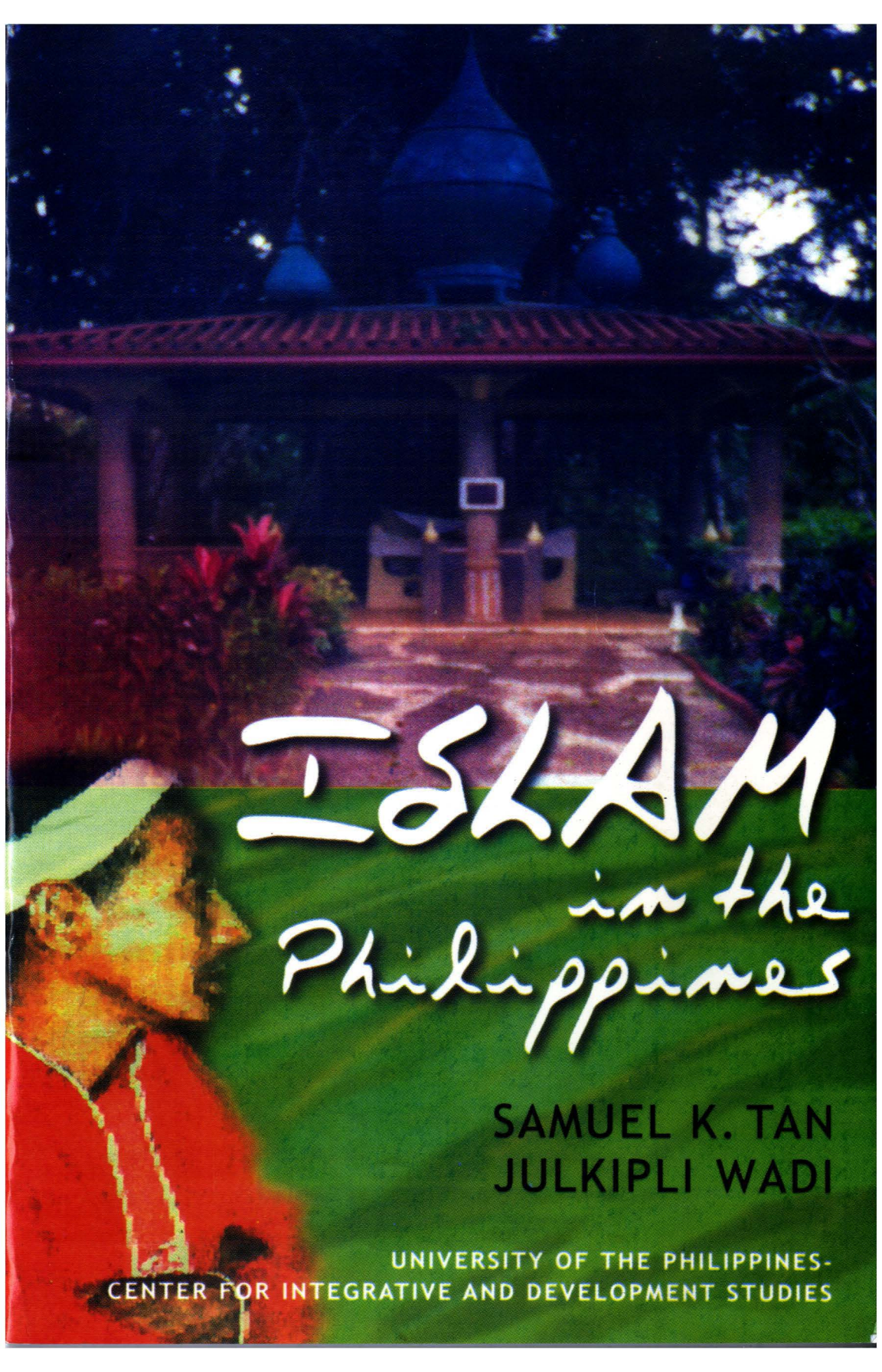




ISLAM

*in the
Philippines*

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*Islam
in the
Philippines*

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PUBLISHED BY
The University of the Philippines
Center for Integrative and Development Studies
Diliman, Quezon City

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ISBN No. 971-76-9
First Printing December 1995
Second Printing July 2003

Book and Cover Design: Ariel G. Manuel
Photo Cover: Munap H. Hairulla

Recommended Entry

Islam in the Philippines/Samuel K. Tan and Julkipli
Wadi. Quezon City: UP-CIDS, c.2003.

Mindanao Studies Report No. 3

1. Islam - Philippines 2. Islam -Relations-Christianity.

I. Wadi, Julkipli. II. Title

BP 172 T3 1995

*Cover design consist of the conceptual reconstruction of
Rajah Baguinda's socio-religious and politico-cultural meeting
place at Bud Datu where the archaeological remains of the
Sulu royalty are preserved.*

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Foreword

The University of the Philippines-Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP-CIDS) instituted the Mindanao Studies Program (MSP) in late 1994 to address the research needs of a rapidly developing region. While the program is committed to undertake multidisciplinary studies on topics ranging from the social, cultural, political and economic changes in the growth corridors to biodiversity conservation, it aims to pay special attention to the substantive concerns of the more marginalized regions of Mindanao.

This publication contains two short essays on Islam in the Philippines. Written by Dr. Samuel K. Tan, Director of the UP-CIDS Mindanao Studies Program, the first essay provides, in condensed form, insights into the Christian-Muslim conflict in the Philippines. On the other hand, the second essay is a preliminary attempt by a young researcher, Julkipli Wadi, Research Associate of the Asian Center, to posit Islam as a potential revolutionary paradigm. The seminal ideas in both essays are intended to stimulate discussion and debate that would hopefully produce more comprehensive works on Islam in the Philippines.

The UP-CIDS acknowledges the editorial assistance of Ms. Jocelyn de Jesus. Bella Lucas and Joy Aparis saw the Mindanao Studies Report No. 3 through its publication with the assistance of Michael Patrick Arciga.

As in all our publications, the views expressed in the two essays are those of the authors whose academic freedom is upheld by the University.

MARIA CYNTHIA ROSE BANZON BAUTISTA
*Executive Director, University of the Philippines-
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1995



Islam and Christianity in the Philippines

SAMUEL K. TAN*

Introduction

ISLAM and Christianity are the two great traditions in the Philippines whose impact on political, social, cultural and economic development spans centuries of Philippine history. To a large extent, the problems of development, which have often expressed themselves in conflict and disunity, can be traced to the nature, structure and function of these two traditions.

The advent of Islam antedates that of Christianity by about two centuries, according to written sources or three centuries, according to oral tradition. But by the time the two religions arrived in the archipelago, they each had acquired enough of an institutional character that allowed them to respond to the multifarious impulses of native cultures in areas where they gained a foothold.

In the case of Islam, the orthodoxy that generally marked its origin in the Arab world, despite some of the differentiating and diverse patterns of Arab interaction with the new faith, dynamically assimilated both the form and sub-

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stance of the non-Arab cultures of Africa in the south, Iberia in the west, Asia Minor in the north and Persia, India and Asia in the east. The same thing can be said of Christianity, whose expansion beyond Judea "to Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth"¹ antedates Islamic expansion by over six centuries. In fact, Christianity had served as a barrier to Islamic expansion to areas that were bound by the "glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome," notwithstanding the subsequent division of Christendom between Rome and Constantinople after 1054 and later, between Catholicism and Protestantism after 1517.

Thus, the Islamic element that entered through the Southern tip of the archipelago, now represented by Tawi-Tawi and Sulu, was filtered from either its Arabian, Chinese or Indian source through Southeast Asian syncreticism.² On the other hand, Christianity, as embodied in Catholicism, entered through the midsection of the archipelago directly from the strongest bastion of Catholic Christianity outside of Rome—Spain. Consequently, the patterns of Muslim and Christian development in the Philippines would be influenced more by the kind of relations between the two religions before their appearances in the archipelago, and to an even greater extent, by the seven or so centuries of Iberian experience under Moorish rule.³

Roles in Political Change

By the very nature of Islam and Catholicism as religious systems — in which the distinction of the religious from the political, economic and sociocultural features is, at best, blurred — their coming to the archipelago and their subsequent impact on indigenous consciousness led to the shaping of political institutions that set the two basic communities and traditions in a state of conflict.⁴ Older than Catholicism in the political sense, Islam succeeded in establishing the sultanate system similar to either the Malay form or that of the Indian subcontinent. Under this new political system, all powers were centralized in the Sultan who was regarded as no less than the "Shadow of God" on earth. The same was true of the system in Southeast Asia, where the Malay sultans wielded powers of life and death over their subjects or in Darul Islam, where early in Islamic history, the *khalifa* — from the "Four Companions" to the last of the Abbassids in mid-13th century A.D. (6th century A.H.) — enjoyed nearly absolute power.

But in the case of the Philippine sultanates, whether in Sulu or Maguindanao and later, Maranao, the folk Islamic tradition provided a neutralizing element from pre-Islamic political institutions as shown in the creation of an advisory body to the Sultan called the *Ruma Bichara*, a council of influential *datus* and *orangkayas* who participated in decision-making processes. In fact, in the case of Maguindanao, the succession to the Sultanate by any duly recognized claimant from among the contending *raja mudas* could not be validated without the ceremonial participation of the *dumatu* who represented the earliest *tabunaway* political line of the presultanate era. By customary law, a *dumatu* had to carry the ceremonial white sand for the Sultan's confirmation.⁵

The independence that characterized the relation between Maguindanao and Sulu was a reassertion of ethnic rather than Islamic inertia in the Muslim South, despite the cooperative efforts forged against colonial threats or the political marriages entered into between members of royalty. Even the Sultan's apparent absolutism was in practice tempered by the more practical power of the *datus* over their respective subjects, who were theoretically under the overall sovereignty of the Sultan, whose presence in the *datuships* was expressed by the five *panglimas* in Sulu. There were no *panglimas* in Maguindanao and the Sultan's influence or presence had to be demonstrated by a system of local alliance or by the Sultanate's coercive forces.

Yet within an obviously pluralistic local society, the *ummah* consciousness allowed the Sultanate to emerge as a unit in itself within the larger geographic confines of the Muslim South, receiving the support of the people and the *datus* in external relations, including the organized raids and negotiations conducted between the Sultanate and foreign powers. The Sultan and the Sultanate were undoubtedly perceived as the institutions vested not only with the responsibility of promoting the well-being of the local *datuships* but also with the task of preserving Muslim institutions from foreign threats.⁶ Islam, which had become the superstructure of the political system as well as the "icing" on the region's "cultural cake," provided the Muslims with a basis for resistance. The Sultanate became the antithesis of the colonial system that arose in the archipelago, a system in which Catholicism would play a significant role in shaping political forms and goals.

Like Islam, Christianity influenced the conduct of political affairs in the Philippines following the successful establishment of the Spanish foothold first in Cebu, and then in Manila, from where Spanish processes were coordinated

and controlled. But theoretically, the Church was expected to concern itself with the "salvation of souls" and, in fact, to be subservient to the State by virtue of the *Patronato Real* which granted the Crown the right to appoint bishops in the colony. The Crown's inability to truly control the colony, however, virtually left the entire management of the colony to local colonial officials, including religious ones. Influenced as they were by mundane, if not vain, aims of Spanish colonization, the priests found their vocation convenient for purposes of economic and political gains which bred rivalries and conflicts between them and the civil officials. Thus, the entire political history of Spanish rule in the archipelago was marked by open hostilities between the Church and the State as represented by the Archbishop and the Governor-General respectively, and later, between the *cura paroco* and the native elite, which led to what Marcelo H. del Pilar called the *frailocracia*, a politico-religious system in which the friars exercised real political power from the municipal to the central levels of the bureaucracy. The success of Christianity in placing a large portion of the archipelago under colonial control was based, to a great extent, on the monolithic structure of the Church which could command obedience and submission even from State officials.

Eventually, the friars exploited both the State and the natives for their own purposes, which included placing the non-Christianized areas under the Cross. As expressed in their doctrines and reports, the religious officials believed that the only way to integrate all the native inhabitants of the archipelago into the colonial system, without necessarily giving them the same rights and privileges enjoyed by the Spaniards, was to convert them to Christianity. It was precisely in this fundamental aim of Christianity where the seed of Christian-Muslim conflict was sown and later nurtured by ethno-religious prejudice, discrimination and repression.

The advent of American rule in 1898 brought only another form and approach of Christianity through which the non-Christian societies, including the Muslims, were effectively penetrated and subtly transformed into supporters of American "liberal democracy."⁷ But unlike Spanish colonial rule, the latter allowed some degree of native participation in the affairs of government. The role of Protestant missions that divided the archipelago into spheres of religious influence was quite crucial as it supported the more important task of educating the natives through the public school system. In effect, the hundreds

of Thomasites who arrived as teachers, and the Protestant missionaries who were supported by their own denominational boards, were co-laborers in the great task of "civilizing the natives" and in ensuring that liberal democracy had its roots in the popular will. Eventually, both Catholic and Protestant minds were behind American political measures to allow popular will and colonial authority to converge in a kind of democratic partnership as envisioned by the Jones Law of 1916 and later, the Tydings-Mc-Duffie Law of 1934. Both laws recognized the right of the natives to political self-determination, but subject to the creation of a stable government which, under colonial rule, really meant a government acceptable to the United States.

The American impact on the Christian Filipinos was also evident among the Muslims and other so-called minorities. Although the Spaniards failed to really subdue the Muslims and incorporate them into the colonial state, except through ambiguously concluded treaties that were not honored, the Muslim sultanates failed to thwart the onslaught of the American politico-military machine. After a bloody and unsuccessful resistance from 1898 to 1913, the Muslims yielded to American pressure to recognize American sovereignty without, however, necessarily relinquishing the Sultan's spiritual hold over his subjects. The Kiram-Carpenter Agreement concluded in 1915 divested the Sulu sultanate of the political power it once enjoyed, thus giving Muslims the same status as the Christian Filipinos insofar as participation in government was concerned.⁸ Although religion was, to a certain extent, important in securing privileges in society, American colonial government emphasized the secular basis of the State, and both Muslims and Christians were expected and required to have the necessary skills and expertise for their participation in the government.

Significance for Nationalism

While Islam and Christianity share certain universal principles, such commonality was not sufficient to bring the two religions to a common objective in the Philippines. Owing in part to historical misfortunes and colonial interests, mutual prejudice and enmity marked the entries of Islam and Christianity into the archipelago. Consequently, the idea of nationhood followed a parallel rather than a concentric line of development, hindering the growth of nationalism. The beginnings of nationalism, generally traced to the propagandists and revolutionists of the 19th century, were not seen in the Muslim South even when the

tide of revolution had reached the very heart of Muslimland by the close of Spanish rule in 1898.

The refusal of Sultan Kiram of Sulu to accept the invitation of Emilio Aguinaldo to join the war against the United States in 1899 was indicative of the absence of any correspondence between the Muslim and Christian communities. Even the acceptance of American sovereignty in both communities only brought the focus of loyalty not on a national community that was truly Filipino but on a foreign power that was regarded as better than the Filipino. To maintain American primacy in the archipelago, American programs kept the Muslim, Christian and other communities socially divided, as they had been under Spanish colonial policies. And very often, the Americans acted as intermediaries between parties in conflict. Even the religious missions which utilized schools, hospitals, sports and other secular means to propagate the Gospel, became credible partners in social development. Thus, the task of keeping the peace throughout the archipelago became the responsibility of both Muslims and Christians in their respective areas, except that above them were the American colonial officials who dictated policies and made decisions.

But the Muslims were not as naive as the colonialists thought them to be, for they were aware of the subtle process of Christianization encouraged by the colonial government. However, the Muslim capacity to thwart such a process by means of force was crippled early in the first decade of the 20th century when superior American military technology wiped out Muslim resistance, leaving the effort to oppose the process to recalcitrant sectors of the Muslim population which saw independence movements as late as 1924 in Lanao, 1927 in Sulu and the late '30s in other areas of the Muslim South. The resistance movements, partly inspired by Islamic elements, were directed more against the Christian Filipinos who fronted for the colonial government. Only the outbreak of the Pacific War in the Philippines in 1941 brought both Muslims and Christians together in a common pledge of loyalty to the United States to resist the Japanese invasion and occupation of the country. Even the other minorities joined in the effort to fight off the Japanese.

The Birth and Development of Muslim Secessionism

With Filipinism strongly equated with Christianity in Muslim perception, the Muslims found it difficult to accept the idea that they were Filipinos. In

fact, a Moro nation articulated by a group of Muslims in the late 1920s began to acquire a revitalized meaning for the Muslim struggle and presented an antithesis to Filipinism. The dilemma of Filipinism as a unifying concept was aggravated by the fact that the ambiguities of ethno-religious origin and expression were unresolved by the time the 1935 Constitution was promulgated. What went into the fundamental law was anchored on the premise of a Filipinism not clearly perceived by both Christians and Muslims beyond the contexts of geography and law. The absence of a common national language, which was not only hindered by the primacy of diverse ethnic languages but also by the growing popularity of English, contributed to the preservation of the cultural gap that existed between Christians and non-Christians. The only meaning that could be given to "Filipino" was one who was a citizen of the Philippines, and to "Filipinism" that which pertained to the Filipino. This was the conceptual framework of nationality when the Constitution became the foundation of the Philippine nation. Consequently, when the entire national community emerged from the ruins of war in 1946 and stretched out its hands to receive independence from the United States, Islam and Christianity were not yet reconciled, and their interests not yet liberated from the confines of religion. In short, neither had yet been rationalized. Regardless of this fact, the 1935 Constitution enshrined the seeds of Filipinism when it declared that the Philippines would be a republican state and that Christians and non-Christians were co-equal in their respective spheres and parallel in importance.

What developed from decades of government neglect of the non-Christian areas and the rising expectations induced by modernization was the trend toward the alternatives of autonomy, secessionism or federation. The demand for Bangsamoro independence, which had chosen peaceful means as expressed by associational movements in the decade before the war later took the earlier rationale of the armed revolutionary struggle. This was quite evident in the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) led by Governor Udtog Matalam of Cotabato. The MIM, as it was popularly called in 1968, invoked an ideal Islamic state. But government initiatives preempted the movement's thrust, inducing radical elements from the youth sector to aim for a secessionist process involving the entire Muslim South. The initial unity forged by the Muslims of Sulu, Lanao, Cotabato and Basilan showed how Islam had finally emerged as the only unifying element for the otherwise ethnocentric groups.⁹ The Islamic mantle was strengthened by support from Muslim countries that saw in the

Muslim struggle for liberation the greater world of Islam (*Darul Islam*) coming to terms with history in the Philippines.

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which represented the radical elements in the Muslim struggle, continued its thrust until the Tripoli Agreement of 1976¹⁰ which, for the first time, focused the singularity of Muslim representation in the person of Nur Misuari, a Tausug from Kabingaan, Sulu. Although the agreement brought Muslim demands to the limit of regional autonomy, which was what most of the Muslims in the South wanted at the time, it also planted the seed of factionalism in the Muslim struggle. There was no doubt that Misuari's secessionist or separatist aim had only been subsumed by the diplomatic interests of the Arab or Muslim countries. Eventually, the Muslim struggle would assume the ethnic character that marked earlier movements during the colonial period. By the time the Muslim South was reorganized into two autonomous regions in 1982, Misuari had already reasserted his separatist ideal in a "Moro Nation" which was never a part of the Philippines historically or otherwise. Understandably, the theoretical basis of the declaration was derived from the Tausug concepts of *gausbaogbug* and *kaadilan*.¹¹

The effect of radical reassertion was to bring about three lines of struggle in the Muslim South: (1) the MNLF Reformist line under Dimasangkay Pundato of Lanao; (2) the Muslim Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) led by Ustadz Hashim Salamat of Cotabato; and (3) the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) under Nuruladji Misuari of Sulu. The first two sought regional autonomy and were therefore willing to accept the reality of Philippine sovereignty while expecting Muslims to be given a more dominant role in the South and greater participation in the national government. The Misuari option completely rejected Philippine sovereignty and accepted only a separate Southern State.

But while the options of autonomy and separatism were conflicting, they were not necessarily irreconcilable. Federalism, as a viable alternative, looms in the horizon because it allows the simultaneous retention of nominal Philippine sovereignty and the exercise of full Muslim independence. It also allows an equally meaningful latitude for Christian participation in such a federal state without conflict. The manner of Islam's and Christianity's meaningful response to the winds of change is clearly moving toward compromise.

Things have been rapidly changing in contemporary Mindanao. The break up of the MNLF into two factions, one co-opted by the government and led by

Parouck Hussin and the other remaining loyal to imprisoned MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari, has left only the MILF and Abu Sayyaf as the remaining symbols of the Bangsamoro struggle. But the expected entry of the United States into the resolution of the Mindanao conflict thru the *Balikatan Exercise* alters the prospects for the Bangsamoro towards a more realistic compromise with the government, which increasingly sees the need to grant Muslim autonomy and essence short of independence.

Conclusion

The overriding question in history, culture, economics and politics is how and where Islam and Christianity can find a basis of reconciliation outside of themselves. The principles of the Philippine Constitution provide starting points from two important concepts: democracy and secularism. Democracy means a way of life in which liberty is recognized as a paramount right of the individual, neither inhibited by law nor by practice, save by any injury it may cause to the welfare of society. Consequently, the human capacities of the individual, unaided by race, religion, status, wealth or power are the only valid criteria of distinction. In effect, individuality is recognized and distinguished, and yet, such a delineation does not divide but rather unites because it is predicated on the fullest exercise of personal freedom. The unity created by this kind of conceptualization proceeds from the dynamics of the individual personality, not from the superficialities of social imposition.

Complementary to this concept of personal democracy is the idea of the secular character of the State and its processes. The Philippines is theoretically a secular State, but in practice, it is greatly influenced by religion. Consequently, the realistic development of the State's secular character is the only way toward national unity. By fully emphasizing the value of secularism and relegating all religions to their sacrosanct and proper place in individual consciences, the State will raise the various ethno-religious groups in the country, currently divided by religious differences, to the same level of importance as far as national perception and treatment are concerned. It is from this point of convergence that meaningful processes of unity can be developed for national interests and purposes. Islam and Christianity can certainly help in the attainment of a truly democratic and secular society without losing anything except that which has made both out to be what they should not.

Notes

- 1 Acts 1:8 is essentially related to the Great Commission given by Christ to his disciples before going to Heaven. From this event on, the Church which was historically brought forth on the Day of Pentecost, became the primary instrument of evangelization according to Christian interpretation. The Book of Acts, attributed to Luke the Physician as author, records the "Apostolic" phase of the Church as it pursued the Great Commission.
- 2 For a stimulating analysis of Islamic syncreticism in Southeast Asia, see Henry de Graff, "Southeast Asian Islam in the Nineteenth Century," in P.M. Holt, Ann K.S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis (eds), *Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge University Press, 1970), II, 123-154.
- 3 For a substantial view of Islam as a civilization in world history, see Hamilton Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (Boston: Bacon Press, 1962).
- 4 Spanish sources, which generally reflect Spanish colonial bias and prejudice toward the natives, classified the inhabitants into "*indios*," the Christianized natives and *infieles* who were neither Christianized nor Islamized for purposes of colonial administration.
- 5 Michael O. Mastura, "The Maguindanao Core – Lineage and the *Dumatus*," *The Notre Dame Journal*, Volume VII, 7, No. 2 (July 1877), 9-24.
- 6 Najeeb M. Saleeby, *The History of Sulu* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, Inc., 1963), 47.
- 7 Samuel K. Tan, "Philippine-American Relations in Historical Perspective," an unpublished manuscript, 14-23.
- 8 Samuel K. Tan, *The Filipino Muslim Armed Struggle* (Makati: Filipinas Foundation, Inc., 1978), Appendix G, 180-186.
- 9 T.S. George, *Revolt in Mindanao* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). The book is a general survey of the antecedents of the Mindanao conflict with particular emphasis on the rise of Islam.
- 10 For an insight into some issues on the Tripoli Agreement, see *Selected Documents for the Conferences on the Tripoli Agreement*, September 12-13, 1985 (Quezon City: International Studies Institute of the Philippines, Malcolm Hall, University of the Philippines-Diliman, 1985).
- 11 Nur Misuari, "MNLFGuidelines: For Political Cadres and Military Commanders," page 145. Misuari used Tausug concepts to indigenize an ideology for the MNLF. "*Gausbaugbug*" and "*kaadilan*" were two such concepts.



Islam as Revolutionary Paradigm

JULKIPLI WADI

Reconsidering Religion

IN his classic work *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Thomas Kuhn asserts that a new theory is always announced together with application to some concrete range of natural phenomena; without them, it would not be a candidate for acceptance.¹ This suggests that a theory should always be directly related to a phenomenon at hand. When it can no longer adequately explain what it is theorizing, there is a need to search for a new 'paradigm'.

This brief paper posits the proposition that Islam is a potentially revolutionary paradigm complementary to socialism and takes off from the assumption that Marxist theory as an analytical framework needs review in the light of the collapse of the socialist world and the fact that social and political developments today cannot be explained solely in materialist terms. If Marxist-inspired revolutionary movements are to advance their struggle against various forms of exploitation, it would be necessary for them to reflect on their fundamental assertions.

One such assertion is Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engel's reversion of George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Absolute Idea. The question now is: Is this epistemological break from Hegel a correct reading? Are Hegel's 'Absolute Idea' and Marx's dialectical materialism diametrically opposed? Isn't there a point of equilibrium analogous to zero as the intersection of the x- and y-axis? Is it sound for revolutionary movements to separate the world of spirit from the world of matter? My answer is no. In today's *realpolitik*, power is not only defined by the amount of money in one's pocket. As Zbigniew Brzezinski has pointed out, the 'cornucopia of liberalism' is like dynamite being lit to destroy the West.

Today, the secular world has deemed religion to be irrelevant. But who are we to deconstruct an understanding of a "religion distorted?" In fact, I would like to think that it is not only "imperial overstretch," to use Paul Kennedy's term, that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, but lack of "moral imperative," to use Brzezinski's term, to empower the inner self of the Soviet peoples. We should note that the collapse of the Abbasid Dynasty, which ruled the Middle East and other parts of Asia and Europe including Spain from the 9th century until the 13th century, not only suffered from "imperial overstretch," but also from the people's lack of moral and spiritual power. Thus, their resistance to external onslaughts was very weak. To some extent, this is similar to the thoughts of Edward Gibbon in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

But is religion only concerned with the spirit? I don't know about other "religions." But the answer is a resounding NO for Islam. In Islam, spirit without matter is half-baked just as matter without spirits is half-baked. As far Islam is concerned, *qudrat* (power) is one of its primary elements. *Adl* (justice), *jihad* (struggle), *qital* (fighting), *al barbu kbid'ah* (art of maneuvering, politics) and a wide range of concepts and principles, are very much alive in practice. But one should not think that these concepts and principles are to be used to plunder and destroy. Coupled with these thoughts are concepts like *rahman* (grace), *raheem* (mercy), *akhlaq* (virtue) and *adab* (morality). The point is that Islam is always looking for an equilibrium, the meeting point of the x- and y-axis similar to the Aristotelian concept of "median culture."

To prove that Islam is not only concerned with counting the number of angels dancing on the head of a pin is to appreciate the dynamics of "Islamic fundamentalism" today. The Third World today, for instance, is under attack through the "Ten Myths of Anti-Worldism."² Such a global crusade is basically

an attack against the Muslim world to which the majority of Third World countries belong. In effect, the struggle of the Third World and those other quarters, e.g., "progressive Islamic fundamentalists," waving the flag of self-determination in order to level the international "playing field," is no different from the complaints of many progressive socialist movements. Although still embryonic, "Islamic fundamentalism" is, today, seen as a global threat to Western capitalist hegemony. It just happens that the latter is using a different perspective in looking at global social contradiction. But as far as the context of the problem is concerned, the objective of socialist and Islamic fundamentalist struggles is to dismantle colonialism and imperialism among others.

What is ironic in the politics of Islam is that it has its history to be proud of. Its presence in the world stage is not just a 19th-century phenomenon. It has been there since the chain of *risalah* (prophethood). And while some Muslims have made Islam static and nonrevolutionary, a "holistic Islam" enlightened by the basic fundamentalist precepts to the *din al fitrah* (primordial tradition) has allowed social movements to be dynamic and eventually, revolutionary in the end. That is why today, a new wave of Islamic dynamism and revolutionary zeal continues to perplex current politics. Some observers have even described Islam as an emergent major force in the impending Clash of Civilizations,³ and its advance, like socialism, is premised on its desire to deal with global and social contradictions.

Islam is not purely idealistic. As such, it can advance a revolution along a historical, materialistic and dialectical line. In a sense, there is room for complementarity between Islam and socialism. I am not referring here to the concepts of "Islamic socialism" developed by Egypt's Gamal Abdal Nasser nor Muammar Qaddafi's "Third Universal Theory." These concepts were not natural ideological creations of the time. These were made to suit the specific imperatives of political leadership. To some extent, these might be considered products of these leaders' own paradigm search. Therefore, these cannot in any way be regarded as applicable to Philippine revolutionary experience.

Islam and Socialism: Points of Complementarities

There are two points in looking at the complementarity of Islam and socialism as instruments to provide a partial answer in the revolutionary paradigm search. Kenneth Bauzon's comment is relevant: "The underlying assumption

of this essay has been that common areas can be found to determine whether or not the paradigms are commensurable... The result would hopefully give a clue to the possibility of agreement among them either on fundamental or nonfundamental issues."⁴ Bauzon notes that Islamic, liberal and neo-Marxist paradigms are incommensurable, but he hopes "for the possibility of agreement among them." Islam precisely has the synthesizing capacity.

Two theoretical imperatives must be taken. First, we should look at the ideological complementarity in terms of principles. Second, we should consider the historical reality of Muslims in the Philippines. In the first instance, the five pillars of Islam, namely, declaration of faith, prayer, *zakat* (charity), fasting and pilgrimage, are not mere rituals. These are ideological frameworks with theoretical consistencies. Take the principle of *zakat*. The primary aim of this principle is to create an egalitarian society where there is no rich or poor. In effect, Islam actually adopts a class analysis and pursues class struggle. If one were to look at it from the perspective of *jihad* (struggle), the more there is room for the revolution of the poor against the rich. In the socialist framework, this is equivalent to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Apparently, there is a wide array of Islamic and socialist principles that can be unified toward a valid revolutionary paradigm.

Islam is not theocracy, if the latter is anything like that of the Pope sitting as God's Vicar on earth. Theocracy in Islam is simply the mutual interaction of reason and revelation. It is democratic because of the concept of *shura* (consensus). After the end of the *Khalifatul Rashidun* (Four-Guided Caliphs), the political leadership of the Muslim world became "un-Islamic." It is because a monarchy, *e.g.*, the sultanate, has no room in Islam. But there is room for democratic centralism. The *Qur'an* says, "obey your Lord, the Prophet and those of authority from among you." In effect, a hierarchical relation of power is recognized even while popular participation is taken into consideration in accord with another principle, "*shura baynabum*," which demands consultation in decision-making. There is a wide range of other principles which Islam can offer to theory-construction.

But why is it, some may ask, that the structure of the Muslim world and, for that matter, any Muslim society remains class-based? This is less because of Islam than of the Muslims themselves. As in socialism, there is a big gap between theory and practice in Islam. This is also the reason why the gap in the Muslim world has continued to sow tension in both domestic and global poli-

tics. Since current nationalist regimes of the Muslim world are seen to be collaborating with the forces of colonialism and imperialism, the ripples generated by Islam are not just domestic but also global. Since socialism also addresses the global network of capitalism, at this point, "political Islam" is at par with — and in fact, goes a step farther than the struggle of socialism.

Finally, when I speak of complementarity, I am not referring to the expedient urge to come up with a mediocre co-optation of Islamic and socialist principles. Neither am I pursuing the idea that socialism is the only paradigm Islam can provide. Islam has its own way of social transformation. It does not need to co-opt other forces and in the process, appear limited in sustaining the ideals it pursues. If Islam is limited, it would not have persisted since the 7th century until today. It would not have created its own global political dynamics. It has not come and gone like Adolf Hitler's Nazism, Benito Mussolini's Fascism, Marx's communism or Mao Tse-Tung's version of socialism. And since our premise is the contemporary search for a revolutionary paradigm, Islam appeals as a viable imperative.

Alternative Viability The Philippine Case

Another way of looking at the viability of the socialist principle with an Islamic face in the context of the Philippine revolutionary experience is by reviewing the history of the Muslims in the Philippines. If we imagine the past, we can say that the history of the Philippines today is merely a fraction of Muslim civilization. This is not a simple apology and rhetoric; neither is it romantic. If Muslim history is appreciated for what it is, it would bring this country back on its feet. According to Theda Skocpol, international development, *e.g.*, modernization, is a determinant in shaping a revolutionary condition. Later studies of other leading Marxists on the mode of production note that local condition, history and culture count even more. With global and domestic forces shaping the revolutionary condition, it is but proper for the revolution, while keeping abreast of Marxist-Leninist thought and contemporary global development, to read between the lines and look into the domestic ingredients of revolutions. This is where revolutionary movements can draw from Islam as an alternative framework. Unfortunately, they have not done so.

Because of the arrogance of the status quo, it is difficult for revolutionary movements, including the communist movement, to focus seriously on para-

digm shift. Worse, we continue to parrot history from the vantage point of the colonial past. That we recognize the very term Philippines as our country's name simply shows the inconsistency of our urge to become sovereign. We dislodge our Muslim heroes like Ilidji and Lapu-Lapu as insignificant, as though they were nuisance candidates in a historical rectification. No wonder then that the Philippine revolution is still very much dependent on foreign support. We have yet to give birth to a true Philippine revolution.

Worse still, even on the revolutionary fronts, we treat our Muslim brothers as if they belonged to a different planet. Conversely, in the Bangsamoro front, Communists are dismissed as atheists par excellence. This, I think, is a big blunder of Philippine revolutionaries. Psy-war is deeply embedded in our soul. In the early years, Nur Misuari and Jose Maria Sison were comrades in thought and practice. Why can't we look at the complementarity of the Muslim struggles and the communist revolution? Even assuming that the proletariat wins in the North, it cannot win in the South. Similarly, the Bangsamoro struggle may achieve political power in the South but unless it breaks out the shell of ethnocentrism, it will fail to create a totally different kind of social transformation.

What is interesting to note about Islam in the country today is that a new force is emerging in the North. It is not the "Islamic fundamentalists," but the *Balik Islam* (Christian converts). As of now, this force is following the apolitical moderate Islamic line. But time will tell: when social contradictions becomes so polarized, new political alternatives are bound to emerge. The converts from Christianity are now widely distributed in several areas in the North such as Pangasinan, Vigan, Baguio, Bulacan, Batangas and Visayas, among others. They have been inspired by the globalization of Islamic resurgence. Najeeb Rasul, a priest from Cebu turned Islamic televangelist of the *Voice of Islam*, claims that from 1986 to 1995, the *Balik Islam* movement has attracted around 92,000 converts.⁵ Thousands of Christians are engaged in a "paradigm shift," or what Cesar A. Majul calls a "change of heart" toward Islam every year. I would like to think that this group cannot remain passive. Like other progressives, members of this group will go the way to bridge the gap between the ideal of Islam and social reality. This is not to say that the tandem of socialism and Islam is new. The fact that today's liberation theology is popular among progressives simply shows that there is room for God and Caesar to come together. The Christian Liberation Movement and other progressive mass movements attest to this.

Toward a Balanced Theory and Praxis

One may ask if, indeed, Islam is capable of presenting its own form of political dynamics. If so, why don't the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and other groups use Islam as a paradigm for social change? This is the irony of Islam in the Philippines. Some traditional Muslims have themselves become victims of merely viewing Islam as a religion — a "religion distorted."

For instance, even the concept of *zakat* which is supposed to be a dynamic force in social transformation has been grossly misunderstood in its classical sense. The rich still give the prescribed 2.5 percent of their annual net income to the poor every year. However, this Islamic practice is merely carried out in form, not in substance. Muslims have yet to emerge from their traditional shell. Given this situation, how can the recognized Muslim revolutionary fronts and movements provide a new, dynamic, sociopolitical alternative? That they are languishing in revolutionary thought, agenda, program and project, shows that they are victims of "religion distorted." The Abu Sayyaf, now at the forefront of revolutionary struggle, is incapable of producing an alternative because it lacks firm theoretical mooring. It is not cognizant of current *realpolitik*. Employing a revolutionary strategy along a medieval political line, the Abu Sayyaf wants to change the world in the wink of an eye. Thus, a revolutionary movement without revolutionary thought is the basic problem of Muslim revolutionary fronts in the country.

Islam is actually replete with theory, but it is not elaborated and operationalized. Socialism, and any other "isms" are good in praxis, but lack a firm, holistic theory. That Islam as a theoretical framework is not explored is the fault of the Muslims themselves. Their penchant for counting the number of angels at the head of the pin, as it were, has rendered them "theoretically" poor. No wonder the Muslim world is in the throes of a crisis. Socialism, in its attempt to change that world, has become the champion of the oppressed and exploited masses. But because of its inordinate concern with matter at the expense of the spirit, it has been compelled to search for theoretical alternatives. With this polarity, is there room for harmony between the theoretical and the practical? Where lies the balance? Can Philippine Islam be the basis of a new revolutionary paradigm for the Filipino masses including the Muslims? These are some questions that demand answers.

Notes

- 1 Thomas Kuhn. *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 46.
- 2 Thierry Warmoes, *The Ideological Offensive Against Solidarity with the Third World: The Case of Anti-Third Worldism* (Brussels: 120 BEF – 8 NLG – 4 USD – 2 GBP, 1993).
- 3 Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 23-49.
- 4 Kenneth Bauzon, "The Commensurability of the Islamic, Liberal and Neo-Marxist Modes of Explanation," *Kasarinlan* 8 (2nd Quarter 1993): 102-123.
- 5 Ustadz Najeeb Rasul, "Spiritual Significance of Fasting." Speech during the Pre-Fasting Symposium on 28 January 1995, sponsored by the University of the Philippines Muslim Students Alumni Association, ASSABIYAH and Institute of Islamic Studies, Asian Center Conference Hall, University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City.

About the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies

The University of the Philippines-Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP-CIDS) was established in September 1985 to promote interdisciplinary studies on critical topics that influence development policies and issues.

The UP-CIDS functions under the Office of the UP President. It has four major programs: the UP State of the Nation Assessment Program; the Peace, Conflict Resolution, and Human Rights Program; the Education Research Program and Special Programs. For further information, contact: The Executive Director, UP-CIDS, UP Diliman, Quezon City. Telefax: 929-3540; 929-8385; 434-92-82; UP Trunkline 920-5301 loc. 5517. Tel. No. 435-92-83.

Mindanao Studies Program at UP (MSP-UP)

The Mindanao Studies Program of the UP-CIDS began from the need for a meaningful presence of the University in Mindanao. This need has increasingly been felt because of major changes generated in the region by development processes and the continuing problems of separatism and insurgency. The Program represents a more organized effort by the University to contribute its intellectual, academic and professional expertise and resources towards enhancing the understanding of government, the private sector and media of the development of regional potentials for political, economic, social and cultural progress.

As the premier state university in the country, the University of the Philippines is expected to contribute substantially, not only to the intellectual growth of the nation in general, but also to the region in particular.

The Mindanao Studies Program is the University's modest response to the challenge of Mindanao. The MSP-UP seeks to explore areas of cooperation and collaboration with existing institutions and agencies involved in the development of Mindanao.

In addition, the Program aims to help in the systematic documentation, organization, preservation and dissemination of knowledge and information on Mindanao through research, studies, seminars and workshops. At the same time, the Program hopes to contribute meaningfully towards state policy formulation and public information service in relation to Mindanao. MSP-UP's ultimate goal is to institutionalize the Program in a sustainable and responsive manner.

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