modernists tended to be less tolerant than traditionalists when the custom in question seemed to veer into religious terrains, as with, for example, the long-cherished habit of presenting food offerings to deceased ancestors. Over time, however, Old Group traditionalists came to agree with the New Group reform-

ists on matters of this sort, insisting that folk rituals inconsistent with Islam should be suppressed.⁷⁰ The cumulative effect of both groups' educational activities was the creation of a new idea of what religion and orthodoxy comprise. Rather than a matter of initiatic discipline and ineffable wonder, religion was being redefined as something objective, easily transmitted, clearly separable from local custom, and based on explicit scriptural precedent.⁷¹

The Traditionalist Monopoly Broken

Whatever their differences in matters of doctrine and custom, it was with regard to schools that the competition between New Group and Old Group Muslims became most heated. The observation of the Indonesian historian Taufik Abdullah on the New Group movement in West Sumatra applies equally to other parts of Southeast Asia: "In the long run, the most important aspect of the Islamic modernist movement was its school reform which formed the foundation for a rapid increase of its followers and for continuity in the movement."⁷²

Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century the traditionalists' boarding schools enjoyed a monopoly on advanced Islamic education, the modernists challenged that trust by introducing a new type of religious school, which they referred to by the Arabic word *madrasa*. The first madrasas were established in the 1910s and 1920s in strongholds of New Group reform like Singapore, West Sumatra, and south-central Java. However, by the beginning of the Second World War, madrasas had spread to southern Thailand, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and even (albeit at first unsuccessfully) Cambodia.

Although New Group reformers used the familiar Arabic term, the *madrasa* in modern Southeast Asia differed from the institution of the same name in the Middle East. Although in the Arab-speaking Middle East today the term "madrasa" can be applied to any type of school (including secular ones), in earlier Muslim history it referred to an institution of higher Islamic learning as opposed to schools providing elementary religious instruction, like the *kuttab* used for Qur'anic recitation. By contrast, in twentieth-century Southeast Asia, the term "madrasa" came to refer to, not an institution of advanced Islamic learning, but to Islamic elementary, middle, or high schools that combined general ("secular") education with religious instruction. In addition to these innovations, madrasas differed from Old Group boarding schools by

doing away with learning circles (*halaqah*) with their students huddled on the floor around a religious master. In place of learning circles, madrasas used well-kept classrooms, blackboards, age-graded classes, and examinations. When they first appeared on the Southeast Asian scene in the early 1900s, madrasas were also associated with girls' education, scout clubs, student newspapers, and sports of Western provenance. In Malaya, Indonesia, and southern Thailand, madrasas also led the way in introducing textbooks printed in Roman letters rather than the modified Arabic script known locally as *jawi*.

The most controversial of madrasa innovations was the inclusion of general or "secular" education in the curriculum. New Group reformists claimed that the Old Group's neglect of science, mathematics, and history was one of the causes of the Muslim political decline in the face of Western colonialism. Modernists insisted that the neglect reflected the Old Group's emphasis on "imitation" (*taqlid*) of centuries-old masters rather than the application of independent reasoning (*ijtihad*).

The New Group critique eventually transformed Islamic education across Southeast Asia, even impacting traditionalist institutions. However, its accusation that Old Group schools were stubbornly resistant to change was a misrepresentation of historical reality. As in the case of the education of young women, some Old Group scholars moved quickly to adopt New Group reforms. In the 1920s and 1930s, a few Old Group schools took steps to introduce general education into their curricula, creating a hybrid boarding school that blended religious study with general education. More fundamentally, the New Group's allegation that the Old Group was resistant to change overlooked the fact that, even prior to the New Group's arrival, the traditionalists had been in the throes of educational reforms of their own.

Making Traditionalists Modern

The sacred texts long at the heart of Southeast Asia's pondok and pesantren boarding schools are collectively known as the "yellow books" (*kitab kuning*), because of the color of the paper on which they were written in the late nineteenth century. Most kitabs are commentaries (Ind. *syarah*; Ar. *sharh*), in the local dialect and/or Arabic, on an Arabic text that was itself a commentary or gloss on some older Arabic text. For many years, scholars of Islamic history had assumed that

the *kitab* curriculum in late-twentieth-century boarding schools was identical to that used in the nineteenth century. However, two studies of the *kitab kuning*, the first published in 1886 by the Dutch colonial scholar L. W. C. van den Berg, and the second a pathbreaking work published in 1989 by the Dutch anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen, reveal just how much the curriculum of traditionalist boarding schools has changed.⁷³

Van den Berg's study showed that, although commentaries drawing on the Qur'an and hadith were used in boarding schools, hadith collections were not yet studied in their own right. The absence is surprising, because hadith study has long been part of the core curriculum of institutions of higher religious learning in the Middle East. Equally surprising, in van den Berg's era there was only one *kitab* in the boarding school curriculum dedicated to the exegesis (*tafsir*) of the Qur'an. A century later, based on exhaustive travel to schools across Southeast Asia and the collection of nine hundred textbooks, van Bruinessen was able to demonstrate just how much the boarding school curriculum had changed:

[A] significant change has taken place in the past century. There are no less than ten different Qur'anic commentaries (in Arabic, Malay, Javanese, and Indonesian) in the collection, besides straightforward translations (also called *tafsir*) into Javanese and Sundanese. The number of *hadith* compilations is even more striking. There is almost no *pesantren* now where *hadith* is not taught as a separate subject. The main emphasis in instruction remains, however, on *fiqh*, the Islamic science par excellence. There have been no remarkable changes in the *fiqh* texts studied, but the discipline of *usul al-fiqh* (the foundations or bases of *fiqh*) has been added to the curriculum of many *pesantren*, thereby allowing a more flexible and dynamic view of *fiqh*.⁷⁴

In just one century, then, the study of *kitab* in Southeast Asian boarding schools had been realigned so as to ground the curriculum more firmly on three subjects: Qur'anic interpretation; study of the Traditions of the Prophet (hadith); and *fiqh*, now expanded to include the principles of jurisprudence.⁷⁵ These changes demonstrate that

traditionalist education was anything but static. The changes are also noteworthy for the way in which they brought Islamic education in Southeast Asia into closer alignment with the educational recentering effected by Middle Eastern madrasas several centuries earlier.

THE BOOK CHAPTERS

This, then, is the historical background to the five chapters that follow. Each chapter picks up the school story in the early years of the twentieth century and traces the development of Islamic education to this day. Along the way, each also addresses a host of issues, including the variety of Islamic schools in each country; the message of their educational curriculum regarding citizenship, gender, and pluralism; and the implications of the school system for public culture and politics in contemporary Southeast Asia.

Educational Dynamism in Islamic Indonesia

The situation of Islamic education in Indonesia is arguably the most dynamic in Southeast Asia. The reform of Southeast Asia's kitab kuning curriculum went further in Indonesia than in any other Southeast Asian country. Nowhere, too, was the expansion of Islamic boarding schools at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries more socially momentous. The unhesitant dynamism shown by traditionalist educators ensured that when the New Group reformists arrived on the scene in the 1910s and the 1920s, the traditionalists responded with educational reforms of their own. Although some traditionalist schools kept to a religion-only curriculum, several of the most distinguished, like the famous Tebuireng pesantren in East Java,⁷⁶ moved quickly to integrate general education into their school programs, often by building madrasa on the school complex's grounds. Traditionalists responded to other New Group innovations in an equally bold manner. They established the first boarding schools for girls in the late 1920s,⁷⁷ and a national association of Islamic scholars in 1926. In the 1930s, they lent their support to Indonesia's fledgling nationalist movement, even signaling their preference for Sukarno over his more self-consciously Islamic rivals.⁷⁸

Although, unlike in other parts of Southeast Asia, traditionalists in Indonesia have continued to enjoy broader popular support than their modernist rivals, modernists associated with groups like the Muhammadiyah (estab. 1912) made even more effective use of Western-inspired

styles of association, management, and fund-raising. In the late 1910s, the Muhammadiyah began the patient construction of an institutional network that today comprises thousand of schools, dozens of hospitals, and some 166 faculties of higher education, most of which offer general professional as well as Islamic education.⁷⁹

Political and economic developments in the 1950s and early 1960s gave added impetus to Muslim efforts to expand and modernize their school systems. In the early 1950s, the newly independent republican government embarked on its own school building program, and a degree from government schools quickly became a condition for employment in business and government.⁸⁰ As more Muslim parents opted to place their children in state schools, the Muslim sector's share of total enrollments plummeted. However, both traditionalist and modernist educators responded to the crisis with characteristic vigor, upgrading their commitment to general as well as religious education, and even adding high schools to their educational programs.

In 1975, the Islamic sector's growing involvement in secular education was given added impetus with the signing of a ministerial memorandum stipulating that all students in Muslim schools should receive a general elementary education of at least six years in addition to their religious studies. More generally, the memorandum sought to bring Islamic education up to the same standard as that maintained by nonreligious state schools by allowing students at Muslim schools to enter state colleges if they fulfilled the general-education requirements and passed an entrance examination. To achieve this parity, madrasas had to teach an assortment of required general courses and revise their curriculum so that 70 percent of the instructional day was devoted to general learning and 30 percent to religious.

In these and other ways, the 1975 agreement accelerated the trend of large pesantrens opening madrasas for the provision of general education. The agreement also encouraged madrasas to align their general curriculum with those of state public schools, and led the most prestigious boarding schools to add senior high schools and even college programs to their educational complexes. Meanwhile, since the late 1970s, enrollment in the Islamic educational sector has soared under the twin influences of the Islamic resurgence and the opening of Islamic schools' curricula to general studies. As demonstrated in these and other initiatives, Muslim educators in Indonesia

have taken enormous strides to break down the duality between general and Islamic education.

With regard to politics and public culture, the situation in Indonesia is more mixed. On one hand, the largest Muslim associations and school networks have demonstrated a proud commitment to the ideals of Indonesian nationalism, which are multiethnic and multi-religious in form. During the 1990s, the leaders of Indonesia's two biggest associations, the Nahdlatul Ulama (35 million followers) and Muhammadiyah (25 million), became outspoken supporters of the democracy movement against President Soeharto. Although their current leadership is more conservative, these organizations remain pillars of Indonesian civil society still today. In line with this legacy, most of the country's 47,000 Islamic schools steer clear of direct political involvement, both on principled grounds and for the practical reason that the Muslim community itself does not line up behind any single party or ideology.

As I explain in Chapter 2, however, since the 1990s a small number of Islamic schools have developed qualities similar to what political theorists have recently come to describe as "social movements." Social movement schools aim not only to educate students but to use the networks and social idealism that result from education to build momentum for the transformation of society—as well as, typically, the state. The schools display another key feature highlighted in the literature on social movements. They provide "cultural frames" for diagnosing societal problems, recommend strategies for the problem's solution, and try to rally people to the proposed course of remedial action.

As with the school network now blossoming under the patronage of the moderately Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), many of these social movement schools have been inspired by a jurisprudentially conservative but tactically moderate wing of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Social movement schools of this sort, then, are not politically radical. Most subscribe to the notion that Islam and democracy can be compatible. Although they promote a deeper Islamization of public life, these schools are system-reforming rather than system-upending.

At the margins of the movement school network, however, are a small number of schools opposed to the existing form of the Indonesian state and demanding the formation of a totally different political order.

The ideologies and tactics of these radical schools vary. They range from Saudi-funded Salafiyah schools, which now number some two hundred, to radical modernists like Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's al-Mukmin school in Ngruki, Central Java. What these schools have in common is the conviction that Islamic educators and the Muslim community as a whole must not resign themselves to the political status quo. The discourse these schools enunciate is not merely theoretical. From 1999 to 2003, radical Islamist schools played a central role in the campaign to dispatch *mujahidin* fighters to the Maluku region of eastern Indonesia, where their clashes with (equally violent) Christian gangs resulted in thousands of deaths.

Of Indonesia's 47,000 Islamic schools, antisystemic radicals represent only a tiny percentage of the whole, and, because their school enrollments average much less than their mainstream counterparts, their share of the total Muslim student population is even smaller. The polling data on a thousand educators that I present in Chapter 2 provides another gauge of how unrepresentative the radicals are. The data show that 86 percent of Muslim educators believe that democracy is the best form of government for Indonesia. Equally striking, the educators' support is neither formalistic nor based on a crudely majoritarian understanding of democracy, but extends to subtle civil rights, including support for the equality of all citizens before the law (94.2% support), freedom to join political organizations (82.5%), and legal protections for the media from arbitrary government action (92.8%).

At the same time, however, these survey data, supplemented by some two hundred in-depth interviews, indicate that most educators support the implementation of Islamic law—although precisely what this means is a matter of disagreement. Notwithstanding their stated commitment to democracy, 72.2 percent of the educators believe the state should be based on the Qur'an and Sunna and guided by religious experts; 82.8 percent think the state should work to implement the shari'a. Interestingly, however, when educators go into the polling booth on election day, the majority do not make implementation of the shari'a their first consideration in choosing a party.

These and other data suggest three things: first, that there is a deep reservoir of support for democratic governance among Indonesia's Muslim educators; second, that educators' commitment to the shari'a is almost as strong as that to democracy; and, third, there is

a vast “gray space” of cultural uncertainty, where Muslim educators and the public have yet to resolve just how to balance these two value commitments. A radical fringe in Indonesia may attempt to press their fellows toward a more immediate and totalizing resolution of this tension. But all evidence indicates that the public and educators are wary of anything hinting at extremism and prefer that these questions be resolved peacefully—and democratically.

Malaysia and the “Etatization” of Islamic Education

As described by Richard Kraince in Chapter 3, the situation in Malaysia shows how an Islamic school system initially quite similar to that in Indonesia has over the past century turned into something quite different. In the early twentieth century, Malaysia’s Islamic schools resembled those in Indonesia, in that they were divided between traditionalist-dominated boarding schools (known in the Malaysian setting as *pondok*) and modernist-operated madrasas. But the educational situation was soon to change.

Although by the end of the nineteenth century the British had won control of most of the Malay peninsula, they left intact the regional sultanships that had exercised light-handed authority over much of the Malay population. Although day-to-day religious affairs had long been handled at the regional and village level rather than by rulers or Islamic courts, the British compensated the native sultans for their loss of sovereignty by awarding them responsibility for religious and customary affairs. The result was that, several decades prior to independence in 1957, Malay rulers had begun to develop an extensive administration for religious affairs.⁸¹ At first, the Malay rulers and their administrators tended to side with Old Group traditionalists, at one point even forbidding public teaching on Islam without the sultan’s written approval.⁸²

As Kraince reminds us, opinion in elite Malay circles shifted toward New Group modernists in the aftermath of the First World War.⁸³ By that time, the Malay elite had begun to realize that British education offered greater opportunities than did Islamic schools for social advancement. In addition, one aspect of the religious bureaucracy’s expansion was its appropriation of the local religious alms (*zakat*) on which Islamic boarding schools had heretofore depended. The loss of the *zakat* funds deprived the traditionalists of their economic independence and made

them more wary than their Dutch Indies counterparts of engaging in intellectual and educational reform.

After Malaysian independence in 1957, the madrasa wing of Islamic education held its own, but traditionalist boarding schools continued to decline. Ironically, the pondoks' fate was exacerbated by the national government's policy of mandating religious education in state schools. Chinese, Indian, and Christian Malaysians worried that the growing emphasis on Islamic education in otherwise "secular" schools would heighten ethnoreligious tensions.⁸⁴ Conversely, the insertion of Islamic instruction into public school curricula reassured Malay Muslim parents that public education would not estrange their children from their faith. Seeing that public education was not irreligious, and that state schools provided mobility into the more lucrative sectors of Malaysia's economy, growing numbers of Malay Muslim parents opted to send their children into the state school system.

In the 1990s and 2000s, political divisions within the Malay Muslim community also worked to the disadvantage of independent Islamic schools, now identified in government parlance as "people's religious schools" (SAR, *sekolah agama rakyat*). Rivalry between the dominant party in the ruling coalition, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), and conservative Islamists in the All-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), impacted the SARs negatively, especially after the government realized that many SARs had ties to PAS.⁸⁵ In an effort to undermine the opposition and improve educational opportunities for Muslim students, the federal government encouraged students planning to pursue Islamic studies to do so in institutions that followed a national curriculum and enjoyed federal or state support. Aided by parents' confidence that their children could receive good religious training in state schools, and by students' desire for vocational training, the government's efforts brought about a drastic decline in enrollments in Malaysia's independent Islamic schools.

The decline does not mean that Islamic instruction as a whole has faded from public life. Rather, over the past generation, the state has become the main provider of religious and moral education. Today all students in Malaysia are required to take five hours of classes each week on Islam (if they are Muslim) or moral education (if non-Muslim). Although Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi has used state schools to promote an anti-clash-of-civilizations program known as

“Civilizational Islam” (Islam Hadhari), the religious curriculum is vetted by Muslim scholars with their own ideas about human rights, gender equality, and the shari‘a. As Kraince notes, non-Muslims and pluralist Muslims in groups like the feminist Sisters in Islam⁸⁶ have complained that, notwithstanding Badawi’s impressive efforts, the state’s religious curriculum is quite conservative. Inasmuch as this is the case, public religious developments in Malaysia bear a striking resemblance to those in Egypt. In both countries, the governing elite’s efforts to coopt the Islamist opposition have resulted in the state’s making large portions of the opposition’s conservative religious platform its own.⁸⁷

Islamic Education and Ethnoreligious Polarization in Southern Thailand

Government policies and Islamic schooling in southern Thailand have long resembled those in Malaysia, but, for political reasons, the outcome of their implementation has been entirely different.

As Virginia Matheson and M. B. Hooker have shown, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the province of Patani in southern Thailand was a renowned center of Islamic learning, producing some of Southeast Asia’s most celebrated traditionalist scholars.⁸⁸ As Joseph Liow shows in Chapter 3, the types of Islamic schools found in southern Thailand resembled those in the nearby Malay peninsula. Decades later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the educational scene in southern Thailand also resembled that in Malaya, in that it was buffeted by the rivalry between Old Group traditionalists and New Group modernists. The main difference between Islamic education in these two countries has to do with the fact that in Malaysia Muslims are politically dominant, and Islam has been accorded a privileged place in national politics and culture. In Thailand, by contrast, the Muslim minority confronts a state that is centralizing, Buddhist-dominated, and intent on forging a national culture in which Islam is conspicuous by its absence.

From 1898 on, the educational policies pursued by Thai governments were openly assimilationist with regard to the country’s non-Buddhist minorities, including adherents of traditional religions in northern Thailand as well as the Malay Muslims in the south. Unlike the tribal peoples in northern Thailand, however, the Malay

elite in the south had for several centuries seen itself as part of a broader Islamic ecumene. In the nineteenth century, this rather diffuse religious sensibility was brought into focus by high rates of pilgrimage from Patani to Arabia and the distinguished role of Patani scholars in the holy land. When, in 1921, Thai authorities introduced compulsory education, the Malay population feared that the state schools intended to divert local Muslims from Islam. Most parents boycotted the schools.⁸⁹

In the face of continuing Malay intransigence, in 1961 the government resolved to work with rather than against the Islamic boarding schools. The state's Pondok Educational Improvement Program (PEIP) promised financial assistance to boarding schools that registered with the government, provided instruction in Thai, and adopted elements of the government curriculum. Although four hundred schools registered under the program, another one hundred closed or went underground. Rather than Thai-ifying the boarding schools, the government had unwittingly turned them into, in Liow's apt phrase, a "front line in the contest between Bangkok and the southern provinces."

Notwithstanding these tensions, by the 1970s southern Thailand's Islamic schools were changing in a way that seemed to indicate they might become a bridge between Muslims and the state rather than the front line in a culture war. One consequence of state efforts to bring pondok and madrasa education into alignment with national curricula was that Malay enrollments in national colleges soared. The establishment of two state-assisted Islamic colleges in the south, with plans for a third, was also well received in the Muslim community. The colleges were designed to provide higher education in Islam as well as courses on Islam for non-Muslims, including government officials posted to the south.

Other educational trends, however, showed that education and politics in the Muslim south were being buffeted by less integrative winds. Beginning in the 1980s, growing numbers of students opted to complete their religious education in the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia. According to reports that Islamic leaders provided Liow, today some twenty to forty schools in the south "promulgate Wahhabi teachings." The life history of the Saudi-trained reformist and Yala College rector Ismail Lutfi illustrate that not all of the Saudi-style

Salafis (Islamic reformists who model their efforts on the pious ancestors, i.e., the first three generations of Muslims) are anti-integrationist. Although Saudi trained, Lutfi is a gifted and warm speaker, and advocates a gradualist and contextualist approach to the understanding of Islamic law. But recent events have shown that, hardened by the heavy-handed tactics of the Thai authorities,⁹⁰ a small minority within the Islamic school system has concluded that compromise with the state is no longer an option.

On matters of gender, Liow points out that Saudi-inspired Salafis do not differ greatly from traditionalist scholars or New Group reformists. Although in Indonesia it is not at all unusual to meet traditionalist thinkers and activists who promote gender-equitable interpretations of Islam (although it must be said that even in Indonesia this remains a minority trend, as many boarding schools continue to use kitabs with inegalitarian gender messages),⁹¹ such gender liberalism is virtually unknown in southern Thailand. Scholars of all stripes subscribe to conservative interpretations of women's roles. As in many other Muslim countries, official gender conservatism has not prevented far-reaching changes in women's roles, not least of which regard their participation in education. Indeed, as Liow observes, in modernized Islamic schools female students typically outnumber males.

Another development to which Liow draws our attention is the rapid growth of the Tablighi Jemaah. Founded in India in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Tablighi Jemaah is a pietistic movement of a gently conservative sort that, since the 1960s, has turned itself into one of the largest transnational Islamic movements in the world. Its aims are simple and ostensibly nonpolitical. Tablighis aspire to lead Muslims to a purer profession of their faith by modeling all aspects of their lives on the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.⁹² Of course, where other Muslims disagree on just how this modeling should work, arguments over religious authenticity can quickly turn political. For tactical as well as jurisprudential reasons, however, Tablighis attempt to keep this religious politics clear of the state.

Tablighis first came to Thailand in the 1960s by way of Malaysia. It was only in the 1980s, however, that the movement became a mass-based organization. As in neighboring Cambodia (but not the Malay peninsula, where the movement is primarily a phenomenon of the urban middle class), Tablighi preachers travel so frequently to the

countryside that, as Liow observes, they “visit most, if not all, of the villages in the southern provinces at least once a week, typically approaching every household in the village.” The movement works hard to recruit local leaders and transports the best of them to Pakistan for education. New leaders also receive training in Urdu, the language of global Tablighism. As in Cambodia, which also has a large Tablighi community, the Tablighi advance has raised tempers in other Muslim circles, not least of all among Saudi-oriented Salafis.

In comparison with Malaysia or even Indonesia, then, Islamic education in southern Thailand is in a deeply unsettled state. Tied as its evolution is to political events, its future also remains unclear.⁹³ Fueled by a sense of political disenfranchisement, Malays in Thailand have come to see Islamic schools as both symbols and instruments of resistance to Thai authority. One cannot emphasize too strongly, however, that the schools are not the cause of the political violence afflicting southern Thailand today. Education remains a key instrument in the Malay population’s efforts to maintain a distinct ethnoreligious identity, however, and will be central to any effort to resolve the region’s crisis.

Cambodia: Islamic Education after the Collapse

The situation described by Bjorn Blengslis in Cambodia is arguably one of the most unusual in Muslim Asia. Historically speaking, Cambodia’s small Muslim population was divided between two primary ethnic communities, the Cham (descendants of fifteenth-century immigrants from coastal Vietnam) and the Chvea (descendants of Malay immigrants from Sumatra and the Malay peninsula). There is also a small subgroup of Cham known as the Imam San who see themselves as keepers of ancient (and largely syncretic) rituals, though today they blend this older heritage with more reformed traditions of knowledge. The Imam San are an example of normatively heterodox Muslims, like the abangan in Java during the 1950s or the Wetu Telu of pre-1970s Lombok,⁹⁴ whose numbers in modern times have dwindled in the face of vigorous campaigns of Islamic reform.

As in southern Thailand, a region to which it has long had ties, Islamic schooling in Cambodia underwent far-reaching changes in the first decades of the twentieth century under the influence of Malay preachers from Malaya and southern Thailand. Cambodian Muslims had long had village-based institutions for Qur’anic recitation, but

they lacked schools for intermediate to advanced study in the Islamic sciences. Islamic boarding schools on the model of Malay pondoks were only finally established in the early twentieth century, making the study of kitab kuning texts broadly available for the first time. Tellingly, when engaged in religious study, Cambodian Muslims used Malay, not their own dialects. From the 1930s on, growing numbers of Cambodian Muslims also went to southern Thailand and Malaya to pursue religious studies. By 1940, it is estimated that five hundred Cambodian Muslims had made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

After World War II, returned pilgrims led the way in establishing schools for more advanced religious study. A reformed variant of the Malay boarding school was also established, one that combined intermediate study in the Islamic sciences with fixed curricula and printed books. A few years later, however, the reformed pondoks were themselves challenged by another Malay-inspired innovation: madrasas combining general and religious education. Modeling themselves on New Group (Kaum Tua) reformists in Malaya and southern Thailand, Cambodia's reformists decried the alleged backwardness of their traditionalist rivals as well as the latter's irreligious "innovations." As also in Malaya, the New Group–Old Group rivalry sundered families and communities. Still today, Cambodian Muslims talk about other varieties of Islam through the prism of this early-twentieth-century schism, even where, as with the Tablighis and Saudi-influenced Salafis, the movements in question do not actually fit easily into either camp.

These latter reform movements arrived on the Cambodian scene in the aftermath of the catastrophic destruction of Islamic institutions wrought by Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea (DK, 1975–1979). Some 1.7 million Cambodians died during the DK period, but Cambodia's small Muslim minority was singled out for especially brutal treatment. Only a handful of mosques and a few dozen Islamic scholars survived the era's devastation.

In the aftermath of the DK horrors, the Malaysian government was the first to provide assistance to the traumatized Muslim community, rebuilding schools and mosques, and offering scholarships to promising young students. In 1989, the Tablighi Jemaah arrived as well, launching an ambitious, village-based program for the re-Islamization of Cambodian Muslim society. Yet another example of the growing influence of globalized Muslim movements in Southeast Asia, today

the group's annual meetings attract thousands of Cambodian Muslims as well as hundreds of Tablighis from South Asia and nearby parts of Southeast Asia.

In the mid-1990s, a Kuwait-based Salafiyyah organization also arrived on the Cambodian scene, the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS). Comprised of conservative Salafis active around the Muslim world, the RIHS used development assistance, mosque building, orphanages, and school programs to promote scripturalist piety. The RIHS' vision of Islam is strikingly un-local, premised on, as Blengli puts it, "a version of Islam which is supposed to be un-contaminated by local culture."

In the late 1990s, a Saudi-based Salafiyyah organization also arrived in Cambodia, and it too emphasized a scripturalist approach to Islam. The group was the Umm al-Qura Charitable Organization, the organization shut down by government authorities in 2003 after allegations that it had lent support to terrorists.

Of all these new organizations, the RIHS has had the greatest influence in the educational sphere. It has also been the least hesitant to condemn indigenous Muslim customs, which it sees as un-Islamic. The RIHS' denunciations eventually prompted Cambodia's native Muslim leadership to appeal to the government to take action against it. Faced with the prospect of government censure, the RIHS has toned down its criticisms and encouraged its members to join the government-linked Cambodian People's Party. These accommodations have done little, however, to defuse the simmering tensions in the Muslim community.

Although for the moment the Salafis find themselves at something of a political disadvantage, educationally they have the upper hand. In a pattern without parallel elsewhere in Muslim Southeast Asia, Salafi schools today educate some 50 percent of Cambodian Muslim youth. By appealing to the government for protection, the indigenous Sunni establishment has for the moment slowed Salafi progress. But the future is not likely to diminish the Salafis' determination, or reverse the disastrous decline of traditionalist Islam in Cambodia.

Insurgency and Pragmatism in the Philippines

At first blush, the Philippines is the Southeast Asian country where one would most expect Islamic education to be politicized and radical. After all, the Muslim south of this country has had an on-again,

off-again insurgency for more than thirty years. There are an estimated fifteen thousand Muslim regulars doing battle with government forces, and another hundred thousand trained militia members willing to provide backup to the regulars.⁹⁵ However, as Thomas McKenna and Esmael A. Abdula explain in Chapter 6, all evidence indicates that the conflict in the south has not led to any serious radicalization of Islamic education. On matters of religious schooling, parents and educators alike show a level-headed pragmatism. No less surprising, and again notwithstanding the thirty-year insurgency, no political party or umbrella organization has been able to seize control of the decentralized religious school system. Until the recent establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), Islamic schooling was managed at the local level, and school directors were justly famous for their independent-mindedness.

Until the early twentieth century, the Philippines had no educational institution for intermediate or advanced Islamic learning comparable to the Javanese pesantren or the Malay pondok. What little formal Islamic education there was took place in loosely organized *pandita* schools. In Philippine Muslim languages, *pandita* refers to a ritual specialist who possesses some type of esoteric religious knowledge (*ilmu*; Ar. *ilm*). Not schools in the formal sense of the term, the *pandita* schools were Philippine variations on the learning circles used for elementary Qur'anic recitation across Southeast Asia.⁹⁶ Although a few scholars may have made the trek to Malaya or the Middle East for religious study, their influence after returning was limited, and the southern Philippines remained one of Muslim Southeast Asia's educational backwaters.

After pacifying the Muslim south in the early 1900s at a cost of thousands of native lives,⁹⁷ the Americans established a cooperative relationship with local Muslim big-men (*datus*). The American administration relied on the *datus* to introduce a centralized government administration in the south, something the Philippines' former Spanish rulers had never managed to do. Fearing unrest, the American administration opted to block the establishment of large capitalist plantations in the south. However, the Americans did encourage a movement of Christian Filipino settlers from the impoverished north into the south's lightly populated forest lands. During the American colonial period, the program's impact on the south's Muslims remained

modest. However, under the Philippine Commonwealth (1935) and the postwar Republic (1945) the program altered the demographic balance in Mindanao, the largest of the southern islands, making Muslims a minority in their homeland. The influx of Christian settlers and bosses was to be one of the catalysts for the Muslim separatist movement that flared up in the 1960s and 1970s. The Americans also introduced public education for the Philippine Muslim elite. Contrary to the Dutch policy in the Indies, which sought to reinforce ethnic divisions, the Americans hoped that education would promote a sense of unity among the south's fissiparous ethnic groups and propel them forward to "civilization."⁹⁸

Beginning in the commonwealth period, the Christian-led government resolved to use public education in an even more interventionist manner, promoting a unitary national culture at the expense of the south's Muslim identities. In 1935, President Manuel Quezon declared that "the so-called Moro Problem is a thing of the past" and announced the establishment of educational programs designed to assimilate Muslims into Filipino culture.⁹⁹ Scholarship programs brought elite Muslims to Manila for college, while in the south large numbers of commoner Muslims enrolled in public schools. Owing to their positive experience with American-sponsored schools, Philippine Muslims showed little of the hesitation their counterparts in southern Thailand displayed toward general education. However, political events in the 1960s and 1970s were to reverse this progress toward Muslim-Christian accommodation, culminating in the outbreak of separatist hostilities in 1972.

In 1976, the government of Ferdinand Marcos reached a tentative agreement with the Muslim rebels. The accord gave Muslims the right to set up schools consistent with Muslim values in their own territories; the policy was reaffirmed in the constitutional revisions of 1986 and with the official establishment of the ARMM. For most of this period, however, the violence in the south made implementation of the educational provisions of the accord impossible. Nonetheless, when the conflict began to subside, the ARMM took steps to reinvigorate Islamic education by, among other things, introducing an "integrated" curriculum that combined religious with general education.¹⁰⁰

As McKenna and Abdula show, the Muslim public's interest in reformed Islamic education was a postwar development driven by two

big changes. The first was an economic boom in the south, one result of which was a tendency on the part of elite Muslims to invest some of their wealth in Islamic activities. Growing numbers of Muslims made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Upon returning to the south, many added to their religious luster by building mosques and madrasas. The new madrasas differed from traditional pandita schools in emphasizing the understanding of Arabic rather than simple recitation of the Qur'an. The new schools also stressed the need for a more doctrinally objectified understanding of Islam. Meanwhile, the Muslim elite's interest in promoting Islam also grew as a result of state-sponsored Christian migration to the Muslim south. As the flow of migrants from the Christian north placed them at a demographic and political disadvantage, Muslims responded with a boundary-maintaining assertion of their religious identity.

The second major influence on the postwar surge in Islamic education was the strengthening of ties between the southern Philippines and the Middle East. In 1950, the government of Egypt began to send missionaries trained at al-Azhar University to the Philippines to teach in madrasas funded by local notables. In 1955, the Egyptian government launched a scholarship program to allow local Muslims to study at Cairo's famed al-Azhar; by 1978, two hundred local young men had taken advantage of the program. Most of the program's graduates returned to the Philippines to teach in madrasas. After the 1976 ceasefire agreement, additional aid flowed into the south from Saudi Arabia and Libya. "This new funding," McKenna and Abdula observe, "allowed the Middle East graduates . . . to open madrasas without relying on the patronage of traditional leaders." Although the separatist struggle of the 1970s slowed the pace of madrasa development, eventually hundreds of schools were built. By the mid-1980s, a new class of well-educated reformists had emerged and was challenging local understandings of Islam.

Today, Islamic education in the Muslim south comes in many forms, including weekend supplements for students in public schools, full-time madrasas, and new academies that blend general and religious education. Most students attend community madrasas of the two-day-a-week sort, while attending regular public schools the rest of the week. Even for students who attend full-time Islamic schools, English tracks remain the more popular educational option. As in other parts of Mus-

lim Southeast Asia, another striking development in recent years has been the expansion of Islamic higher education. One more sign of the times, 70–90 percent of the students in these programs are women. Most hope to use their educational training to serve as teachers of Arabic in the government-sponsored Islamic school system.

In all these regards, Islamic education in the Philippines offers a striking example of the flexibility and practicality characteristic of Muslim education in most of Southeast Asia. Parents appreciate Islamic education for its ability to instill piety and a religious identity in an unstable world in which neither can be taken for granted. At the same time, parents want their offspring to acquire marketable skills. Islamic schools aim to strike a balance between these two valued ends. Meanwhile, McKenna and Abdula note, “despite vague claims by the Philippine government and military . . . no direct link has been established between Philippine madrasas and Islamist extremist groups.” They point to the bittersweet irony that Abdulrajak Janjalani, the founder of Abu Sayyaf (the Philippine’s most notorious terrorist group) was “a product of a Jesuit high school, not a madrasa.”

In an educational system notable for its pragmatism, there is still one worrying note. It is that both state schools and Muslim schools in the southern Philippines are mostly silent on matters of religious diversity and interreligious dialogue. As another analyst of Philippine Islamic schools has observed, “The Islamization of education in Muslim Mindanao could reinforce Filipino Muslim bias against their Christian fellow citizens, while the lack of a multicultural education that promotes positive awareness of Islam in the rest of the country fails to address Filipino Christian biases against their Muslim fellow citizens.”¹⁰¹ The challenge of striking a balance between self-affirmation and tolerance of the “other” is one with which Muslims and non-Muslims in other parts of Southeast Asia continue to grapple as well.

CONCLUSION

The studies in this volume point to several conclusions. First, and most generally, Islamic education in these countries is neither unchanging nor backward-looking. On the contrary, it has been in the throes of far-reaching change for more than a century. Unlike their counterparts in the Muslim Middle East, however, at the dawn of the modern era Southeast Asian Muslims did not yet have a network of madrasas in

place for intermediate and advanced religious study. In earlier times, royal courts may have sponsored study circles for some specialized learning, and a few scholars made the trek to Arabia for study. The presence of more or less orthodox legal digests in western portions of the archipelago also indicates that a few scholars had been familiar with portions of the law since at least the seventeenth century.¹⁰² Until the nineteenth century (and even later in some regions), however, popular Islamic culture showed the imprint of raja-centric ceremony and a pantheistic folk Islam more than it did sustained engagement with the Islamic sciences. In this portion of the Muslim world, then, advanced Islamic education and the school-leveraged recentering of Islam have both been recent developments, products of a sustained engagement with a distinctly Muslim modernity.

Public Islamic culture began to change in the first decades of the nineteenth century, as growing numbers of pilgrims from self-consciously Islamic portions of the archipelago like Aceh, West Sumatra, Banten, and Singapore began to make the journey to the holy land. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, the trickle turned into a flood, as steamships speeded the passage to the Middle East and commercial trade and cash crops provided growing numbers of Muslims with disposable income. The new culture of print Islam appeared on the scene during these years, too, as Malay-language presses in Mecca, Cairo, and Istanbul made religious tracts less expensive and more available. By the end of the nineteenth century, printing presses were broadcasting their cultural wares from the archipelago's booming urban centers. The new medium only furthered the progress of a delocalized profession of Islam.

It was here, too, at the interstices of a pluralizing Southeast Asia, that the first generation of modern reformists, the New Group (Kaum Muda) Muslims, arose. The New Group decried traditionalist Islam as corrupt, inauthentic, and out of step with the age. New Groupists called for a return to Islam's sources, the Qur'an and Sunna, and a new spirit of independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) rather than imitation (*taqlid*). The reformers also called for women's education as well as stricter controls on women's dress; a deeper Muslim engagement with modern science; new forms of civic association; and a clearer and more objectified sense of what is and what is not "Islam." In the absence of an Islamic state, and faced with non-Mus-

lim rulers, the institution that was to empower Muslim learning and society was the madrasa, a modern school combining general education with the religious.

Notwithstanding their blanket denunciations of traditionalist learning, the New Group Muslims were not the only agents of religious and educational reform. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, Old Group traditionalists in central and western areas of the archipelago initiated their own educational innovations. They distanced themselves from pantheistic variants of Sufism, adopting a more shari'a-minded mysticism.¹⁰³ With colonialism's advance, they shifted their boarding schools from urban courts to the countryside, and took their message of piety and moral community to rural populations heretofore only vaguely familiar with translocal Islam. By the end of the nineteenth century, Islamic boarding schools had spread across most of Muslim Southeast Asia, with the notable exception of the Philippines, where advanced religious education became widely available only after the Second World War. The new Islamic schools laid the foundation for the twentieth century's great Islamic revival. By the end of that century, the syncretism and pantheistic Sufism for which this region had once been renowned had greatly declined.

The second conclusion that stands out from these studies is that, in addition to showing the effects of pietistic reform, Islamic education in the twentieth century showed the imprint of three uniquely modern influences: the developmentalist state (in both its colonial and postcolonial forms); the capitalist marketplace; and mass education. In the early twentieth century, the state that Muslim educators faced was colonial and non-Muslim. Unlike their counterparts in the Ottoman lands and Iran, but like Muslims in India,¹⁰⁴ then, Southeast Asian Muslims could not look to native rulers for guidance as to how they should build their schools. They turned instead to Middle Eastern countries and to the public and Christian schools introduced by Western colonizers. In Thailand and Cambodia, Muslim educators learned from schools imposed by non-Muslim rulers.

In the postcolonial period, the threat of conversion or colonial exploitation diminished, but the challenge of the state to Islamic education did not. The postcolonial state was a nation-state, premised on the alluring but eminently contestable idea that citizens should share a common culture. To this end, as in other parts of the modern world,¹⁰⁵

the new nation-states used mass education in an effort to create appropriately socialized citizens. This effort challenged Islamic education to its core. The historic mission of Islamic schools had been, not to buttress a developmentalist state, but to create pious and knowledgeable Muslims, with a sense of allegiance to the community of believers (*umma*), however it be defined.

The national school systems introduced by Southeast Asia's post-colonial states adopted varied approaches to the existing network of Islamic schools. Tellingly, however, none at first made a serious effort to draw privately owned Islamic schools into the project of citizen making. Even in Muslim-majority Indonesia and Malaysia, the post-colonial state attempted an end run around Islamic schools, building a state school system in which the terms of the new national culture could be imparted without compromise. In Thailand and the Philippines, Muslims faced, not just an indifferent state, but one intent on using public education to replant the Muslim public's solidarities elsewhere than in the *umma*.

State-based education caused a crisis of Islamic education as great as any experienced in the colonial era. Although madrasas survived, boarding schools in Malaysia fell into steep decline. Even in Indonesia, which had the region's most resilient boarding school system, enrollments at first declined, as parents opted to send their children to public schools. In southern Thailand, the Philippines, and Cambodia, the threat to the Muslim minority led many parents to rally to the defense of Islamic schools. Nonetheless, across Southeast Asia in the 1950s and early 1960s, policy analysts and government officials predicted that it was only a matter of time before Islamic education would decline in the face of a secularist juggernaut.

In most of Muslim Southeast Asia, however, the predicted collapse did not take place. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a resurgence of piety and religious education across the region. The institutional expression of the change varied by country. In Malaysia, private Islamic education declined while Islamic lessons in public schools boomed, to the consternation of the country's non-Muslim minorities. In southern Thailand, Islamic schools reached a tentative agreement with the Thai state, integrating general education into their curriculum. But the achievement was eventually compromised by the south's continuing poverty, the government's heavy-handed repression, and sputtering

violence from an insurgent fringe. In contrast, and notwithstanding a thirty-year insurgency, Muslim parents and educators in the Philippines showed a remarkable pragmatism. Most parents put their children in Islamic schools during weekends, leaving the remainder of the week to public education. The growing number of Middle Eastern-trained teachers did lead to a less accommodating practice of Islam, but one still not prone to absolutist exclusivity.

In Cambodia, the havoc wrought by Revolutionary Kampuchea (1975–1979) delayed the Islamic resurgence; indeed, it almost destroyed the umma. The devastation opened the door to Muslim foreign aid after the RK collapse, some of which encouraged a drift to Saudi-influenced Salafist exclusivity.

In Indonesia, finally, the resurgence created an Islamic educational renaissance, marked by an eager embrace of general education, greater intellectual openness, and Muslim engagements with the ideals of democracy and pluralism. However, the period also witnessed the rise of social-movement rejectionists as well. Though they comprised only a small proportion of the whole, their influence grew to the extent that post-Soeharto politics proved incapable of addressing Indonesia's lingering challenges of poverty, corruption, and social pluralism. Now a decade into the post-Soeharto transition, Indonesia's Islamic educational system is showing signs once more of renewed confidence.

These examples show that Islamic schools across Southeast Asia are varied but, with the qualified exception of Malaysia, share the characteristic of having weathered the postcolonial storm. Often overlooked in discussions of Islamic education, one development more than any other facilitated this success. It was not radical Islamism or an unstinting struggle to implement shari'a. It was something simpler yet, from an epistemological point of view, more momentous: a confidence on the part of Muslim educators and the public that there is no opposition between general and Islamic learning. Here was a transformation that opened Islamic education to a critical engagement with the plural and unstable intellectual horizons of the modern world.

Today the consensus on the wisdom of this opening remains securely in place with regard to primary and secondary education, as evidenced in the enthusiasm of Muslim parents for general as well as religious education. In some segments of Islamic higher education, however, a small but vocal minority insists that, in their current

incarnations, modern science and the humanities are so intrinsically secular as to be incompatible with Islam.¹⁰⁶ Although this is a minority view, it is a vigorously argued one. Its proponents are also able to draw on the resources of well-funded donors in the Middle East to promote their point of view. The issue of the Islamization of the academy will remain a topic of debate for some time to come, and it may become more heated before it cools down.

A third and final conclusion concerns Islamic schools and politics. The dynamism that Muslim educators have shown should dispel once and for all the illusion that the educational mainstream in this region is narrow-minded or absolutist. In Southeast Asia as in most of the Muslim world, Islamic education bears the imprint of an engagement with, not just the sources of Islamic tradition, but the demands and opportunities of the modern age. In its seriousness and versatility, the most apt comparison for Islamic education in Southeast Asia is not medieval scholasticism but Roman Catholic educators' efforts in the twentieth-century United States to respond to a world not entirely of their choosing but in which they were determined to prevail.¹⁰⁷

But one difference, a relative rather than absolute one, remains. It is that, since the late nineteenth century, many among Southeast Asia's Islamic schools have not shied away from but encouraged involvement in politics and public affairs. The tendency should not be exaggerated; nor, least of all, should it be understood as implying an interest in radical politics. There was no lock-step uniformity to this disposition; nor will there be in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, by comparison with their Christian counterparts in the late-modern Western world, Islamic schools in Southeast Asia have shown less hesitation about enjoining participation in politics and public life. We hear in this a perhaps not distant echo of the first principle of Islamic ethics, as affirmed in jurisprudence: that it is the duty of all believers to "command right and forbid wrong" (Ar. *al-amr bi'l-ma'rûf wa'-naby 'an al munkr*).

As the historian Michael Cook has explained, this principle is deeply rooted in Qur'anic tradition. Its political sociology is interesting as well. To quote Cook, the principle implies "that an executive power of the law of God is vested in each and every Muslim." As a result, "the individual believer as such has not only the right, but also the duty, to issue orders pursuant to God's law, and to do what he can to see that they are obeyed."¹⁰⁸ Although its interpretation varies, no principle of

Islamic public ethics is as widely cited as this one. None also better illustrates just why efforts to sell Muslim educators the secular liberal notions of religion and ethics—with their assumption that ethics are above all a private matter—typically meet with unease.

Again, however, Muslim educators' conviction that religious education should be relevant to public affairs is not unique to their tradition;¹⁰⁹ nor has it led to a seamless consensus as to what Muslim politics should be. Though easy to invoke, the principle of commanding right and forbidding wrong is not easy to apply. It is not this search for public relevances, then, that should be a matter of concern when reflecting on the future of Muslim education and politics in Southeast Asia. Rather, it is the tendency of a small fringe to interpret Muslim ethics and knowledge in an exclusive and absolutist way.

Over the long term, the best antidote to this latter challenge will be the one preferred by the great majority of Muslim educators in contemporary Southeast Asia: not repression, but efforts to make existing educational and political institutions operate more openly and vigorously. For the indefinite future, Muslims in this part of the world will continue to debate the proper forms public ethics and politics should take. Muslim schools will be one of the main sites of argument. The paradigmatic institution of our age, however, the school also holds the best promise for a peaceful and pluralist resolution of the debate.

NOTES

1. On the Jemaah Islamiyah, see "Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the 'Ngruki Network' in Indonesia" (Jakarta/Brussels: ICG Indonesia Briefing, August 8, 2002); "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operates" (Jakarta/Brussels: Asia Report No. 43, December 11, 2002); and "Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia: Damaged But Still Dangerous" (Jakarta/Brussels: Asia Report, No. 63, August 26, 2003). On the financing of JI operations, see, Zachary Abuza, *Funding Terrorism in Southeast Asia: The Financial Network of Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah* (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2003).

2. "Thailand: Education in the South Engulfed in Fear: Teachers Targeted in Spiral of Reprisal Killings and Violence" (New York: Internet E-mail Flyer, Human Rights Watch Asia, June 14, 2007).

3. See McKenna, Chapter 6 in this volume. The quote is from "Defense, Deped to Look into *Madrasah's* Alleged Role in Breeding Terrorists," *MindaNews*, vol. 2, no. 40, June 16, 2003.

4. See Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

5. See "Sidik Jari Kalla Menggoyang Pondok" [Kalla's Fingerprints Shake the Islamic Boarding Schools], *Tempo*, December 18, 2005, pp. 38–39.

6. The small kingdom of Brunei on the island of Borneo is also a Muslim-majority state, and Singapore and Burma have small Muslim minorities; Vietnam's is even smaller. Because of limited funds and the intensity of the discussion surrounding Muslim schools in the focus countries, the project was limited to the five cases discussed in this book.

7. See Azyumardi Azara, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa: Muslim Schools and National Ideals in Indonesia," in Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, eds., *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 172–98; and Jajat Burhanudin and Dina Afrianty, eds., *Mencetak Muslim Modern: Peta Pendidikan Islam Indonesia* [Producing Modern Muslims: Mapping Islamic Education in Indonesia] (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2006).

8. Although I touch on the results from the 2006 survey in Chapter 2 of this book, I will provide a fuller discussion of the survey in a later book.

9. See Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848–1945*, vol. 2: *Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

10. Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (January 1960): 228–49 (quotation is from p. 231).

11. Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 5.

12. For thoughtful introductions to the history and interpretation of the Qur'an, see Bruce Lawrence, *The Qur'an: A Biography* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), and Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

13. See Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 29; and Claude Guillot, "Creation of a Fixed Text," in Jane Dammen McAuliffe, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 41–57. For a slightly different chronology, see Jonathan Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 59.

14. This was the case, for example, in late-nineteenth-century Egypt. See Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1998), p. 29.

15. *Pengajian Qur'an* may also refer to less elementary forms of Qur'anic study, where formal methods for interpreting the text are also studied.

16. On the role of the *kuttab* in the Middle East, see Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work*, pp. 27, 36–38, 48; and Dale F. Eickelman, *Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 50. On Qur'anic recitation in Indonesia, see Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Qur'an in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

17. On this process, see Norman Calder, *Studies in Early Islamic Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 164, and Wael B. Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunnī uṣūl al-fiqh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 7–35.

18. Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge*, p. 7; and Marc Gaborieau, "Introduction," in Nicole Grandin and Marc Gaborieau, eds., *Madrasa: La transmission du savoir dans le monde musulman* (Paris: Éditions Arguments, 1997), pp. 1–10.

19. Berkey, *Formation of Islam*, p. 187.

20. See Bulliet, *Islam*, pp. 148–49.

21. The inclusion of medicine and astronomy in the early madrasa curriculum appears to have been more common in the Islamic northeast (Turkey to northern India) than in the Arab Middle East. See Roy Mottahedeh, "The Transmission of Learning: The Role of the Islamic Northeast," in Nicole Grandin and Marc Gaborieau, eds., *Madrasa: La transmission du savoir dans le monde musulman* (Paris: Éditions Arguments, 1997), p. 61; and Said Amir Arjomand, "The Law, Agency, and Policy in Medieval Islamic Society: Development of the Institutions of Learning from the Tenth to the Fifteenth Century," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41, no. 2 (April 1999): 263–93.

22. For comparative studies on saint shrines and pilgrimage, see Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot, eds., *Le culte des saints dans le monde musulman* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1995).

23. On early madrasas and the *ziyarah* complex, see R. Hillenbrand, "Madrasa Architecture," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 5, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), pp. 1136–54. On shayks, pilgrimage, and barakah, see Christopher S. Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyâra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 127–67. On the conflict of interpretations surrounding saint shrines in Southeast Asia, see John R. Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse: Religion and Ritual in Gayo Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 30–31, and Ronald Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad: Negotiating Identity and Modernity in Muslim Java* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), pp. 28–33.

24. Jonathan Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge*, p. 17. The personalized and charismatic bases of traditional education are vividly captured in two anthropological studies: Dale Eickelman's portrait of a Moroccan religious notable in *Knowledge and Power*, pp. 91–98, and, for Java, Lukens-Bull's *A Peaceful Jihad*, pp. 2–5.

25. The situation in Indo-Turko-Persian madrasas could be different, as illustrated in Francis Robinson's *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001), chap. 1.

26. On the place of the foreign sciences in the premodern madrasas, see A. I. Sabra, "The Appropriation and Subsequent Naturalization of Greek Science in Medieval Islam," *History of Science* 25 (1987): 223–43.

27. See David C. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1450* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), esp. pp. 161–213.

28. The decline was relative but not absolute. At some madrasas and at some of the libraries for which the medieval Muslim Middle East was famous, works in the natural sciences and philosophy were still available, and some lawyers, philosophers, and, especially, doctors continued to consult them. See George Madkisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), p. 79; and Toby Huff, *The Rise of Early Modern Science: Islam, China, and The West*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 53, 63, 70.

29. Huff, *Rise of Early Modern Science*, p. 70.

30. Bulliet, *Islam: The View*, p. 21.

31. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam*, p. 229.

32. The phrase is Berkey's, *Formation of Islam*, p. 189.

33. On literacy and formal education in the premodern Middle East, see Carter Vaughn Findley, "Knowledge and Education in the Modern Middle East: A Comparative View," in Georges Sabagh, *The Modern Economic and Social History of the Middle East in Its World Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 130–54.

34. See Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge*, p. 244.

35. See Berkey, *Formation of Islam*, p. 245.

36. The concept of social "disciplining" to which I refer here has affinities with the discussions of rationalization in Max Weber and religion-as-discipline in Talal Asad. See Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1993); on rationalization in Weber, see my "World Building and the Rationality of Conversion," in Robert W. Hefner, ed., *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 3–44.

37. See Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680*, vol. 2: *Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 132.

38. See Anthony Milner, *The Invention of Politics in Colonial Malaya: Contesting Nationalism and the Expansion of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 186; Mark Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), pp. 32–34; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, 2:170–72; and Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Patani* (Bangi, Malaysia: Kebangsaan University Press, 1999), p. 14.

39. A striking example of a ruler's mediation in religious disputes occurred during the debate between Nur al-Din al-Raniri (a native of Gujarat who came to live in Aceh) and followers of the great monist Sufi, Shams al-Din al-Sumatrani, at the court of Sultan Iskandar Thani of Aceh, sometime after 1637. See Peter Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World* (London: Hurst and Company, 2001), p. 123, and S. M. Naguib al-Attas, *A Commentary on the Hujjat al-Siddiq of Nur al-Din al-Raniri* (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture, 1986).

40. Milner, *Invention of Politics*, p. 146. See also his "Islam and the Muslim State," in M. B. Hooker, ed., *Islam in South-East Asia* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983), pp. 23–49; and Woodward, *Islam in Java*, p. 57: "[T]he Indo-Persian systems of northern India provided the models for the Javanese imperial formulation of Islam."

41. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, 2:171.

42. Milner observes wryly that in peninsular Malaya's sultanates, the legal digests begin with, not God's law, but discussions of the sumptuary laws that distinguish among kings, commoners, and slaves. See Milner, *Invention of Politics*, p. 148.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

44. For an infamous example of royal repression of ulama, see Woodward, *Islam in Java*, p. 60, and B. Vlekke, *Nusantara* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), p. 175.

45. See Robert W. Hefner, *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).

46. See Martin van Bruinessen, "Global and Local in Indonesian Islam," *Southeast Asian Studies* (Kyoto) 37:2 (1999): 46–63; Th. G. Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*, vol. 1: *Synopsis of Javanese Literature 900–1900 A.D.* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), pp. 78, 95; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, 2:181–83.

47. On court-sponsored rituals of a strongly syncretic cast, see Stephen C. Headley, *Durga's Mosque: Cosmology, Conversion and Community in Central Javanese Islam* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2004), esp. pp. 282–320; and Woodward, *Islam in Java*, p. 168. On the trials and tribulations of Malay ritual specialists in modern times, see Carol Lader-

man, *Taming the Wind of Desire: Psychology, Medicine, and Aesthetics in Malay Shamanistic Performance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); and Michael G. Peletz, "'Ordinary Muslims' and Muslim Resurgents in Contemporary Malaysia: Notes on an Ambivalent Relationship," in Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvatic, eds., *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia*, pp. 231–73 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), pp. 231–73. For a discussion in a Javanese context, see Robert W. Hefner, "Islamizing Java? Religion and Politics in Rural East Java," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46, no. 3 (August 1987): 533–54.

48. On the *bissu* (a transgendered ritual priest in South Sulawesi), see Sharyn Graham Davies, *Challenging Gender Norms: Five Genders among Bugis of Indonesia* (San José: Wadsworth Publishing, 2006); and Gilbert Hamonic, *Le langage des dieux: Cultes et pouvoirs pré-islamique en Pays Bugis, Célèbes-Sud, Indonésie* (Paris: Éditions CNRS, 1987).

49. For contemporary ethnographic studies of the fate of nonstandard traditions of Islamic knowledge in the face of Islamic reform see, in a Malay setting, Laderman, *Taming the Wind of Desire*; in a Javanese setting, Robert W. Hefner, "The Political Economy of Islamic Conversion in Modern East Java," in William R. Roff, *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning: Comparative Studies of Muslim Discourse* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 53–78; and, among the Sasak of Lombok in Indonesia, Sven Cederroth, *The Spell of the Ancestors and the Power of Mekkah: A Sasak Community on Lombok* (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1981).

50. The phrase is from Milner, "Islam and the Muslim State," p. 31.

51. For a historical review of qadis and the application of Islamic law in precolonial Southeast Asia, see Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia*, 2:142–47, and, for family law, pp. 147–57. On kingship and Islamic law, see Milner, "Islam and the Muslim State," pp. 23–49, esp. 26–29.

52. Reid, *Southeast Asia*, 2:181.

53. See Michael G. Peletz's historical overview of local and qadi justice in the Malay peninsula and Sumatra in *Islamic Modern: Religious Courts and Cultural Politics in Malaysia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 26–38.

54. For a dating of pesantrens back to the seventeenth century, see G. W. J. Drewes, *The Admonitions of Seb Bari* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 11. For a critique of Drewes, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Shari'a court, tarekat and pesantren: Religious Institutions in the Banten Sultanate," in *Archipel* (Paris) 50 (1995): 165–200.

55. A detailed history of Islamic education, Azyumardi Azra's study of Islamic schools in West Sumatra (known locally as *surau*) concludes that the first schools were established in the late seventeenth century. However, Azra underscores that it is not clear that these schools provided intermediate or advanced study. The great wave of school construction, he adds, occurred later, in the aftermath of West Sumatra's Wahhabi-influenced *Padri* war (1803–37). See Azyumardi Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Islam Tradisional dalam Transisi dan Modernisasi* [Surau: Traditional Islamic Education in Transition and Modernization] (Jakarta: Logos, 2003), p. 9.

56. Van Bruinessen, "Shari'a court, tarekat and pesantren," p. 174. S. Soebardi's 1971 study argues that the establishment of pesantrens dedicated to the study of classical religious commentaries (*kitab*s) goes back to the sixteenth century. There is little evidence to suggest, however, that *advanced* religious learning was common at this time. See S. Soebardi, "Santri Religious Elements as Reflected in the Serate Tjentini," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 127, no. 3 (1971): 331–49.

57. A recent study by M. C. Ricklefs provides an excellent overview in a nineteenth-century Javanese setting of the tensions created by the spread of institutions of

formal Islamic learning and a Muslim populace with a less *shari'a*-minded understanding of their faith. See his *Polarising Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions (c. 1830–1930)* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007), esp. pp. 49–83.

58. For a sympathetic portrait of al-Wahhab's life and thought, see Natana J. De-long-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

59. On the Padri movement, see Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784–1847* (London and Malmö: Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph No. 49, Curzon Press, 1983), pp. 161–92. On the Patani reformists, see Virginia Matheson and M. B. Hooker, "Jawi Literature in Patani: The Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition," in *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 61, no. 1 (1988): 1–86.

60. In the 1820s, eight hundred pilgrims left for Arabia from Singapore alone. This was a source of consternation for Christian missionaries, who lamented the growing influence of *hajis* among Malays. See Milner, *Invention of Politics*, p. 159.

61. See C. Snouck Hurgonje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1931), p. 215.

62. Van Bruinessen, "Global and Local," p. 49.

63. This is not to say that the prototypes encountered in the Middle East were exclusively Middle Eastern. Martin van Bruinessen has discovered evidence indicating that another influence on Southeast Asian educators in the late nineteenth century was the Indian-established Sawlatiyya madrasa in Mecca. Endowed by an Indian woman and directed by a renowned anticolonial scholar, Rahmat Allah bin Khalil al-'Uthman, the Sawlatiyya was established in 1874 as a reformed madrasa related to the celebrated Darul 'Ulum school in Deoband, India. At the turn of the century, many Indonesians studied at the school. See van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and *Kitab Kuning*: Maintenance and Continuation of a Tradition of Religious Learning," in Wolfgang Marschall, ed., *Texts from the Islands: Oral and Written Traditions of Indonesia and the Malaya World* (Bern: University of Bern Press, 1994), pp. 121–45.

64. See Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu," in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 146, no 6, 2–3 (1989): 225–269, esp. 230; and Madmarn, *Pondok and Madrasah*, pp. 52–54.

65. See Sartono Kartodirdjo, "Agrarian Radicalism in Java: Its Setting and Development," in Claire Holt, ed., *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 71–125; and *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course and Sequel* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).

66. Michael G. Peletz, *Islamic Modern: Religious Courts and Cultural Politics in Malaysia* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 30.

67. For a portrait of one such center, see William R. Roff, "The Malayo-Muslim World of Singapore at the Close of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 1 (1964): 75–90.

68. I owe this phrase to John Bowen; see *Muslims through Discourse*, p. 33.

69. In the 1890s, Ahmad Khatib al-Minankabawi, the grandson of an Hijazi immigrant to West Sumatra, was a leading figure in the Jawi community in Mecca. During his long years of residence, Khatib was a vociferous critic of both colonialism and Minangkabau customary law. Khatib influenced a generation of students who, on their return to Southeast Asia, assumed seats on opposite sides of the New-Group and Old-Group debate. As Michael Laffan has shown, in the 1890s the Meccan Jawi community was not yet polarized along these lines. Compare Michael Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood*

and *Colonial Indonesia: The Umma below the Winds* (London and New York: Routledge-Curzon, 2003), pp. 106–13, with William R. Roff, “Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920’s,” *Indonesia* 9 (April 1970): 73–87.

70. The reformist viewpoint on ancestral offerings is summarized in Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse*, p. 31; and Peletz, *Islamic Modern*, p. 54.

71. On the Kaum Muda vs. Kaum Tua controversy in late colonial Malaya, see William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 56–90; on the conflict in Negeri Sembilan, Malaya, see Peletz, *Islamic Modern*, pp. 53–55; and in the Gayo highlands of Sumatra, see Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse*, pp. 11–16, 22–35. For a reassessment of the opposition in Indonesian today, see Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, pp. 7–8, 14–16.

72. Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra (1927–1933)* (Ithaca, NY: Monograph Series, Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1971), p. 55.

73. See L. W. C. van den Berg, “Het Mohammedaansche godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de daarbij gebruikt Arabische Boeken,” *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land-, En Volkenkunde* 31 (1886): 519–55; and Martin van Bruinessen, “Kitab Kuning,”

74. Van Bruinessen, “Kitab Kuning,” p. 229.

75. On kitab kuning in contemporary Java, see also Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, pp. 57–58.

76. On Tebuireng, see Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, pp. 25–45; and Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *The Pesantren Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java* (Tempe: Monograph Series, Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1999), pp. 77–115.

77. The exact date for the establishment of a boarding school for young women in Indonesia is a matter of disagreement. In the late 1920s, several schools established classes for females, apparently without yet setting up a freestanding boarding school. At the very latest, then, in 1930 the Pesantren Denanyar in Jombang established a fully separate boarding school for girls. For an overview of this history and of pesantren curricular lessons on proper women’s behavior, see Eka Srimulyani, “Muslim Women and Education in Indonesia: The *Pondok Pesantren Experience*,” in *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 27, no. 1 (March 2007): 85–99.

78. On the traditionalists’ early enthusiasm for nationalism, see André Feillard, *Islam et armée dans l’Indonésie contemporaine* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1995), p. 35.

79. See Muhammad Fuad, “Islam, Modernity, and Muhammadiyah’s Educational Program,” in *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (2004), pp. 400–414.

80. See Dhofier, *Pesantren Tradition*, p. 22.

81. See Roff, *Origins of Malay Nationalism*, pp. 67–70.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

83. For a historical study that resonates with Chapter 3 (Kraince), see Rosnani Hasim, *Educational Dualism in Malaysia: Implications for Theory and Practice* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1996).

84. See Susan Ackerman and Raymond L. M. Lee, *Heaven in Transition: Non-Muslim Religious Innovation and Ethnic Identity in Malaysia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1988).

85. See Farish A. Noor’s superlative *Islam Embedded: The Historical Development of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party PAS (1951–2003)*, vol. 1 (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 2004), pp. 28–96.

86. Peletz, *Islamic Modern*, pp. 124, 188, and Zainah Anwar, "What Islam, Whose Islam? Sisters in Islam and the Struggle for Women's Rights," in Robert W. Hefner, ed., *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), pp. 227–52.

87. On Egypt, see Carrie Wickham Rosefsky, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

88. See Matheson and Hooker, "Jawi Literature"; and Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Patani*, pp. 17–40.

89. On this history, see also Raymond Scupin, "Muslim Accommodation in Thai Society," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 2 (1998): 229–58.

90. For an overview of the escalating violence in the 2000s, see Duncan McCargo, ed., *Rethinking Thailand's Southern Violence* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007).

91. In particular, many pesantrens still use a text written by Imam Nawawi al-Bantani (1818–1897), a famous West Javanese scholar who taught in Mecca's al-Haram mosque in the late nineteenth century, that details the (many) circumstances under which husbands may beat their wives. See Srimulyani, "Muslim Women and Education in Indonesia," p. 94. On Nawawi's place in Indonesian Islamic scholarship, see Abd. Rachman, "Nawawi al-Bantani: An Intellectual Master of the Pesantren Tradition," *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 3, no. 3 (1996): 81–114. For a broader and compelling overview of women's roles in Islamic education and organizations in Indonesia, see Pieterella van Doorn-Harder, *Women Shaping Islam: Reading the Qur'an in Indonesia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

92. On Tablighis in Thailand, see also Alexander Horstmann, "The Inculturation of a Transnational Islamic Missionary Movement: Tablighi Jamaat al-Dawa and Muslim Society in Southern Thailand," *Sojourn* 22, no. 1 (2007): 107–30. For comparative studies of the movement, see Muhammad Khalid Masud, ed., *Travellers in Faith: Studies of the Tablighi Jama'at as a Transnational Islamic Movement for Faith Renewal* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

93. See McCargo, *Rethinking Thailand's Southern Violence*.

94. On the Wetu Telu, see Sven Cederroth, *The Spell of the Ancestors and the Power of Mekkah: A Sasak Community on Lombok* (Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1981).

95. See International Crisis Group, "Southern Philippines Backgrounder: Terrorism and the Peace Process," ICG Asia Report No. 80 (Singapore and Brussels: ICG, 13 July 2004).

96. On the *pandita* schools, see McKenna and Abdula (Chap. 6, this vol.), and Jeffrey Ayala Milligan, "Reclaiming an Ideal: The Islamization of Education in the Southern Philippines," *Comparative Education Review* 50, no. 9 (2006): 430. On Spanish and American policies toward Muslims in the south, see Thomas M. McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1998).

97. See McKenna, *Muslim Rulers*, p. 89, and Peter Gordon Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: the American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899–1920* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), p. 164.

98. See McKenna, *Muslim Rulers*, pp. 104–8.

99. See Milligan, "Reclaiming an Ideal," p. 414.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 415.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 429.

102. For an analysis of the jurisprudential texts used in Southeast Asia, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and *Kitab Kuning*: Maintenance and Continuation of a

Tradition of Religious Learning,” in Wolfgang Marschall, ed., *Texts from the Islands: Oral and Written Traditions of Indonesia and the Malaya World* (Bern: University of Bern Press, 1994), pp. 121–45.

103. On the reformist nature of nineteenth-century Sufi orders in Indonesia, see Martin van Bruinessen, “The Origins and Development of Sufi Orders (*tarekat*) in Southeast Asia,” *Studia Islamika—Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (1994): 1–23.

104. On the role of Islamic schools in facilitating independent Muslim action without the support of the state, see Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 9.

105. On mass education for nation making, see Byron K. Marshall, *Learning to Be Modern: Japanese Political Discourse on Education* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), and Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), pp. 303–38.

106. For one such critique, see Adian Husaini, *Hegemoni Kristen-Barat Dalam Studi Islam di Perguruan Tinggi* [Western-Christian Hegemony in the Study of Islam in Higher Education] (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2006). On the Islamization-of-knowledge movement, see Mona Abaza, *Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt: Shifting Worlds* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 77–87.

107. On the Catholic engagement, see Philip Gleason, *Contending with Modernity: Catholic Higher Education in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

108. Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 9.

109. A point highlighted in José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), and Nancy L. Rosenblum, ed., *Questions of Citizenship and Demands of Faith: Religious Accommodation in Pluralist Democracies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).