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Beyond ‘Terrorism’ and ‘State Hegemony’: assessing the Islamist mainstream in Egypt and Malaysia

JAN STARK

ABSTRACT *International networks of Islamic ‘terrorism’ have served as the most popular explanation to describe the phenomenon of political Islam since the 11 September attacks. This paper argues that both the self-proclaimed doctrinal Islam of the militants and Western perceptions of a homogeneous Islamist threat need to be deconstructed in order to discover the often ambiguous manifestations of ‘official’ and ‘opposition’ Islam, of modernity and conservatism. As a comparison of two Islamic countries, Egypt and Malaysia, which both claim a leading role in their respective regions, shows, moderate Islamic groups have had a considerable impact on processes of democratisation and the emergence of civil society during the quarter century since the ‘Islamic resurgence’. Shared experiences like coalition building and active participation within the political system demonstrate the influence and importance of groups such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM) or the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS). These groups have shaped the political landscape to a much larger extent than the current pre-occupation with the ‘terrorist threat’ suggests. The gradual development of a ‘culture of dialogue’ has rather revealed new approaches towards political participation and democracy at the grassroots level.*

The debate on political Islam since the attacks of September 11 has been dominated by popular interpretations of ‘terrorism’ that have become the new mantra of the media and a steadily increasing following of ‘terrorism experts’ among political analysts, journalists and politicians. In two otherwise very different regions of the Islamic world, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, the rather mono-causal focus on ‘Islamic terrorism’ has been instrumental in characterising the ‘Muslim other’ in the broad strokes of a politically and culturally exclusive extremism as the only possible conclusion of a constructed clash of Muslim – Western civilizations earlier introduced by Huntington.¹ In Southeast Asia, long perceived as the ‘Islamic periphery’, the fringes of the political spectrum have taken centre stage according to the

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widely circulated and published arguments of the gurus of counter-terrorism and security analysis, among them Rohan Gunaratna and Zachary Abuza. They have argued for a rather remote-controlled threat of al-Qaeda towards the security interests of Southeast Asian nations—a threat emanating from the border provinces of Afghanistan and Pakistan and centring around highly secretive networks, operational cells and clandestine money transfers. Thus ‘the state’ (Malaysia, Indonesia, but also the Philippines or even the ‘terror hotbed’ Pakistan) and ‘the West’ are forced into a perceived confrontation of almost apocalyptic dimensions with ‘militant Islam’, in which only one of these solid ‘entities’ can either claim victory or perish.²

In the Middle East, the sharply drawn borderline between this ‘terrorist threat’ and the state has literally materialised in the form of a newly built security fence between Israel and the Palestinian West Bank. This demarcates the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘the other’ as the ‘anti-fascist rampart’ functioned during the Cold War. The ongoing debate among Western orientalisks has been a reflection of this confrontation—of whether to perceive Islamic fundamentalism as the new ‘Empire of Evil’ or to take a more differentiated approach, both being shaped by the fears but also by the political considerations of the Islam–West divide.³

What has been almost completely overlooked in this current debate is the fact that 20 years ago, when the so-called Islamic resurgence was in full swing, very similar arguments were being brought forward to construe a clash between Islam and the state, which—according to the ‘clash-of-civilisations theory’—had been forced to reassert its hegemony over Islamic discourses by incorporating them into its own imaginations of modernity and development.⁴ As a result, the exclusivity of this self-proclaimed Islam then led to a spiralling out of control of Islamic fundamentalism, forcing Islamists to take an increasingly radical stand, which—as we know—has now finally resulted in the emergence of the ultimate challenge to this hegemony—the terrorist threat of al-Qaeda and its consorts.

In an attempt to deconstruct this long-standing tradition in the interpretation of political Islam, this paper tries to show that both the ‘terrorism’ and the ‘state hegemony’ argument have been a design of convenience. Said design has ignored the multilayered and often ambiguous manifestations of both ‘official’ and ‘opposition Islam’ as the oscillating forms of the conservatism of Islamic ‘modernity’ and the modernities of Islamic ‘fundamentalism’. In this context, it will also be argued that the debate on political Islam of the past 20 years has sidelined and seriously underestimated the impact of moderate Islamic groups (often deemed ‘extremist’ and ‘deviationist’ by a zealous state) on discourses of democratisation and its potential to bring about social change. As middle classes both in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia have been increasingly Islamised and the interlinkages between both regions are once again reinstated, there are similarities emerging in the way Islam is used to negotiate popular demands of political participation being neglected by the state. While Egyptian Islam has influenced Malaysia since the times of the reformer Muhammad Abduh, whose discourses on Islam and the state stimulated the

early reformist *kaum muda* movement in British Malaya in the early 20th century, the Malaysian experience of today has much to offer to Egypt.⁵

The numerous undercurrents that have reshaped and challenged now retired prime minister Mahathir's vision of a modernising but authoritarian state have profited from the traditions of multilayered cultural, doctrinal and ethnic traditions which have been so significant both for the development of Southeast Asian Islam and for the modern Malaysian state. As Malaysia has entered the post-Mahathir period and Mubarak prepares to hand over to his successor in Egypt, both Malaysia and Egypt enter a phase of transition that spans the 20 years between 'Islamic resurgence' and 'post-Islamism'.⁶ As a result, in both countries the hegemony of the state is more questionable than ever.

The onset: the Islamic resurgence in Malaysia

The *dakwah* movement (the 'call to Islam') of the 1970s has frequently been described as the backbone of Malaysian Islamic revivalism.⁷ Inspired by an *ummah*-wide reassertion of Islamic lifestyles and an attempt to go back to the Islamic 'roots', devoid of the alleged deviations of localised folk Islam inspired by Hindu–Buddhist tradition (*adat*), *dakwah* emerged from the Malaysian universities as an attempt by a young urbanised middle class to gain access to the political and economic domain of the state. One of the prominent groups of the *dakwah* movement, the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia—ABIM) had initially started in 1971 as a counter-hegemonic movement under the leadership of its founder, Anwar Ibrahim. Being concerned with rural poverty and uneven development, especially after the hunger riots in Baling, Kedah, in 1974, ABIM quickly attained a crucial role in the formulation of the government's Islamic policies.⁸ When Anwar was co-opted into the new Mahathir administration in 1982, the gradual 'abimisation' of the leading Malay component party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) within the ruling National Front coalition marked the ascent of the '*dakwah* persona' into the political mainstream and a gradual Islamization of society, that—even though stopping short of introducing the *shariah* at the federal level—has made a deep impact in terms of a renewed Islamic consciousness and an increasing awareness of Muslim and non-Muslim social boundaries.

At the same time, however, manifestations of resurgent Islam that did not conform to the claim of hegemony were sidelined by an increasingly authoritarian state. The constitutional crisis of 1983–84 had been a first indication of the growing discontent of the royal elites with Mahathir's developmentalist policies emerging over the government's questioning of the position and privileges of the royals, which Mahathir attempted to curtail. While the Sultans still managed to manoeuvre the government into a stalemate during this crisis, the conflict between the two continued to simmer. The 'development by trusteeship' approach enshrined in the New Economic Policy (NEP) of 1971 had been turned into 'overall trusteeship through Islam' in the early years of Mahathir's rule, leaving it to the state to define and

regulate the way in which Islam and its role in society should be professed and discussed. The UNMO split of 1987–88 denoted the tensions between the former Malay elites which had been dominating politics during the years after independence.⁹

Mahathir's incumbent, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah—himself of royal descent—represented a socioeconomic model of the 'UMNO old guard' that had been characterised by a 'spontaneous capitalism' in which middle-sized and smaller-scale enterprises of various ethnic backgrounds had traditionally bargained over the allocation of funds and positions. The displeasure of the 'Team B' representing the 'old UMNO' and its large support comprising small entrepreneurs and civil servants also addressed the way in which Islam had been increasingly instrumentalised by the state to create an ideological support base for those directly profiting from the discourses of value-instilled entrepreneurship and a Weberian code of Islamic working ethics dominated by diligence and discipline.

Inasmuch as the *dakwah*-inspired Islamic revivalism relied heavily upon the normative codes of Islamic doctrine and morality, the images of Islam professed by the upper classes of royal background have been part of an inter-Muslim network in which kinship genealogy, so important to the traditional Malay government (*kerajaan*), allegiance to religious lineages (*salasila*) and a chain of religious transmission (*isnad*) have acquired new modernised meanings. The emergence of Islamic movements like Al Arqam (or Darul Arqam) has created a link bridging the Islam of the Malay *kerajaan* characterised by the dominant position of the Malay ruler and the resurgent neo-Sufism that has attracted an increasing following among young Malay professionals.¹⁰

Al Arqam, which was founded in 1968, three years before its Wahhabi *dakwah* counterpart, ABIM, was able to relate directly to the Sufi traditions in Southeast Asian Islam that had enabled early Malay rulers to accept Islam in the 15th century. Sufi–Zoroastrian perceptions of the ruler's position as 'God's shadow on earth' coincided with their own Hindu–Buddhist traditions. The strong linkages that the Malay sultans of Selangor, Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu had maintained with Sufi scholars from Pattani, Brunei and Indonesia came increasingly under pressure from a largely secular state and from the rising influence of Wahhabism in the early 20th century and again in the 1970s.

The Islam practised by Al Arqam differed in some significant ways from the mainstream. In its messianic proclamations laid down in Ashari's writings Al Arqam reclaimed the Sufi traditions of the Central Asian *Khorasan* (Uzbekistan) and the prophecies of the 'schedule of Allah' propelling Muslims of the early 15th century to reclaim Islamic glory. Ashari's interpretation of a reawakening of the Islamic caliphate state in the east (Southeast Asia), followed by the proclamation of a Messiah (*Mahdi*) in the Muslim heartlands—the Arab peninsular—offered an alternative to the Wahhabist notion being vigorously upheld by other Malaysian *dakwah* groups and their insistence on the similarities between Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian revivalist Islamic practices and doctrine.¹¹

The failure of Sufi Islam to develop into the mainstream discourse of the Islamic resurgence, being sidelined by the Wahhabist *dakwah* groups, might be a result of conflicting traditions in the setting of Malay politics itself. The dominant position of the king (*raja*) in the traditional Malay sultanate has effectively been inherited and re-enacted by UMNO, the close protégé relationships between government and the *Bumiputra* private sector after Mahathir's privatisation drive of the 1990s being one of its latest manifestations. While its firm grasp on Islamic policies has allowed an abimised UMNO to turn Malays into 'better Arabs', it has been greatly assisted by ABIM's attempt to Islamise the state from within by gradually obliterating the boundaries between a secular state and an increasingly Islamic society. This notion of a dominating position of Islam in society has, however, been alien to both the traditional Malay *kerajaan* and the Sufi-dominated Islamic world-view which contributed to the spread of Islam in 15th century Southeast Asia.

Al Arqam's repeated criticism of ABIM's Islamisation drive, mainly motivated by political ambitions and its own abstention from the protracted fight between ABIM, UMNO and the opposition PAS, over 'better Islam' in the 1980s and 1990s, is also a reflection of differing political traditions that have dominated Southeast Asian Islam for almost 500 years.¹² Al Arqam's more gentle approach to *dakwah*, reflected in the *dhikr* chantings of its musicians, were temporarily silenced by the *Jihadis* of the federal Islamic bureaucracy that had declared Al Arqam a deviationist movement by 1994.

Islamic resurgence in Egypt

Similarly to Malaysia, the Islamic resurgence of the 1970s in Egypt has been described as a 'deliberate and forcible exclusion of Islam as a source of ideology', prompting Islamists into an increasingly violent confrontation with the state.¹³ Even though the Islamisation drive of the Egyptian government has never gone as far as in Malaysia—where *dakwah* policies have become those of the state—both the administrations of Sadat and Mubarak have co-opted Islam into the secular nationalist discourses of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). When Mubarak took over the government in 1981 after Sadat's assassination, political Islam was already deeply ingrained in Egyptian society. Its 'resurgence' merely reconfirmed the position of Islam as a tool of political expression for the lower middle and middle classes since the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) had claimed to restore the position of Islam after the abolition of the caliphate in 1924.

The ideologically common basis of *dakwah* groups in Malaysia like ABIM and the Muslim Brotherhood has always been constructed using the *Quran* and *hadith* as the main sources of reference and an exemplary Islamic state of the early caliphate as described by Ibn Taymiya (1268–1323). It has only been the ideological turn taken by moderate Islamists in the 1970s, however, that has enabled them gradually to obscure the boundaries between the secular state and Islam.¹⁴

In 1969 Hasan al-Hudaybi, the successor of al-Banna in the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood, reinterpreted the meaning of divine sovereignty (*hakimiyyah*) that had played such a prominent role in the writing of al-Quds. Contrary to al-Quds, who sanctioned *jihad* as a means against any government seen as a usurper of the 'Kingdom of God on Earth', al-Hudaybi called for a much more flexible application of *hakimiyyah*—leaving considerable space for Muslims to create and rethink important political, social and economic features of a future Islamic state.¹⁵ This approach, which enabled the moderate to engage in a dialogue both with the representatives of the state and the clergy, had already ideologically isolated the radical *jihadists* long before their armed struggle against the Egyptian state collapsed in the late 1990s.

Participation in the parliamentary elections of 1984 was a reflection of the willingness of the Muslim Brotherhood to participate in the political process. For the first time, Islamists were able to win seats in parliament in a coalition, which the Muslim Brotherhood had formed with the New Wafd Party. Again in the elections of 1987, the Islamists were able to secure a substantial number of votes, this time in the so-called Islamic Alliance together with the Socialist Labour Party and the Liberal Social Party.

Even though the Muslim Brotherhood had not yet been recognised as a legal organisation, the experience of coalition building broadened the political basis of the movement, by drawing new groups of urban professionals into it and by providing opportunities to experiment with new approaches towards social reform and democracy.

Despite the rejection of Western democracy and its party interests, which the Muslim Brotherhood condemned as *hizbiyya* (partisanship), new forms of political participation and social activism began to emerge not only in Egypt but also in Malaysia. In 1982, the new president of ABIM, Siddiq Fadil, openly rejected *assabiyah* (nationalism, party interests) but presented alternatives for Islamic forms of democratisation at the same time. His attempt to differentiate between a society populated by Muslims and its degree of Islamisation not only implied the notion of resistance against an oppressive state but also introduced an anti-clerical element into the discourses of an Islamic state that had so far been dominated by the strong position of the clergy and the importance of the jurisprudence (*fiqh*).¹⁶ In both countries reference was made to the tradition of early Islam and the need for consultation (*shura*) as a tool of political participation.

The *Shura* councils of the both the Muslim Brotherhood and ABIM-DASH; reflecting the various social backgrounds of an urban middle class—thus enabled their members to realise their ideas of an Islamic society without being strictly bound by the dominating position of the *shariah* that featured so prominently in the discourses of al-Quds and the *jihadists*.

The Muslim Brotherhood and its coalition partners engaged in a wide range of social and political activities in which private Islamic volunteer organisations effectively took over the role of a largely passive state. Apart from mosques, clinics and welfare institutions, the Islamists also increasingly claimed political space in the professional associations of lawyers, doctors,

engineers and journalists. In the early 1990s a new Islamist-led opposition front emerged under the leadership of the Liberal Party, led by Adel Hussein and Ibrahim Shukry. Its new newspaper, *Al Sha'ab*, developed into a prominent Islamist critical voice, especially after the outbreak of the first Gulf War in 1991.

This co-option of Islamist discourses into a secular party had been made possible by a shift in the intellectual debate in the late 1980s towards the political centre. The Islamisation of the middle classes—both in Egypt and Malaysia—during this time had contributed to a Islamic reassertion of discourses on knowledge, technology and the social sciences, which formed the backbone for the *wasatiyya* (centrist) movement of professionals, members of the Mubarak administration and the younger generation in the Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁷ Being committed to democracy, nationalism and equal political representation, centrist intellectuals like Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Tariq al-Bishri or Muhammad 'Imara effectively continue the tradition of Islamic reform of Muhammad 'Abduh (1849–1905), who had a crucial influence on Islamic reformers and early nationalists in colonial Malaya.

The institutionalization of the Islamist mainstream in the 1990s

Towards 'Islamic democracy': The Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS)

No other Islamic party in Malaysia has gone through so many changes in terms of ideology as the Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS). Initially set up to contest the Malay nationalist movement led by UMNO in the early 1950s, PAS always faced the challenge of how to reconcile ethnic Malay interests with the universalism of Islam. Even while the Islamic resurgence was in full swing in Malaysia's urban centres during the late 1970s, the rurally based PAS largely relied on the kinship and clan networks of the Malaysian peninsular's east coast which had characterised traditional Malay *kerajaan*. The party was under the influence of the so-called *ustaz* group, the conservative clergy that had emerged from the religious schools (*madrassas*) of Kelantan and Terengganu and continued to control party politics until the leadership change of 1985.

Under the presidency of Fadzil Noor and Yusuf Rawa, PAS moved towards Islamic internationalism, mainly characterised by a growing inclination towards an 'Islamic state' dominated by the *shariah*. Still inspired by the 1979 Islamist revolution in Iran, the clergy insisted on a continuous dominant role for the *ulama* in the formulation of party politics; they both dominated in the party's decision making body, the *Majlis Shura*, and in the *Dewan Ulama*, where they were prominently represented.

Changes in party membership in the 1990s led to an increasing contestation of the *ulama*'s position that had placed the role of Islamic legislature (*fiqh*) and its close relationship to the state over the need for political innovation (*bid'ah*). Young urban professionals had been drawn into the party since the 1980s, when ABIM had been split between supporters of

Anwar Ibrahim's co-option into the government and those who supported PAS in its pursuit of an Islamic state.

The success of the Mahathir administration to turn Islam, rapid economic growth and racial harmony into a long-term vision of value-instilled modernity came at a time where the end of the Cold War also required new approaches from Islamic parties world-wide. The inclusion of the Islamised middle classes in the political mainstream, featuring close co-operation between UMNO and the *dakwah* movement made it clear to PAS that only a policy emphasising the moderate universalist features of Islam would be able to lead it out of the corner of the *kafir-mengafir* debate of the previous decade, in which UMNO and pas had battled over more and 'better' Islam.¹⁸

In an attempt to portray the importance of clean governance, equality and social justice, the PAS-controlled state government of Kelantan tried to introduce the *hudud* laws in 1992, the Quranic capital punishment in the criminal code. This was seen as the ultimate symbol of a futuristic Islamic egalitarianism, in condemnation of UMNO's perceived crony politics, rather than as a short-term political goal. In both the parliamentary elections of 1990 and 1995 PAS had emphasised that only a popular mandate attained through a democratic process and the prominence of the *shariah* as its legal instrument could ultimately lead to the 'caring society' (*Masyarakat Penyayang*) that both Mahathir and PAS had envisioned in an attempt to reconcile market capitalism with an Islamic humanity.¹⁹

The realisation that elections could only be won in the political centre prompted PAS to establish its first multiparty opposition front, the Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (APU). Despite its failure in 1995, when one of PAS's junior partners, Semangat 46, rejoined the ruling National Front, PAS's readiness to seek political coalitions reflected its willingness to work within the system in order to replace the government, not to destroy its institutions. This was made clear by its chairman, Fadzil Noor, who had been elected in 1995.

PAS had closely followed developments in Egypt, particularly the efforts at coalition building made by the Muslim Brotherhood under the leadership of Mustafa Mashur. The need to convey the 'democratic image' of Islamism required steps going beyond the mantra-like accusations that used to depict governments as un-islamic and authoritarian. PAS was pushed hard to consider organisational and structural changes within the party apparatus: the *ulama* leadership's legitimacy was questioned, as was the relationship between the indirectly elected Council of the Clergy (*Dewan Ulama*) and the elected Central Executive Committee.²⁰

Women candidates were fielded for the first time in the general elections of November 1999. After the dismissal of Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in September 1998, these elections finally provided PAS with the long sought-after opportunity to establish its concepts of Islamic participatory democracy on a broader level. The formation of the opposition Alternative Front, Barisan Alternatif (BA), was another attempt to convince the electorate, especially non-Muslims, that PAS was no longer the 'extremist'

party portrayed by the government. BA's election manifesto reflected the co-option of the Islamists into mainstream policies: moving towards 'political accountability', a 'social contract' (*kontrak sosial*) and 'true democracy' (*demokrasi tulen*) was later put in the international context of Islam's moderating role in the globalisation process. This was the main theme of PAS's General Assembly held in Kuala Terengganu in June 2000.²¹

Gone were the days where the *ulama* had simply declared critics to be 'unbelievers' (*kafir*) to bring deviant opinions into line.²² PAS invoked the support of non-governmental organisations to further democratic reform and set up the Council of the National Justice Movement. Comprising the Democratic Action Party (DAP), the socialist Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM) and eight human rights groups, it demanded the rule of law and the repeal of Mahathir's draconian security laws mostly dating from the 1980s. Riding on a wave of popular support, PAS was temporarily able to bridge ideological differences with the *dakwah* movement in calling for reform (*reformasi*). Its support for Wan Azizah's Justice Party (Keadilan) was reminiscent of the old days, when Azizah's husband, Anwar Ibrahim, had actively worked with PAS in the late 1970s—much to the annoyance of UMNO. However, with the 11 September attacks, PAS's resolve was again put to the test.

New coalitions, new parties: the diversification of the Muslim Brotherhood

If the 1990s marked the decade where opposition Islam shifted from *fatwa*-dominated discourses towards democratisation and coalition politics in Malaysia, the same can also be said of Egypt. The emergence of new platforms for human rights, political participation and the inclusion of minorities under the Islamic project led to the establishment a new Islamist party, the Wasat, as an offspring of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1996. The liberalisation of middle class Islamist ideology occurred at a time when the call for *dakwah* was reshaped to become a part of party politics. In Malaysia, ABIM would launch Keadilan in 1998 as an attempt to resist continued co-option by the state, which had finally tamed the Anwar project through the prosecution and purge of ABIM members in the state administration after Anwar Ibrahim's arrest in late 1998.

Even though Wasat's attempts to register as a political party had failed twice in 1996, its founders, younger members of the MB, used the party launch as a two-pronged initiative to further entrench Islamism within the fabric of Egyptian politics. It offered a political alternative to the urban electorate that had regarded Islam as a tool for voicing opposition to the state and to prepare the ground for a possible coalition with the ruling party in order to Islamise the system from within.

Despite Mubarak's staunch refusal to let political Islam gain a foothold in the officially secular political system, Islamist ideologues of the 1970s generation (*al-jil as-saba'inat*) had been able to be politically active within the professional syndicates that had increasingly come under the influence of the MN despite the new syndicate laws issued in 1993 by the state in an attempt to curtail their rise.²³ As it became obvious that the syndicates would not be

able to provide any more upward mobility for young Islamists attempting to gain political influence, the shift in strategies within the MB itself exposed a growing friction between the 'old guard' willing to continue its underground struggle against the government and those who were influenced by the centrist *Wasatiyya* movement described earlier.

Since the position of the Wasat Party founders was perceived as a threat to the power structure of the Muslim Brotherhood, traditionally controlled by the conservative *ulama* fraction, the former were excluded from the decision-making body, the *Shura*, officially on disciplinary grounds. But even the accusation made by the conservatives that the young Islamists had bypassed the Islamic decision making process could not halt further attempts to engage both their own organisation and the state politically, resulting in the latter refusing to issue them a licence from the Political Parties Committee (PPC).²⁴

The state's crackdown on the MB before the 1995 elections, resulting in the trial and imprisonment of 54 of its leading members, appeared to confirm the fear among MB conservatives of a recurrence of its suppression in the 1980s. However, the clampdown did not occur in order to maintain the clearly drawn boundaries between Islamic opposition and the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). It was rather a desperate attempt to reinstate those boundaries that had been increasingly blurred—not only since segments of the NDP itself sympathised with the liberal pro-democracy *Wasatiyya* movement, but also because the government realised that an accession of the Islamists into the political mainstream could no longer be prevented—and certainly not in the long term.

Both the autocratic inflexibility of the Muslim Brotherhood and the anxious manoeuvring of the government led to a political impasse after the PPC's refusal to register the Wasat Party in 1996. Only in May 1998 was the party able to submit another application, which was again rejected. The re-submission two days later marked the final split between the Wasat and the Muslim Brotherhood. The new platform, called al-Wasat al-Misri (the Egyptian Centrist Movement) represented an attempt by the politicised middle classes, independent intellectuals and disillusioned government officials to make the *Wasatiyya* movement of the 1980s an integral part of party politics.

No longer bound by the tight discipline of the Muslim Brotherhood, Wasat was able for the first time to move beyond the limits of Islamic party policies which had seemed so menacing to the Mubarak administration. Despite being rejected by the PPC for a third time in June 1999, Islamists had gained enough experience within the system to bypass the restrictions imposed and apply to set up a non-governmental organisation, the Misr: Li-l Thaqaifa wa-l Hiwar (Egypt: For Culture and Dialogue), which was approved by the Ministry of Education in April 2000.²⁵ Mostly comprising former members of the Wasat Party, this NGO again proved the flexibility of the Islamists in adjusting to adverse political environments. As the Malaysian example also shows, it is not necessarily only within the political or party system where dissenting voices of political Islam emerge. The ability to achieve an 'Islamic society' by gradually changing its social and political fabric was the major

achievement of the *dakwah* movement in accordance with Maududi's 'flexible *shariah*' (*shariah haraki*)—an approach that both denounced the omnipotent role of the state and often harshly criticised the clergy. Islamist networks operating outside the party system have increasingly linked up on the international stage—a process that has gained particular attention after 11 September.

Radicalised Islamists: losing out over internal divisions

In both the Middle East and Southeast Asia, Islamist radicalism—or as it is popularly known, terrorism—has frequently been described as a clash between insurgent Muslims and the authoritarian state.²⁶ This has concealed the fact that Islamist extremism has been a deeply fractured force and has often maintained links reaching deep into the political establishment—which is the case in Egypt and Malaysia.

Far from being the monolithic threat perceived, Islamic militancy has on the one hand been weakened by the onslaught of the state, whose resources, having both the entire legal instrumentarium and the security apparatus at its disposal, are certainly considerable. On the other hand it has profited from a general shift of Islamic mainstream policies and from a resulting ideological proximity between 'mainstream' and 'fundamentalist' Islam over an Islamic state, with the *shariah* as its only legislation and adherence to an Islamically defined morality and lifestyle. As a result, this brand of Islam has become much more accepted in society.

Even though Egypt's experience with political violence is longer and more pronounced than in Malaysia, both countries share similar patterns in the way Islamic extremists have been kept at bay sin, ideologically speaking, they have not been able to offer anything new, while their violent campaigns have alienated the majority of the population.

The two major radical Islamist groups in Egypt, Al-Jama'at al-Islamiyyah and Jama'at al-Jihad have failed largely because of their inability to gather social and political support.²⁷ This distinguishes them from groups like the MB, which, despite regularly emerging internal splits, have gained broad-based credibility through the social and educational activities that they have effectively taken over from the state. Since the assassination of Sadat in 1981, both groups have attempted to spread their networks beyond the Islamic students' associations from which they emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. The inability of the Mubarak administration to carry out economic reform and reduce unemployment again led to a growing influence of the Islamic students' associations at the universities, seeking alternative Islamic lifestyles and demanding the creation of an Islamic state. However, the attack on Mubarak in Addis Ababa in summer 1995 by Jama'at al-Islamiyyah and, even more so, the attacks in Luxor in 1997 killing 68 foreign tourists exposed the fact that the Islamic students' associations had lost their influence within the radical Islamist movement.

The divisions between urban middle class and rural working class members, between the capital and locally organised insurgencies in Minya

and Asyut, Upper Egypt, between exiled and local leaders had already structurally impaired radical Islam before Mubarak moved against it after this prolonged wave of violence.

The unilateral ceasefire declared by imprisoned Jama'at- and Jihad leaders in July 1997, followed by an actual surrender of al-Jama'at leaders in March 1999 announcing the suspension of all armed attacks, reflected a deep-rooted shift within the radicals' leadership structures both locally and abroad.²⁸ Since the Muslim Brotherhood started a dialogue with the radical groups after the arrests of 1995, foreign leaders gradually marginalised radical elements within Jama'at al-Islamiyyah. Its exiled leadership being split between its European headquarters and former *mujahidin* residing in Afghanistan moved towards reconciliation, particularly after a new consultative *Shura* council elected more moderate leaders in 1999.²⁹

In Malaysia Islamist violence has never reached the levels of Egypt. The traditional concept of loyalty (*kesetiaan*) between Malay rulers and their subjects—a political culture inherited by the ruling party coalition BN, has relegated violent outbursts to instances of a breach of this social contract, as during the ethnic riots of May 1969. Being tightly controlled by the state, political Islam has often sought 'deviationist ways' to express itself. The Memali incident of 1985 was one of the more prominent cases, where non-conformist, Sufi perceptions of social and political organisation clashed with the resurgent *dakwah* Islam of the urban centres.³⁰

The various strata of Islam, be it the modernist version of Mahathir, the Islamic state discourses of the opposition or the occasional deviationist group, have been able to coexist largely because Mahathir's developmentalism and modernisation produced rapid growth rates and improving living standards for large segments of society throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. The partial reversion of this process through the emergence of a politically well connected Malay business class, by the Asian economic crisis of 1997–98, affecting middle and lower income groups, by numerous scandals in politics and the private sector and by the development of international Islamist networks, has created an atmosphere where political violence has started to breed.

The impact of September 11 and its aftermath

Accommodation of Islamist discourses in Malaysia revisited

Mahathir's announcement in September 2001 that Malaysia was already an Islamic state took everybody by surprise. For the first time a government claiming Malay nationalism and a secular state as its ideological basis had taken over the main argument of the Islamists.³¹ Indeed, the debate on the practicalities of an Islamic state was no longer relegated to the political margins: the impact of *dakwah* Islam on UMNO's policies had led to a gradual Islamisation of society of various shades, reaching from Mahathir's modernist Vision 2020 to the conservative policies of the religious

departments (*Jabatan Agama*) at state level. The initiatives of the chief ministers (*Menteri besar*) of Selangor and Johor, both UMNO-members, to introduce AIDS tests for Muslim couples were not dissimilar to Islamist initiatives on the east coast to introduce separate supermarket counters for males and females or to close down bars and gambling facilities. In the competition for 'better Islam' the Islamisation programmes of the two major parties had become so interchangeable and conservative that an outside shock, such as the terrorist attacks of 11 September, was needed temporarily to force the political mantra of the 'Islamist'—now even 'terrorist' PAS and the modernist UMNO back into public consciousness.

PAS's reaction—in a gross misjudgement of public opinion—did not help to disperse this perception. While PAS had been able to attract larger segments of the Malay community with its campaign for clean governance and an Islamically inspired drive against corruption and human rights abuses, the international aspect of this fight for Islamic justice implied direct confrontation with the USA and its war on terror. When the PAS president, Fadzil Noor, in October 2001 declared the US-led invasion of Afghanistan an arbitrary move against a defenceless country and demanded an invasion of Israel, which was allegedly terrorising the Palestinians, he came uncomfortably close to al-Qaeda's reasoning about the injustices suffered by the Islamic world.³² PAS's move to declare a *jihad* on America a few days later was—in its own view—only a logical consequence of its previous policies, but using terms now associated with Islamic extremism by an already suspicious public helped to turn the tide.

Conservative Islam and its manifestations in Malaysia reflect the position it has taken at the political centre. When Terengganu's chief minister Haji Hadi Awang and the PAS state assembly tabled and passed the *hudud* bill in July 2002, PAS had again over stretched itself in the race to 'out-Islam' UMNO.³³ While from PAS's point of view, insisting on an Islamic state and jurisdiction served the party well to portray the failure of a secular legal and political system, PAS could no longer expect to garner political support beyond the conservative Malay heartlands of the east coast unless it tried to win back the urban middle classes.

The changes that have taken place within the party's membership structure since 2002 suggest that PAS opted for a strategy of closing the gaps between the influential *ulama* group and the professionals in the party. Its efforts centred on Selangor, the most prosperous Malaysian state neighbouring the capital Kuala Lumpur, as well as on the northern states of the 'Malay' belt, Kedah and Perlis.

The former university lecturer Haron Din, who initially emerged from the *dakwah* movement and had been a close associate of Anwar Ibrahim, was elected to contest UMNO in Kedah by appealing to the segments of government servants and middle class Malays whom PAS is otherwise unable to reach with its Islamic state rhetoric. At the same time, Haron was made PAS information chief, enabling him to join the *Dewan Harian*, a presidential council that advises the party president on current matters and functions to balance the conservative *ulama* wing, *Dewan Ulama*.³⁴

In Selangor PAS would only be able to counter the discourses of the National Front on developmentalism and growth by a similarly focused opposition coalition. During the polls at the 49th PAS general assembly (*Muktamar*) in September 2003, Hassan Ali was chosen as both the party's vice president and commissioner of Selangor. He represents the moderate wing of the party, being supportive of an opposition coalition including Keadilan and the DAP. The fact that his predecessor in Selangor, the ultra-conservative *Ustaz* Hassan Shukri was made PAS deputy president at the same time reflects the continuous frictions within the party over its ideological direction.³⁵

The contradictions within the various PAS factions over what an Islamic state should actually amount to, were again reflected in an interview given by PAS vice-president Mustafa Ali to the BBC in October 2003. His claim that an Islamic state was not the primary aim of the party and that PAS would not sentence apostates to death was followed by an announcement by the PAS state government of Terengganu to gazette and enact the Terengganu Syariah Criminal Offence (*Hudud* and *Qisas*) laws even without the assistance of the federal enforcement agencies.

The conflict between the advocates of an Islamic state and an Islamically inspired civil society ideologically closer to the 'Asian renaissance'³⁶ of ABIM and Anwar Ibrahim reflects a generational shift in which the majority move towards further co-operation with the political system, whereas a minority has distanced itself and has joined the Islamist networks of *Jihad*. This development of two currents within the Islamist mainstream has occurred in a similar fashion within the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and its breakaway offshoots.

Participating in the democratisation process: Islamists continue to shape Egyptian policies

The aftermath of the 11 September attacks has hastened two major developments in Egyptian politics. The radical Islamists have been further marginalised, to the extent that the Mubarak administration has started to release them from prison, while the moderate forces of political Islam represented by parts of the Muslim Brotherhood and their political allies have continued their attempts to create an Islamically inspired democratisation process. Similarly to PAS, the Muslim Brotherhood continued to suffer from divisions between conservatives and moderates throughout 2002 and 2003: even though a leadership change at the top level took place in early 2004, there was much confusion over the election of the deputy.

Rumours alleging the appointment of Khayrat al-Shater through the MB president, Moun al-Hodeibi, were quickly denied by the group. The fact that al-Hodeibi had not appointed a deputy for more than a year after he took over the leadership in 2002, however, indicated continued conflict within the group's decision-making body (the Guidance Bureau) over the exact political role that the Muslim Brotherhood should attempt to play in a more liberal political landscape.³⁷ The dialogue with the state being carefully proposed by

Hodeibi after his ascent to power was an expression of the changes that had taken place not so much within the Muslim Brotherhood itself, which remained banned by the state, but of the political alliances that had been developed among opposition parties under the active involvement of Brotherhood members. The attempt to form another opposition front was triggered by large-scale demonstrations against the US-led war in Iraq, which took place in early 2003. Particularly the student demonstrations on 21 February 2003 in Cairo, attended by thousands of participants, were more than just an outflow of anger against American, British and Israeli politics in the Middle East. They revealed the frictions between the 'official' and the 'popular' Egypt—a ruling party unable to reform itself and an increasingly impatient population. At the end of March 2003 an even bigger demonstration of around 40 000 people made the need for political reform even more pressing. For the first time the anti-war movement had joined forces with human rights activists, leftist and Islamist politicians. The arrest of 800 people after the March demonstrations contradicted the regime's attempt to introduce reforms. Despite the declaration of the ruling NDP, during its 25th annual meeting in September, that 2003 would see the launch of a new political agenda of political and economic reform, this initiative was often interpreted as an attempt by the party to legitimise the 'hereditary succession' of Gamal Mubarak to his father, Gamal. The former had earlier launched a 'national dialogue' between the government and the opposition.³⁸

Even if this announcement is seen as mere window-dressing in order to support the US policies which used 'democratisation in the Middle East' as a justification for involvement in Iraq, this 'national dialogue' once more revealed the increasingly porous boundaries between the state, where younger generation cadres under Gamal Mubarak's ambitious NDP deputy chairmanship were becoming more and more influential, and the opposition, where young urban middle classes from various social, religious and non-religious backgrounds had successfully engaged in a political dialogue since the late 1990s.

Seen in this light, the step taken in early May 2003 by the major opposition parties, the Wafd, Tagammu, Arab Nasserists and Islamic Labour Parties, to form a national opposition front, was not only a response to the street protests a few month earlier, but reflected a development that had been under way for some time before and had occurred in almost parallel fashion in Malaysia. Competition among various political concepts in which the mainstream Islamists joined with secular forces did not prevent the occasional relapse into Islamic conservatism, but it contributed to a gradual relaxation of the political idiom allowing differing views to be expressed more openly.

New challenges, new opportunities: where is mainstream Islam heading?

The few months between the appointment of Malaysia's new prime minister, Abdullah Badawi, on 31 October 2003 and the 11th general elections on 21 March 2004 were characterised by a considerable swing in public opinion.

After 22 years of the Mahathir administration and its often authoritarian policies towards the opposition, of its privatisation policies, which had created a tiny and politically well connected Malay business class and of its 'vision' of a modernising, value-instilled Malaysian state, a new start seemed to be possible. The first steps taken by Badawi, including shelving infrastructural mega-projects such as the multi-million double tracking rail project, which had been controversially awarded to the Malaysian MMC–Gamuda consortium shortly before Mahathir's retirement, the prosecution of prominent businessmen on corruption charges and an attempted overhaul of the police and immigration departments, suggested a more 'Anwar-like' policy approach.³⁹ The former deputy prime minister, Anwar Ibrahim, had suggested alternatives to Mahathir's capitalist-modernising concept as early as 1997. Anwar pledged an open multi-ethnic society based on good governance, political transparency, democracy and human rights in an Islamic civil society.

Badawi has won support both for his Islamic credentials and for his non-confrontational approach, making it increasingly difficult for the opposition to maintain its line of criticism, of despotism, cronyism and corruption, which allowed it to gain ground against *Mahazalim*, 'Mahathir, the Oppressor', in the 1999 general elections. The new prime minister's standing has been boosted further by his release of Anwar Ibrahim in September 2004, exactly six years after his arrest for alleged corruption and sexual misconduct.

The Islamic opposition, PAS, has tried to counter Badawi's attempts to create more political accountability by presenting its long-awaited blueprint for an Islamic state which had been lingering on the party's drawing board since Mahathir declared Malaysia an Islamic state in late September 2001.⁴⁰ The various versions circulating in English and Bahasa Malaysia once again reveal the ideological differences within PAS. Even more importantly they are proof that both Malay parties, UMNO and PAS, continue to encroach on the secular nature of the Malaysian constitution—be it through the thorough Islamisation of society and state under Mahathir's tenure, or the continuous attempts of PAS to 'out-Islam' him.

The Islamic state document of PAS, published on 12 November 2003 reflects the shifts towards a more conservative leadership (Haji Abdul Hadi Awang as chairman, Hassan Shukri as deputy) appointed during the PAS General Assembly in September 2003. The more liberal draft of former chairman Fadzil Noor, launched at the 48th PAS General Assembly one year earlier had called for an Islamic state that could also have been envisioned by Anwar Ibrahim. Based on civil society (*masyarakat madani*), a true welfare state and an innovative and dynamic government, Document 2 reflected the ambitions of the Islamised middle classes in PAS that had already made their impact much earlier in the 'abimized' UMNO of the 1980s but had become increasingly alienated by Mahathir's authoritarian style and his handling of the Anwar affair in 1998.⁴¹ Being only short-lived, Document 2 was withdrawn after Fadhil Noor passed away in June 2002 and only re-emerged in November 2003 in a drastically altered form after it had been re-examined by the *Majlis Shura Ulama*.⁴²

The new document confirmed the rule of the *ulama*, the at least temporary retreat of the more liberal forces and a return to a brand of authoritarianism reflected in captions such as ‘a religion that is obeyed’, ‘obedience to the state’ and ‘duty-bound’ that many Malaysians had hoped to overcome after Mahathir’s resignation in late October 2003. It could hardly be expected that an Islamic state concept based on rigid *shariah* rule would be able to gather support among non-Muslims, especially as no reference had been made to the position of minorities in Hadi’s blueprint. Therefore, at the 12 November launch, Hadi was forced to come up with a 10-point ‘guarantee’ (*jaminan*) acknowledging the right of cultural expression and equal rights in education and the political process without discrimination based on race or religion.⁴³

The main purpose of the *ulama*-controlled decision-making body had been to establish an Islamic caliphate in Malaysia which could eventually be enlarged to comprise the Muslim regions of the Malay archipelago, a goal already envisioned by the banned militant Kumpulan Mujahedin Malaysia (KMM) which had earlier maintained contacts with PAS. However, the gradual infusion of Islamist middle classes into PAS’s central committee throughout the previous years has obviously put pressure on the *ulama* to soften the Islamic state blueprint by adding guarantees as a concession to Malaysian multi-ethnic society. This was even admitted by Hadi Awang himself, who stated:

‘I am quite sure that you are well aware that my short deliberation is targeted to tackle unresolved burning issues that may have not been dealt with in great detail in the document’.⁴⁴

After several central committee meetings an attempt was made to relegate all non-religiously educated party members to marginal positions during the drafting process of the document—an attempt by the *ulama* faction to challenge the Islamic credentials of Abdullah Badawi.

The conflict between ideological purists, who try to maintain Malay support in the rural areas and those who are trying to make PAS a ‘mainstream party’ going beyond the deadlock of an Islamic state symbolises the dilemma that many mainstream Islamists are facing. There is a continued oscillation between successful attempts to liberalise and attract coalition partners from the non-Islamist camp and the protracted struggle of the doctrinal Islamists who place *shariah* rule, the dominant position of the state and consequently their own position above all strategic considerations of political feasibility.

The release of 1000 Islamic militants in Egypt announced by the Interior minister Habib el-Adli in early September 2003 indicated that the earlier announcement by Gama’at al-Islamiya to renounce violence had indeed brought a certain level of stability.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the root causes of the spread of Islamic militancy, namely high unemployment, a lack of educational opportunities for the lower classes and a continuous migration to the urban centres, made this a rather fragile peace between the militants and the state. Not surprisingly, a report released by parliament in February 2004 again confirmed the inability of the Mubarak administration to achieve

any tangible social and economic reform. According to this report, the government had failed to combat the serious deterioration in the vast majority of citizens' living standards, the inflation rate had further increased and the budget deficit and domestic debts reached new heights in 2003.

The appointment of the new chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood, the former social activist Mohamed Mahdi Akef, in January 2004 halted the leadership struggles of the previous two years. Unlike PAS, which actively participates in the political process, the Muslim Brotherhood continues to be seriously hampered in its activities by the emergency laws that are still in force. A statement made by Mubarak's advisor Osama el-Baz confirmed the administration's policy of allow Islamic organisations to be active in the social and charitable field but denying them any access to parliament and political participation.⁴⁶

While the new MB leadership has accepted these limitations and sees its future as an educational movement raising awareness of Islamic issues in public rather than in confronting the state, the lack of reform in Egyptian politics has further aggravated the dissatisfaction among government employees who belong to the lower income sector. Despite the secrecy that surrounds the activities of the Brotherhood itself and its contact with other political parties, the movement has managed to establish an informal dialogue with segments of the Egyptian government, high-ranking officials preparing for the transition of power from Hosni Mubarak to his successor and a generation shift within the ruling NDP under Mubarak's son Gamal.

Conclusion

Rather than limiting discourses of political Islam to the clashes between 'Islamic terrorism' and 'the state', this paper has attempted to trace the considerable contributions of mainstream Islamist movements towards the development of civil society in Egypt and Malaysia. Both the Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) and the Muslim Brotherhood have made considerable progress in the past two decades in their effort to work within the political system: the former insistence on an 'Islamic state' and the unquestioned rule of the Islamic clergy has been increasingly called into question by the Islamised middle classes, whose growing influence has drastically altered the membership structures of parties like PAS.

The infusion of rural professionals into the former rural networks of PAS and Al Arqam, the increasingly clouded boundaries between the Islamic movement and states infused with Islamist policies—either openly through the co-option of the *dakwah* movement as in Malaysia, or indirectly through a gradual process of infiltration because of a decades-long deadlock in social and political reform as in Egypt—has produced a wide-ranging variety of Islamist mainstream discourses, reaching from appeals to an Islamic civil society to coalition agreements with non-Islamic parties and plans for the introduction of Quranic capital punishment (*hudud*).

The consequence of two decades of intense Islamisation is a radically altered society, in which neither the 'state' nor the Islamists are able to

recognise their initial 'starting points': the secular–nationalist state of the 1970s has completely vanished, being transformed by moderate Islamists now holding key positions in the state administration. The constant harsh criticism of Islamists of a state being 'un-Islamic' has not produced much legal and political reform, neither in Egypt nor in Malaysia, but it has forced Islamist parties into recognising the necessity of adopting 'mainstream policies' palatable to the majority of the population in order to gain recognition. Despite several relapses into Islamist terminology, the ultimate goal of achieving majority support within the political system has been the main characteristic of political Islam's development from 'Islamic resurgence' to 'Islamic participation', a process which is likely to continue after the failure of Islamic militancy becomes more and more obvious.

Notes

- 1 Samuel P Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997.
- 2 Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside al-Qaida: Global Network of Terror*, London: Hurst, 2002; and Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003. Numerous other authors have followed a similar line of argument. See, for example, Yonah Alexander, *Usama bin Laden's al-Qaida: Profile of a Terrorist Network*, Ardsley, NY: Transnational Publishers, 2001; Peter L Bergen, *Holy War Inc: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden*, New York: Free Press, 2001; and Udo K Ulfkotte, *Das geheime Netzwerk der Islamisten*, Munich: Goldmann, 2001.
- 3 The ongoing debate between American Middle Eastern scholars on whether Islamic fundamentalism should be perceived as evil *per se* or whether a more differentiated approach should be adopted reflects also the political considerations of the US-led 'war on terror' and the Israeli–American/Arab divide. This debate is summarised in R Bernstein, 'Experts on Islam pointing fingers at one another', *New York Times*, 3 November 2001.
- 4 For the Middle Eastern setting, see, for example, George Lenczowski, *The Political Awakening in the Middle East*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970. The Islamic resurgence is also explained as a reaction towards an overpowering state by Najib Ghadbian, *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in the Arab World*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997, pp 63–68; Judith Nagata, *The Reflowering of Malaysian Islam: Modern Religious Radicals and Their Roots*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984; and, among many others, Hussin Mutalib, *Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- 5 On the role of political Islam in the nationalist movement of British Malaya in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the emergence of the Islamic 'reformers' (*kaum muda*) influenced by Middle Eastern thinkers, such as Muhammad Abduh, and their clash with the traditional classes of Malay royalty (*kaum tua*), see William Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- 6 The term 'post-Islamism' is defined by Gilles Kepel as an attempt by Islamist movements to reinvent themselves as democratic movements by propagating formerly condemned 'Western values' like freedom of expression and women's rights that are often re-interpreted as being originally Islamic values. Kepel, 'Islamism reconsidered', *Harvard International Review*, 22 (2), 2001, p 24.
- 7 Numerous authors have dealt with this phenomenon, for example Chandra Muzaffar, *Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1987; Zainah Anwar, *Kebangkitan Islam di Malaysia: Dakwah di Kalangan Pelajar*, Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk Publications, 1987; and Mutalib, *Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics*.
- 8 For a more detailed discussion of ABIM's beginnings, see Jan Stark, *Kebangkitan Islam: islamische Entwicklungsprozesse in Malaysia*, Hamburg: Abera, 1999, pp 36–45.
- 9 The authoritarian trends of the Mahathir administration and the use of Islam in its political discourses have been described by DK Mauzy & RS Milner, 'The Mahathir administration: discipline through Islam', in *Pacific Affairs*, 56 (4), 1983, pp 617–648.
- 10 The sufist manifestations of the Islamic resurgence in Malaysia are discussed by Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, 'Inter-movement tension among resurgent Muslims in Malaysia: response to the state clampdown on Darul Arqam in 1994', *Asian Studies Review*, 27 (3), 2003, pp 361–387.

- 11 In Al Arqam's own interpretation, Khorasan stretched far beyond Uzbekistan, also including Afghanistan, parts of Iran and Pakistan and extending to Yunnan, China. Darul Arqam, *Timur dan Khurasan dalam Jadual Allah*, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Hikmah, 1992.
- 12 's support of the government's *Pusat Islam* in banning Al Arqam was criticised by Ashari Muhammad, who blamed ABIM's president, Dr Muhammad Nur Manutty, for showing unjustified antagonism towards Al Arqam. Ashari Muhammad & Abuya Sheik Imam, *Assalamualaikum Dato' Seri PM: Surat-surat Kepada Perdana Menteri Malaysia (Jawapan Kepada Tuduhan-Tuduhan)*, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Abuya, 1993.
- 13 Najib Ghadbian, *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in the Arab World*, p 66.
- 14 In a reinterpretation of Ibn Taymiya, Islamists have called for a *Jihad* against secular governments and a totally Islamic order to replace them, as stated by the Egyptian Muhammad 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, 'Al-Farida al-gha'iba' (The missing precept), *Al-Ahrrar*, 14 December 1981, pp 1, 3, 5.
- 15 See al-Hudaybi's writings on Islamic society and governance. Hasan al-Hudaybi, *Du'at la Qudat* (Callers not judges), Cairo: Tarbiya Publishing, 1977.
- 16 Siddiq Fadi's speech during the 17th ABIM General Assembly denotes these discourses as the new universal language of Islamism. *Mengangkat Martabat Umat: Mukhtamar Sanawi ABIM ke-17*, Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1988.
- 17 Raymond Baker, 'Individious comparisons: realism, postmodern globalism and centrist Islamic movements in Egypt', in John Esposito (ed), *Political Islam, Revolution, Radicalism or Reform?*, Cairo: AUC Press, 1997.
- 18 Members of UMNO and PAS had been accusing each other of being 'kafirs' (unbelievers). In Kelantan, PAS's heartland, this had led to the creation of UMNO and PAS mosques and separate cemeteries; dishes cooked by one party and offered to the other were rejected as *haram* (forbidden). See Stark, *Kebangkitan Islam*, p 65.
- 19 The 'caring society' was mentioned for the first time in PAS's manifesto for the 1990 general elections. *Manifesto Pilihanraya 1990: 'Masyarakat Penyayang'*, Kuala Lumpur: PAS, 1990.
- 20 The need for political accountability featured prominently in the more reform-oriented youth wing of PAS, PAS Pemuda. A statement to that extent was made in late 1998. *Kenyataan Ketua Dewan Pemuda PAS Pusat*, 12 December 1998, Kuala Lumpur.
- 21 See points 3 'Kontrak Sosial Menuju Alaf Baru' and 5 'Membina Demokrasi Tulen' in Barisan Alternatif's 1999 election manifesto *Manifesto Bersama, Ke Arah Malaysia Yang Adil*, Kuala Lumpur: Angkatan Edaran Enterprise, 1999, pp 26–37, 40–41.
- 22 In 1985 the former member of the PAS party executive committee, Ustaz Abu Bakar Hamzah, had been expelled from the party and branded a 'kafir' because of his criticism of the PAS leadership which he described as the 'new Ayatollahs'.
- 23 Social mobility and political activism, characterised young Islamists close to the Muslim Brotherhood, as it was described by one of the anonymous authors of the journal *Political Readings*. 'Al-Muhafaza wa-l Taqadum fi Misr: Al-Ihya al-Islami' (Conservatism and progressivism in Egypt: the Islamic revival), *Qira'at Siyasiyya*, 3 (2), 1993, p 19.
- 24 Salah 'Abd-al Karim, *Awraq Hizb al-Wasat al-Misri* (Papers of the Egyptian Wasat Party), Cairo, 1998.
- 25 *Ibid*, p 29.
- 26 See footnotes 2 and 4.
- 27 Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2002, pp 282–292.
- 28 The political development of the militant Islamist is analysed by Rafa't Said Ahmed, 'Al-Islamiyyun: As-Sulta wa-l Unf (The Islamists: power and violence), *Middle East Affairs Journal*, 2 (1), 1994, pp 79–90. The ceasefire of 1997 is discussed in Kepel, *Jihad*, p 297.
- 29 The leadership had then split into two main groups: the European one under the leadership of Osama Rouchdi condemned the 1997 Luxor attacks and called for a ceasefire, while the other group under Rifai Ahmad Taha residing in Afghanistan called for a continuation of the violence.
- 30 In a clash between Ibrahim Libya, the leader of a sufist group, his followers and the police in Memali, Kedah, 18 people were killed in 1985.
- 31 After Mahathir's announcement on 29 September 2001, a brochure was published by the Ministry of Information that outlined the Islamic state concept as seen by UMNO. Because of the controversial status of non-Muslims in this concept, the brochure was later withdrawn. Wan Zahidi Wan The, *Malaysia Adalah Sebuah Negara Islam* (Malaysia is an Islamic State), Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Penerangan, 2001.
- 32 'US embassy under guard, PAS labels Americans "war criminals"', at <http://www.malaysiakini.com>, 8 October 2001.
- 33 Mustafa Kamal Basri, 'Hudud bill passed', *The Star*, 9 July 2002, p 1.
- 34 Joceline Tan, 'PAS moves to spread its wings', *The Star*, 5 October 2003, p 26.

- 35 Devid Rajah, Nick Leong & K Suthakar, 'Ulama Hassan is PAS no 2', *The Star*, 15 September 2003, p 12.
- 36 Anwar Ibrahim, *The Asian Renaissance*, Singapore: Times Books, 1996, describes Anwar's vision of a multi-ethnic democratic civil society in which Islam features prominently.
- 37 'Aiming for change', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 25–31 December 2003, at <http://weekly.ahram.org>.
- 38 'Citizenship dialogue', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 18–24 September 2003.
- 39 Khoo Boo Teik, 'Malaysian politics in 2004: transitions and elections', *Trends in Southeast Asia* (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies), 4, 2004, pp 8–9.
- 40 *The Islamic State Document*, Kuala Lumpur: PAS, 2003.
- 41 'Memorandum Negara Islam—Pemerintahan Islam Dalam Abad ke-21' (Memorandum on Islamic state: Islamic governance in the 21st century), unpublished PAS document.
- 42 Ustaz Badruzaman Yusoff, *Penjelasan Dokumen Negara Islam* (Clarification on the Islamic State Document), Kuala Lumpur: PAS, 2003.
- 43 Haji Abdul Hadi Awang, 'Ucapan Sempena Majlis Pelancaran Dokumen Negara Islam', Speech made in conjunction with the launch of the Islamic State Document, Kuala Lumpur, 2003. Both the Bahasa Malaysia and English versions have been circulated.
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 'Releases and arrests', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 11–17 September 2003.
- 46 'Setting for small steps', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 22–28 January 2004.