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THE GLOBAL SIXTIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Indonesia and Malaysia

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In Western societies in general and in secular, liberal democracies in particular, the terms "1968" and "the sixties" are frequently associated with a strong student movement and a liberalization of various behavioral norms and conventions. The student-power movement of the late 1960s articulated a range of demands, among them peace in Vietnam, an end to alleged imperialism by certain Western powers, and the liberation from moral constraints as summed up in the slogan "make love not war." While acknowledging the important role of student and New Left movements during the period known as the "global sixties" in the West, it remains to be questioned if such movements emerged all over the globe. It may additionally be asked if there were other ideological and/or social movements that exerted an influence on major cultural changes during the era less well known than those associated with the sixties in the West. In what follows, I focus on developments in two Southeast Asian states with Muslim-majority populations, Indonesia and Malaysia, and trace the late sixties and seventies as a period of considerable social change there. The movements that became influential in these two countries are different from the ones in the West. They can hardly be characterized as New Left movements, although their political orientation was anti-establishment in a way similar to that of their counterparts in other world regions. Their actions were, in most cases, directed against authoritarian if not dictatorial rule.

The focus of the following reflections is on the significance and meaning of religiously inclined movements in the two countries. By looking at religion as a mobilizing factor in the struggle for political change, I argue that "Islamic resurgence" movements of the sixties and seventies in Indonesia and Malaysia had a similar impact on their societies and politics as the "1968" and New Left movements had in Western countries. From a social science perspective, the wave of Islamic resurgence formed a huge transnational and transregional social movement; it can be analyzed with social movement theories and methodologies. From the perspective of global politics, the various currents of this movement across the globe have influenced world politics beside or underneath the dominant bipolar ideological East-West confrontation. In formal Western politics, it was only with the Iranian revolution of 1979 that the magnetism of religious ideals became recognized as a political force. Ayatollah Khomeini's revolutionary movement was one major outcome of a reassertion of religious principles for the pursuit of political ends. It had various nonrevolutionary yet culturally and politically important precursors in different parts of the world—among them Southeast Asia.

The chapter is structured into four sections. It begins with a broader—world political—perspective in order to embed the developments in Indonesia and Malaysia in the setting of what may be called the international politics of Islamic revival. The second and third sections are devoted to the two countries of interest, Indonesia and Malaysia. The final section sums up the reflections of the preceding ones and addresses the central issue of Islamic resurgence and revival in the 1960s and 1970s as a *Zeitgeist*-driven movement displaying features similar to its sixties counterparts in the secular world.

The broader perspective

Perceptions of the post-colonial political world order were dominated by the image of a bipolar structure—East versus West, or communism/socialism versus capitalism. The confrontation of these poles shaped the lens through which international relations were looked at. While the Non-Aligned Movement was established in 1961 with the explicit message that its member states would not side with one or the other ideological camp, many nation-states did not hesitate to adopt the concepts and practices of either socialism or capitalism. Nationalism accompanied the struggle to sustain (regained) independence, even though the notion of the "nation" was not always confined to the geographical borders of nation-states. Arab communities in the post-colonial era, for instance, championed Gamal Abdul Nasser's ideas of pan-Arabism and a United Arab Republic. When this endeavor failed, some Arab states introduced their own version of socialism (e.g., Iraq). The polarization of East and West rendered such developments matters of great concern to both ideological camps. Even before the Vietnam War epitomized Western fears of communism's spread, the US had been keeping a watchful eye on Southeast Asia. Indonesia was a crucial case in this regard, whereas Malaysia had expressed strong anti-communist sentiments ever since its independence in 1957.

In both academic and public discourse of the time, questions of political-systemic and regime change were in the foreground: How do states transform to democracies—if they do at all—and how can such transitions be promoted (e.g., by development assistance)? What the Western academic discourse was only partially cognizant of is that, apart from the ideological poles of left-right and East-West, there were transnational and transregional movements in active pursuit of the Islamization of their societies—making religious values rather than right or left ideologies central to the resistance to their respective (authoritarian) regimes. While the Muslim Brotherhood (اخوان المسلمين, *Ikhwân al-Muslimîn*) was regarded as a fundamentalist faith-based political group in Egypt, where it would oppose the widely respected Anwar al-Sadat, international branches of the *Ikhwân* gained respect among fellow Muslim activists in other countries as allies in the anti-authoritarian struggle. But such movements' and activists' struggle against authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in the wider Muslim world did not figure prominently in Western political discourse.

From the perspective of Muslim nations, the landscape of international relations looked quite different from how it was discussed in leading Western journals like *Foreign Affairs* or *International Politics*. During the 1960s and 1970s, path-breaking events influenced politics in virtually all Muslim societies around the world. While the defeat of the Arab forces in the 1967 war against Israel was a major setback for many people's hopes and aspirations in the Arab world, the Iranian revolution symbolized a "victory of Islam" with global resonance. Both the defeat of 1967 and the Iranian revolution inspired a popular reassertion of Islamic religious identity, which frequently translated into political demands. The epistemological project of an "Islamization of knowledge" in the 1970s gained mileage among Muslim intellectuals in various countries, most notably Malaysia, parts of the US, and Pakistan (Derichs 2017: 33–94).

The transregional relations that had been established among students, civil society activists, and scholars since the 1960s often coalesced in academic, social, and political institutions (formal as well as informal) and expressions of an explicitly religious identity. I focus on developments of these kinds in the context of Indonesia and Malaysia below.

Islamic resurgence movements formed one side of the coin in the Muslim world of the 1960s and 1970s. During the same period, New Left movements also spread and attracted considerable followings. The mid-1960s to mid-1970s was a vital and pivotal period for the Arab New Left (Hilal and Hermann 2014; Ismael 1976), as well as for radical Islamic movements like the Muslim Brotherhood. In Southeast Asia, the political landscape looked particularly fragmented, given the heterogeneity of cultures, religions, and economic and political systems in the region. East and Southeast Asia had never experienced identity-shaping turning points that affected the whole region such as 1967 had in the Arab world. Neither was there a shared medium of communication and ethnic affinity comparable to the Arabic language and ethnicity that might have bolstered an "Asian" identity. That left an opening for Arabic New Left movements to reach out across the region and leave a strong imprint on its politics and intellectual culture. As Tareq Ismael observed:

> The New Arab Left emerged visibly during the months following the June 1967 War. This emergence was merely a *crystallization* of the political, ideological, and organizational unrest that the various existing political organizations had been experiencing since the early sixties. The whole spectrum of parties and intellectuals identify June 1967 as the most important turning point of Arab politics and thought in modern history.
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> *(1976: 101, emphasis in original)*

Although the situation was quite different in East and Southeast Asia, war and conflict were also frequent in this region in those years—particularly in Southeast Asia, where the so-called Cold War felt not cold but extremely hot (Thomas 2007: 57). China under Mao Zedong, North Korea under Kim Il Sung, the Vietcong in Vietnam, and the Indonesian Communist Party during Sukarno's presidency (1945–67) absorbed the bulk of international attention. With the Chinese revolution leading one of the most populous states in the world to embrace a communist system, Western governments organized to prevent a "domino effect" of more and more states "falling" for their ideological foe. The West's preoccupation with thwarting the rise of communist-leaning, left-wing movements within its own borders as well as in other parts of the world meant that relatively scant attention was paid to the transnational and transregional currents of Islamic resurgence.

It is astonishing that scholarship on the Arab and Asian Islamic movements and their broader transnational and transregional dynamics of mutual fertilization is still scarce. The same is true of studies that link the proliferation of New Left movements in the two regions with those of an explicitly Islamic provenance (e.g., the emergence of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine with the proliferation of the Muslim Brotherhood after Sayyid Qutb's execution in 1966). In Indonesia and Malaysia, the domestic left-wing movements were severely persecuted by the respective regimes in the 1960s (Wieringa 2002; Zahari 2001), with a brutal crackdown taking place in Indonesia in 1965. What emerged in the wake of the substantial decimation of the political left—virtual extinction, in Indonesia's case—was the growth of Islamic movements in the two countries, both on and off campus. Although the developments in Indonesia and Malaysia differ considerably from one another, during the ten-year period beginning in 1965 there was an ever more visible articulation of Muslim identities in culture, society, economy, and politics. Transnational and transregional linkages between religious activists, organizations,

and influential individuals were facilitated by various means of exchange, including student mobility to educational institutions in the Middle East. The ensuing Islamic resurgence movements in Malaysia and Indonesia can thus be considered a social movement phenomenon that brought about as much change to society as their sixties' counterparts in the Western world.

Indonesia

Indonesia is not only a Muslim-majority country but also one with a substantial communist legacy. Indonesia's "1968" took place in 1965, when the military began a purge that virtually extinguished members and supporters of the hitherto very popular Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) from the national political map, undermining President Sukarno's authority, and ultimately leading to his deposal in 1967. The atrocities committed by the military marked a critical juncture and the beginning of significant political and social change in Indonesia. The purge erased not only a core segment of the country's intellectual elite, but also wiped out progressive groups such as the popular women's organization Gerwani. Members of the movement were arrested, imprisoned, raped, and tortured (Keller 2015). What followed was a complete reversion toward a traditional gender ideology that relegated women's societal functions to that of good mothers and obedient wives—a social construction of womanhood called "state *ibuism*" (Suryakusuma 1988). Sukarno, both the godfather of the Non-Aligned Movement and an ally of the PKI during his later years in office, had shown little sympathy for political demands from religious actors. While he had accepted that the constitution of 1945 would list belief in one God as the first of five principles (called *Pancasila*) on which the constitution rests, he had rejected the demand to subject all Indonesian Muslims to *shari'a* law. In 1965, after an attempted coup supposedly orchestrated by the PKI, the military took advantage of the commitment to Islam of almost 90 percent of the population and accused those associated with the PKI and Gerwani of being anti-religious and hence a threat to the nation. However, all activities that might be construed as "political Islam" were strictly banned. The state decreed that Islamic organizations were allowed as long as they practiced "cultural Islam," that is, as long as religious conviction did not translate into political action. Resistance to the subsequent dictatorial New Order regime of general turned president Suharto (1967–98) could thus be articulated only in "non-political" guises or carried out by more or less illegal means.

Religious assertion in general and the practice of "cultural Islam" in particular, served the re-creation of social cohesion after the disruptive events of 1965. The country's two biggest Islamic mass organizations embraced the mainstream of Muslim believers: Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, with a membership of approximately 60 million) and Muhammadiyah (with an estimated membership of 30 million), which dominate the Muslim landscape in Indonesia to the present day. These two and a couple of other popular Muslim organizations founded political parties only after the fall of Suharto in 1998. Masyumi, an older political party with an explicit Islamic platform, had already been banned by Sukarno in 1960. Under Suharto's New Order, four Islamic parties were formally allowed to run for seats in the national parliament. They were, however, forced to merge into one party in 1973 and were never free to express any opposition to the ruling powers.[1] The ban on political activity in the name of Islam lasted well into the 1980s, but in the meantime the global wave of Islamic resurgence and faith-based resistance to authoritarian rule had nonetheless made its way to Indonesia.

In the Muslim-majority population, a revitalized orientation toward religious values and principles was fostered by missionary or *dakwah* (from the Arabic دعوة, "call" [to Islam]) groups. As in neighboring Malaysia, they mobilized increasing numbers of followers, male and female,

Figure 31.1 Muslim students march in Jakarta, demanding that the Communist Party be banned following an aborted coup, 1965 (photo by Carol Goldstein/Keystone/Getty Images)

in the late 1960s and the decades that followed. *Dakwah* took various forms. At the center of most activities was the demand for personal piety, *sharî'a*-compliant behavior (e.g., observing what is forbidden [*haram*] and what is allowed [*halâl*]), the cultivation of purity, and the practice of Islamic teaching. *Dakwah* teachings stress that Islam provides guidance for life, including all human needs, both spiritual and worldly. To those who include politics as an integral part of social organization, Islam "is law, civilization and culture, political system and governance" (Machmudi 2008: 66). Following the principles of Islam means to accept that Islam is an encompassing, fulfilling way of life.

After the party was banned, former Masyumi activists established the Indonesian Council for Islamic Dakwah (Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia, DDII), which criticized the government in Friday sermons and attracted a mass audience to its religious gatherings (Machmudi 2008: 87). Other activists organized in student and youth groups such as the Islamic University Students Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, HMI) or its high school wing, the Indonesian Islamic Students (Pelajar Islam Indonesia, PII).[2] Several *dakwah* groups hosted transnationally connected Muslim activists who had been directly inspired by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.[3] Visits to Egypt and studies at Middle Eastern universities provided opportunities to meet members of the Brotherhood and access to the writings of influential ideological leaders like Sayyid Qutb. It is hard to establish firm numbers concerning the size of youth groups, campus organizations, and other politically inclined Islamic activist groups. But it appears that, similar to the situation in European countries during this period, leading educational institutions such as big universities in the major cities were central sites for mobilization. The dozen or so State Institutes of Islamic Studies (Institut Agama Islam Negeri, IAIN) and the Bandung College of Technology were also hotspots of Islamic activism. Daromir Rudnyckyj's study of a celebrated *dakwah* teacher underscores the importance of individual "role models" for the mobilization of faith-based activism across the country. His story of Imaduddin Abdulrahim, an electrical engineering professor at Bandung College, illustrates the trajectory of Islamization in Indonesia. The college's campus mosque, where he taught, was a magnet for Indonesian

Figure 31.2 Students demonstrating in front of the Bogor Palace with signs calling for the arrest of President Sukarno, October 24, 1966 (photo by Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone via Getty Images)

university students in the 1970s. "Muslim students came from across the archipelago for short, intensive courses dedicated to religious study," Rudnyckyj relates. "The movement spread in rhizomatic fashion across the archipelago after students who had come to the Salman mosque returned to their campuses to disseminate the religious lessons that they had been exposed to in Bandung" (Rudnyckyj 2010: 57; see also Rosyad 2006). Imaduddin, who had studied Islam privately, also developed transnational and transregional connections. He had befriended Anwar Ibrahim, the leader of the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement, and invited him to Indonesia in 1967. Both Imaduddin and Anwar sought to expose the linkage between Islamic principles, economic practice, and ethics—pertaining to the shop floor as well as to corporate management. Rudnyckyj argues that the movement which Imaduddin engendered "was the bellwether of a broader transformation in the role of Islam in Indonesian public life . . . historically significant because it marked a change in the way in which Islam was viewed by middle-class Indonesians" (2010: 59).

Although concrete data are lacking, the accepted view is that the "purifying" Islamic resurgence movements were particularly strong on Indonesian campuses in the 1970s and 1980s. But since political Islam was harshly repressed under the dictatorial rule of Suharto's New Order until the late 1980s, all their activities had to take place clandestinely and often illegally. It was far too dangerous for *dakwah* activists critical of the regime to express their opposition openly in mosques or schools. In Imaduddin's mosque movement, religious principles were framed in economic ethics, provoking less suspicion among the state's security forces. Trying to escape close surveillance, the political Islamic groups on school campuses—they were present at secular universities, as well as religious ones—felt compelled to operate in small circles (حلقة, *halaqah*). Their manuals and ideological study programs mainly derived from Muslim Brotherhood writings that had been translated into Indonesian. The political strategies of the Brotherhood in Egypt matched the situation in Indonesia perfectly. Just like their fellows overseas, activists in

Indonesia had to cope with an utterly authoritarian environment. The only funding they could rely on, apart from what the global Muslim Brotherhood could provide, came from Saudi Arabia and Iran—the two regional powers contesting for influence in the Muslim world.

Both the semi-legal campus *dakwah* groups and the legally operating mass organizations NU and Muhammadiyah secured strong followings and filled the ideational and emotional vacuum that the tragedy of 1965 had left. As Machmudi recalls, "At the very least, the role of Muslims within the system during that regime had the effect of increasing the development of Islam at the grassroots level and in some areas of state structure" (2008: 69).

Robert Hefner echoes this perspective in regard to rural Java (Indonesia's biggest and most inhabited island) after the purge, finding that despite the numerous anti-Islamic initiatives of the Sukarno period, "the majority of Javanists still strongly identify with Islam as an index of ethnic and national identity, and most have always been unwilling to take the radical step of repudiating Islam" (1987: 543).[4]

Islamic resurgence as an international trend therefore found fertile ground in the archipelago. Albeit in a different form than in neighboring Malaysia, an Islamization of work and life swiftly proceeded. To foster national identity, religious instruction was made a mandatory subject in secular schools beginning in 1967. This official endorsement of (cultural) religious affirmation made it easier for student *dakwah* groups to penetrate the secular campuses, though the risks remained considerable. Moreover, they had to compete with state-sponsored *dakwah* groups who were increasingly sent out in the 1970s to promote religious values (Hefner 1987: 546). Nonetheless, Machmudi considers the clandestinely operating university circles the predecessors of "the most successful Islamization processes on secular campuses" of later decades (2008: 112). At some schools, highly motivated students organized study groups and clubs to address their fellow students' spiritual needs.

Suharto's fierce containment of Islamic political activity, on the one hand, and the fostering of cultural-religious sentiments, on the other, had significant consequences. As described by Joseph C. Liow (2016), it helped in "catalysing a vibrant Islamic intellectual milieu as Islamic social movements moved underground and into the campuses." The political repression of anything that might threaten the authority of the president, the ruling party, or the military thus engendered a strong countereffect. Under the surface of a depoliticized Muslim population, a faith-based student movement aligned itself transnationally with religious actors elsewhere. Influential Muslim intellectuals enjoyed more credibility among the general public than did the ever more corrupt regime. Missionary *dakwah* activities that aimed to improve people's understanding of how to practice Islam mushroomed across the country.

By the latter half of the 1980s, Suharto, with a shrinking base of support, concluded that he could no longer neglect the majority's desire for religion to play a bigger role in the running of the country. The founding of the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia, ICMI) in 1990 symbolically reflected the president's giving in to the fact that people's religious identity had to be catered to not only in the realm of culture and education but also in politics. The emergence of the ICMI came as a surprise to many Western observers, but most Muslims in Indonesia had already seen that Suharto had begun to strategically employ expressions of religious commitment (e.g., performing the pilgrimage to Mecca) as well as to make accommodating gestures toward the increasingly self-assured Muslim middle-class community. Hefner writes that many ICMI "members declared quite openly that the organization's primary purpose [was] to promote the Islamization of Indonesian state and society" (1997: 75).

The groundwork laid for this Islamization by Islamic mass organizations, *dakwah* movements, student groups, and post-1965 intellectual currents proved successful over time. In daily life,

Islamization has manifested in highly visible form through an increasing commercialization, commodification, and aestheticization of Islam. In many sectors of the economy, from the fashion industry to medical care, food production, banking, and tourism, the observation of Islamic norms and principles is paramount. It now matters whether a famous designer item is *halâl* or not, if medical treatment can be sought from doctors trained in *tibb nabawî* ("medicine of the Prophet"), or if the *hajj* pilgrim can afford to throw a party or function for friends and family before leaving for Mecca. Travel agencies promote pilgrimages (*umrah*) with celebrities, and the female community of the *hijabers* (women who don the veil in fashionable styles) is known for its young designers of high-end Muslim fashion (Derichs 2016).

Malaysia

In 1960, three years after it achieved independence, the population of Malaysia was roughly one-eleventh of Indonesia's (8 million versus 88 million) (World Bank n.d.). At approximately 60 percent in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a large (and steadily growing) Muslim community in Malaysia, but still far from Indonesia's 88 percent Muslim majority. However, the wave of Islamic resurgence affected Malaysian politics much more intensely. A peculiar characteristic of Malaysia is that the country's constitution stipulates that all ethnic Malays are Muslims. Non-Malays are free to choose their faith, but ethnic Malays have no choice but to confess to Islam. All Malaysian Muslims are subject to Islamic laws and jurisdiction.

Post-independence Malaysia had a society with an ethnically delicate constellation. In 1963, Malaya (now West Malaysia) entered into a new Malaysian Federation with two former British crown colonies on the island of Borneo (now East Malaysia) and Singapore, with its ethnic Chinese majority. In the Federation overall, ethnic Chinese made up more than one-third of the population. Many Malays viewed Malaysians of ethnic Chinese origin with suspicion, in particular because of their potential allegiance with China's ruling communists. Ethnic Chinese were discriminated against based on stereotypical anti-communist narratives and the belief that Malaysia should never have a "Chinese" majority, fueling tensions that led to the expulsion of Singapore from the Federation in 1965.

In West Malaysia, where the majority of the population lives, the sultans who rule the federal states have the authority to govern Islamic affairs. There is no requirement that the states, their sultans, or their '*ulamâ*' (علماء, religious scholars) follow the religious policies that have been formulated by the federal Department for the Advancement of Islam (Martinez 2002: 477). The fact that religious jurisdiction and the enactment of Islamic laws rests with regional and not central authorities allows for considerable variation in lawmaking. It was, for instance, at times much easier for Muslim men to marry a second wife when they were registered in a state where the marriage law was comparatively lax. This situation led women's movements to call for reforms of the country's Islamic family law. What principles must be observed by Muslims and what rights non-Muslims may enjoy have become crucial questions and topics of fierce political debate. The fact that religion in general and Islam in particular play an extremely important role in contemporary Malaysia is rooted in events almost fifty years old.

Following the elections of 1969, race riots swept through Malaysia. The clashes between mainly Malaysians of ethnic Chinese and ethnic Malay backgrounds caused a great number of injuries and deaths. Although it cannot be compared in any way to the massacres of 1965 in Indonesia, "May 1969" left a scar in the collective memory of the nation; the date connotes a trauma and a tragedy the reoccurrence of which is to be avoided at all costs. Ever since May 1969, any activity that might disrupt the delicate ethnic balance has been immediately prohibited. Ensuing outbreaks of unrest, partly based in leftist opposition to the government, were

Figure 31.3 Troops of the Malay Royal Regiment patrol the damaged and littered streets of Kuala Lumpur's Chinatown, following days of clashes between ethnic Chinese and ethnic Malay mobs that left 100 persons dead, May 17, 1969 (Bettmann/Getty)

quashed. By the mid-1970s, it was official policy to gear all political activities toward nation building and crack down on those who would not comply.

This policy ultimately had an impact on students' on-campus activities. The reinforcement of the University and University Colleges Act (UUCA) in 1974, writes Meredith Weiss, "allowed for rapid expansion of higher education, transformed mechanisms for campus management and control, and eviscerated the student Left" (2011: 129). And it created space for another orientation that would have had a considerable effect on society and politics in the decades to come. "As the period [of unrest] drew to a close in Malaysia in 1974, the first seeds of the soon-massive Islamic revival sprouted in the substrate of a newly subdued polity and campus" (Ibid.). While the post-1969 era is predominantly associated with a New Economic Policy (NEP) that improved conditions for ethnic Malays, the NEP went hand in hand with the mobilization of a national social movement for *dakwah* and religious purification. University students and youth organizations were in the forefront of this movement. In contrast to their peers in Indonesia, Malaysian students could organize and mobilize more openly, although the enactment of the UUCA restricted political campus activism. The official policy of raising the economic status of ethnic Malays translated into concrete privileges for the community. Enrollment in public universities, for instance, was subjected to a quota system to give ethnic Malays and those from indigenous communities better access to higher education. This quota system was of particular benefit to children from Malay families with rural backgrounds. Many graduates from the tertiary institutions that were established in the 1970s were thus first-generation students.

The Islamic Youth Movement (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia, ABIM) became a central player in *dakwah* activities and political reform during this period. The movement's demands for political reform were cloaked in calls for the country's moral and ethical renewal through faith. ABIM was initially aligned with the opposition Islamic Party of Malaysia (Parti Islam se-Malaysia, PAS). PAS could operate freely—again in contrast to Indonesia, where parties with explicitly Islamic manifestos were prohibited under Suharto's New Order. PAS's agenda

to bring religion into the heart of politics appealed to the Muslim youth movement, and it seemed like a natural partner for ABIM. When, however, the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) recruited the movement's charismatic leader, Anwar Ibrahim, as a member in 1982, ABIM-style Islamization became part of the official political agenda.

Dakwah activities accelerated throughout the 1970s and spread across the country, despite the relative dearth of universities at the time compared to Indonesia. Apart from the University of Malaya, an independent national university since 1962, and Science University Malaysia, established in 1969, there were three public universities founded in the 1970s. A couple of polytechnics and private colleges accompanied them. Yet for the comparatively small country, the moves made to expand tertiary education were considerable.[5] The Malaysian government was open-minded toward political Islamic activism after the race riots and actively promoted its own version of Islamization cum modernization, though Islamic organizations were certainly discouraged from voicing too much criticism of the status quo in the political arena. The setting in which they operated was authoritarian, albeit not as harsh as in neighboring Indonesia. The government neither distanced itself from Islamic activism for political ends nor was there any edict to confine Islamic activism to "cultural" expressions. The alliance between Islamic activists and the opposition PAS was probably a strong incentive for UMNO to attend to Muslims' concerns and tolerate most religious student and youth initiatives.

The public pressure exerted on the government by Islamic resurgence movements became a meaningful force during the 1970s. The government responded to this development by co-optation. UMNO's recruitment of ABIM leader Anwar engendered a major shift of the main currents of the *dakwah* movement toward a friendlier stance vis-à-vis the ruling regime. From the early 1980s onward, *dakwah* on Malaysian campuses was an integral element of the state's agenda of Islamic religious revival.

Malaysia's *dakwah* movement also enjoyed external linkages. In the wake of Anwar's visit to Indonesia in 1967, described in the section above, an important connection in the 1970s was formed with Indonesian *dakwah* groups. Mutual invitations of leading activists were arranged, stimulating cross-border networking. Influences from Arab countries, Iran, and India did not figure too prominently in the Malaysian Islamic resurgence landscape (Shamsul 1983: 401), with one exception—the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood's international branches had by then established close ties to Southeast Asian Muslim activist groups. The notion of trans- and international solidarity among Islamic *dakwah*, resurgence, reformist, and revival groups was advocated on campuses and in the wider Muslim civil society. Moreover, ABIM sent some of its members to Indonesia, where they received training and linked up with the influential Muslim Students Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, HMI). The Malaysian counterpart of HMI, the Islamic Student Society (Persatuan Mahasiswa Islam, PMI), arranged solidarity events like public demonstrations in support of Muslim fellow students in other countries who had been attacked or persecuted (e.g., in the southern part of neighboring Thailand) (Weiss 2011: 166ff.). The deaths of Muslims in international conflicts such as the Arab-Israeli Yom Kippur War of 1973 and the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979 triggered a host of solidarity activism in both Malaysia and Indonesia. The shared sense of having to defend one's faith-based concerns brought about a type of international solidarity similar to that aroused by the revolutionary left in other parts of the world during those years.

In the wake of the *dakwah* movement of the 1970s, Islamization formed a substantial part of the Malaysian government's modernization agenda and its developmentalist orientation (Stark 1999). Anwar Ibrahim rose to prominence in UMNO and gradually assumed political positions that were crucial for the consolidation of Islamic thought and principles in the country's educational sector. Since it lacked huge Islamic mass organizations like Indonesia's NU and

Muhammadiyah, which were able to establish their own educational institutions from primary to tertiary level, religious schools were organized differently in Malaysia.

A transnational and transregional intellectual project called the "Islamization of knowledge" played a pivotal role in the establishment of Islamic research centers and eventually the International Islamic University (1983). In Malaysia, the central figures of this initiative in the 1970s were Ismail Al-Faruqi from the US and Malaysian scholar Naguib Al-Attas. Al-Faruqi had set up the International Institute of Islamic Thought in Herdon, Virginia, followed by a branch institution in Malaysia. Al-Attas founded the Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization in Malaysia. The two scholars, who had met at the World Conference on Muslim Education in Mecca in 1977, eventually entered into severe intellectual conflict. Nonetheless, the Islamization of knowledge was widely adopted among government officials. In a broader perspective, the Islamization of knowledge can be seen as a variant of efforts to "indigenize" the social sciences and as a spinoff of Islamic revival, resurgence, and reform movements around the globe. Critiques of Western models of development and science went along with a desire to restore Islam's strength and power in a post-colonial world. The bottom line of its various currents across continents is an emphasis on the spiritual, metaphysical, and divine dimensions of knowledge and science. All knowledge comes from God. Man is expected to accept this hierarchy of knowledge. When merely reason is used to study—as in the secularized world of science and knowledge generation—the sacred qualities of knowledge are lost.

Anwar Ibrahim in particular promoted the endeavor of an Islamization of knowledge and thereby paved the way for the consolidation of Islamic subjects in national educational institutions in the 1980s. Islamic civilization, for instance, was made a compulsory subject at the University of Malaya in 1984. This was accompanied by other policies such as the requirement of students to comply with Islamic dress codes. In terms of an alternative epistemology, the Islamization of knowledge project succeeded in the advancement of key concepts different from those central to the dominant, Western-based scientific disciplines.[6] These concepts are taken from the Qur'an and Sunna (the collection of the Prophet's statements, declarations, messages, pronouncements, teachings, and reported actions) and translated into guiding principles for the ordinary person's daily life. Malaysia's "Islamic economy," with its distinct devotion to *sharī'a*-compliant corporate management, is a case in point (see Sloane-White 2017). The fact that Malaysia is today a leader in the *halâl* certification business and a strong player in Islamic banking speaks to the success of Islamization in the country.

Dakwah groups' joining the bandwagon of a global Islamic resurgence and more local forms of revival such as Islamization of knowledge paved the way for the strong religious identity of today's Muslim middle class in Malaysia. Weiss cites the Malaysian women's right activist Zainah Anwar's observation that "by the mid-1980s, around two-thirds of Malay university students (then totaling around 40,000) were 'committed to some level or other to *dakwah*'" (Zainah 1987, quoted in Weiss 2011: 218). Sociologist Shamsul Amri states that *dakwah* became Malay students' "parapolitical outlet" (Shamsul 1983: 401). The *dakwah* movement can legitimately be regarded as an expression of Muslim "student power" in Southeast Asia.

Summary

Islamic resurgence may be described as a faith-based social and political movement of the late 1960s and 1970s. It was not driven by a distinct anti-war sentiment like the huge protest movements against the Vietnam War in the West. It carried moral demands, but they were not directed at sexual liberation and emancipation. Rather than urging a "sexual revolution," it proposed a reversal toward traditional gender roles. The protest of the Islamic resurgence

movement against the powers that be addressed the moral decay in politics and the neglect of Islamic norms and principles. A critical post-colonial element was inherent in the movement's agenda, too. The governments of Muslim-majority states were blamed for voluntarily becoming dependent on the secular West. It had a modern and progressive impetus: projects like that of the Islamization of knowledge diffused the authority once exclusively held by traditional religious leaders—imams, mullahs, preachers, and '*ulamâ*'—which rested in traditional institutions of learning and worship, in *madrasahs* (religious schools), mosques, *pesantren* (boarding schools), and the like. Intellectuals promoting the Islamization of knowledge did not ignore these traditional authorities and institutions, but they reframed their position by pluralizing religious authority and education. In retrospective, Islamic resurgence can be read as a "symptom of post-colonial critique of a Western monopoly in various regards, including the scientific monopoly on creating theories, concepts and categories that claim universal validity" (Derichs 2017: 52).

Internationally, many in the Muslim world of the 1960s and 1970s felt politically dependent on Western powers. As noted above, 1967 was a major blow to the belief in the strength of Arab military forces and, in religious terms, in the capacity of Muslims to defeat (Israeli) Jews. The consequent sense of weakness and the desire to overcome it culminated a decade later in the Islamic revolution in Iran. With this victory, the Shi'a branch of Islam won unprecedented acclaim in the Muslim world. Never before and never afterward did Southeast Asia see so many Sunni Muslims convert to Shi'ism. To the secular West, the revolution and subsequent establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran showed that the Muslim world was not willing to accept Western values and morality. Within the Muslim world, it also triggered the competition between Sunni and Shi'a of the following decades, epitomized on the intergovernmental level by the continuing hostility between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Both regional powers sought (as they do today) to win over allies and followers by sponsoring the establishment of schools, mosques, and other institutions of learning and worship, via development aid, donations, and scholarships for foreign students. The influx of students from Southeast Asia to the Al-Azhar (Egypt), Al-Madina (Saudi Arabia), and Al-Mustafa (Iran) universities has grown steadily (Bano and Sakurai 2015). The ideological rift between what is often called "Wahhabi Islam" and Shi'ite currents rendered the aspiration for a united *umma* (Muslim nation) celebrated by the movement of Islamic resurgence an illusion. Today, the Muslim world is more fragmented perhaps than ever—a development aggravated by the emergence of extremely radical militant groups.

While the Arab states on the whole and Egypt in particular had a "defining moment" in 1967, Indonesia's critical juncture is associated with the year 1965, and Malaysia's with 1969. In the Arab world, New Left forces emerged after 1967 and left their imprint in the domestic, regional, and international political arena. In Indonesia and Malaysia, any attempts to build left or New Left organizations and make them politically meaningful after 1965 and 1969, respectively, were forcefully repressed by the ruling powers. Instead of New Left movements, student power in these two countries was vested in Islamic activism. Muslim students' activism under the rubric of Islamic resurgence and *dakwah* paralleled Western students' struggle for peace and liberalization. The *dakwah* movement made Islamic moral and ethical principles central to its demand for social and political change. It was not an anti-modernity movement, but rather an endeavor to merge the worldly situation of modern life with Islamic values and practices. In Indonesia and Malaysia, students and youth made *dakwah* a feature of Muslims' personal concern for compliance with the moral and ethical principles of their faith. Networking occurred bilaterally, but also internationally—the far-flung branches of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood playing a central role in the mobilization of cross-border cooperation.

Student power in the Muslim world is literally "*taliban*" power (طالب, *ṭâlib* is the word for "student"), associated with proselytizing youth groups who either became violent in later years—with sometimes global consequences—or assumed high-ranking positions in national and international politics and society as respected intellectuals, government officials, or religious leaders. The recent phenomenon of Islam being embraced in all spheres of daily life (financial and medical services, education, finance, tourism, fashion, music, food, and consumption in general) is just one visible outcome of a global movement that was somehow relegated to second rank in the hegemonic Western perception of world affairs.

Notes

1 In 1968, a new political party, the Indonesian Muslim Party (Partai Muslimin Indonesia), was founded by former Masyumi members. Its poor performance in the general elections of 1971 rendered it insignificant and led to even more clandestine activism on the part of groups critical of the regime.
2 The leaders of these groups were mostly male, although NU and Muhammadiyah, from which many activists hailed, each had their own women's and young women's wings.
3 Other internationally influential groups were the Jamaah Tabligh, Hizbu-t-Tahrir, and Shi'ite organizations of various orientation (e.g., Iraqi or Iranian).
4 Hefner observes that the New Order proved favorable to Islamic revitalization, at least in the early years of Suharto's rule, when there was a considerable amount of cooperation between Muslim organizations and individuals and the security forces (1987: 542).
5 Hard figures for topics such as school enrollment are scarce for this period in Malaysia. Some data for the late 1960s and 1970s are provided in Weiss (2011: 130ff.). The government's plan in 1967 had been to achieve a 20 percent rate of higher education enrollment among secondary-school graduates. The University of Malaya had the largest enrollment, while the National University of Malaysia—founded in 1970—hosted over 1,000 students in 1973 (ibid.).
6 Naguib Al-Attas, for example, introduced the following as key concepts for an Islamic system of education: religion (دين , *dîn*), man (انسان , *insân*), knowledge (علم و معرفة , *'ilm* and *ma'rifah*), wisdom (حكمة , *hikmah*), justice (عدل , *'adl*), right action (عمل كأدب , *'amal* as *adab*), and university (كلية جامعة , *kulliyyah-jâmi'ah*) (1993: 160).

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