

Fall 10-1-2018

# Mahathir's Islam: Mahathir Mohamad on Religion and Modernity in Malaysia

Sven Schottmann

Follow this and additional works at: <https://kahualike.manoa.hawaii.edu/uhpbr>



Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), [Islamic Studies Commons](#), and the [Political Theory Commons](#)

---

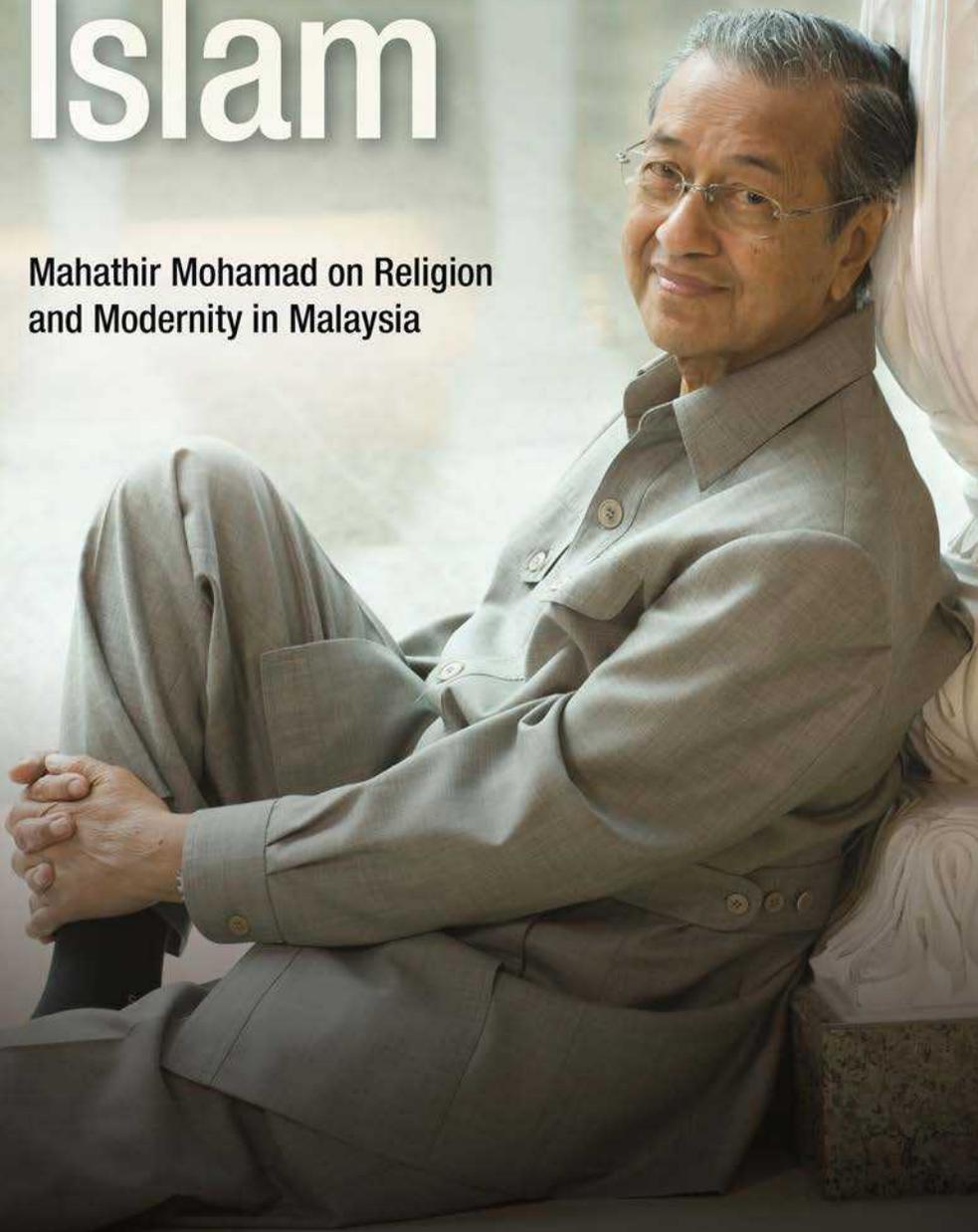
## Recommended Citation

Schottmann, Sven, "Mahathir's Islam: Mahathir Mohamad on Religion and Modernity in Malaysia" (2018). *UH Press Book Previews*. 15.  
<https://kahualike.manoa.hawaii.edu/uhpbr/15>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the University of Hawai'i Press at Kahualike. It has been accepted for inclusion in UH Press Book Previews by an authorized administrator of Kahualike. For more information, please contact [sheila.yeh@hawaii.edu](mailto:sheila.yeh@hawaii.edu).

# Mahathir's Islam

Mahathir Mohamad on Religion  
and Modernity in Malaysia



Sven Schottmann

## **MAHATHIR'S ISLAM**

# MAHATHIR'S ISLAM

*Mahathir Mohamad on Religion  
and Modernity in Malaysia*

**Sven Schottmann**



University of Hawai'i Press  
*Honolulu*

© 2018 University of Hawai'i Press  
All rights reserved  
Printed in the United States of America

23 22 21 20 19 18      6 5 4 3 2 1

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Names: Schottmann, Sven, author.

Title: Mahathir's Islam: Mahathir Mohamad on religion and modernity in Malaysia/Sven Schottmann.

Description: Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, [2018] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018001939 | ISBN 9780824876470 (cloth ; alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Mahathir bin Mohamad, 1925—Religion. | Mahathir bin Mohamad, 1925—Political and social views. | Islam and state—Malaysia. | Malaysia—Politics and government.

Classification: LCC DS597.215.M34 S36 2018 | DDC 959.505/4092—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018001939>

University of Hawai'i Press books are printed on acid-free paper and meet the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Council on Library Resources.

Cover Photo © 2010 Tara Sosrowardoyo. All rights reserved.

# CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	vii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Orthography and Naming Conventions</i>	xiii
<b>Chapter One</b>	
The Mahathir Years	1
<b>Chapter Two</b>	
Maverick, Paradox, Recalcitrant	32
<b>Chapter Three</b>	
The World as Seen from Seberang Perak	60
<b>Chapter Four</b>	
Making Islam Work	89
<b>Chapter Five</b>	
Influences and Impulses	115
<b>Chapter Six</b>	
Explanations and Transformations	143
<b>Chapter Seven</b>	
<i>Akhir Zaman: End Days</i>	169
<i>Notes</i>	189
<i>Bibliography</i>	221
<i>Index</i>	239

## FOREWORD

Majlis Profesor Negara (MPN), or the National Council of Professors, Malaysia, with its 2,200 members representing both public and private universities, launched a special program called the Mahathir Distinguished Fellowship Program (MDFP) in December 2012. The aim of this program is to encourage serious scholars, Malaysians and non-Malaysians, to examine objectively and critically the role played by Malaysia's former prime minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in shaping modern Malaysia and to explore his contributions, as a statesman, to the country, the region, and the world.

From a number of domestic and international nominations, Dr. Sven Alexander Schottmann from the Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe University in Melbourne was chosen as the inaugural recipient of the Mahathir Distinguished Fellowship. The choice was based on his excellent academic record and, particularly, his attractive proposal to focus on Mahathir's Islamic discourse within the broader context of his "modernization project" for Malaysia and especially for the Malays. This book is the product of his effort that began long before he was awarded the fellowship, which allowed him to complete it successfully with the support of a generous grant.

There have been numerous commentaries and op-eds written by academics and journalists from around the world on Mahathir's take on religion. One of the earliest academic papers that analyzed Mahathir's Islam published in the English language was an essay by Diane Mauzy and Robert S. Milne entitled "The Mahathir Administration in Malaysia: Discipline through Islam," published in *Pacific Affairs* in 1983. Most of the content of this essay was later integrated into a book by the same authors entitled *Malaysian Politics under Mahathir*, published by Routledge in 1999, but like many other authors working on Mahathir's engagement with Islam, they depended almost totally on English sources for both their essay and the book. Conversely, most Malay-language essays and books on Mahathir's Islam belong to what might be described as an expanded version of the op-ed genre and tend to rely solely on Malay-language sources.

Dr. Schottmann—with an excellent command of his native German as well as English, Malay-Indonesian, and classical Arabic—has been able to access and use materials on Mahathir and other relevant “Islamic sources” for his analysis that writers before him were not able to do. As a result, his book presents a quality of analysis that has an admirable level of breadth and depth, arguably surpassing even the ones written prior to this on Islam as well as on other aspects of Mahathir’s rule and ideology.

It was a common observation in the 1990s that Mahathir’s so-called Islamic approach led to the intensification of “Islamization” of the national administration and the country as a whole. Based on a sensitive and informed global reading of the ideas of the twentieth-century Muslim modernists, Dr. Schottmann advanced an interpretation and argument that it was Islam in Malaysia that Mahathir modernized, not the other way around. This was accomplished through what he called Mahathir’s “theology of progress,” which provided a wide range of solutions and corrective measures that eventually were implemented.

There is much more that this book offers that deepens our knowledge not only about Mahathir’s pragmatic Islamic orientation but also the many other sociocultural, economic, and political challenges which he had to face and resolve, especially during the critical years of the Asian Financial Crisis and the major political fallout with his erstwhile deputy.

Dr. Schottmann’s book is a must-read not only for those interested in Malaysian studies but also those who are fascinated by Mahathir, who, in the eyes of many—Muslim taxi drivers in Europe included—is a successful and truly modern Muslim democrat of international stature, indeed a statesman.

Datuk Dr. Shamsul A. B.  
Distinguished Professor  
Founding Director, Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA)  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)  
Bangi, March 2014

## PREFACE

Lee Kuan Yew, the long-term leader of postcolonial Singapore and a man with whom the subject of this study shared a relationship comprised in equal parts of respect and dislike, famously joked that even from his sickbed, even from beyond the grave, he would get up and right things for Singapore if he felt something was going wrong. Malaysians didn't even have to wait for a ghostly apparition of their country's longest-ruling prime minister to wade back into Kuala Lumpur's increasingly murky politics, which happened almost immediately after his official retirement. Mahathir Mohamed played a central role in the early demise of his hapless immediate successor Abdullah Badawi and helped install Najib Razak as Malaysia's sixth prime minister—only to emerge subsequently as Najib's most ferocious critic within the ruling party, calling for Najib's removal from office amid creeping authoritarianism and growing evidence of corruption on a scale previously unimaginable even in Malaysia. The nonagenarian's return to politics culminated in the extraordinary May 2018 election victory of Pakatan Harapan, a highly diverse coalition comprised of fellow dissidents from his former political party UMNO, his erstwhile foes from the Chinese-dominated DAP, a splinter party of Malaysia's large Islamic party PAS, and the Anwar Ibrahim-led PKR. Although the longer term viability of Pakatan Harapan remains to be seen, the alliance succeeded in ending fifty-three years of UMNO's dominance over Malaysian politics and captured the imagination of a majority of Malaysians eager for real change.

Mahathir's Malaysia has been a part of my life across three decades. It was the mid-1990s when I first became interested in the bespectacled middle-aged man with the black *songkok* (traditional Malay-Muslim hat) and thin-rimmed glasses, pursed lips half smiling from a portrait hung in the entrance hall of my residential college at the International Islamic University Malaysia. I began to read the available material on Malaysian politics and very soon started stumbling across descriptions of a religious versus secular divide in these scholarly discussions, something that I had difficulty reconciling with what I saw around me in the suffusion of Islam and religious practices even among people who

might think of themselves as secular or not particularly observant. A decade later, I decided to study at greater depth his engagement with religion, which was something previous authors had not been particularly interested in. My decision to write a book on Mahathir as a Muslim thinker—or perhaps better, Muslim statesman—elicited a range of different responses from friends and colleagues. One of my favorites was the sarcastic comment of one my one former college mates, a law graduate from Kelantan, that such a book would probably end up being very short.

Mahathir left office in 2003 as one of the country's most polarizing political figures and returned in 2018 as the apparently universally-admired, putative restorer of Malaysia's democracy. Well before his election victory in 2018, Mahathir had become one of the country's most popular politicians riding a growing wave of nostalgia. As Mahathir established himself as the leading figure of the growing anti-Najib movement, even apologizing for his previous errors, much of the divisiveness of the 1990s and early 2000s was temporarily forgotten amid the euphoria over prospects for a new Malaysia. Public opinion appears to be swinging toward a highly favorable view of Mahathir as the unlikely midwife of democratic reform. However, there are still many Malaysians who hold him responsible for the country's political and economic malaise, and it is important to remember that the emergence of the kleptocratic Najib regime was in large part made possible by the erosion of institutions during Mahathir's first premiership. The writing and analysis on Malaysian politics in the 1980s and 1990s, which tended to be polemical and tendentious rather than reflective or dispassionate, contributed little to constructive debate.

In view of the material to be presented in this study, I believe that a case can be made that neither his supporters nor his detractors have got it right. Mahathir clearly had many flaws as a leader, but it seems to make little sense to seek answers to the question as to whether he was a good or a bad leader. Realistically, any honest answer would invariably involve so much nuance and qualification to be of little use. On the whole, as this book seeks to argue, there was probably an equal measure of "good" and "bad," if one may use such moral terms, in Mahathir's leadership. But the fact that it was his vision for change that has transformed Malaysia so lastingly underscores the importance of exploring this legacy at greater depth and, in particular, his as of yet still understudied engagement with what Islam is—and more importantly, what it should do.

This book represents the culmination of several years of research based at the Monash Asia Institute at Monash University; the Centre for Dialogue at La Trobe University; the Asia Institute at the University of Tasmania; the Arts, Education and Law Group at Griffith University; and extended periods of research in Ma-

aysia. In the course of my study, I have been helped by many people. I am most heavily indebted to Professor Marika Vicziany, Professor Greg Barton, and Dr. Julian Millie, because these three, each in their own way, significantly shaped my thinking about the present subject material, in particular through their encouragement to read about India and Indonesia. At La Trobe University, Professor Joseph Camilleri has provided outstanding support and mentorship for this and all of my other projects over the years: a true scholar and gentleman. Colleagues at La Trobe University as well as outside have also been extremely supportive in helping me complete this book, including Professor Alberto Gomes and Dr. Michális S. Michael from the Centre for Dialogue; Distinguished Professor Datuk Shamsul A. B. and Dr. Khaldun Malek from the Institute for Ethnic Studies at the National University of Malaysia; Professor Abdul Rahman and Dr. Ahmad Zaharuddin Sani Sabri from the Institut Pemikiran; Dr. Mahathir at Universiti Utara Malaysia; as well as Professor Wan Mohamad Nor from the Centre for Advanced Studies on Islam and Civilisation at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

My fieldwork in Malaysia was greatly facilitated by Datuk Badariah Arshad and Cik Zarina Abu Bakar from the Perdana Leadership Foundation in Putrajaya; Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah's personal assistant Cik Rohani; Dr. Syed Ali Tawfik al-Attas and Cik Azla from the Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia; Dr. Syed Farid Alatas from the Department of Malay Studies at the National University in Singapore; and Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Abdul Hamid Othman and Hajjah Azizah at the Department of Religious Affairs in the Prime Minister's Department. Special mention must also go to Dato' Wira Dr. Sharif, who spent many hours with me discussing Kedah history and visiting sights around his beloved hometown of Alor Setar. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir for her forthcoming nature and support. I found homes away from home in the houses of Tomi Soetjipto and Zyen and Julian Hopkins. I would like to thank them and the countless other Malaysians for their generous hospitality.

I would also like to express my gratitude for the funding that was made available for this project, including a Travel Fellowship from the Australia-Netherlands Research Collaboration to conduct research at Leiden University in the Netherlands, support from the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore to travel to Southeast Asia, and the generous grant from the Majlis Profesor Negara. The Monash Asia Institute, the Monash Research Graduate School, and La Trobe University have also been extremely generous in funding repeat research visits to Malaysia and Singapore. I would also like to thank my editor, Pamela Kelley, and her team at the University of Hawai'i Press for their wonderful support in getting this project off the ground. I am equally grateful for the comments of the two anonymous reviewers, which helped strengthen the argument and prose of this effort.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank my wife, Nursyahida, who put up with long hours and sleepless nights and heard much more about Malaysian politics of the 1980s and 1990s than she cared for. It seems to be customary for authors to thank their patient partners, but it is only through Shai's love, patience, unswerving support, and constant encouragement that I was able to see this project to its completion. My major regret is that my father is not around to see this book. Through his decision to uproot his young family to Hong Kong and then Singapore in 1971, he helped first kindle and then encourage my interest in the history and society of the Malay world. I dedicate this book to him as well as to my children, Amira, Imran, and Adnan: children of Asia, Europe, and Australia, and very much the inquiring minds Opa Joe would be proud of.

## ORTHOGRAPHY AND NAMING CONVENTIONS

As there exists no universally accepted system to transliterate Arabic, the romanization of Arabic terms, with which Malaysians are brought into regular contact because of Islam, poses a number of distinct challenges. The convention adopted here is that words found in the *Oxford English Dictionary* will be spelled as they appear there (thus *umma*, *madrassa*, and *jihad*). With the exception of using ‘ to signify the letter ‘*ain* and ’ to represent *hamza*, diacritics are not used. The sign for *hamza* itself is used only when it occurs within a word, not when it occurs at the end. Arabic words that are not commonly used in English but that have entered the Malay lexicon (for instance, *ustaz*, *fardu ain*, and *ayat*) will be italicized and spelled as they appear in the *Kamus Dewan*, published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. All translated passages, unless otherwise indicated, are the work of the individual authors.

A clarification on onomastics may also be in order here. I have chosen to cite and list Malaysian authors and sources by “family” name where applicable or by their given (first) name rather than their second name, except where it is known that the individual author prefers listing by the patronymic. Although I have endeavored to maintain consistency across the chapters, notes, and references, I ask that the reader indulge minor variations.

## CHAPTER ONE

# *The Mahathir Years*

When it is properly understood, and its true precepts are followed, Islam offers a path to enlightenment, to harmony, to stable and responsible government, to progress and to prosperity. . . . We believe that the way we adhere to the essential or fundamental teachings and practice of Islam in Malaysia has contributed to our success as a nation.

—*Mahathir Mohamad (2002)*<sup>1</sup>

The closing decades of the twentieth century saw immense cultural, political, and economic changes leading to the emergence and massive expansion of entirely new social classes, the demographic transformation of cities and countries, the emergence of new conceptions of identity, and human mobility on an unprecedented scale. Scientific breakthroughs and advances in communications technology have dramatically altered—and for the most part improved—our lives and our communities. But these developments have also contributed to profound shifts in society, the precise implications of which we cannot yet comprehend. The speed with which these changes have been taking place has been breathtaking around the world, but the degree to which Southeast Asian societies have been transformed since the 1970s is, quite simply, staggering.

In the span of a single generation, once predominantly rural societies and agricultural economies such as Malaysia became predominantly urban and industrial. Unlike their parents' generation, a majority of Malaysians today live in towns and cities, and the service sector generates more than 60 percent of the gross domestic product. In dollar terms, average household incomes increased eightfold in the thirty years between 1980 and 2010, participation in secondary and tertiary education expanded greatly, and there has been much progress in health indicators such as infant mortality, maternal health, literacy rates, and life expectancy.

Malaysia makes for an ideal case study of this change. The comparatively small Southeast Asian country of some thirty million has tremendous cultural,

religious, and ethnic diversity. Wedged culturally and politically between its much larger neighbors, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines, it witnessed one of the most notable socioeconomic transformations of the late twentieth century. As the glitzy malls around the capital Kuala Lumpur shout to the outside world, Malaysia has made tremendous strides toward the desired status as a developed country.

But problems persist. Amid the endurance of real poverty even in the shadows of gleaming office towers and—much worse—hidden from sight in remote rural communities and plantations, plural Malaysia is seen by some as more divided and polarized today than at any stage of its twentieth-century history. Ethnically segregated schooling has become the norm for an entire generation of Malaysian school students, while the halal-conscious Malay lower middle class fastidiously avoids the Chinese-run *kopi tiam* (coffee shops), extending segregation from the school bench to the dining table. Although a Malaysian identity of some form has emerged over the past sixty years, there appear to be fewer and fewer opportunities for Malaysians—made up of just under 60 percent Malays and other so-called *bumiputeras*, or indigenous people, 24 percent Chinese, 7 percent Indians, and 7 percent other ethnic minorities—to mingle at work and play.

Most worryingly, perhaps, the Malaysian economy has been steadily losing its dynamism over the past decade, and the country appears already caught in the middle-income trap, as its erstwhile languishing and long much poorer neighbors such as Indonesia or Vietnam have begun to surge. It would be a simplification to attribute the many problems besetting present-day Malaysia solely to the leadership of a single man. The reverse, of course, also holds true, and the country's notable transformations cannot be described as the life's work of one person alone, as many of Mahathir's more ardent admirers like to do. There has never been a single driver of Malaysian politics—not even during what are often called the Mahathir years between 1981 and 2003, when despite his preeminence Mahathir was only one among many dramatis personae on the stage of Malaysian politics. His dominance, however, allowed him to become one of the most important architects of Malaysia's post-independence history. In the course of his two decades in the prime minister's office, Mahathir is often said to have "changed not just the face but also the soul of Malaysia."<sup>2</sup>

When he became the country's fourth prime minister on July 16, 1981, few Malaysians would have anticipated the quick pace of the far-reaching transformations he was calling for. Yet many observers at the time sensed that a new era in Malaysian politics had begun under a leader so different in biography, personality, temperament, and ambition from any of his predecessors. More than a decade after formal retirement, the debate over his legacy continues. Depending on whom one is speaking to, he was a visionary leader who set Malaysia on the path

to prosperity and progress—or a parvenu with a massive chip on his shoulder, whose personalized style of politics facilitated corruption in previously unseen proportions. Perhaps it was the mercilessly fast pace of the changes that Mahathir insisted were necessary to transform the country; perhaps it was the forcefulness of his personality and his inability to brook dissent to his vision of a new Malaysia. But even today, many years after he stepped down, Malaysians are still coming to terms with their Mahathir years.

This larger-than-life figure continues to cast long shadows over an increasingly divided country. While Mahathir polarized Malaysians during his twenty-two-year-long prime ministership, the ostensibly retired leader divides public opinion like no other political figure in the country. In 2013, he emerged from some polls as Malaysia's most popular politician, while other Malaysians revile the man they hold personally responsible for the proliferation of astonishing levels of corruption among Kuala Lumpur's political elite, for the viciousness and increasing racialization of political discourse, for a slowing economy bereft of vision, and for the growing incidents of urban violence and insecurity.

Most critically, in the wake of new realities of Chinese-Malaysian voters deserting the long-ruling Barisan Nasional coalition and casting their lot with the opposition Pakatan alliance, which included the Islamic party PAS, Mahathir was posited by critics as a relic of an outdated communitarian mode of thought, out of touch with changing conditions on the ground. In the run-up to the 2013 general election, some pundits even called for Mahathir to be charged with treason over his alleged role in granting identity cards to Indonesian and Filipino migrants in Sabah in the long-standing practice of exchanging citizenship for votes. And yet in Malaysia's momentous fourteenth election in 2018, Mahathir managed to once again reinvent and reposition himself as the most plausible hope for democratization amidst the rose-tinted nostalgia for the days before the scandal-ridden Najib government.

Without doubt, Mahathir continues to shape his complex political legacy in and out of retirement as Malaysia's fourth and now seventh prime minister. The fact that it took a notionally retired, 92-year-old former politician to unseat a ruling party and system of government he had shaped like few others points toward Mahathir's undoubted centrality to Malaysian politics, as well as the dire state of the land.

### **The Good Old Days**

For many Malaysians in their forties, fifties, and sixties, the so-called Mahathir decades of the 1980s and 1990s will always be the golden years. Many seem to

have internalized the idea that the country's best days are behind it. In a society where the wives of senior politicians pay heed (and good money) when a popular Persian-American tarot reader flies in from southern California, where Islamic symbols of state power mix with much older black magic rituals, more than a few attach some belief in the so-called Rahman theory. Reflecting both Malay world conceptions of power inhering or manifesting in inanimate objects and the numerological preoccupations of Sufistic Islam, the name of Malaysia's first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, is often thought to *membawa makna yang tersirat* (contain a concealed meaning). I first encountered this idea in coffee shop conversations in the mid-1990s, when the proper name "Rahman"—in itself also one of Allah's ninety names and therefore imbued with additional significance—was described as being composed of the starting letters of the names of all men ever to be Malaysia's prime minister.

According to this more than slightly obscurantist reading of Malaysia's political history, the Mahathir years, the middle of the Rahman order, would always be the noon zenith before its inexorable decline and ultimate destruction under a leader whose name would start with the letter *N*. What happens after *N* must necessarily be the subject of another inquiry, but throughout this book I concern myself with the Mahathir years and their lasting effect. On the one hand, there are indubitable successes of transforming the country from agricultural backwater reliant on the export of rubber and tin into a regional powerhouse, a manufacturing hub, and one of the world's largest trading nations. On the other hand, while Malaysia has long left behind Ghana, a country to which it was often compared when both became independent in 1957, it has clearly not been able to build on the gains of the 1980s and 1990s.

Although economic growth has continued this century, the last two decades or so have been notably less dynamic and inspiring. The scale of corruption associated with the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) sovereign wealth fund is truly staggering, while lurid tales of political murder have become mainstays. The Malaysian economy has plateaued even as Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam, with their much larger domestic markets, have emerged as increasingly attractive destinations for foreign investment. A case in point might be the much-vaunted national car policy, centrally driven by Mahathir himself and never entirely disbanded by his successors, with Prime Minister Najib only lashing out against Proton in a bid to punish the increasingly recalcitrant Mahathir. Instead of establishing Malaysia as Southeast Asia's car-manufacturing center, protectionism even under Najib's guise of gradual liberalization continues to create immense inefficiencies in what could otherwise have been a very lucrative industrial sector.

The Mahathir years, local shorthand for the two decades between 1981 and 2003, also coincided with a substantial erosion of the country's democratic political culture. This arguably made for some planning efficiencies by cutting out potentially meddlesome opposition to the "mega projects" that were so characteristic of the era. But the authoritarianism of the 1980s and 1990s as well as its enduring echoes in post-Mahathir Malaysia has also left young Malaysians singularly ill-prepared for the imaginative and critical thinking required to thrive in the knowledge-driven economy (k-economy).

A similarly mixed picture emerges for Mahathir's long-standing commitment to raise the living standards of the country's Malay majority, which remains one of Malaysia's most disadvantaged ethnic communities in spite of the country's five-decade-long, large-scale affirmative action program known as the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP has gone some way toward a more equitable distribution of wealth between Malaysians of different ethnic backgrounds, in particular between the *bumiputera* (princes of the soil) majority indigenous to the Malay Archipelago and non-*bumiputera* minority communities descended largely from Indian and Chinese migrants. Many economists, however, now argue that the NEP and its successor policies have become obstacles to achieving greater social justice, that they have created unprecedented intracommunal divisions, and that they are actually stunting Malaysia's economic growth. Substantial revisions are required, possibly along the lines suggested by Anwar Ibrahim, of reformulating the NEP into a genuine pro-poor development policy that would improve the material conditions of poor Malays as much as of poor Chinese, Indians, Eurasians, and the non-Malay *bumiputera* communities of Sabah and Sarawak.

But perhaps the most contentious legacy of the Mahathir government lies in the growing social and political profile of Islam in Malaysia, paralleling similar processes under way in other parts of Muslim Southeast Asia and indeed the wider Muslim world. There have been some efforts under the Najib government that may be seen as reaching out to the country's non-Muslim minority, in particular after the Barisan Nasional's disastrous 2013 performance. But there has been no rescission of his predecessor Mahathir's 2001 declaration that the multi-religious and multicultural Southeast Asian country is not a secular but an Islamic state, with all that this entails.<sup>3</sup> A number of observers now argue that Islam, long seen as a force for unity among the ethnically, culturally, socioeconomically, and geographically disparate Malays, has become a source of division, both within the Muslim community and between Muslims and non-Muslims. Over the past ten years, Malaysia has attracted worrying headlines internationally through firebombings and desecration of places of worship,<sup>4</sup> a drawn-out

and ongoing court dispute over whether Catholics could use the word “Allah” to refer to God in Malay-language publications,<sup>5</sup> the legal odyssey of a former Muslim who wished to strike Islam from her official documents,<sup>6</sup> or several particularly distasteful body-snatching incidents, where corpses of deceased converts to Islam were literally snatched from their grieving non-Muslim kin.<sup>7</sup> Even within Malaysia’s Muslim majority, fissures and divides are clearly emerging, resulting largely from divergent understandings of the role that religion should play in society and in particular from disagreements over the growing policing of the private sphere by state-appointed or at least state-sanctioned religious actors.

Mahathir did not introduce Islam *de novo* into Malaysia’s political landscape, but even cursory comparisons of the beginning and the end of his premiership underscore the transformative effects of his *dasar penerapan nilai-nilai Islam dalam pentadbiran*, or the official policy of “infusing government with Islamic values” launched in early 1983. While there are many Muslim and non-Muslim critics of these policies, this Islamization of educational curricula, the banking system, public broadcasting content, and government protocol were arguably also among some of Mahathir’s most popular policy decisions, earning begrudging kudos even from his most ardent critics in the Islamic opposition. *Dasar penerapan nilai-nilai Islam*, it might be argued, reflected the Malay zeitgeist like none of Mahathir’s other populist initiatives.

Like the Mahathir premiership more generally, the legacy of his engagement with the religion defies easy categorization. But unlike the vision of state-led, export-oriented industrialization,<sup>8</sup> the curtailment of democracy under his increasingly presidential style of leadership,<sup>9</sup> or Kuala Lumpur’s dramatic foreign policy realignments since the late 1970s,<sup>10</sup> the role that Mahathir assigned to religion in his vision for Malaysia’s accelerated development and sociocultural modernization remains underexplored. This study seeks to identify core themes in Mahathir’s representations of Islam and to examine the change and evolution of his ideas. The objective is to make out some of the biographical, spiritual, intellectual, and theological impulses that underpinned Mahathir’s insistence that, “properly understood,” Islam was not an obstacle to growth and progress. What is missing from the growing body of political analyses of Malaysia in the 1980s and 1990s are detailed analyses of what Mahathir himself had to say about religion and its function in a modern and modernizing society. As early as 1948, Mahathir is on record calling for a concerted effort to renew Islamic thought (*pembaharuan*) in order to help facilitate socioeconomic development among the Malay community of the peninsula and enable them to “catch up” with non-Malays.<sup>11</sup> It is precisely this sustained engagement with the sociopolitical imper-

ative of Islam that earned this ostensibly secular leader the admiration of many among the faithful in Malaysia and beyond.

Islam may well be the least studied aspect of Mahathir's politics. For instance, Khoo Boo Teik, in his *Paradoxes of Mahathirism: An Intellectual Biography of Mahathir Mohamad*, discusses the significance of Islam to what he describes as Mahathirism in a single, discrete chapter. Barry Wain, whose book *Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohamad in Turbulent Times* was effectively banned in Malaysia for several years, likewise assigns only one rather short chapter to discussions of Mahathir's encounter with Islam. The other significant studies on the presence of Islam in Mahathir's political rhetoric are all article length, including notable contributions by Meredith Weiss, Patricia Martinez, and Ooi Kee Beng.<sup>12</sup> Ismail Ibrahim's *Pemikiran Dr Mahathir tentang Islam* introduces readers to some general themes in Mahathir's "thoughts on Islam." But the author, who was also the founding director of the government-linked Institute for Islamic Understanding, relies only on a select number of speeches from the late 1990s. He does not provide an analysis of the evolution of Mahathir's public religious discourse or of the sources, influences, and motivations that informed his particular emphasis on this or the other aspect of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. A further drawback is that the book ignores some of the very problematic aspects of Mahathir's thought, including its racialized undertones or his prickly relationships with the 'ulama, the learned scholars of Islam.

What makes Mahathir interesting as a figure in the political history of the late twentieth-century Muslim world is certainly not philosophical rigor or scholarly learning. He also cannot, as one must readily admit, be considered a particularly original thinker. His religious discourse was marked by the fusion and blending of different, disparate, and sometimes plainly contradictory strands of Islamic thought. But it was Mahathir's willingness to engage seriously with Islam and to countenance a more prominent place for the religion at the highest levels of the postcolonial polity, the economy, and the system of international finance that set him apart from many of his contemporaries in the prime ministers' or presidential offices of the Muslim world. Mahathir had little by way of formal training in religious sciences and cannot be thought of as a conventional bearer of sacred knowledge in Malay-Muslim society. Yet his name resonated with many at home and many more abroad as a leader willing to think seriously about Islam's role in the modern world, willing to question the West's hegemonic claim to a singular modernity, and willing to contemplate alternative models of development.

This book seeks to provide a comprehensive account of the representations an ostensibly secular leader from the 1980s and 1990s made of the proper place

of religion in the modern world. It seeks to identify core themes and trace the change and evolution of his public statements against some of the larger intellectual developments, socioeconomic transformations, and geopolitical processes within which his engagement with Islam must be located. None of this is to imply that one can take Mahathir the politician to have been driven by a religious or spiritual motivation: there are actually weighty arguments against coming to such a conclusion. As is clear to most observers, Islam often provided critical stabilization and additional cultural legitimization to his increasingly authoritarian rule. In seeking to encompass and understand his public religious discourse, one must remain mindful of the political contexts and the larger sociohistorical processes that accompanied this ethnonationalist politician's very public embrace of Islam after the middle to late 1970s.

But relying on explanations that focus on external political factors driving his discourse alone limits our ability to plumb the depths of his intellectual encounters with his faith. Mahathir clearly pursued political objectives in setting himself up as the exponent and spokesperson of a pragmatic and worldly Islam. However, there is more to this than mere expediency. Mahathir was not so much the initiator or originator of calls to Islamize banking, education, and the legal system as their single most significant sponsor among Muslim political leaders of the period. He was viewed by many in the 1980s as the most sympathetic of Muslim leaders to such causes as the Islamization of knowledge<sup>13</sup> and the other challenges to the West's hegemony over the theories and models of modernization and development. Many of his ardent supporters would be bitterly disappointed over the course of his premiership, and his credentials as an Islamic leader were severely tarnished by the time he finally stepped down in 2003. But his promise to establish in Malaysia the world's first truly modern Muslim state was greeted with much enthusiasm when he entered office in 1981—not just in Malaysia but around the world. This underscores the extent to which it is possible and legitimate to conceive of Mahathir as a significant figure in the Muslim world's postcolonial political history.<sup>14</sup>

### Localizing Universalisms

"Doctor M," as he is still often called, saw himself first and foremost as a nationalist. "I am a Malaysian nationalist," he told me when I asked him to describe his political worldview. His elementary ideological-political predisposition is probably best encompassed by Anthony Milner's term, "*bangsa*-minded."<sup>15</sup> Mahathir was driven, above all else, by the quest to restore the dignity and sovereignty of the Malay nation, the *bangsa Melayu*, in their now independent homelands after

more than five hundred years of meddling by foreigners in the *tanah Melayu*, the Malay lands. To most *bangsa*-minded, being Malay was synonymous with being Muslim, and like many of them, Mahathir gravitated toward the conservative, ethnonationalist United Malays National Organization. UMNO, it was felt, was able to harness the unifying force of Islam without the flirtation with leftist ideologies or the perceived diminution of race at the hands of its more religiously inclined breakaway faction, the predecessors of Malaysia's Islamic Party PAS (Parti Islam Semalaysia/All-Malaysian Islamic Party).<sup>16</sup> However, when Mahathir exhibited as prime minister a willingness to contemplate a far more prominent public role for Islam than any of his predecessors, he was able to counter, to some extent at least, PAS's argument that the UMNO leadership was insufficiently committed to upholding the teachings and precepts of the faith.

This study takes Mahathir seriously as the leader of a late twentieth-century Muslim-majority country, engaged in a conversation (with coreligionists as much as with non-Muslims) about the intellectual heritage of Islamic civilization, about the religion's ethical precepts, its laws, its views of the place of humankind in creation, and indeed its merits in the modern world. This allows us to obtain an account of his premiership as well as his personality from the increasingly salient but until now neglected perspective of Islam. A number of insightful accounts of the Mahathir years have been published over the past decade.<sup>17</sup> There is still, nonetheless, a marked reluctance in this material to approach Mahathir as an agent of late twentieth-century Islamic thought. Instead, much of the extant scholarship emphasizes the role of the man who used to be his deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, or that of his successor, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. But in view of Mahathir's centrality in the shaping of Malaysia's public discourse on Islam in the 1980s and 1990s, it would seem reasonable to take seriously what he said about the religion. The objective is not to return to essentialist arguments about the allegedly immutable nature of Islam but to understand the role of religion in the modernizing discourse of one of Asia's most significant but also polarizing and controversial twentieth-century leaders. Tracing the path by which he arrived at his views can help provide a more nuanced understanding of transformative effects of Mahathir's two decades in power.

It is inadequate to argue that Mahathir, often described one dimensionally and without much nuance as a secularist, was simply forced to respond to the rising popularity of the Islamic party PAS, and that he sought to do so through a game of one-upmanship. Joseph Liow's *Piety and Politics in Malaysia* goes some way toward explaining the multilayered complexity of Mahathir's religious turn. Indeed, the far more relevant question to ask is why initiatives such as "Islamizing" educational curricula or the setting up of ambassadorial-level relations with

the Palestinian Liberation Organization received such enthusiastic support in the first place. There is much insight in Chandra Muzaffar's and Judith Nagata's accounts of Malaysian Muslim politics in the 1980s, including their observations that Islamization helped underscore Malay claims to political primacy in the multicultural polity.<sup>18</sup> But even these studies seem to ignore the particularly Islamic sensitivities that underlie these demands. Why were there these demands for more Islam, and why were many Muslims in Malaysia asking for notably similar things as their brethren in countries as diverse as Indonesia, Egypt, and Turkey? The bulk of the existing scholarship points to such factors as political repression or socioeconomic inequalities, yet persuasive accounts for the specifically *Islamic* character of Muslim world politics remain few and far between.

Islam in postcolonial Malaya/Malaysia<sup>19</sup> has long had an ethnopolitical dimension, the result of the country's demographic peculiarities. But long-standing demands for halal banking, for a school curriculum that makes more reference to Asian and Islamic history than the history of the British Empire, for the construction of more places of worship, and for a government that does not serve alcohol at its official functions sprang deeply from Muslim sensitivities. As many of these demands had parallels in other Muslim countries as well, Islamization policies should not be reduced to cynical attempts at outmaneuvering domestic political opponents. Malaysia's Islamic turn under the Mahathir government cannot be explained away entirely as religiously colored manifestations of Malay ethnonationalism. These policies responded to something emanating from postcolonial Malay-Muslim society in Malaysia, including the wish for the a priori Malay state to be more reflective of the values, beliefs, practices, and aesthetics of its majority population. These demands were amplified by a range of factors, such as growing levels of participation in secondary and tertiary education or widespread resentment over Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian lands. But there was more to Malaysia's Islamization than cynical manipulation of popular sentiment, and there was more to Mahathir's engagement with the precepts of Islam than mere instrumentalism.

This study seeks to contribute to the growing body of studies of contemporary Muslim politics. In attempting to reconstruct an interior view of Mahathir, a figure from what is sometimes still described as the periphery of the Islamic world, this book traces the political-historical milieu from which his ideas emerged and against which they must be read. But there are also much more practical considerations. Unlike most of the figures associated with the late twentieth-century revitalization of Islamic thought, Mahathir was first and foremost a politician. What strategies did he have to pursue in order to establish his credentials to speak about the desired relationship between Islam and society, an

area of knowledge conventionally considered the preserve of the religiously educated and other bearers of sacred knowledge? How did factionalism in the ruling UMNO limit or affect his ability to state his views? How did the UMNO's non-Malay coalition partners respond to his version of Islamization? How did Mahathir's concepts differ from those espoused by other UMNO leaders, or even those of the Islamist opposition assembled in PAS and the multiethnic but predominantly Malay-Muslim PKR (Parti Keadilan Rakyat/People's Justice Party)? What role did the significant Chinese, Indian, and non-Muslim *bumiputera* communities, representing more than a third of Malaysia's population, play in the formulation of Mahathir's views on Islam and politics?

It is this study's major aim to uncover the archaeology of Mahathir's ideas and to then link them with parallel processes elsewhere in the Muslim world, including Indonesia, the Middle East, Pakistan, and Turkey, but also diaspora communities in the West.<sup>20</sup> It does so by tracing the theological, jurisprudential, and historical validation he sought for his arguments. Did he privilege particular *fahaman* or *aliran pemikiran* (i.e., understandings or leanings) within Islam, and if yes, why did he choose to do so? How did these *fahaman* manifest themselves in his public or private statements? What other influences are detectable in Mahathir's pronouncements on Islam? For example, how was the early twentieth-century modernist movement reflected in his representations of "properly understood" Islam? What about any intellectual and imaginative impact from the so-called Islamic revival that is often described as having swept Malaysia and many other parts of the Muslim world after the 1970s? What about the emerging discourse often—rather problematically—described as post-Islamism?<sup>21</sup> How were these influences modulated into Malaysia, and by what processes did they become domesticated or Malaysianized in Mahathir's public rhetoric?

Though a major motif of Mahathir's political discourse, Islam was not dominant, and just under half of his significant speeches mention the religion at all. It was the primary subject of just over 5 percent of all of his speeches. Does that mean, however, it is possible to conclude that Islam was unimportant to his vision for Malaysia's modernization? There are three reasons against arriving at such a viewpoint. First, Islam and its role in modern Malaysia clearly exercised Mahathir in persistent ways, and an almost missionary zeal of inculcating a "proper understanding" of Islam among the Malays was a constant of his political rhetoric across many decades. Second, there was an organic relationship between his overarching politico-ideological concern for the Malays' socioeconomic modernization and what he perceived to be the transformative powers of Islam. Third, the fault lines that have opened up in Malaysian society (both within the Muslim community and between Muslims and non-Muslims) have been driven

by disagreements as to the rightful political role of Islam. Mahathir played a central role in the evolution of these debates, and the representations he made of religion as Malaysia's most influential political leader can therefore scarcely be ignored.

Exploring Mahathir from the perspective of his grappling with the question of what role Islam could and should play in modern Malaysia is unlikely to resolve the inconsistencies, contradictions, and paradoxes that have exasperated more than a few of his biographers. But it can provide fresh insights into Malaysia's Mahathir era and its enduring and highly divisive legacy from a different and fresh perspective. In providing an account of the twenty-two-year-long Mahathir rule through his own views and statements on Islam, this book goes beyond the more familiar approaches that stress authoritarian control, communalist politics, or economic development policies. Its analysis relies in equal measure on Mahathir's own statements and published writings and the actual impact of the policies that his government implemented. On account of the many indications that his government's Islamic policy was centrally inspired by his understanding of *sesuai* and *berpatutan* (suitable or appropriate) interpretations of Islam, it is worthwhile to analyze the connections between the evolving public character of Malaysia's state religion and Mahathir's encounter with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

### **Islam and the Movement of History**

Well into the 1970s and 1980s, prophecies as to the imminent death of religion were commonplace. The movement of history seemed to point toward a global convergence on the secular, capitalist, liberal democratic model. Any difficulties in applying this model to the newly independent states of Asia and Africa were explained as stemming from the persistence of premodern culture in these places. Social commentators were virtually at one in arguing that the rise of the modern state in the Third World, coupled with material progress, would eventually give rise to more recognizably modern forms of politics there as well. Scientific rationalism and advances in technology would help transform even such stubbornly religious backwaters as the Iberian Peninsula or Eastern Europe. Though not peculiar to the formal study of societies, such singular conceptions of modernity led to widespread assumptions that economic progress would help replicate the sociocultural formations and political conditions it had produced in countries that had been the first to industrialize. As was assumed to have happened in Western Europe (erroneously, as it turns out), religious beliefs and

practices would gradually fade under the combined pressures of urbanization, bureaucratization, and the market.

Long-held assumptions of Western social science that a privatization of religion was a defining quality of—or perhaps even an essential precondition for—modernity are now the subject of serious questioning. Many of these assumptions have been shown to be manifestations of the particular circumstances and conditions peculiar to post-Enlightenment Western European Christendom. Over the past ten to twenty years, scholars representing a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds have pointed to a revitalization of religion in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>22</sup> The emergence of new religious thinkers and activists in the Muslim world is particularly well documented,<sup>23</sup> but even the traditionally educated ‘ulama or religious scholars, long thought to be redundant and anachronistic, have experienced a notable revival over the past three to four decades.<sup>24</sup>

The evidence for an ongoing and wider revitalization of religion (even if this should not be understood as a return to the old in any way) is compelling. It has been marshaled from many different regions and for many different faiths, ranging from the growing influence of evangelical Protestantism over US politics to the rise of Hindutva in India. Even Europe, home to some particularly stringent variants of political secularism, has not been immune. The extraordinary post-Soviet resurgence of Russian orthodoxy is perhaps the most commonly cited example pointing to a resurgence of Christianity, but other notable indicators include the more than a million largely youthful pilgrims who attended Pope Benedict XVI’s closing mass at the 2005 World Youth Day in Cologne, or the unprecedented popularity of New Age spirituality in once solidly Catholic Italy. The Eastern European countryside increasingly bears the tell-tale signs of Pentecostal church architecture—soaring glass fronts, triangular roofs, and all—and there is clear evidence pointing to a growing religiosity among non-Christian Europeans, such as the Muslim minorities of Britain, France, and the Benelux states.<sup>25</sup>

Mahathir’s engagement with Islam must be read against the historical context of this wider late twentieth-century resurgence of religion in general and the post-1970s Islamic revival in particular. Although initially often seen as a rejection of modernization, as an irrational or antimodern movement, the multiple voices associated with the resurgence of Islam have, in fact, sought to articulate distinctly *modern* critiques of Western-dominated modernity, proposing a range of “Islamic” alternatives to the theories and practices of modernization and development. Mahathir’s engagement with Islam coincided with this period of intellectual reinvigoration. The years of his premiership saw, in some ways, the realization of a number of the reform programs that had been envisaged by the

Malay world's modernist movement half a century earlier (see chapter 5). The period of the 1980s and 1990s can also be identified as coinciding with the transformation of Malay world Islam from a primarily cultural signifier, associated with life cycle rituals, the daily prayers of the faithful, and the Ramadan fast, into a socioeconomic and political identity. While more than a few Malaysian Muslims envisaged the creation of a theocratic *negara Islam*, or Islamic State in the mold of an Islamic republic, many others began working to bring about the desired Islamic order (i.e., the *masyarakat madani* project later associated with Anwar Ibrahim) through civil society activism.

The deepening profile of Islam in Malaysian politics and wider society over the past couple of decades has attracted keen scholarly interest.<sup>26</sup> But few observers have been unequivocal in stating that increasing levels of religious observance, as well as the more privileged position that the Malaysian state has accorded Islam, are not in and of themselves necessarily corrosive to Malaysian democracy. Many, in fact, have argued that these developments undermine conceptions of equal citizenship or inclusive notions of national identity, and that the growing role played by Islam militates against an independent judiciary, a free press, and a free and fair electoral system. Pronouncements as to the compatibility or otherwise of Islam and democracy are unlikely to reflect anything other than the personal viewpoint of the one speaking. But it behooves us to take seriously the assertion of many Malaysian Muslims that their religion constitutes an all-encompassing way of life. The demand for religion to play a more prominent role in shaping and molding society is not necessarily limited to those voting for Islamic parties, either. In a broader sense, even as key thinkers of the Islamic movement in the 1990s and 2000s have put forward more innovative and dynamic responses to the challenges facing their societies, the very idea of secularism is undergoing a reformulation.<sup>27</sup>

As Robert Bellah, José Casanova, T. N. Madan, Shmuel Eisenstadt, and others have shown, religion can be a force for civility, facilitate the establishment of democratic forms of governance, and help resist the coercive hegemonies of market and state.<sup>28</sup> These observations are particularly relevant for Malaysia, where “many Muslims continue to look to their religion for the principles of public order as well as personal spirituality.”<sup>29</sup> The lack of enthusiasm for secularism among many Malaysian Muslims arises not so much from the inability to distinguish between temporal and spiritual power—a lived reality of Islamic civilization for nearly 1,400 years. Rather, it arises from what many have argued is the impossibility of reducing Islam to matters of a personal, privatized spirituality. Talal Asad insists that the very idea of religion as a separate, sacred life sphere is itself a construction of Western modernity.<sup>30</sup> The complex processes playing out

across the Muslim world, including the spectacular events unfolding in Arab countries, are not at all about whether Islam will play a central role in shaping these societies but *what kind* of role it will play. Asad argues that Islam should not be viewed as a static entity, as a closed system, but rather as a dynamic movement, fluid and subject to change across geographical space and time over the past fifteen centuries. Muslims insist that Islam is an all-encompassing way of life with relevance and application, not limited to spirituality and worship but as something interwoven into society and culture.

Many proponents associated with what has been called liberal Islam have argued that so-called political Islam represents an illegitimate or ahistoric protrusion of religion into secular public space. There exists no single orthodox position on what constitutes legitimate political authority or of the rightful relationship between religion, state, and society, and over the centuries jurists, theologians, and philosophers representing a wide range of schools of thought have put forward some startlingly different answers to this question. Yet many of the individuals associated with the modern-day liberal project seem rather indifferent to the serious misgivings many of their coreligionists have about the appropriateness of secularism as a guiding principle of communal life. These hesitations should not be dismissed as modern apologist obsessions, manifestations of the deficiencies of contemporary Muslim thought, or even erroneous understandings of Islamic teachings and history. Abdal Hakim Murad, a Cambridge-based scholar trained in the classical Islamic sciences, does not question the relevance of Islamic law to contemporary Muslim societies but points to the difficulty of reconciling the intrusive, controlling bureaucratic state with classical manifestations of the relationship between religion, society, and the polity, characterized by minimal interference from the center, the absence of codified law, and *qadis* or *muftis* dispensing justice at a local, personalized level.<sup>31</sup>

The practice of Islam and the manifestation of being Muslim is always shaped by historical conditions, social location, and geography, and reference to religion alone is insufficient to explain the complexity of political processes in Muslim societies. But this observation should not blind us to the existence of a range of spatially and temporally independent beliefs and practices that together constitute Islam, not an “unchanging and essentially ‘other’ . . . but the practices and everyday lives of persons describing themselves as Muslims.”<sup>32</sup> The suggestion that the concept of a single Islam must be abandoned in favor of a multiplicity of small-letter *islams* comes across as “high-minded *Besserwisserei*, or conceptual violence.”<sup>33</sup> Asad’s suggestion to approach Islam as a discursive tradition may be a more helpful starting point. He cautions about measuring the beliefs and

practices of individual Muslim communities against Islam's founding texts, the various golden ages of Islamic civilization, or some other perceived notion of orthodoxy; instead, Islam should be seen as a broad discourse "that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present."<sup>34</sup> More than a fifth of humanity identifies as Muslim, and Islam remains a powerful force pervading the daily lives of several hundreds of millions of people. They are at least as aware as the anthropologist studying them of theological and doctrinal differences with others who also call themselves Muslims. Yet there is the reality of Islam, "a norm that has displayed various modes of development, [but] always within the possibilities inherent in that reality and according to its principles."<sup>35</sup>

The spate of arson attacks on sacred places in Malaysia in 2010 and 2011 revealed an uncivil and exclusionary face of Malaysian Islam. But as Mahathir argued, both as prime minister and since retirement, the best way of addressing these problems does not lie in calling for the emancipation of the polity from the religious norms and values of its increasingly observant Muslim majority. Mahathir suggested that Islam could, in fact, play a major role in modulating civility into the public sphere. Islam in Malaysia is already well under way in its transformation from a primary association with communitarian identity into the vehicle for a political consciousness able to resist the inhuman logic of the market and the authoritarian state. To illustrate this, both UMNO and PAS have over the past two decades moved to emphasize universalism, justice, and the true equality of humankind as core themes in Islamic scriptures. No tradition is inherently democratic or authoritarian, and the myths and founding texts of any religion can be mobilized toward either democratic or authoritarian ends. But in view of the reality that a growing majority of Malaysians professes Islam, and that many other Malaysians have begun turning toward Islam, modern Malaysian conceptions of state must necessarily and can legitimately incorporate the political aspirations of the growing Muslim majority.<sup>36</sup>

## Trajectories

A significant subset of the literature on contemporary Islamic political thought is marked by what may be called the "failure" thesis. Books and essays with such titles as the *Crisis of Modern Islam* and *What Went Wrong* advance the idea that there existed a fundamental dissonance between Islam and modern ways of organizing the polity, including the territorial nation-state, popular sovereignty, the equality of citizens, the rule of law, and democracy.<sup>37</sup> All of these are deemed to be incompatible with Islamic visions of political community, which in turn

are described as requiring a profound modernization to open the requisite intellectual space for the articulation of critiques of the entrenched patriarchy, sultanism, or even the formulation of a moral-ethical framework beyond the shari‘a. That well-known personages of the twentieth-century Islamic movement rejected democracy as a form of prostitution (Khomeini) or insisted that popular sovereignty was an unlawful usurpation of the divine prerogative (Qutb) lent further weight to the incompatibility or failure thesis, strengthening the convictions of those holding that the religion and culture played a role in the endurance of authoritarian regimes across the Muslim world.

A growing body of literature guarding against such reductionist views began emerging in the late 1970s. Left-leaning academics and social commentators, including such figures as Edward Said and Rashid Khalidi, have pointed toward the disrupting effects of colonization or cynical big-power machinations in stunting the growth of democratic political structures in the countries of the Muslim world. A few observers described the rise of so-called political Islam as an aberration reflecting the extent of the eroded cultural positions of traditional elites in many Muslim societies,<sup>38</sup> or as something resulting largely from external influences such as the closure of mosques, assassinations, or exclusion from the political process.<sup>39</sup> But there still are only a few scholars who are pointing out the democratic potential inherent to Islam and that religion could be harnessed to help consolidate the people’s aspirations for participatory government, rule of law, and notions of good governance.<sup>40</sup>

Most studies of Muslim politics start with the challenge represented by the Prophet Muhammad’s passing. There is good reason to begin there, as many of the Muslim world’s ongoing debates on the compatibility of Islam, constitutionalism, parliamentary democracy, the territorial nation-state, and nationalism are given shape by the rich heritage of Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy. The precise nature of political authority remains subject to intense debate, not only between Sunnis and Shiites but also between so-called traditionalists and reformists, between secularists and advocates of an Islamic state, or plainly between individuals with authoritarian and those with politically inclusive instincts. There is enduring disagreement over whether and how the Islamic faith can or needs to be reconciled with some of the basic organizing principles of the modern state, even whether or not an Islamic worldview recognizes at all any separation between sacred and profane life spheres. A *de facto* decoupling of spiritual authority from temporal power occurred soon after the passing of the Prophet, but sovereignty remains one of the most contentious subjects in contemporary Islamic political thought—both in the sense of regret many Muslims express about political fragmentation and lack of unity but, more significantly,

also in political implications of literal interpretations of the Qur'anic dictum that sovereignty belongs to God alone.

Political philosophy as it developed in the Muslim world between the ninth and eleventh centuries CE was essentially descriptive and tasked with providing justification for precedent rather than with envisaging the ideal polity. Works in the classical mirror genre, the better-known examples of which include those of Mawardi (d. 1058) and Nizam al-Mulk (d. 1092), were often written under princely duress, as their authors were wont to admit. These treatises did not seek to transcend prevailing political circumstances marked by civil wars, heterodoxies, jostling for power among non-Arab converts, and the rise of contending centers of power such as the Seljuks or the Fatimids. The political realities of the era, including the practical secularization of political and religious spheres, led scholars such as Mawardi, author of *Al-Ahkam al-sultaniyya* (The Laws of Governance), to conclude that “the state was not a direct expression of Islam, but a secular institution whose duty it was to uphold Islam. [This] was the Islam that saw holiness and religion incompatible with state politics,” which “were expected to be violent and corrupt.”<sup>41</sup> The minimum expectation of the ruler became that he defended orthodoxy and protected the community of the faithful against attacks from without. The Sunni caliphate, unlike the Shia imamate, thus was “relieved of all metaphysical sanction.”<sup>42</sup> Although the famous Shafiite jurist al-Ghazali (d. 1111) suggested that a ruler should aspire to justice and keep the company of the learned and the pious, the maintenance of the status quo soon became the supreme, all-overarching objective of Sunni political philosophy.

The arrival of Islam into maritime Southeast Asia is most commonly dated to after the fall of the Abbasid caliphate in the thirteenth century. Unlike Islam's initial expansion into Byzantine and Sassanid lands, into Egypt, Sindh, and North Africa, the Islamization of Southeast Asia, like most post-Abbasid expansion more generally, occurred largely by the peaceful and gradual means of what Nehemia Levtzion has aptly described as a process of adhesion, whereby groups embraced Islam without immediately adhering absolutely to all its prescriptions.<sup>43</sup> Even after pork had joined the lists of the forbidden foods and even after Arabic names had become widespread, the propitiation of Hindu-derived deities on auspicious occasions had thus not ceased in totality, and there was generally no concerted effort to proscribe or limit animistic practices and beliefs standing in some tension with Islam's monotheistic teachings. Paralleling developments in coastal East Africa, the Balkans, and Central Asia, where conversions to Islam are still ongoing processes rather than distinct events, Islam and Southeast Asia's pre-Islamic cultures very gradually blended into distinct syntheses.

Over the course of the past six to seven centuries, the political culture of the Malay world became suffused and enmeshed with Islamic legal concepts and vocabulary, creating not so much layers of veneers as a patchwork quilt. Muslim-ruled sultanates such as Pasai, Aru, Malacca, Demak, and Banten, which began replacing the region's Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms starting with the thirteenth century, helped diffuse Islamic notions of right conduct across the archipelago.<sup>44</sup> Anthony Milner argues that Persianized concepts of Islamic kingship were intrinsically attractive to rulers whose territories were fractured by geography and who were engaged in constant conflict with competitors from beyond the realm, the outlying districts, and even from within the palace grounds themselves.<sup>45</sup> Turning to supernatural forces and appropriating the symbolic language of Islam helped undergird the legitimacy of monarchs whose claims were seldom uncontested. Islam became absorbed into the Indic-derived political cosmology of the pre-Islamic Malay state, the ruler embodying the cosmic truth and virtue of both the *devaraja* and the *khalifa*. Between the period of the increasingly rapid diffusion of Islam and the arrival of European colonizers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Southeast Asian Islam became firmly linked with the position of the sultan. But as Milner reminds us, the prominence given to the Muslim rulers of Southeast Asia "was far from unique in the Muslim world," which contemporary observers "might have perceived . . . as an expanding galaxy of monarchies, many of which asserted lofty spiritual claims."<sup>46</sup>

The European diplomats, missionaries, merchants, and adventurers that began visiting and residing in Muslim lands in greater numbers beginning with the nineteenth century are often seen as the originators of still widespread assumptions about the difficulty to reconcile Islam with modernity. Reference to the irredeemable obscurantism of Muslims has given way in recent decades to a considered approach more cognizant of the ease with which millions of them have been able to combine faith with new technologies and ideas. The works of Chandra Muzaffar, Khaled Abou el-Fadl, Amina Wadud, and Tariq Ramadan have shown the Qur'an to have no more pro- or antipluralist proclivities than the *Bhagavad Gita* or the New Testament. Some commentators still harbor culturalist doubts, but many more point to Indonesia and Turkey to argue that growing commitment to Islam need not be an obstacle to democratic rule. This line of argument received further reinforcement by the revolutionary movements of the Arab world, where the first free elections in generations have invariably brought to power religiously observant actors. While Islam need not be an obstacle to democracy, it can be a modulator of conceptions of good governance and can provide autochthonous justifications that are likely to be far more persuasive

than the enforced, arbitrary, and authoritarian modernization exercises of Iran under the shah, Soviet Central Asia, early republican Turkey, or Habib Bourguiba's Tunisia.

Those academic commentators advancing the argument that Muslims face a stark choice between democracy and theocratic authoritarianism have been less adamant after the publication of works such as Robert Hefner's *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* and Nader Hashemi's *Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy*. There is still, however, among many contributors a notable tendency to perceive liberal democracy in its Western European or North American guises as a universally valid ideal and as something that—even if with the requisite Islamic coloration—Muslims should find compatible with their faith and as something they should aspire to. Little thought is given to the vast middle ground between the equally exclusivist secular and Islamist conceptions of the state, or to the possibility that Muslim thinkers might instantiate entirely new models of the polity, as of yet unknown or “inchoate superior alternatives to secularism,” as Scott Morrison puts it.<sup>47</sup> The dismissive essentialism of neo-orientalism has become increasingly unfashionable, but while Nader is right in pointing out that the modern polity in the Muslim world must enter through the gates of religion, it seems just as problematic to assume that once Muslim-majority countries have stepped through this door, their democracies must resemble liberal-secular models in their conception of the desirable relationship between religion, state, and society.

It is worth stating at the outset that Malaysia under Mahathir cannot be considered as having met many of even the most elementary measures of a desirable polity—whether judged against Islamic or Western standards. In the face of the country's dramatically deepening social inequalities and a revelation of increasingly spectacular corruption scandals involving the highest levels of authority, Mahathir's 2001 declaration that Malaysia already constituted an Islamic state was met with derision by many in the Muslim community, quite apart from the frosty reception it received among most non-Muslim Malaysians. But the Mahathir government, in taking notable steps toward normalizing Islam in postcolonial Malaysia and according the religion a more privileged public role, provided a wide range of Muslim social actors with the space to articulate legitimate critiques of the authoritarian or discriminatory status quo. As some of the later chapters in this book elaborate, this openness enabled Muslims to emerge as vocal advocates of political transparency and helped bring about (even if quite unintentionally) orthodox articulations of a democratic polity reflective of Islamic norms and cognizant of the conservative values of its Muslim majority.

Malaysia's evolution toward a more inclusive society is no more complete than that of Australia, France, or Germany, or for that matter those of Indonesia or Turkey, two Muslim-majority states often described as examples of the relatively successful integration of Islam, democracy, and secularism. Neither Indonesia nor Turkey is stationary in its political culture, and both have experienced what may be described as a normalization of Islam in postcolonial political discourse over the past twenty years. The Australian scholar of Indonesia, Greg Barton, is right in pointing to the poor electoral performance of Islamic parties in Indonesia, but it is important to recall that the Indonesian state, both during the last Suharto years and in the post-Reformasi phase, has displayed much greater flexibility in catering to a wider range of Muslim actors.<sup>48</sup> The Indonesian state's newfound ability to accord greater space for public recognition of Islamic precepts and practices has obviated the need of many to vote for specifically Islamic parties in order to ensure such basic entitlement issues as religious education of children, the construction of mosques, and allowing female Muslim civil servants to wear the headscarf. Overall, the institutional arrangements and social realities of post-New Order Indonesia are arguably more deserving of the adjective "nonsectarian" rather than secular.<sup>49</sup> Turkey's experience under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) (at least during its initial decade in power) evinces certain parallels.

Political predictions are notoriously difficult to make, but it seems safe to say that the Barisan Nasional's social contract has been in a process of unraveling. The Mahathir era's bargain of political quietude for prosperity also no longer holds true. What type of polity will evolve from the crumbling edifice of UMNO's rule is impossible to say, but it is likely that Islamic actors from Anwar Ibrahim's multicultural PKR (Parti Keadilan Rakyat/People's Justice Party) and even more significantly, PAS, will contribute to the shaping of Malaysia's political future. It is not unlikely that Islam may emerge as an even stronger cultural modulator of notions of good government, rule of law, and social justice, even if the repositioning of Islam in Malaysia into an emancipatory and politically inclusive public religion is by no means a foregone conclusion. The curious role that Mahathir played in making such an outcome possible at all needs to be recognized, even if, as chapter 7 argues, this may have been largely the unintended consequence of his government's individualizing and individually empowering religious discourse. While there are other factors that help explain the rise of what has been called a "Muslim Democratic" discourse in Malaysia, the role played by the Mahathir government in the lead-up to this rather notable realignment must be more meaningfully explored.

## The Individual as a Unit of Analysis

Why has Mahathir himself so rarely been the focus of the extant literature on Islam in Malaysian politics? There appear to be at least three reasons for this. The first is the enduring secular paradigm. The attention of both scholarly and journalistic observers has tended to center on Mahathir's erstwhile deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, or his successor, Abdullah Badawi, and the Islamist-oriented opposition party PAS rather than Mahathir's ethnonationalist United Malays National Organization. This should not surprise anyone greatly, as contemporary scholarship on Muslim politics—in Malaysia as much as elsewhere—still seeks to separate secular and nationalist from Islamist and religious leaders in order to account for the wide range of positions individuals have adopted on the question of the relationship between state, society, and religion. A correlate of this is a second factor: the general tendency of many scholarly works on Mahathir to focus on his role in Malaysia's development and economic growth rather than religious or cultural themes.

The third answer lies in the changing focus of political science and area studies experts. Well into the 1960s and 1970s, the political histories of the newly decolonized states of Asia and Africa were still often written essentially as the political biographies of liberation heroes such as Sukarno, Nkrumah, Nehru, and Atatürk. It was almost as if knowing the mind of the man at the top would provide a more privileged understanding of the country he was leading. This changed after the late 1960s, when developments within Western society itself in general and in the social sciences in particular led to the embrace of the idea that the rapid transformations of the developing world were better understood from the perspective of macrotransformations than great man theory. The challenges of nation- and state-building projects then under way across the postcolonial world and the intricacies of the historical process were far too big and too complex to be reduced to the role, no matter how important, of a single person. Unlike historians or anthropologists, political scientists still often view biography as too distracted from the larger picture or of running the risk of losing disciplinary rigor.

There is, however, scope for biography as methodology in contemporary political science—nowhere more so than in the context of authoritarian systems that give a limited number of individuals great leeway in shaping the fate of entire societies. Mahathir was, arguably, one of the single most important architects of Malaysia's thoroughgoing sociocultural, economic, and political transformations. A number of senior civil servants are on record complaining about his micromanaging tendencies.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, one needs to be careful not to overstate the extent to which he dominated Malaysian politics even during

the so-called Mahathir years. Malaysia during the 1980s and 1990s was not simply the empty canvas upon which he merely painted what the Malaysian political scientist Khoo Boo Teik has persuasively described as “Mahathirism.”<sup>51</sup> Mahathir’s ideas on development, society, the economy, ethnicity, nationalism, international relations, and particularly religion were challenged, questioned, and derided by many different groups. Mahathir, for instance, had very public fall-outs with senior ‘ulama, the learned scholars of Islam who as civil servants were meant to help formulate and implement the government’s Islamic policies.

There are few serious biographies to help us understand who Malaysia’s fourth prime minister was and how he had come to be that way. The works of Barry Wain and Khoo Boo Teik are rare exceptions and offer invaluable insights into Mahathir the man and the politician. Based on his doctoral dissertation submitted to Flinders University in 1994, Khoo’s *Paradoxes of Mahathirism: An Intellectual Biography of Mahathir Mohamad*, paints a highly nuanced picture of the evolution of Mahathir’s political thought, positing nationalism, capitalism, Islam, populism, and authoritarianism as the five constituent pillars of “the relatively coherent political ideology of Mahathirism.” The real strength of *Paradoxes* lies in the author’s ability to link cogently the substance of Mahathir’s thinking on these five pillars to biography and personal disposition. On the matter of Mahathir’s understanding of religion, for example, Khoo argues that Mahathir’s Islam was centrally shaped by “the religiosity of the self-made man.”<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Mahathir appears to have applied his medical training to politics, and terms such as “diagnosis,” “pathology,” “sickness,” and “cure” were indeed extremely common in his rhetoric. “For ‘Dr UMNO,’” Khoo writes, “medicine and politics were unified. . . . Medicine becomes more than a metaphor for the diagnosis and treatment of the body politics: the doctor’s ‘frankness’ is his people’s ‘catharsis.’”<sup>53</sup> *The Economist*, in an article from nearly a decade earlier, lends support to Khoo’s assertion: “Mahathir Mohamad practised medicine as a young man. In a way, he still does. You make an examination of the country, he says, diagnose its ailments. Reach a judgment, put it into practise and watch the patient.”<sup>54</sup>

Much of the other broadly speaking biographical work does not do Mahathir much justice. They can be recognized as falling into either one of two categories: gushing hagiographies or frothing indictments. Ahmad Lutfi Othman’s short 1994 tract entitled *Mahathir khianati melayu* (Mahathir betrays the Malays) or Mohd. Sayuti’s 1999 book *Saya adalah—Mahafiraun* (I am—Mahapharaoh) are exemplary of the latter type. One of the best English-language examples of the former would likely be Robin Adshead’s *Mahathir of Malaysia*, a book full of glossy photographs and some interesting, little-known facts about Mahathir’s early years in Alor Setar and Singapore. But *Mahathir of Malaysia* offers no

critical assessment of the politics and the policies of the man who had been in office for almost a decade when the book was published in 1989. The most flawed example of the many Mahathir hagiographies, however, must be Hasan Hamzah's *Mahathir: Great Malaysian Hero* (1990). This book, which is close to five hundred pages long, offers few real insights into the thought of Malaysia's fourth prime minister and seems to have been written entirely for the career advancement of a junior political operator from Sarawak. Even worse, as Khoo documents, is Hasan's lifting of entire chapters from the works of others.<sup>55</sup>

The dearth of serious biographies is exacerbated by the lack of studies of Malaysia's postcolonial leadership that are comparable to Angus McIntyre's (2005) psychobiographical study of Indonesia's first four presidents. McIntyre's approach, however, could help provide deeper and more meaningful insights into the real differences between the commoner Mahathir and his more blue-blooded predecessors. Many writers have argued that his premiership represented a sea change in Malaysia's political culture. A forceful but perhaps also one of the most thoughtful arguments presented for the case that Malaysia under Mahathir was a curious reflection of the man at the top's own "constrained, perhaps even fore-shortened or distorted . . . mental and intellectual horizons" comes from the long-standing observer of Malay-Malaysian politics and society, Clive Kessler.<sup>56</sup> Comparing Mahathir's worldview to the eclectic tastes of the Malay middle class, Kessler argues that both are "[a] breathtaking aesthetic *bricolage*, a *mélange* . . . far from entirely consistent and 'of one piece,' a strange combination of different, incongruous and perhaps even ultimately incompatible components."<sup>57</sup> Kessler's essay traces the facets of Mahathir's worldview as an "economic moderniser, technological hyper-modernist, religious individualist and anti-individualistic socio-cultural conservative" to his all-encompassing Malay nationalism, and to the "thorough-going and principled repudiation of [colonialism's] pervasive arrogances, its humiliation of its subjects, its infantilising paternalism, and its self-interested yet hypocritically unacknowledged material rapaciousness."<sup>58</sup>

Despite what Kessler calls Mahathir's "thorough-going and principled repudiation" of colonialism, a number of observers, including the late Syed Hussein Alatas, have noticed in Mahathir a curious reflection of colonialist ideas. In *The Malay Dilemma*, for instance, Mahathir is said to have echoed nineteenth-century assumptions about a hierarchy of man, arguing that Malay underdevelopment was the result of colonial neglect as well as inherent differences between "industrious" and "docile" migrants and the "indolent" Malays. Syed Hussein Alatas, Charles Hirschman, and others have, directly or indirectly, taken Mahathir to task for failing to see the economic rationality of the Malay peasantry's refusal to enter the modern agricultural sector or the extractive industries of

colonial Malaya because of terrible working conditions and poor wages. Michael Peletz notes the “deeply ironic fact” that Mahathir “espouses an essentialising Orientalism of the sort that literary critic Edward Said excoriated in his now classic (1978) study of Western literary representations of the ‘Orient.’ . . . The notion of ‘Asian values’ articulated by Mahathir and others is not only a widely unqualified, absolute term; it also presupposes a monolithic, eternally unchanging, homogenised ‘Asian’ (as well as an undifferentiated, immutable, sexually anarchic and terminally decadent ‘Western’) whose essential features transcend time, space, gender, class, occupation and local cultural identity.”<sup>59</sup>

Others have put forward similar, often deeply personal explanations for Mahathir and his binary—Kiplingian in many ways—view of the world. Jon Swain, Southeast Asia correspondent for the *Times* during the early years of the Mahathir government, argued, perhaps somewhat simplistically, that the prime minister’s nationalism and critical stance vis-à-vis the West arose “from his early education, when he failed to gain admission to read law in Britain.” Barry Wain’s *Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohamad in Turbulent Times* also claims that “Mahathir’s jaundiced view of Australia” had been precipitated by a snub of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra in 1969. Mahathir, Wain reckons, “has never forgotten how he was treated all those years ago.”<sup>60</sup> Cheah Boon Kheng concurs: “To understand Dr Mahathir’s nation-building process one needs to understand his personality. [He was] an extremely proud, sensitive man who was prone to sulk, and interpreted most issues personally.”<sup>61</sup>

There are clear dangers associated with making a single person the focus of a study that seeks to make sense of the extraordinary political developments that have been under way in the Muslim world over the past thirty to forty years. The objective is not to deny the role of other personalities, geopolitical factors, or domestic civil society, and the approach does not call for a return to great man theory. Instead, we need to reassess Mahathir’s legacy by bringing together a study of his life and personality with an appreciation of the wider contexts in which his political leadership was embedded. The focus on the individual Mahathir may help provide narrative coherence in this study of what is one of the most significant political phases in Malaysia’s postcolonial history. Some of the most insightful accounts of postcolonial Indonesian politics can be gleaned from the biographical material on Sukarno, Suharto, and Abdurrahman Wahid.<sup>62</sup> In acknowledging the role of the person Mahathir, I also came to appreciate more deeply that political change does not proceed merely from the abstract forces of the *longue durée*. Some individual leaders are figures of historical significance, and Mahathir was such an individual.

This book draws from a range of sources, including several in-depth and repeat interviews with Mahathir himself; his wife, Dr. Siti Hasmah; their eldest daughter, Marina; and members of his extended family in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Alor Setar, and Melbourne. Between 2006 and 2010, I spent three extended periods of comprehensive data collection in Malaysia, where I was able to interview some of the key personalities of Malaysian Islam and politics of the 1980s and 1990s. I conducted close to fifty in-depth, semistructured interviews with politicians, former bureaucrats, ‘ulama, academics, civil society activists, and other shapers of public opinion—in addition to countless personal, informal conversations with ordinary Malaysian Muslims and non-Muslims. In 2008, a generous fellowship from the Australia-Netherlands Research Collaboration made possible an extended period of fieldwork in Leiden, where I was able to consult the significant collection of early twentieth-century Malay-language journals, newspapers, and other periodicals in order to develop a better understanding of the nationalist fervor of the Malay world into which Mahathir was born in 1925. As the inaugural recipient of the Mahathir Distinguished Fellowship from the Majlis Professor Negara (National Council of Professors), I was also able to undertake extended periods of fieldwork research in Malaysia preceding the 2013 general elections—a time when Barisan Nasional was trailing in national polls, but when the long-retired Mahathir was voted the country’s most popular politician, and when one was able—even if only briefly—to speculate about the emergence of a Mahathir dynasty with the appointment of son Mukhriz to the position of chief minister of Kedah.

Apart from these interviews, the methodology rests on subjecting to close scrutiny a large amount of primary source material written *on* or *by* Mahathir himself. Chiefly among these are Mahathir’s published writings—principally books and essays. He wrote extensively and is associated with a voluminous number of essays and op-ed contributions to both Malaysian and international newspapers. Basic insights into what I somewhat reluctantly would describe as “Mahathir’s Islam” can be obtained from his fifteen or so monographs, including well-known titles such as *The Malay Dilemma* (1970), *The Challenge* (1986), and *Reflections on Asia* (2002). More recently, Mahathir turned to the Internet as a way of publicizing his ideas, and the tech-savvy nonagenarian regularly posts updates on his Web log, chedet.com. Here one is able to obtain insights into the worldview of a retired statesman who often claims to have been sidestepped by his own party UMNO since retiring.

The second documentary source comprises the official speeches given in varying capacities as parliamentarian, senior cabinet member, prime minister,

elder statesman, or invited speaker on the global lecturing circuit. I have collated and analyzed more than six hundred of these speeches, lectures, and official addresses to develop a longitudinal chart of the continuities and the dissonances in his engagement with the religion, its tenets, and contemporary Muslim spirituality. My analysis is centered on the 561 major speeches Mahathir gave as prime minister. Some of these have been published in book form, including *Malays Forget Easily* (2001) and *Islam, Knowledge, and Other Affairs* (2006), while other major speeches have been reprinted in the quarterly government publication *Foreign Affairs Malaysia*.

I have been able to obtain many low-key speeches to domestic audiences (which were not catalogued in *Foreign Affairs Malaysia* and were probably never intended for reprinting) from the exhaustive Web site of the Prime Minister's Department, as well the ten volumes of the *Encyclopaedia of Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad*, simultaneously published in Cairo, Beirut, and Kuala Lumpur in 2004. These speeches provide invaluable documentation of his representations of the role to be played by Islam, both at the level of the individual believer and society. They are an immensely rich source for documenting his six-decade-long engagement with the religion, but in particular they highlight the momentous twenty-two years of his premiership.

The third set of documentary sources that I have drawn upon comprises the many interviews that Mahathir has given to the local and international press over more than four decades. These interviews provide in many ways arguably the most candid insights into Mahathir's understanding of Islam, because they are also the least rehearsed representations of his thoughts and ideas. The earliest sources from which I draw are a series of letters that Mahathir wrote to the *Sunday Times* as a student in Singapore in the late 1940s and early 1950s. After returning across the causeway in 1953, he concentrated on his career as an officer of the colonial government and was deployed to various hospitals across three northern states of British Malaya (Kedah, Perlis, and Penang) before setting up his private practice in his hometown of Alor Setar in 1957. With the exception of a very limited number of articles submitted to *Intisari, the Journal of the Malaysian Society for Sociological Research*, and the odd letter to the editor of Malaya's/Malaysia's English and Malay press, there is little by way of archival record for the decade between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s, when he first attained national prominence as the freshman member of Parliament for Kota Setar Selatan. The Hansard of the Malaysian Dewan Rakyat has proven an invaluable tool for retracing his opinions during this initial phase of his public career.

Mahathir's thought is far more comprehensively documented from the early 1970s onward than in the previous twenty years. In 1971 he published what prob-

ably remains his best-known work up to the present, *The Malay Dilemma*. Another important but frequently overlooked book from the same period is the *Guide for Small Businessmen*. His engagement with Islam continued throughout the 1970s, when he first became a senator in the Malaysian upper house, and then in rapid succession minister of Education, minister of Trade and Industry, and finally in 1976 deputy prime minister. Forty-four of his major speeches from this decade have been reproduced in the 1982 collection by Harun and Shafie, *Mahathir: Cita-cita dan pencapaian*.

Mahathir's engagement with Islam intensified during the 1980s. His most significant work during this pivotal decade was *The Challenge*. While *The Malay Dilemma* makes mention of Islam in less than ten discrete instances, *The Challenge* is replete with references to events and personages in early Islamic history, such as the Battle of Uhud or some of the Prophet Muhammad's better-known companions, such as Umar Ibn al-Khattab or Abu Dharr, indicative of the more developed conceptualization that Islam had attained in his worldview during the same period. *The Challenge* abounds with Qur'anic quotations, including both in English translation and the unattributed but masterful and obviously handwritten calligraphic rendering of the original Arabic texts. This intensified engagement continued in later books, such as *Islam and the Muslim Ummah* (1995) and *The Role of Islam in the Modern State* (2003). During this period, Islam also emerged as an important background subject in many of Mahathir's works not directly focused on Islam, such as *A New Deal for Asia* (1999) or *Reflections on Asia* (2002). This intensity far exceeds what is evident in his earlier writings from the 1960s and 1970s.

I asked two questions of these diverse sources: How did his articulation of Islam and the representations he made of its modernizing role change over time, and what kind of continuities can be observed despite the changes and shifting political conditions? I began my study approaching Mahathir's engagement with Islam based on how it would appear to him. The first core empirical chapter, chapter 4, therefore seeks to encapsulate "Mahathir's Islam" on its own terms, as it was presented to his listeners, viewers, and readers through the speeches, writings, and interviews that were a fixture of Malaysian public discourse in the 1980s and 1990s. This hermeneutical approach was accompanied by a critical perspective that is essential in helping explain why Malaysia's former prime minister chose to turn toward Islam at a specific juncture of modern Malaysian history and what drove him to highlight particular aspects of Islam at particular points in time. This reference to context (which includes paying attention to the specific circumstances of audience, location, language, and time in which a particular speech occurred) and allowing Mahathir to essen-

tially speak for himself will hopefully help limit any wilful misrepresentation of his ideas on my part.

I have drawn inspiration from the methodological approach taken by Khoo Boo Teik (1995). His analysis of Mahathir's official speeches, publications, and interviews (painstakingly collected before they were made available online on the Web site of the Prime Minister's Department) identifies what he describes as the five components of "Mahathirism." Khoo explores the dynamic interrelationship between Mahathir's nationalism, capitalism, Islam, populism, authoritarianism, and the specific political circumstances he faced as leader in order to demystify the enigma that Mahathir had been for so long. Unlike Khoo's much broader intellectual biography, this book is focused on a single and, as I argue, hitherto underexamined aspect of Mahathir's ideological repertoire and political discourse: his articulation of a "proper" or "correct understanding" of Islam. It will seek to derive an understanding of Mahathir's engagement with the religion through a close reading of the primary source material in order to identify dominant themes and analyze continuities and discontinuities stretching across seven decades. Unlike Khoo, I have also been able to draw upon repeat interviews with Mahathir, members of his extended family, and a dozen or so other informants who have known him for many years and who in many cases were influential advisors or executors of his politics and policies.

The extensiveness and diversity of the sources consulted for this study have allowed me to develop a longitudinal chart of the continuities and the dissonances in Mahathir's engagement with the religion, its tenets, and contemporary Muslim spirituality. The earliest source is a series of letters that Mahathir wrote to the *Sunday Times* as a university student in Singapore in the mid-1940s, and the most recent ones are blog and Facebook posts. The extent to which Mahathir's personal views shine through this material underscores his agency. He did not believe in delegation—whether in Malaysian politics or in his own conduct—and is reputed to have written much of this material himself. His press secretary Ahmad Mustapha complained that he "was left with arranging for press conferences and preparing short speeches."<sup>63</sup> This is significant because it underscores the degree to which Mahathir's own opinions and experiences, his own worldview, and his own understanding of Islam and its function in modern society were conveyed to his audience without much filtration by officials or gatekeepers. There is, as a result, a certain immediacy to his engagement with the faith. It is this immediacy that endows Mahathir's articulation of "properly understood Islam" with resonance and relevance beyond Malaysia.

## Structures

This study seeks to explore the role of Mahathir's Islamic discourse by placing it within his broader political project of Malay modernization, locating the secular-trained politician in twentieth-century debates on the role of religion in society and relating his ideas to the wider range of Muslim responses to modernity. It represents the first major English-language study of Mahathir's articulation of a proper understanding of Islam, arguing that his representations of the religion can be systematically approached and studied as a relatively coherent discourse reflecting the causes and ideas of the twentieth-century Muslim modernist movement. Apart from rationalistic and pragmatist interpretations of the Muslim faith, Mahathir's discourse also contained his assessment of the sociocultural, economic, and political problems facing the contemporary Muslim world, and what I describe as his interpretation of Islam as a "theology of progress,"<sup>64</sup> as well as the range of solutions and corrective measures that he proposed Muslims should adopt.

The book argues that Mahathir's discourse inspired and informed much of the Malaysian government's Islamization policies of the 1980s, 1990s, and beyond. He was central to the development of what some have described as the state's "nationalization of Malaysian Islam."<sup>65</sup> The two decades of the Mahathir government coincided with the gradual coagulation of novel forms of Muslim consciousness celebrating individual achievement amid the federal government's ever-expanding role in facilitating the emergence of a suitably modern "Islamic" way of life, extending into private domains of family and community as well as the market and society. The lasting influence of the Mahathir government on Malaysian society and politics makes the engagement with Islam on the part of the former prime minister one of historical interest.

This book is organized around seven largely thematically organized chapters. Chapter 2, "Maverick, Paradox, Recalcitrant," begins by sketching the momentous transformations of his twenty-two years in power as the political backdrop to his engagement with religion. It seeks to detail the political scenario behind Mahathir's public statements on what role Islam should play in a modern and modernizing society, including the government's long-running pro-Malay positive discrimination program, Malaysia's rapid industrialization experience, the plateauing of the Malaysia economy in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis, relations with its ASEAN neighbors, and the growing pro-democracy movement Mahathir confronted after the late 1990s. Critically, it also sketches in broad strokes some of the major policy planks of Islamization as it was experienced in the 1980s and 1990s. Chapter 3, "The World as Seen from Seberang Perak," pro-

vides a personal biography of the shaping influences on the man who would be Malaysia's fourth prime minister. It traces his journey from part southern Indian, commoner son of the schoolmaster in semirural Kedah to the prime minister's office, arguing that Mahathir's politics and policies cannot be understood except against the "polished black-shoe" Anglo-Mohammedan sobriety he imbibed in youth and childhood at the very edge of Britain's Southeast Asian empire.

Chapter 4, "Making Islam Work," identifies the central themes in Mahathir's engagement with Islam, including what he described as its "freeing of the Malay mind from all sorts of superstitions,"<sup>66</sup> its advantages over other faiths, its call to moderation, and its encouragement for Muslims to succeed in this earthly life. Chapter 5, "Influences and Impulses," explores the theological and ideational influences to Mahathir's Islamic thought, identifying a number of influential personalities as well as episodes in his personal biography that appeared to shine through his public statements and that may help account for the change or, conversely, the constancy in some of his pronouncements on Islam. Chapter 6, "Explanations and Transformations," seeks to provide an account for the specific nature of Mahathir's religious discourse. It looks at the wider transformations of twentieth century: Malay culture, electoral competition with PAS, and Islam's transnational dimensions, as well as the range of the distinct political advantages the prime minister obtained from his public embrace of the *kebangkitan umma* or the "Islamic revival" that had begun sweeping Malaysia in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The concluding chapter, "*Akhir Zaman: End Days*," ties the book together, surveying the complex impact and anything but straightforward, enduring echoes of Mahathir's religious discourse on Malaysian society and politics. It argues that the Mahathir legacy can only be described as ambiguous. On the one hand, his public discourse emphasized the individualistic, egalitarian, pluralistic, democratic, and dynamic qualities of Islam. On the other hand, the Mahathir government also enacted legislation (or rather acquiesced in the activities of certain religious bodies) that is often described as having curtailed religious freedoms in Malaysia—in particular, the religious freedoms of Muslims. Similarly, while Mahathir's representations of Islam were fraught with contradictions and flaws and in many ways contributed to Malaysia's worsening state of interethnic relations, his insistence that every Muslim has the right to speak for Islam paradoxically also seems to have prepared the ground for a future democratization of Malaysian politics. Mahathir cannot be regarded as a profound Muslim thinker, but the transformative effect of his politics and discourse (both in Malaysia and beyond) can only be appreciated if we take him seriously as one of Asia's most influential twentieth-century political thought leaders and a statesman from what has become one of the most dynamic regions of the Muslim world.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abaza, Mona. *Debates on Islam and knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt: Shifting worlds*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.
- Abdal Hakim Murad. "Shari'a in the modern world." Cambridge Khutbahs etc. Muslim sermons and talks in English. Last modified April 22, 2012. Accessed June 20, 2012. <http://cambridgekhutbasetc.blogspot.com.au/>.
- Abdul Rahman Embong. "The political dimension of the economic crisis in Malaysia." In *Southeast Asia into the twenty-first century: Crisis and beyond*, edited by Abdul Rahman Embong and Jürgen Rudolph. Bangi: UKM Press, 2000.
- Abdullah Ahmad. *Dr Mahathir's selected letters to world leaders*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2007.
- Adibah Amin. "Education for all Malaysians: Dr. Mahathir Mohamed talks to Adibah Amin." *New Straits Times*, September 10, 1974, p. 10.
- Adshead, Robin. *Mahathir of Malaysia*. London: Hibiscus Publishing Company, 1989.
- Ahmad Ibrahim. *Konflik UMNO PAS dalam isu Islamisasi*. Petaling Jaya: IBS Buku, 1989.
- Ahmad, Irfan. *Islamism and democracy in India: The transformation of Jamaat-e-Islami*. Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Ahmad Mustapha Hassan. *The unmaking of Malaysia: Insider's reminiscences of UMNO, Razak and Mahathir*. Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, 2007.
- Al-Attas, Syed Ali Tawfik, and T. C. Ng. *Abdullah Ahmad Badawi: Revivalist of an intellectual tradition*. Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 2005.
- Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib. *Islam, secularism, and the philosophy of the future*. Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia, 1978. (Reprinted, London and New York: Mansell, 1985).
- Aljazeera International. "Malaysian churches attacked." Last modified January 8, 2010. Accessed March 23, 2010. <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia-pacific/2010/01/20101871816435228.html>.
- Anwar Ibrahim. *The Asian Renaissance*. Singapore: Times Publications, 1996.
- Asad, Talal. *The idea of an anthropology of Islam*. Washington, DC: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986.
- . "Modern power and the reconfiguration of religious traditions." *Stanford Electronic Humanities Review* vol. 5, no. 1 (1996).
- . *Formations of the secular*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.

- Ayoob, Mohamad. *The many faces of political Islam*. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2008.
- Azyumardi Azra. *Origins of Islamic reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern "Ulama" in the seventeenth and eighteenth century*. Crow's Nest, NSW: Asian Studies Association of Australia, in association with Allen & Unwin, and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004.
- Bahtiar Effendy. "Islam and the state in the Indonesian experience." *Islam and Civilizational Renewal* vol. 2, no. 1 (2010): 126–144.
- Barnard, Timothy P., ed. *Contesting Malayness: Malay identity across boundaries*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2004.
- Barracrough, Simon, "The dynamics of coercion in the Malaysian political process." *Modern Asian Studies* vol. 19, no. 4 (1985): 797–822.
- Barton, Greg J. "The emergence of neo-modernism: A progressive, liberal movement of Islamic thought in Indonesia." PhD thesis submitted to Monash University, 1996.
- . *Gus Dur: The authorised biography of Abdurrahman Wahid*. Jakarta and Singapore: Equinox Publishing, 2000.
- . *Jemaah Islamiyya: Radical Islamism in Indonesia*. Singapore: Ridge Press, 2005.
- Bayat, Asef. "The coming of a post-Islamist society." *Critique: Critical Middle East Studies* no. 9 (fall 1996): 43–52.
- . "What is post-Islamism?" Last modified 2005. Accessed April 18, 2007. [http://www.isim.nl/files/Review\\_16/Review\\_16-5.pdf](http://www.isim.nl/files/Review_16/Review_16-5.pdf).
- . *Making Islam democratic: Social movements and the post-Islamist turn*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- BBC World News. "Muslim burial for Malaysian hero." Last modified December 28, 2005. Accessed March 23, 2010. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4563452.stm>.
- . "Malaysia rejects Christian appeal." Last modified May 30, 2007. Accessed March 23, 2010. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6703155.stm>.
- Bell, Daniel A., David Brown, Kanishka Jayasuriya, and Gavin M. Jones, eds. *Towards illiberal democracy in Pacific Asia*. Houndsmills, UK: Palgrave, 1995.
- Bellah, Robert. *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996.
- Bellah, Robert, and Philip Hammond, eds. *Varieties of civil religion*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980.
- Bijlefeld, Willem A. "On being Muslim: The faith dimensions of Muslim identity." In *The Islamic impact*, edited by Yvonne Y. Haddad, B. Haines, and E. Findly. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984.
- Bonner, R. "Malaysia's prime minister to step down after two decades." *New York Times*, June 26, 2002.
- Bundesregierung. "Rede des Bundeskanzler Schröder vor dem Institut für Diplomatie und Auswärtige Beziehungen." Kuala Lumpur, May 12, 2003. Accessed April 21, 2011. <http://archiv.bundesregierung.de/bpaexport/rede/66/484966/multi.htm>.
- Calhoun, Craig, M. Juergensmeyer, and J. van Antwerpen. *Rethinking secularism*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

- Camilleri, Joseph A. "Religion and culture in Southeast Asian regionalism." In *Culture, religion and conflict in Muslim Southeast Asia*, edited by Joseph A. Camilleri and Sven A. Schottmann, pp. 19–40. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Camroux, David. "Looking East . . . and inwards: Internal factors in Malaysian foreign relations during the Mahathir era, 1981–1994." Australia-Asia Paper no. 72 (1994), Griffith University.
- Casanova, Jose. *Public religions in the modern world*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Case, William. *Elites and regimes in Malaysia: Revisiting a consociational democracy*. Clayton, VIC: Monash Asia Institute, 1996.
- . "Semi-democracy in Mahathir's Malaysia." In *Reflections: The Mahathir Years*, edited by B. Welsh, pp. 77–86. Washington, DC: Southeast Asia Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2004a.
- . "Testing Malaysia's pseudo-democracy." In *The State of Malaysia: Ethnicity, equity and reform*, edited by E. T. Gomez, pp. 29–48. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004b.
- Catholic Herald Malaysia Online. "Non-Muslims can use Allah." Last modified on January 4, 2010. Accessed March 23, 2010. <http://www.heraldmalaysia.com/news/storydetails.php/Nik-Aziz:-Non-Muslims-can-use-%E2%80%98Allah%E2%80%99/3703-28-1>.
- Cesari, Jocelyne. "Muslim minorities in Europe." In *Modernizing Islam*, edited by John L. Esposito and Francis Burgat, pp. 251–269. London: Hurst & Company, 2003.
- Chandra Muzaffar. *Universalism of Islam*. Penang: Aliran, 1979.
- . *Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia*. Petaling Jaya: Fajar Bakti, 1987.
- Cheah, B. K. "Sino-Malay conflicts in Malaya, 1945–1946: Communist vendetta and Islamic resistance." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* vol. 12, no.1 (March 1981): 108–117.
- . *The Challenge of ethnicity: Building a nation in Malaysia*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2004.
- Chernov-Hwang, Juliet. *Peaceful Islamist mobilization in the Muslim world: What went right*. New York: Palgrave Press, 2009.
- Cook, M. *Commanding right and forbidding wrong in Islamic thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Crouch, Harold. "Authoritarian trends, the UMNO split and the limits to state power." In *Fragmented visions: Culture and politics in contemporary Malaysia*, edited by J. S. Kahn and Francis Loh Kok Wah, pp. 21–43. North Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Dabashi, Hamid. *Islamic liberation theology: Resisting the empire*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Daniels, Timothy P. *Building cultural nationalism in Malaysia: Identity, representation and citizenship*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Deliar Noer. "The development and nature of the modernist movement in Indonesia." In *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, edited by Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, and Yasmin Hussain. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985.
- Det, C. H. E. (pseudonym of Mahathir M.). "Malay women make their own freedom." *Sunday Times*, July 20, 1947.

- . “Malays and the higher education.” *Sunday Times*, September 26, 1948.
- . “Picnic time in the Dusun.” *Sunday Times*, January 23, 1949.
- . “The rulers are losing loyalty.” *Sunday Times*, August 7, 1949.
- . “Malays in south Siam struggle on.” *Sunday Times*, January 8, 1950.
- de Vere Allen, John. “The elephant and the mousedeer: A new version of Anglo-Kedah relations, 1905–1915.” *Journal of Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* vol. 41, no. 1 (July 1968): 54–94.
- Dhillon, Karminder Singh. *Malaysian foreign policy in the Mahathir era, 1981–2003*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2008.
- Djohan Effendi. “Progressive traditionalists: The emergence of a new discourse in Indonesia’s Nahdlatul Ulama during the Abdurrahman Wahid era.” PhD thesis submitted to Deakin University, 2000.
- Dzulkefli Ahmad. “Young Malaysians urged to continue development struggle.” *Business Times Malaysia*, March 7, 2002.
- Dzulkefli Ahmad. “Political Islam at the crossroads in Malaysia.” *The Malaysian Insider*. Last modified December 28, 2012. Retrieved April 12, 2013. <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/sideviews/article/political-islam-at-the-crossroads-in-malaysia-dzulkefli-ahmad>.
- Ehteshami, Anoushiravan. “Islam as a political force in international relations.” In *Islam in world politics*, edited by N. Lahoud and A. H. Johns, *Islam in world politics*, pp. 29–53. Abingdon: Routledge, 2005.
- Eickelman, Dale F., and Jon Anderson, eds. *New media in the Muslim world: The emerging public sphere*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.
- Eickelman, Dale F., and James Piscatori. *Muslim politics* (2nd edition). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Eisenstadt, Shmuel N. “Multiple modernities.” *Daedalus* vol. 129, no 1 (2000): 1–29.
- Elder, John. “Of race, religion and politics.” *The Age*. Last modified March 10, 2013. Accessed March 12, 2013. <http://m.theage.com.au/victoria/of-race-religion-and-politics-20130309-2fsje.html>.
- Elson, Robert E. *Suharto: A political biography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Enayat, Hamid. *Modern Islamic political thought*. London: Macmillan, 1982.
- Esposito, John L. *Islam and politics*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998.
- Esposito, John L., and Francis Burgat, eds. *Modernising Islam: Religion and the public sphere in Europe and the Middle East*. London: Hurst & Company, 2003.
- Esposito, John, and John O. Voll. *Islam and democracy*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- . *Makers of contemporary Islam*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Farish Noor, “The localisation of Islamist discourse in the Tafsir of Tuan Guru Nik Aziz Nik Mat, Murshid’ul Am of PAS.” In *Malaysia: Islam, Society, and politics*, edited by Virginia Hooker and Norani Othman. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003.

- . *Islam embedded: The historical development of the pan-Malaysian Islamic party PAS, 1951–2003*. Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 2004.
- . “Malaysia’s shame.” Last modified 2008. Accessed June 24, 2012. [blog.limkitsiang.com/wp-content/plugins/as-pdf/generate.php?post=381](http://blog.limkitsiang.com/wp-content/plugins/as-pdf/generate.php?post=381).
- Faruqi, Ismail al-, and Omar A. Naseef. *Social and natural sciences: The Islamic perspective*. Sevenoaks, UK: Hodder & Stoughton for King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, 1981.
- Federspiel, Howard. “Modernist Islam in Southeast Asia: A new examination.” *Muslim World* vol. 92 (fall 2002): 371–386.
- Feener, Michael, and T. Sevea, eds. *Islamic connections: Muslims in South and Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009.
- Fernando, Mayanthi L. “Reconfiguring freedom: Muslim piety and the limits of secular law and public discourse in France.” *American Ethnologist* vol. 37, no. 1 (February 2010): 19–35.
- Fischer, Johan. *Proper Islamic consumption: Shopping among the Malays in modern Malaysia*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2008.
- . *The halal frontier: Muslim consumers in a globalized market*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Fischer, Michal. “Islam and the revolt of the petite bourgeoisie.” *Daedalus* vol. 111, no. 1 (1982).
- Funston, John, ed. *Government and politics in Southeast Asia*. London: Zed Books, 2001.
- . “The Malay electorate in 2004: Reversing the 1999 result?” In *Malaysia: recent trends and challenges*, edited by S. H. Saw and K. Kesavapany, pp.132–156. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2006.
- Gilsenan, Michael. *Recognising Islam: An anthropologist’s introduction*. Beckenham, UK: Croon Helm, 1982.
- Gomez, E. T., ed. *Politics in Malaysia: The Malay dimension*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Gomez, E. T., and K. S. Jomo. *Malaysia’s political economy: Patronage, politics, and profits*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Government of Malaysia. *The second Malaysia Plan, 1971–1975*. Kuala Lumpur: Government Printers, 1971.
- . *Profile of Dato’ Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad*. Kuala Lumpur: Government Printers, 1982.
- Gunaratna, Rohan. *Inside al-Qaeda: Global network of terror*. New York: Berkley Books, 2003.
- Hafiz, Kai. *Radicalism and political reform in the Islamic and Western worlds*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Hamzawy, Amr. *The key to Arab reform: Moderate Islamists*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005.
- Harding, Andrew. “The keris, the crescent and the blind goddess: The state, Islam, and the constitution in Malaysia.” *Singapore Journal of Contemporary and Comparative Law* vol. 6 (2002): 154–180.
- Hassan A. “Peraturan Barat menjajah dunia.” Utusan Malaysia. Last modified July 19, 2006. Accessed March 23, 2010. [http://www.utusan.com.my/utusan/info.asp?y=2006&dt=0719&pub=Utusan\\_Malaysia&sec=Rencana&pg=re\\_01.htm](http://www.utusan.com.my/utusan/info.asp?y=2006&dt=0719&pub=Utusan_Malaysia&sec=Rencana&pg=re_01.htm).

- Hassan, Riaz. *Inside Muslim minds*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008.
- Hefner, Robert W. *Civil Islam: Muslims and democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- . "Public Islam and the problem of democratization." *Sociology of Religion* vol. 62, no. 4 (2001): 491–514.
- , ed. *Remaking Muslim politics: Pluralism, contestation, democratization*. Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Hilley, John. *Malaysia: Mahathirism, hegemony, and the new opposition*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2001.
- Hoexter, Miriam, Shmuel N. Eisenstad, and Nehemia Levtzion, eds. *The public sphere in Muslim societies*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.
- Hoffstaedter, Gerhard. *Modern Muslim identities: Negotiating religion and ethnicity in Malaysia*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2011.
- Hooker, Virginia M. *Writing a new society*. Honolulu: Allen & Unwin and University of Hawai'i Press, 2000.
- Hua, Shiping, ed. *Islam and democratization in Asia*. Amherst, NJ: Cambria Press, 2009.
- Human Rights Watch. "U.S.-Malaysia counterterrorism cooperation." *In the Name of Security: Counterterrorism and Human Rights Abuses under Malaysia's Internal Security Act* vol. 16, no. 7 (2004): 43–51.
- Huntington, Samuel. *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of the world order*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Hussin bin Mutalib. *Islam in Malaysia: From revivalism to Islamic state*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1993.
- Hwang, In Wong. *Personalised politics: The Malaysian state under Mahathir*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003.
- . "Malaysia's presidential premier." In *Reflections: The Mahathir Years*, edited by B. Welsh, pp. 67–76. Washington, DC: Southeast Asia Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2004.
- Ibrahim bin Abu Bakar. *Islamic modernism in Malaysia: The life and thought of Sayid Syekh Al-Hadi, 1867–1934*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1994.
- Ismail Ibrahim. *Pemikiran Dr Mahathir tentang Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications and Distributors, 2007.
- Jackson, Karl D. "Dr Mahathir Mohamad: A career in comparison." In *Reflections: The Mahathir Years*, edited by B. Welsh, pp. 48–56. Washington, DC: Southeast Asia Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2004.
- Jomo, K. S. "Growth with equity in East Asia?" DESA Working Paper no. 33. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006. Accessed September 25, 2012. [http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2006/wp33\\_2006.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2006/wp33_2006.pdf).
- Jurgensmeyer, Mark. *Religious nationalism confronts the secular state*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Kahn, Joel. "Islam, modernity and the popular in Malaysia." In *Malaysia: Islam, society and politics*, edited by Virginia Hooker and Norani Othman, pp. 147–167. Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 2003.

- . *Other Malays: Nationalism and cosmopolitanism in the modern Malay world*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006.
- Kaur, H. "Bush rolls out welcome mat for Mahathir." *Business Times Malaysia*, May 13, 2002.
- Kepel, Giles. *The revenge of God: The resurgence of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the modern world*, Translated by Alan Braley. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- Kerajaan Negeri Kedah. *Alor Setar 250 tahun*. Alor Setar: State Government of Kedah Darulaman, 1990.
- Kessler, Clive. "The mark of the man: Malaysia's Mahathir after Mahathir." In *Reflections: The Mahathir Years*, edited by B. Welsh, pp. 15–27. Washington, DC: Southeast Asia Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2004.
- Khoo, Boo Teik. *Paradoxes of Mahathirism: An intellectual biography of Mahathir Mohamad*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- . *Beyond Mahathir: Malaysian politics and its discontents*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2003.
- Knudsen, A. "Political Islam in the Middle East." 2003. Accessed November 16, 2006. <http://www.cmi.no/publications/file/?1548=political-islam-in-the-middle-east>.
- Kramer, M., ed. *The Islamism debate*. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1997.
- Kua, Kia Soong. *May 13: Declassified documents on the Malaysian riots of 1969*. Kuala Lumpur: Suaram Communications, 2007.
- Kurzman, Charles, ed. *Modernist Islam 1840–1940: A sourcebook*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Laffan, Michael F. *Islamic nationhood and colonial Indonesia: The umma below the winds*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.
- . *The makings of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the narration of a Sufi past*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Lambton, Anne. *State and government in medieval Islam: An introduction to the study of Islamic political theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Lane, A. J. *A traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'an Commentary: The Kashshaf of Jar Allah Zamakhshari*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Langer, R., and U. Simon. "The dynamics of orthodoxy and heterodoxy: Dealing with divergence in Muslim discourses and Islamic studies." *Die Welt des Islams: International Journal for the Study of Modern Islam* vol. 48, no. 3–4 (2008): 273–288.
- Lapidus, Ira M. "The golden age: The political concepts of Islam." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* vol. 524 (1992): 13–25.
- Lawrence, Bruce. *Defenders of God: The fundamentalist revolt against the modern age*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Lee, H. P. *Constitutional conflicts in contemporary Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Lee, Hwok Aun. "The NEP, Vision 2020 and Dr Mahathir: Continuing dilemmas." In *Reflections: The Mahathir years*, edited by B. Welsh, pp. 270–281. Washington, DC:

- Southeast Asia Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2004.
- Lee, Julian C. H. *Islamism and activism in Malaysia*. Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 2010.
- Legge, John D. *Sukarno*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1972.
- Leong, H. K., and J. Chin, eds. *Mahathir's administration: Performances and crisis in governance*. Singapore: Times Editions, 2003.
- Levtzion, Nehemia. "Toward a comparative study of Islamization." In *Conversion to Islam*, edited by N. Levtzion, pp. 1–24. New York and London: Holmes & Maier, 1979.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The political language of Islam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- . "What went wrong?" *The Atlantic Online*, January 2002. Accessed October 23, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/01/what-went-wrong/302387/>.
- Liddle, R. W. "The Islamic turn in Indonesia: A political explanation." *Journal of Asian Studies* vol. 55, no. 3 (August 1996): 613–634.
- Lijphart, Arend. *Democracy in plural societies: A comparative exploration*. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1977.
- Lim, Kit Siang. Media statement: "Najib repudiating the Merdeka 'social contract' and the stand of the first three prime ministers that Malaysia is a secular and not an Islamic state?" 2007. <https://limkitsiang.com/archive/2007/jul07/lks4422.htm>. Accessed October 8, 2017.
- Liow, Joseph. *Piety and politics: Islamism in contemporary Malaysia*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Lopez, Gregore P. "Mahathir's regional legacy." *East Asia Forum*. Last modified June 17, 2010. Accessed May 14, 2013. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2010/06/17/mahathirs-regional-legacy/>.
- Madan, T. N. "Secularism in its place." *Journal of Asian Studies* vol. 46, no. 4 (1987): 747–759.
- Madjid, Anouar. *Unveiling traditions: Postcolonial Islam in a polycentric world*. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2000, p. 73–98.
- "Mahathir's unhappy Malays." *The Economist*, Saturday, September 3, 1988, pp. 51–52.
- "Malaysia's Mahathir: A moderate voice for Islam." *New York Times*, December 6, 2002. Accessed December 17, 2009. [http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/06/opinion/06iht-edback\\_ed3\\_.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/06/opinion/06iht-edback_ed3_.html).
- Malaysian House of Representatives. *Parliamentary debates*. Official Report vol. 1, no. 5, 6 (July 1964), col. 723–727. Accessed August 8, 2008. <http://www.parlimen.gov.my/hindex/pdf/DR06071964.pdf>.
- . *Parliamentary debates*. Official Report vol. 1, no. 51 (March 5, 1965), col. 4664. Accessed August 8, 2008. <http://www.parlimen.gov.my/hindex/pdf/DR05031965.pdf>.
- Malhi, Amrita. "The PAS-BN conflict in the 1990s: Islamism and modernity" In *Malaysia: Islam, Society and Politics*, edited by Virginia Hooker and Norani Othman, pp. 236–267. Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 2003.
- Mandaville, Peter. *Transnational Muslim politics: Reimagining the umma*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001.

- . *Global political Islam*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Marranci, Gabriele. *Understanding Muslim identity: Rethinking fundamentalism*. Houndsmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Martinez, Patricia. "The Islamic state or the state of Islam in Malaysia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* vol. 23, no. 3 (2001): 474–504.
- . "Mahathir, Islam and the new Malay dilemma." In *Mahathir's administration: Performances and crisis in governance*, edited by H. K. Leong and J. Chin, pp. 215–251. Singapore: Times Editions, 2003.
- . "Perhaps he deserved better: The disjuncture between vision and reality in Mahathir's Islam." In *Reflections: The Mahathir Years*, edited by B. Welsh, pp. 28–39. Washington, DC: Southeast Asia Studies Program, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2004.
- . "Malaysian Muslims: living with diversity." *New Straits Times*, August 10, 2006.
- Mazlee Malik. *Berdakwalah secara percuma*. Last modified February 10, 2012. Accessed March 7, 2013. <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/188691>.
- McIntyre, Angus. *The Indonesian presidency: The shift from personal toward constitutional rule*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.
- Means, Gordon. "Soft authoritarianism in Malaysia and Singapore." In *Democracy in East Asia*, edited by L. Diamond and M. F. Plattner. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- . *Political Islam in Southeast Asia*. Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Centre, 2009.
- Metcalf, Barbara. *Islamic revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Milne, R. S., and Diane Mauzy. *Malaysian politics under Mahathir*. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Milner, Anthony C. *Kerajan: Malay political culture on the eve of colonial rule*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press for Association for Asian Studies, 1982.
- . "Islam and Malay kingship." In *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, edited by Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, Yasmin Hussein, et al., pp. 25–35. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985.
- . *The invention of politics in colonial Malaya: Contesting nationalism and the expansion of public sphere*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- . *The Malays*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008.
- Moaddel, M. *Islamic modernism, nationalism, and fundamentalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Mohamad Mizan A., and J. Veitch. "Cross-border terrorism: The link between Malaysia Militant Group and Jemaah Islamiyah: Implications for regional security." Paper presented at "Crossing Borders: Promoting Regional Law Enforcement" conference. Canberra, April 8–9, 2009.
- Mohamad Sukeri bin Khaled, ed. *Kedah 100 tahun 1900–2000: Isu-isu politik dan sosioekonomi*. Sintok: Penerbit Universiti Malaysia Utara, 2002.
- Morais, V. *Mahathir: A profile in courage*. Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 1982.

- Morrison, Scott. "Review of *Islam, Liberalism and secular democracy* by Nader Hashemi." *Journal of Islamic Studies* vol. 22, no. 3 (2011): 242.
- Muhammad Kamal Hassan. "The influence of Mawdudi's thought on Muslims in South-east Asia: A brief survey." *Muslim World* vol. 93, no. 3-4 (2003): 429-464.
- Mustafa Ali M. *Mahathir Mohamad*. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1985.
- Nagata, Judith. *The reflowering of Malaysian Islam: Modern religious radicals and the roots*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984.
- Nair, Shanti. *Islam in Malaysian foreign policy*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Narayanan S. "From Malabar to Malaysians: The untold story of Malayalees in Penang." Paper presented at the 2nd Colloquium of the Penang Story. Penang, September 22, 2001. Accessed May 2, 2013. <http://www.penangstory.net.my/indian-content-papersuresh.html>.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Traditional Islam in the modern world*. London: KPI, 1987.
- . *Islam in the modern world: Challenged by the West, threatened by fundamentalism, keeping faith with tradition*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2001.
- Nasr, Seyyed Veli Reza. *Mawdudi and the making of Islamic revivalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- . *Islamic leviathan: Islam and the making of state power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Norani Othman, ed. *Shari'a Law and the Modern Nation-State: A Malaysian Symposium*. Kuala Lumpur: SIS Forum, 1994.
- , ed. *Muslim women and the challenge of Islamic extremism*. Bandar Baru Seri Petaling: Vinlin Press, 2005.
- Norani Othman, M. Putuachary, and Clive Kessler, eds. *Sharing the nation: Faith, difference, power and the state 50 years after Merdeka*. Petaling Jaya: SIRDC, 2008.
- Ooi, Kee Beng. "Mahathir as Muslim leader." In *Southeast Asian Affairs 2006*, edited by Daljit Singh and Lorraine C. Salaza, pp. 172-180. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2006.
- Pang, Stephanie, and A. Whitley. "Ethnic Malays have frittered away opportunities, Mahathir says." July 8, 2007. Accessed January 21, 2008. <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=am0uXeUgft8tE&refer=asia#>.
- Peletz, Michal. *Islamic modern: Religious courts and cultural politics in Malaysia*. Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Petito, Fabio, and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, eds. *Culture and religion in international relations: The return from exile*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Petra Kamaruddin, Raja. "Again, money walks, bullshit talks." *Malaysia Today*, September 17, 2006. Accessed January 21, 2008. [http://www.malaysia-today.net/Raja\\_Petra/2006\\_09\\_17\\_archive.html](http://www.malaysia-today.net/Raja_Petra/2006_09_17_archive.html).
- Pipes, Daniel. *In the path of God: Islam and political power*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002.
- Platzdasch, Bernd. *Islamism in Indonesia: Politics in the emerging democracy*. Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 2009.
- Rahim, Lily Zubaidah, ed. *Muslim secular democracy: Voices from within*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

- Rajesh Kochhar. "Muslims and English education in colonial Bengal," 2013. Accessed March 6, 2013. <http://rajeshkochhar.com/2013/02/muslims-and-english-education-in-colonial-bengal-calcutta-madrassa-and-hooghly-mohsin-college-in-a-historical-perspective/>.
- Rao, V. V. B. *Malaysia: Development pattern and policy 1947–1971*. Singapore: University of Singapore Press, 1980.
- Reid, Anothony, "Understanding *Melayu* (Malay) as a source of diverse modern identities." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* vol. 32, no. 3 (2001): 295–313.
- Ricci, Ronit. *Islam translated: Literature, conversion and the Arabic cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Richardson, M. "Mahathir boosted by terrorism stance." CNN.com, October 31, 2001. Accessed March 23, 2010. <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/southeast/10/31/malaysia.mahathir/index.html>.
- Roff, William. "Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua: Innovation and reaction amongst the Malays." In *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, edited by Ahmad Ibrahim, Sharon Siddique, and Yasmin Hussain, pp. 123–129. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985.
- . *The origins of Malay nationalism* (2nd edition). Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1994.
- . *Studies on Islam in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2008.
- . "Islam obscured? Some reflections on studies of Islam and society in Southeast Asia." In William Roff, *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2009, pp. 3–32.
- Rose Ismail, ed. *Hudud in Malaysia: The issues at stake*. Kuala Lumpur: SIS Forum, 1995.
- Saravanamuttu, Johan. *Malaysia's foreign policy: The first fifty years—alignment, neutralism, Islamism*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010.
- Sardar, Ziauddin. *The future of Muslim civilization*. London and New York: Mansell, 1987.
- Sayyid, Bobby S. *A fundamental fear: Eurocentrism and the emergence of Islamism*. London: Zed Books, 1997.
- Schottmann, Sven A. "Melayu Islam Beraja: The politics of legitimisation in a Malay Islamic monarchy." *Review of Indonesian and Malay Affairs* vol. 40, no. 2 (2006): 111–139.
- . "From triumphalism to the New Deal: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Asian Century." *Proceedings of the 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia*, 2008. Accessed May 6, 2013. <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/asaa/svenschottmann.pdf>.
- . "God helps those who help themselves: Islam according to Mahathir Mohamad." *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* vol. 24, no. 1 (January 2013): 57–69.
- . "Paving the ground? Malaysia's democratic prospects and the Mahathir government's Islamic discourse." In *Negotiating tense pluralisms: Culture, religion, and conflict in Muslim Southeast Asia*, edited by J. A. Camilleri and S. A. Schottmann, pp. 52–69. London: Routledge, 2013.

- Shadid, Anthony. *Legacy of the prophet: Despots, democrats, and the new politics of Islam*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001.
- Shamsul Amri Baharuddin. "The 'Battle Royal': The UMNO elections of 1987." *Southeast Asian Affairs* vol. 15 (1988): 170–188.
- . "Nations of intent in Malaysia." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*, edited by S. Tønneson and H. Antlöv, pp. 323–347. Richmond, UK: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies and Curzon Press, 1996.
- . "Identity construction, nation formation and Islamic revivalism in Malaysia." In *Islam in an era of nation-states: Politics and religious renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia*, edited by Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvatic, pp. 323–347. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997.
- . "Competing domains of control: Islam and human rights in Malaysia." In *Islam and Human Rights in Practice: Perspectives across the Ummah*, edited by Shahram Akbarzadeh and Benjamin MacQueen, pp. 108–117. London and New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Sinanović, Ermin. "Post-Islamism: The failure of Islamic activism?" *International Studies Review* vol. 7, no. 3 (2005): 433–436.
- Sisters in Islam. "Do not legislate on faith." Last modified 2001. Accessed February 1, 2010. [http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=464&Itemid=197](http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=464&Itemid=197).
- Stauth, Georg. "Politics and cultures of Islamization in Southeast Asia: Indonesia and Malaysia in the Nineteen Nineties." Bielefeld: Transcript, 2002.
- Stewart, Ian. *The Mahathir legacy: A nation divided, a region at risk*. Singapore: Talisman, under license from Allen & Unwin, 2004.
- Stremlin, Boris. "Does Islam exist? The Islamic *longue duree* and world-systems analysis." In *Islam and the Orientalist World-System*, edited by K. Samman and M. al-Zo', pp. 79–92. Boulder, CO, and London: Paradigm, 2008.
- Strindberg, Anders, and Mats Wärn. *Islamism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011.
- Tagliacozzo, Eric, ed. *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, movement, and the longue duree*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2009.
- Taji-Farouki, Suha. *Modern Muslim intellectuals and the Qur'an*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Thomas, Scott M. *The global resurgence of religion and the transformation of international relations: The struggle for the soul of the twenty-first century*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Tibi, Bassam. *The crisis of modern Islam: A pre-industrial culture in the scientific-technological age*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988.
- Utusan Online. "Islam liberal menyeleweng." May 22, 2005. Accessed October 23, 2017. [http://www.utusan.com.my/utusan/info.asp?y=2005&dt=0522&pub=Utusan\\_Malaysia&sec=Dalam\\_Negeri&pg=dn\\_09.htm&arc=hive](http://www.utusan.com.my/utusan/info.asp?y=2005&dt=0522&pub=Utusan_Malaysia&sec=Dalam_Negeri&pg=dn_09.htm&arc=hive).
- Vicziany, Marika. "Malaysia: The contradictions of a remarkable economic transformation." In *Business in Asia*, edited by Russell Smyth and Marika Vicziany. Clayton, VIC: Monash University Press, 2006.

- Voll, John O. *Islam, continuity, and change in the modern world*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982.
- von Vorys, Karl. *Democracy without consensus: Communalism and political stability in Malaysia*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975.
- Wain, Barry. *Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohamad in turbulent times*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Warner, Carolyn M., and Manfred W. Wenner. "Religion and the political organizations of Muslims in Europe." *Perspectives on Politics* vol. 4, no. 3 (September 2006): pp. 457–479.
- Weck, Winfried, Noorhaidi Hassan, and Irfan Abu Bakar, eds. *The politics of identity and the future of democracy in Indonesia*. Jakarta: Centre for Religion and Culture, 2011.
- Weiss, Meredith L. "What will become of Reformasi? Ethnicity and changing political norms in Malaysia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* vol. 21, no. 3 (1999): 424–450.
- . "The changing shape of Islamic politics in Malaysia." *Journal of East Asian Studies* vol. 4, no.1 (2004): 139–173.
- Westoff, Charles F., and Tomas Frejka. "Religiousness and fertility among European Muslims." *Population and Development Review* vol. 33, no. 4 (December 2007): 785–809.
- Wilson, B. "The failure of nomenclature: The concept of 'orthodoxy' in the study of Islam." *Comparative Islamic Studies* vol. 3, no. 2 (2007): 169–194.
- World Bank. *Country Report Malaysia*, 2008. Accessed April 21, 2013. [http://ddpext.worldbank.org/ext/ddpreports/ViewSharedReport?&CF=&REPORT\\_ID=9147&REQUEST\\_TYPE=VIEWADVANCED](http://ddpext.worldbank.org/ext/ddpreports/ViewSharedReport?&CF=&REPORT_ID=9147&REQUEST_TYPE=VIEWADVANCED).
- Zabedah A. N. *Renongan: Antoloji esei melayu dalam tahun2 1924–1941*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1964.
- Zakaria A. "The 1999 general election: A preliminary overview." In *Trends in Malaysia: Election Assessment* no. 1. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000. Accessed March 5, 2010. <http://www.iseas.edu.sg/trends120.pdf>.
- Zaman, Muhammad Qassim. *The ulama in contemporary Islam: Custodians of change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Zastoupil, L., and M. Moir. *The great Indian education debate: Documents relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist controversy, 1781–1843*. Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, 1999.
- Zein, Abdulhamid El-. "Beyond ideology and theology: The search for the anthropology of Islam." *Annual Review of Anthropology* vol. 6, no. 1 (1977): 227–254.
- Yavuz, Hakan M. *Islamic political identity in Turkey*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Yegar, Moshe. *Islam and Islamic institutions in British Malaya: Policies and implementation*. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1979.

## Works by Mahathir Mohamad

- Det, C. H. E. (pseudonym of Mahathir M.). "Malay women make their own freedom." *Sunday Times*, July 20, 1947.
- . "Malays and the higher education." *Sunday Times*, September 26, 1948.
- . "Picnic time in the Dusun." *Sunday Times*, January 23, 1949.

- . “The rulers are losing loyalty.” *Sunday Times*, August 7, 1949.
- . “Malays in south Siam struggle on.” *Sunday Times*, January 8, 1950.
- Mahathir M. “Adat and Islam.” *Intisari: Journal of the Malaysian Sociological Research Institute*, 1962. Reprinted in Mahathir M, *The early years, 1947–1972: Compilation of writings by Dr Mahathi Mohamad*. Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing, 1995, pp. 103–115.
- . *The Malay dilemma*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 1970.
- . “The basis and goal of UMNO’s struggle.” Speech at the official opening of the UMNO Youth and Women’s UMNO Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, July 1, 1976. Reproduced in Harun & Shafie (1982:18).
- . “Seminar on transnational corporations and national development.” Address by the Deputy Prime Minister. Petaling Jaya, October 2, 1979. *Foreign Affairs Malaysia* vol. 12, no. 4 (December, 1979): 393.
- . Speech at the Kadi, Imam and Religious Officer Training Course. Jenan, March 28, 1982.
- . Speech at the opening of the National Level Islamic Thought Course. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Bangi, May 5, 1982.
- . Opening address to the 2nd Annual General Assembly of RISEAP. Subang, June 4, 1983.
- . Speech at the launch of Bank Islam Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, July 7, 1983.
- . Awal Muharram Message. Radio Televisyen Malaysia Broadcast, October 6, 1983.
- . Speech at the PERKIM Headquarters. Kuala Lumpur, October 22, 1983.
- . Speech at the 7th Malaysian Law Conference. Kuala Lumpur, October 31, 1983.
- . “Whither Malaysia?” Speech at International Symposium organized by Keio University. Tokyo, November 11, 1983.
- . Prime Ministerial New Year’s Address. RTM Broadcast, December 31, 1983.
- . Speech at the official opening of the Islamic Civilisation Exhibition. Kuala Lumpur, May 21, 1984.
- . Presidential Speech to the 34th UMNO Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, May 25, 1984.
- . Speech at the opening of the 3rd International Seminar on Islamic Thought. Kuala Lumpur, July 26, 1984.
- . National Day Message. Radio Televisyen Malaysia Broadcast, August 31, 1984.
- . Speech at the official opening of the Defence Ministry Mosque. Kuala Lumpur, September 20, 1985.
- . Speech at the official opening of the conference on the concept of an Islamic state. Petaling Jaya, September 26, 1985.
- . *The Challenge*. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1986.
- . Speech at the opening ceremony of the International Islamic Symposium. Kuala Lumpur, March 5, 1986.
- . Speech at the RISEAP Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, March 19, 1986.
- . Opening address to the Seminar on Developing Islamic Financial Instruments. Kuala Lumpur, April 28, 1986.
- . “The South-South II Conference.” Speech at the opening of the South-South II Conference. Kuala Lumpur, May 5, 1986. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclo-*

- paedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 10 part 4, Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 95–106.
- . Speech at the RISEAP 4th Annual General Assembly. Kelana Jaya, November 8, 1986.
- . “Islam is concerned with justice everywhere.” Speech at the 5th Islamic Summit. Kuwait, January 28, 1987.
- . Speech at the official opening of the Islamic Management Seminar jointly organized by the Islamic Development Bank and the Education Ministry. Petaling Jaya, April 6, 1987.
- . Speech at the National Qur’an Reading Competition. Kuala Lumpur, April 13, 1987.
- . *Hari Raya Puasa Fitri Message*. Radio Televisyen Malaysia Broadcast, May 29, 1987.
- . Speech at the International Ummatic Unity Seminar. Kuala Lumpur, August 29, 1987.
- . Speech at the official opening of the UMNO Youth Convention on poverty. Kuala Lumpur, September 12, 1987.
- . Speech at the official dinner in honour of H. E. Mohammad Khan Junejo, prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Kuala Lumpur, November 5, 1987.
- . Speech at the 43rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, October 4, 1988. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 10 part 6, Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 123–136.
- . “Regionalism, globalism and spheres of influence: ASEAN and the challenge of change into the 21st century.” Ninth Singapore Lecture, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, December 14, 1988, p. 29.
- . Speech at the 50th anniversary of UMNO. Johor Baru, May 11, 1989.
- . Presidential address to the Annual General Assembly of the United Malays’ National Organisation. Kuala Lumpur, November 17, 1989.
- . “South-south consultation and cooperation.” Speech at the 1st meeting of the Heads of State and Governments of the Summit Level Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation. Kuala Lumpur, June 1, 1990. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 10, part 4. Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 81–88.
- . “Malaysia: The way forward.” Speech at the Malaysian Business Council. Kuala Lumpur, February 28, 1991.
- . Speech at the official opening of ISTAC. Kuala Lumpur, October 4, 1991.
- . Speech at the 3rd Bumiputera Economic Congress. Kuala Lumpur, January 10, 1992.
- . Speech at the launch of the Institute of Islamic Understanding and the Opening of the Congress on the 21st century. Kuala Lumpur, July 3, 1992.
- . Speech at the official opening of the sixth Islamic Academy of Sciences Conference on the Environment and Development in the Islamic World. Kuala Lumpur, August 10, 1992.
- . Presidential Address at the 42nd UMNO Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, November 6, 1992.
- . Speech at the National Qur’an Reading Competition. Kangar, January 4, 1993.
- . Parliamentary speech debating the constitutional amendment. Dewan Rakyat, January 18, 1993.

- . “Islam and justice.” Speech delivered at the Conference on Islam and justice. Kuala Lumpur, June 3, 1993.
- . “The role of an Islamic university.” Speech delivered at the 10th Anniversary celebrations of the International Islamic University Malaysia. Petaling Jaya, August 24, 1993.
- . “The role and influence of religions in society.” Speech delivered at the opening of the seminar on Muslim and Christian minds. Kuala Lumpur, September 14, 1993.
- . Presidential address at the Annual General Assembly of the United Malays National Organisation. Kuala Lumpur, November 4, 1993.
- . “Going back to the Quran.” Speech delivered at the opening of the 4th International Seminar on the Quran. Kuala Lumpur, February 2, 1994.
- . “Reviving the glory of Islamic Civilisation.” Speech delivered at the opening of the World Islamic Civilisation Festival 1994. Kuala Lumpur, June 17, 1994.
- . “North-South relations: Problems and prospects.” Speech delivered at the International Conference in Human Resources Development within the framework of International Partnership. Jakarta, September 16, 1994. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 4. Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 207–214.
- . *Speech at the official opening of the Law Seminar*. Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur, October 14, 1994.
- . Speech at the official launch of ASDI Shares. Kuala Terengganu, October 31, 1994.
- . Presidential address at the Annual General Assembly of the United Malays National Organisation. Kuala Lumpur, November 18, 1994.
- . Speech at the launch of Takaful Islam Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, August 1, 1985.
- . “Asian versus Western values.” Speech at the Senate House, Cambridge University. Cambridge, March 15, 1995.
- . “Islam: The misunderstood religion.” Keynote address delivered at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. Oxford, April 16, 1996.
- . “Islamic justice.” Keynote address delivered at the International Seminar on the Administration of Islamic law. Kuala Lumpur, July 23, 1996.
- . Address to the UMNO Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, October 10, 1996.
- . Speech at the 50th Anniversary of the Council of Malaysian Churches. Kuala Lumpur, April 25, 1997.
- . “Facing the 21st century: Reform and the challenges for regional Muslims.” Speech at the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, August 22, 1997.
- . “Asia’s role in the global Commonwealth of the 21st century.” London, October 21, 1997. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*. Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 53–62.
- . “Forging an Asia-Europe partnership for the 21st century.” Speech delivered at the Global Panel Kuala Lumpur. Kuala Lumpur, November 10, 1997. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 4. Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 133–143.

- . “Europe and the Islamic World.” Speech at the opening of the Malaysia-European Union Joint Seminar. Kuala Lumpur, March 24, 1998.
- . “Tolerance and moderation in Islam.” Keynote address delivered at al-Azhar University. Cairo, May 10, 1998.
- . *A new deal for Asia*. Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1999.
- . “The role of Islam in fostering interreligious understanding.” Speech delivered at the International Seminar in the role of Islam in fostering in interreligious understanding. Kuala Lumpur, May 25, 1999. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 1. Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 83–98.
- . Speech at the 5th International Conference on the future of Asia organized by Nihon Keizai Shimbun. Tokyo, June 3, 1999.
- . Presidential address to the 50th UMNO Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, June 18, 1999.
- . *Islam and the Muslim Ummah: Selected speeches by Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia*, vol. 2. Edited by Hashim Makaruddin. Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 2000, p. 119.
- . Speech at the Symposium on Malay identity in the 21st century. Kuala Lumpur, April 29, 2000.
- . Speech at the official opening of the 18th PUSPANITA Representatives’ Assembly. Putrajaya, July 22, 2000.
- . “Malaysia’s experience: Lessons for the ummah.” Speech delivered at the Lariba Lifetime Achievement Award. Chicago, September 1, 2000.
- . Speech at the official opening of the National Qur’an Reading Competition. Kota Kinabalu, September 18, 2000.
- . “The future of Muslims in the 21st century.” Speech delivered at the meeting with Muslim intellectuals and professionals. London, October 3, 2000. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *The Encyclopaedia of Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad*, vol. 1. Kuala Lumpur: Darulfikir, 2004, pp. 35–44.
- . Speech at the launch of the Malaysian Formula Foundation. Petaling Jaya, November 1, 2000.
- . Hari Raya Aidilfitri Message. Radio dan Televisyen Malaysia Broadcast, December 26, 2000.
- . “Meeting the challenges of the 21st century: Role of Muslim nations.” Keynote address to the Emirates International Forum. Dubai, April 26, 2001.
- . Address to the General Assembly of the World Evangelical Fellowship. Kuala Lumpur, May 4, 2001.
- . “Malays forget easily.” Presidential address to the 52nd UMNO Annual General Assembly. Kuala Lumpur, June 21, 2001
- . Speech at the 48th Annual General Assembly of the Peoples’ Progressive Party of Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, September 29, 2001.
- . The 2002 Budget Speech. Dewan Rakyat, October 19, 2001.
- . Speech at the Iftar with student leaders. Putrajaya, December 5, 2001.
- . Hari Raya Puasa Message. Radio Televisyen Malaysia Broadcast, December 15, 2001.
- . *Reflections on Asia*. Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 2002.

- . Speech at the opening of the seminar on issues and processes in the opening of the Malay-Muslim mind. Kuala Lumpur, January 29, 2002.
- . Speech at the official opening of the International Islamic Capital Market Conference and the launching of the International Islamic Capital Market Week at the Securities Commission. Kuala Lumpur, March 26, 2002.
- . Speech on the occasion of the US–ASEAN Business Council Dinner. Washington, DC, May 14, 2002.
- . “Mendedah yang terbuka.” Presidential address to the 53rd UMNO Annual General Assembly, Kuala Lumpur, June 20, 2002.
- . “The new Malay Dilemma.” Speech at the Harvard Club of Malaysia Dinner. Kuala Lumpur, July 29, 2002.
- . The 2003 Budget Speech. Putrajaya, September 20, 2002.
- . Speech at the opening of the 3rd Malay-Islamic World Convention. Malacca, October 3, 2002.
- . “Islam: Fostering peace and dialogue in an interdependent world.” Speech at the Symposium on Islam at the United Nations University. Tokyo, December 13, 2002.
- . “Driver of conflict: Political Islam and its discontents.” Speech at the interactive session of the World Economic Forum. Davos, January 24, 2003.
- . Speech at the launch of E-Syariah. Putrajaya, February 7, 2003.
- . “Islam in the era of globalization.” Opening speech at the World Ulama Conference. Putrajaya, July 10, 2003.
- . Speech at the launch of Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia. Shah Alam, July 18, 2003.
- . “Building on success, investing for the future.” The 2004 Budget Speech at the Dewan Rakyat. September 12, 2003.
- . Opening Speech at the 10th session of the Islamic Summit Conference. Putrajaya, October 16, 2003.
- . “Knowledge and the Muslim enigma.” Speech delivered at the conferment of the honorary doctorate in Knowledge Science by the Multimedia University. Malacca, July 25, 2004. Reproduced in Mahathir M., *Islam, knowledge and other affairs*. Petaling Jaya: MPH Publishing, 2006.
- . “Challenges facing the Muslim ummah in the modern world.” Speech delivered at the International Conference on the Muslim ummah in the modern world. Karachi, September 3, 2004.
- . “The barbaric lynching of President Saddam Hussein.” Press statement by Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (Member of the International Committee for the Defence of President Saddam Hussein). December 30, 2006.
- . “A century old school.” Last modified 2008. Accessed September 17, 2011. [http://test.chedet.com/che\\_det/2008/08/a-century-old-school.html](http://test.chedet.com/che_det/2008/08/a-century-old-school.html).
- . *A Doctor in the House: The memoirs of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad*. Petaling Jaya: MPH Publishing Group, 2011.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SVEN SCHOTTMANN is director of Internationalisation for the Arts, Education and Law Group at Griffith University in Brisbane and a member of the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research. His main research interests are Muslim political movements in Southeast Asia and the range of intellectual and imaginative encounters between Muslims in different parts of the world. He has published extensively on topics ranging from Southeast Asian regionalism and transnational education to the role of religion in diplomacy. He is coeditor of *Conflict, Culture and Religion in Muslim Southeast Asia: Negotiating Tense Pluralisms*. Sven Schottmann is the inaugural recipient of the Malaysian government's Mahathir Distinguished Fellowship Program and was a visiting research fellow at the Institute for Ethnic Studies at the National University of Malaysia, as well as the Royal Dutch Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden. A longtime resident of Singapore and Malaysia, he gained a Bachelor in International Studies degree from DePaul, a Master of Science in Asian Politics from the School of Oriental and African Studies, and a PhD from Monash University.