

## The Islamization of Southeast Asia

ANTHONY REID

LIKE any other religious tradition, Islam in Southeast Asia presents us with both inside and outside evidence about its history. The inside evidence of Muslim sources themselves is necessarily of a pious nature, as is, for example, the internal evidence about the conversion of Britain to Christianity. No historical event could more obviously be a part of God's purpose for man, and therefore the aspects of the story recalled by Muslim writers are naturally those which show the Divine purpose at work. While almost all the Southeast Asian chronicles describe supernatural events which accompany the conversion of a state to Islam, the differences between the type of Divine intervention is certainly instructive. Malay chronicles like those of Pasai, Melaka, and Patani do not differ markedly from accounts from other parts of the world. They emphasize Divine revelation through dreams, such as those of the rulers of Pasai and Melaka in turn; or the miraculous powers of a holy man of God, such as Shaikh Sa'id of Pasai in his healing of the ruler of Patani.<sup>1</sup> Although these chronicles are not averse to describing the powers of rulers and the origins of states in older pre-Islamic terms of magical potency (*sakti*) they keep their description of the Islamization process within bounds which would probably have been acceptable to Muslims in most parts of the world. In the Javanese Islamic tradition, and its Banjar off-shoot, however, one finds more frankly pre-Islamic religious elements. The clearest religious motive for conversion

1 'Sejarah Melayu or "Malay Annals". A translation of Raffles MS 18', ed. C.C. Brown, *JMBRAS* 25(1953), pp. 41-2 and 52-4; 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai; a revised romanized version of Raffles MS 67, together with an English translation', ed. A.H. Hill, *JMBRAS* 33 (1961), Pt. 2, pp. 116-120; *Hikayat Patani: The Story of Patani*, ed. A. Teeuw & D.K. Wyatt (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1970), I pp. 71-5. See also the discussion of these texts in G.W.J. Drewes, 'New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia', *BKI* 124 (1968), pp. 436-8.

offered in the *Hikayat Banjar* is that the chief of Djipang, in East Java, 'was very astonished when he saw the radiance (*cahaya*) of Raja Bungsu (i.e. Raden Rahmat). He knelt at Raja Bungsu's feet and requested to be converted to Islam'.<sup>2</sup> From the *babads* emanating from what Ricklefs calls the 'quasi-Islamic tradition' of Java,<sup>3</sup> come stories still more frankly heterodox in the type of powers which they attribute particularly to such great mystics as Sunan Kali Jaga and Sheikh Siti Jenar.

In comparison with most great religious changes in world history, we are comparatively well endowed also with outside sources basically unsympathetic or hostile to the Islamization process. Ever since Marco Polo reported that:

the people of Perlak (Nth Sumatra) used all to be idolaters, but owing to contact with Saracen merchants, who continually resort here in their ships, they have all been converted to the law of Mahomet<sup>4</sup>

there have been Christian observers committed to excluding any religious explanation of the change. Tome Pires and the other 16th century Iberians who took a great interest in this subject tended to follow Marco Polo in emphasizing that contact with Muslim merchants from the West was a sufficient explanation of Islamization.

It is tempting to the polemicist to raise one or the other of these two points of view into an adequate explanation for Islamization, so that a somewhat false debate has emerged. On the one hand we have Van Leur and Schrieke stressing the alteration in trading patterns and the dominance of Muslims in Indian Ocean trade of the 12th–16th centuries; and going on to make political factors even more crucial than commercial ones. Van Leur, who rather absurdly refuses to allow that Islam offered any 'higher civilization' to Southeast Asia, insists that the struggle between Portuguese and Muslims confirmed an already established pattern whereby Islam was hardly more than a symbol of political alliance with one side against the other.<sup>5</sup> On the other side of the debate, A.H. Johns and Fatimi took more seriously the evidence of the 'inside' sources, and used it to develop into a rival explanation of the Islamization process mystical Sufi preachers, who

were proficient in magic and possessed powers of healing; and not least ... were prepared to use the terms and elements of pre-Islamic culture in an Islamic spirit.<sup>6</sup>

This antithesis stands in need of a rigorous synthesis. The rival explanations both contain much truth, but they are talking about different phenomena. The Islamic presence was of course brought by trade, and often consolidated

by political and military power. Without the mercantile success of Muslims Southeast Asians could never have been confronted with the option of Islam at all, and without the backing of state power the option would not have reached those outside the trading centres. Yet every Southeast Asian who embraced Islam had to undergo his own process of inner conversion, his own reconciliation between long-held assumptions about the shape of the world and the central features of the new doctrine. Given the paucity of autobiographical evidence on this personal dimension we would be wise at the outset to acknowledge the limitations of any discussion of motivations. Nevertheless, by combing the evidence of history on the period in question with the insights of anthropologists on the nature of Southeast Asian religious experience and conversion, the debate can be advanced in a number of key areas.

### Dealing with the Dead

The ethnographic works of the last hundred years on the remaining 'animist' traditions of Southeast Asia have made certain consistencies of religious belief very clear. The most striking common feature of these religious systems is the continuing involvement of the dead in the affairs of the living. Disease, misfortune and crop failure are held to be caused by the displeasure of ancestral spirits who have not been honoured with the appropriate rituals, or by the malevolence of restless or unhappy spirits of the dead which may be counteracted by the protection of the 'good' or happy ancestors. The ritual expression of this belief is the centrality in all such religious systems of elaborate feasting for the dead, and of the subsequent invocation of ancestral spirits at every important *rite de passage* or agricultural ritual of the calendar. Not unnaturally, when names were required to distinguish this traditional religion from Islam or Christianity, it was frequently designated the 'Way of the Ancestors' (Sa'dan Toraja *Aluk to Dolo*; East Sumba *Marapu*)<sup>7</sup>.

We have 16th and 17th Century evidence from Spanish and Portuguese sources on the religious beliefs of the people of Luzon, the Visayas, and South Sulawesi (Bugis and Makassar) before their conversion to Christianity and Islam respectively. This confirms that death-rituals and propitiation of the ancestral dead were remarkably similar to the pattern we know among non-Muslim peoples of Borneo and Sulawesi in modern times.<sup>8</sup> The Hinduism of

7 Among an abundant anthropological literature, see especially Richard Huntington and Peter Metcalf, *Celebrations of Death: the Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual* (Cambridge, 1979); Peter Metcalf, *A Borneo Journey into Death: Berawan Eschatology from its Rituals* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982); Uchiyori Motomitsu, 'The Leaving of this Transient World: a study of Iban eschatology and Mortuary Practice', Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, ANU, Canberra, 1978; H. Schärer, *Ngaju Religion: The Conception of God among a South Borneo People*, trans. R. Needham (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1963); Edwin M. Loeb, *Sumatra: Its History and People* (Vienna, Institut für Volkerkunde, 1935), pp. 74–93; Gregory L. Forth, *Rindj: An Ethnographic Study of a Traditional Domain in Eastern Sumba* (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1981), pp. 83–103 and 171–213; W. Stöhr and P. Zoetmulder, *Les Religions d'Indonésie* (Paris, Payot, 1968), esp. pp. 219–226; Roland Werner, *Mah-Meri of Malaysia: Art and Culture*, Kuala Lumpur, Penerbit Universiti Malaysia, 1974. Janine Koubi, 'La première fête funéraire chez les Toraja Sa'dan', *Archipel* 10 (1975), pp. 105–19. Toby Volkman, 'The Riches of the Undertaker', *Indonesia* 28 (1979), pp. 1–16.

8 On the pre-Hispanic Philippines see Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*,

2 *Hikajat Banjar. A Study in Malay Historiography*, ed. J.J. Ras (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1968), p. 420.

3 M.C. Ricklefs, *Modern Javanese Historical Tradition* (London, SOAS, 1978), p.2.

4 *The Travels of Marco Polo*, trans. R.E. Latham (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1958), p. 225.

5 J.C. van Leur, *Indonesian Trade and Society: Essays in Asian Social and Economic History* (The Hague, Van Hoeve, 1955), pp. 110–4; B.J.O. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague, Van Hoeve, 1955–7), I pp. 1–82; II, pp. 230–67.

6 A.H. Johns, 'Sufism in Indonesia', *JSEAH* 2, no. 2 (1961), p. 15. Also S.Q. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia* (Singapore, Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 1963), esp. pp. 92–9.

Bali appears to have demanded little alteration to the ways in which the dead were regarded there, with offerings and death-rituals even today as central as in the 'animist' little traditions.<sup>9</sup> In a less overt manner, the popular religious practice of even the people of the archipelago who have been Muslim or Christian for centuries reveals the continuing importance of the dead in the ritual pre-occupations of the living. In short, it is possible to conclude that the dominant religious belief-system of the Southeast Asia to which Islam came in the 14th-17th centuries was one of deep ritual concern for the propitiation of the dead. In comparison with this popular pattern, the Brahmanic influence at many of the royal courts was very much more limited in scope, save perhaps in parts of Java.

Such concern for the ritual well-being of the dead would appear to be incompatible with Islam, with its intolerance of idolatry and polytheism, and its consequent insistence that burials should be simple and immediate, the dead returning to God as unadorned as they came from him at birth. Indeed the abrupt change of burial practice with the acceptance of Islam appears to be one of the most striking successes of the new religion. In those parts of Sulawesi which accepted Islam in the 17th Century, valuable ceramics were buried with the dead to accompany them in their journey to the hereafter, and these can be dated to various periods in the 10th-16th centuries, but appear to cease abruptly with Islam. The extravagant feasting which non-Muslim parts of the archipelago associate pre-eminently with death-rituals, was transferred among Muslims to weddings, and to a lesser extent to circumcisions. With some notable exceptions, such as the rulers of Melaka, early Aceh and Mataram,<sup>10</sup> the graves of Muslims even in the earliest period of Islam were relatively modest.

Nevertheless Islam demonstrated to Southeast Asians that it had its own ways of ensuring that the spirits of the dead were at peace, and even of invoking those spirits for the well-being of the living. It is now well-known that it was in the mystical form brought by initiates of the Sufi orders (Arabic *tariqa*; Malay *tarekat*) that Islam primarily recommended itself to Southeast Asians of the 14th-17th centuries. We will be mistaken, however, if we think of this Sufism only in terms of the path to direct or ecstatic union with God taught in many of the early Malay and Javanese Islamic texts.<sup>11</sup> During the period of most rapid

conversions to Islam in Southeast Asia, Sufism at the popular level had become a means of linking the individual believer with the spiritual power (Ar. *baraka*; Malay *berkat*) of holy men, apostles, rulers, founders of orders, and others whose *baraka* was manifested in numerous miracle stories. From this period, as Trimmingham puts it, 'No clear distinction can henceforth be made between the orders and saint-veneration, since God's proteges (*awliya 'i'llah*) are within the orders'.<sup>12</sup> The spiritual power of these dead saints was invoked to help the living partly through the chain (*silsila*) of spiritual genealogy which linked each Sufi teacher ultimately to the venerated founder of his order, but also through visitations (*ziyara*) to the tombs of holy men, where offerings were frequently made.

The mystic carries out a *ziyara* for the purposes of *muraqaba* (spiritual communion) with the saint, finding in the material symbol an aid to meditation. But the popular belief is that the saint's soul lingers about his tomb and places (*maqam*) specially associated with him whilst he was on earth or at which he had manifested himself. At such places his intercession can be sought.<sup>13</sup>

These features of Sufism were to be found throughout the Muslim world, but were especially marked in India and Southeast Asia, where the expanding faith tended to take the form of 'a holy-man Islam'.<sup>14</sup> The seeking of the *berkat* of holy men at their tombs has of course been a very marked feature of Southeast Asian Islam in modern times, wherever a stricter spirit of modernism has not taken root. Many of the tombs now most widely venerated are those of the apostles thought to have introduced Islam to each area, such as those of the nine walis of Java, or of Dato ri Bandang in Makassar. Still more honoured are the graves of those who popularized a particular sufi order, such as Abdar-Rauf of Singkil, the 'Shaikh Kuala' beloved of the Acehnese, who introduced the *Shattariyya tariqa* to Indonesia in the 17th Century, or Shaikh Yusuf, the great teacher of the *Khalwatiyya* order, who even in his lifetime was held by the people of Makassar 'in such great love and awe as though he was a second Muhammad'.<sup>15</sup> Although the earliest Sufi orders in Southeast Asia appear not to have been as highly structured as in other parts of the Muslim world, the extreme reverence for such figures and their graves confirms that it was indeed Sufi masters and practices which made the greatest impact in the region. An orthodox Muslim code of ethics from 16th Century Java warns its readers against the most popular of all the orders, the *Kadiriyya*, and goes to proclaim, 'It is unbelief to say that the great imams are superior to the prophets, or to put the saints (*wali*) above the prophets, and even above our lord Muhammad'.<sup>16</sup>

*of the Prophet* (Canberra, Australian National University, 1965); Syed Naguib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Press, 1970).

12 J. Spencer Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 26.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., p. 22.

15 Governor Hartsink of Makassar, 1689, as cited in Leonard Y. Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka. A History of South Sulawesi in the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1981), p. 277. The title by which Yusuf is known in Makassar, Tuanta Salamaka (our lord who preserves us) indicates the intentions of the hundred of visitors bringing offerings daily to his tomb.

16 G.W.J. Drewes (ed.), *An Early Javanese Code of Muslim Ethics* (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1978), pp. 38-9.

trans. J.S. Cummins (Cambridge, Hakluyt Society, 1971), pp. 278-81; Pedro Chirino, *Relacion de las Islas Filipinas*, trans. R. Echevarria (Manila, Historical Conservation Society, 1969), pp. 327-9; Antonio Pigafetta in C.E. Nowell (ed.), *Magellan's Voyage around the world: Three Contemporary Accounts* (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1962), pp. 163-7; J.L. Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), pp. 23-4. On pre-Islamic South Sulawesi, see Christian Pelras, 'Celebes-sud avant l'Islam, selon les premiers temoignages etrangers', *Archipel* (1989), pp. 153-84.

9 Ingela Gerdin, 'The Balinese Sidikara: Ancestors, Kinship, and Rank', *BKI* 137 (1981), pp. 17-34; C. Hooykaas, 'Counsel and Advice to the Soul of the Dead', *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 10, i (1976), pp. 39-50.

10 For the rich tombs of the Melaka kings see *The Commentaries of the Great Afonso Dalboquerque*, ed. W. de Gray Birch (London, Hakluyt Society, 1875-84), III, p. 136; and for those of Aceh, John Davis in *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchase His Pilgrimes* Vol. II (Glasgow, James Maclehose for Hakluyt Society, 1905), pp. 321-2.

11 A good selection of such texts have now been edited, including C.A.O. van Nieuwenhuijze, *Samsu't-Din van Pasai* (Leiden thesis, 1945); G.W.J. Drewes, *The Admonitions of Seh Bari* (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1969); A.H. Johns, *The Gift Addressed to the Spirit*

Whether living or dead, the holy men of early Islam in Southeast Asia were accepted as having supernatural power similar to that of the ancestors; their graves replaced the resting places of the spirits of the dead as centres of pilgrimage, meditation, and petition.<sup>17</sup>

The words of prayer were changed into an Islamic form much more quickly than the purposes to which prayer was put. To exorcise a malevolent spirit or to invoke a protective ancestral one, an Arabic prayer was at least as powerful as the mantra it replaced. For the most part Arabic terminology was quickly introduced in the religious area — *baca do'a* (to read an [Arabic] prayer) becoming the standard term for an invocation or blessing; *roh* (plural *arwah*) becoming accepted as the Islamic equivalent of the key Austronesian concept of *semangat* (soul-substance or spirit); and such words as *berkat* and *kramat* describing the power that emanated from the graves of the saints. There are however some interesting indigenous survivals. The word *ngaji* (*kaji*, *mengaji*), normally used for recitation of the Koran, for the souls of the departed as well as for other purposes, is an Austronesian word probably from the same root as the *ngaji* still used by animists in Flores in recent times to describe the ritual prayers addressed to the ancestors.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Southeast Asian Islam took over an older indigenous word *sembahyang* (*sembah* = veneration; *hyang* = god(s), *lord*) as the most usual term for personal prayer, including the daily *salat*.<sup>19</sup>

Also worthy of further study is the role of the prayer litany known in Indonesia as the *Tahlil* (the first words of the confession of faith, *La ilaha illa Allah*), because that phrase is repeated many times in its opening chant. The form of this prayer is popularly attributed to Abd al-Kadir Jilani, the most widely venerated of all the Sufi masters, which leads us to suspect that it may have been spread through Indonesia by the earliest adherents of Kadiriyya mysticism in the 16th and 17th Centuries. In the Moluccas, where this is the litany normally used for the dead, it takes the form of a prayer for the spirit of the Prophet, then for the spirits of the ancestors of the host family, especially the recently deceased, then for the ancestors of all present, and finally of all those who have died in the faith. It is recited not only at funerals, but at the specified intervals after death (3, 7, 40, 100 days) when ritual meals are held, at visits to graves, and at the annual commemoration of the dead.<sup>20</sup> Whether or not in the same form, a *Tahlil* chant for the dead was also practised widely in Malaya, Sulu, Java and Sumatra.<sup>21</sup>

17 For a 19th Century missionary view of the process of Islamization in an animist Indonesian culture, see Gottfried Simon, *The Progress and Arrest of Islam in Sumatra* (London, Marshall Brothers, 1912). More modern anthropological accounts are Douglas Miles, 'Shamanism and the Conversion of the Ngadju Dayaks', *Oceania* 37, i (1966), and *Curtiss and Crescent Moon: a case study in social and political change in outer Indonesia* (Sydney, University of Sydney Centre of Asian Studies, 1976).

18 Albert Novena, 'Tradition and Catholicism: Prayer and Prayer Groups among the Sikkanese of Flores' (B. Lit. thesis, ANU, 1982), pp. 13–24. For a review of the Literature on *semangat* and its relationship with Sufi concepts of *roh*, see Kirk Endicott, *An Analysis of Malay Magic* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1970), esp. pp. 28–51.

19 I owe this point among others to Ann Kumar, whose unpublished paper, 'A Javanese Kiai', stimulated my thinking on these questions.

20 I am grateful to M. Shalleh Putuhena, of the IAIN Ujung Pandang, for this information on practice in the Moluccas.

21 For Malaya see W.W. Skeat, *Malay Magic; being an introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsula* (1900; reprinted New York, Dover Publica-

The way in which the elaborate pre-Islamic feasting of the dead on their way to the land of the spirits gradually gave way to Islamic practice is easier to observe in a relatively recently Islamized area such as South Sulawesi. When James Brooke was in the Bugis area in 1840, he noted that there was still a 40-day period of public feasting at the death of important people, with relatives of the deceased slaughtering buffaloes, goats, and chickens to feed all who attended.<sup>22</sup> Even today many Bugis continue to distinguish a proportion of their property under the name of *ampikale*, the original purpose of which was to cover the substantial costs of this 40-day feasting after death. Today this portion goes to reward the member of the family who has borne most of the burden of caring for the deceased in old age.<sup>23</sup>

As Snouck Hurgronje saw it, after the ritual meals for the dead on the 3rd, 7th, 100th (or in Java up to 1000th) day after their death, the spirit of the dead was no longer individually remembered and propitiated, but rather merged into the collective 'spirits of the departed'. These are especially remembered throughout Islamic Southeast Asia on the 8th month of the lunar calendar (*Sha'ban*), known in Java as *Bulan Arwah* (the month of the spirits), and in Aceh and elsewhere as 'the month of the rice feasts', since every family must hold a feast in honour of its ancestors during that month.

According to the official or learned conception this is done in order to bestow on the deceased the recompense earned by his good work; according to the popular notion it is to let them enjoy the actual savour of the good things of the feast.

In the Arab world the month regarded as most appropriate for honouring the dead is the 7th, though the practice is by no means on the Southeast Asian scale. Snouck Hurgronje, noting that South India shared the Southeast Asian preference for the 8th month, saw this as further evidence for the Indian origin of Indonesian Islam. Equally significant, however, is the popular association between the honouring of the ancestors and the rituals associated with the fasting-month (the 9th) and the feasts which end it at *Idulfitri*. Southeast Asian Muslims in general (though this is nowhere so marked as in Sulawesi and the Moluccas) concentrate their visits to the family graves in the last few days of the 8th month, and the first days of the 10th, the latter being part of an Indonesian tradition at *Idulfitri* of asking forgiveness of one's elders, living and dead, for the misdeeds of the past year. It may therefore be that the preference of the 8th month for honouring the ancestors derives from an earlier transitional phase in which the feasting of *Idulfitri*, and the ritual of fasting and of breaking the fast, was replacing the feasts which traditionally had accompanied death rituals and

tions, 1967), pp. 406–8; for Java, Ann Kumar, 'A Javanese Kiai' (unpublished); for Sumatra G.F. Pijper, *Fragmenta Islamica* (Leiden, Brill, 1934), pp. 178–81; for Sulu T.M. Kiefer, *The Tausug* (New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972), p. 132.

22 James Brooke, *Narrative of Events in Borneo and Celebes down to the Occupation of Labuan*, ed. R. Mundy (London, John Murray, 1848), I, pp. 87–8. For similar extravagant feasting in Bengkulu in the 1920s see Pijper, op. cit., pp. 179–81.

23 Muslich Maruzi, 'Persamaan Hak dan Perimbangan Jasa: Studi Kasus tentang pola pewarisan tanah di kalangan masyarakat Bugis Desa Ompo, Kabupaten Dati II Soppeng' (Ujung Pandang, Stencil PLPIIS, 1981), p. 74.

24 C. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, trans. A.W.S. O'Sullivan (Leiden, Brill, 1906), I, p. 221.

offerings to the ancestors.

### Urbanization and Social Change

If we have learned anything from the intense debate sparked by Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, it is that profound religious change in a society is accompanied by major changes in the social and economic order. The causal relationship between the two is highly complex, so that we must be on guard against simplistic explanations which either see religious change as purely a consequence or rationalization of economic change, or which by contrast see actions in the economic area flowing solely from the ideal types presented by religion and ideology. We are on safer ground in understanding changes in the social area as mutually reinforcing, with an infinite variety possible in the mix. At least for the relatively self-contained world of the animist, however, this process of mutually reinforcing change seems often to have been initiated by the invasion of economic and political forces from outside. The last century has witnessed a period of such inescapable change for many interior or upland peoples of Southeast Asia.<sup>25</sup> I suggest that the period when many of the major Southeast Asian states accepted Islam was similarly one of inescapable change, to which the growth of trade and of trading cities was the initial spur.

Although our knowledge of the earlier period is still very sparse, there can be no doubt that the scale of Southeast Asian trade began to expand very rapidly in the late 14th century, and continued to do so into the 17th century. The reasons were in part the 'spice-orgy' which began to affect Europe after the crusades, and the organization of the Red Sea-Suez route to the Mediterranean for spices and Chinese goods by the Mamelukes about 1345; in part the great increase of Chinese activity in Southeast Asia, both official and unofficial, in connection with the early Ming dynasty. As a result of this trade cities developed with astonishing rapidity. Melaka, Grisek, and Makassar we know to have developed from little more than villages to cosmopolitan cities with populations of 50,000 or more within a century. Aceh, Banten, Patani, and Ayudhya also grew to great conurbations.<sup>26</sup> Like any great cities, they were markets for ideas as well as merchandise. The Chinese brought much new knowledge of material culture, bronze-casting, gunpowder, scales, shipbuilding, and also some new tastes in food and drink; Indian merchants brought accounting and business methods as developed as any in the world; 'the Arabian arithmetic' was being studied in Aceh in 1620;<sup>27</sup> the Makassarese prince Pattingalloang a little later insisted on obtaining from the Europeans at his court the latest in scientific knowledge from Europe, including an expensive new telescope with which Galileo had begun to revolutionize the view of the cosmos.<sup>28</sup> Although Arabic,

Italian, and Portuguese were spoken in many of the bigger cities, it was Malay above all which made it possible for Southeast Asians to learn of each other's cultures and of the visitors from outside the region. Magellan could make good friends in the Visayas because the Malay-speaking Sumatran slave he had brought around the world was well understood there.<sup>29</sup> His colleague Pigafetta appeared to think that 'these Moors' had only one language, whether it was in the Philippines, Borneo the Moluccas or Timor, and that of course was Malay.<sup>30</sup>

We know much less about the hinterlands behind these interconnected urban cities of Southeast Asia, but enough to see that the gulf from town to country was an immense one. The Melaka case is the most extreme, with little but forest once away from the urban and coastal area. Before the rise of Aceh the commercial cities of northern Sumatra are always described as enclaves surrounded by tattooed cannibals. Since Sultan Iskandar Muda is described as meeting a crafty bow-legged Batak when he was out hunting, even Aceh in his days cannot have extended far into the interior.<sup>31</sup> In South Celebes, despite its apparent homogeneity of culture, the picture is the same. 'The nearer we drew to Makassar ... the more civilized we found the people', remarked Navarette as he followed the coast down from the north in 1657.<sup>32</sup> To the English in Makassar, the Bugis who periodically disturbed the peace of the city appeared like wild men who 'amaze and terrify' the city.<sup>33</sup> Even in Java, where the modern convention is the reverse one of contrasting the refined kraton culture of inner Java with the more gauche and materialistic *pasisir*, there is much evidence to suggest that Demak, Cirebon, Tuban, Grisek and Surabaya were the real centres of Javanese civilization at least until they fell before the arms of Sultan Agung in the 17th century.<sup>34</sup>

The gulf between civilized city and primitive countryside can partly be explained by the strong foreign element in the early growth of these cities. Chinese are now admitted to have had a major part in the founding of Grisek, Japara, Ayudhya, and Nakhon seri Thammarat (Ligor) in the late 14th and early 15th centuries. They had much to do with the growth of Melaka and Patani in the same period, though Javanese and Gujeratis soon became even more numerous. Malays and Javanese in Ternate, Malays and Portuguese in Makassar, Malays, Chinese and Gujeratis in Banten all contributed much to the urban population and the emerging urban culture. Yet it would be a great mistake to minimize the importance of that new culture by seeing the new cities as some sort of disaggregated pastiche of foreign elements. All of these cities shared a culture which was Malayo-Muslim and an urban settlement pattern which was very distinctively Southeast Asian.

The pressures of rapid urbanization and social change can be viewed from the perspective of the villager drawn into the rapidly growing trade centres, or from the point of view of whole societies exposed to rapid social change as

29 Pigafetta, ed. Newell, pp. 136-7.

30 Ibid. pp. 227-36.

31 Teuku Iskandar (ed.), *De Hikajat Atjeh* ('s-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 1958), pp. 146-8.

32 *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete 1618-86* ed. J.S. Cummins (Cambridge, Hakluyt Society, 1962), I, p. 111.

33 India Office Library G/10/1, ff. 82. 117, 202.

34 H.J. de Graaf & Th. G. Th. Pigeaud, *De Eerste Moslems Vorstendommen op Java* ('s-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 1976), pp. 165-6.

25 See, e.g., Simon, *Progress and Arrest*, esp. pp. 46-7 and 70-1; J.J.P. Cote, 'The Colonization and Schooling of the To Pamona of Central Sulawesi, 1894 to 1924' (M. Ed. Thesis, Monash University, 1979); Miles, *Curtain and Crescent Moon*.

26 Anthony Reid, 'The Structure of Cities in Southeast Asia, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries', *JSEAS* XI, 2 (1980), pp. 235-9.

27 'Memoires du Voyage aux Indes Orientales du General Beauclieu, dressés par luy-mesme', in *Relations de Divers Voyages Curieux*, ed. Melch. Thevenot (Paris, Cramoisy, 1666), p. 99.

28 Anthony Reid, 'A Great Seventeenth Century Indonesian Family: Matoaya and Pattingalloang of Makassar', *Masyarakat Indonesia* 8, 1 (1981), pp. 19-24.

their role in world trade grows. The latter is perhaps best seen in Makassar, where we are particularly well provided with internal and external sources covering its rise from a local animist village at war with all its neighbours in the early 16th century, to the great metropolis and trading centre of Eastern Indonesia by the early 17th. The city must have had a population approaching 50,000 by 1615, when 1260 houses were burned down without disrupting the city as a whole, and when the English saw the king review 36,000 fighting men called up at only 24 hours notice.<sup>35</sup> The Makassarese may have been an extreme case of openness to change and to new ideas because of the very speed of their urbanization pattern. The Gowa chronicle reads like a series of 'firsts', as it notes which King was the first to erect brick walls, which the first to cast guns, to organize a new aspect of government, and of course to conquer and make tributary each surrounding state. Despite this rapid change, when the first substantial Dutch description of the city gives us a glimpse in 1607, just after the formal acceptance of Islam, it was still a largely animist culture.

The various fruits of India abound there, also goats, buffaloes, and pigs, though these are now difficult to obtain, because the King accepted the Mohamedan Law four years ago... The men carry usually one, two, or more balls in their penis, of the same size as those of Siam, but not hollow or clinking, rather of ivory or solid fishbone, which is now also declining among them because of the change of sect; while they were heathen the women cut off their hair with a comb, but they now have it washed long, and bind it in the manner of the Malay women; the female slaves whom one sees carrying water in the back streets have their upper body with the breasts completely naked, and wear trousers which come up to the navel. When they wash they stand mother-naked, the men as well as the women, which I have seen in no other place in the Indies as I have here.<sup>36</sup>

Just forty years after this report, another visitor to Makassar noted that, 'there are... no hogs at all because the natives who are Mohammedans, have exterminated them entirely from the country', while 'the women are entirely covered from head to foot, in such fashion that not even their faces can be seen'.<sup>37</sup> The change in every aspect of life was profound and rapid. Despite the seemingly very short history of urban civilization in South Sulawesi, European accounts agree that the 17th Century Makassarese were 'a very good people to deal with and to live by; and which hold good right and justice, and order after their manner'.<sup>38</sup>

If the Islamization of Makassar was exceptional, it was less because of the speed of the social change which accompanied it, then because there was a real choice for Makassar between Christianity and Islam. This is the point of the widespread European accounts, current as early as the 1640s, about a decision

by the Makassar elite to let God decide for them between Islam and Christianity by means of a contest, to see whether Muslim Aceh or Christian Melaka would be the first to respond to a request for missionaries.<sup>39</sup> The 'race' as such may be a legend, as Noorduyn has convincingly argued,<sup>40</sup> but the Portuguese were correct in lamenting that they had had a chance to Christianize Makassar and had lost it largely by default. The Makassarese profited from both Portuguese and Malay trade and had some knowledge of the doctrines upheld by each. At least in the case of the great Arung Matoaya, who guided Makassar into a wider world through Islam, there is no doubt that there was a conscious weighing of two rival world-views, and an intellectual decision between them.<sup>41</sup>

For most Southeast Asians there was no such conscious decision between rival systems of equal relevance. Rather was it a question of a new *ilmu*, a new system of controlling the supernatural forces around them, to be judged primarily in terms of its results and its consonance with the new and desired life-style. An anthropologist has recently described the constant religious experimentation on the part of Ngaju Dayaks in Borneo, deserting one shaman or one set of spirits for another in accordance with the perceived results. A Dayak Christian missionary described their approach as follows to this field-worker:

Dayaks play politics with supernatural beings. No one could deny that they are religious. But their interest in religion is a matter of tactics. The more a man knows about ritual, the more he can do for his own and his family's welfare. A person's wealth is proof of his theological knowledge. They are continually changing their adherence from one set of spirits to another. If they make the right moves they will die rich and buy their way into Heaven with huge animal sacrifices. If they die in poverty they may remain in eternal Purgatory.<sup>42</sup>

Islam is perhaps of all great world religions the most congenial to trade, and both the Quran and the Hadith heap praise upon the 'trustworthy merchant' who trades profitably for the benefit of himself, his family, and worthy causes.<sup>43</sup> In Southeast Asia Islam was brought by traders, and quickly associated itself with the relatively opulent and sophisticated life-style of the mercantile cities. In Luzon, when Islamization was still at an early stage, it was reported that,

some are Moros, and they obtain much gold, which they worship as a God. All their possessions are gold and a few slaves... They believe that paradise and successful enterprises are reserved for those who submit to the religion of the Moros of Borneo, of which they make much account... These are a richer people, because they are merchants, and with their slaves, cultivate the land.<sup>44</sup>

Islam, in other words, was identified with wealth, success, and power for many

39 *Rhodes of Vietnam*, p. 207; C.R. Boxer, *Francisco Vieira de Figueiredo: A Portuguese Merchant-Adventurer in South East Asia* ('s-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 1967), p. 3n.; Navarrete I, p. 113.

40 J. Noorduyn, 'De Islamiseering van Makasar', *BKI* 112 (1956), pp. 247-67.

41 *Ibid.* Also Reid, 'Matoaya and Patingalloang', pp. 13-18.

42 Douglas Miles, 'Shamanism and the Conversion of Ngaju Dayaks', p. 5. See also Volkman in *Indonesia* 28 (1979), p. 4 for wealth as a sign and product of spiritual power.

43 See, most recently, Maxime Rodinson, *Islam and Capitalism* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1977), pp. 16-19.

44 Francisco de Sande, Relation of the Philippines Islands 7 June 1576, in E.H. Blair and J.A. Robertson (ed.), *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898* (n.p., n.d.), IV, pp. 67-8.

Filipinos. It is scarcely surprising that those who were ambitious, particularly in the area of trade, began to assimilate towards Islam even before they understood anything about its central doctrines. The early Spanish chroniclers often spoke as though all of the lowland people of Luzon were 'Moros', although this can only have been in terms of the most superficial cultural borrowing. 'In the villages nearest the sea' many did not eat pork, although they could not explain why to the Spanish and appeared not even to know the name of Mohammad.<sup>45</sup>

For other reasons too the more commercially inclined must quickly have been attracted towards the new faith. The spirits of the ancestors, the trees and the mountains did not travel easily. The trader who moved from place to place needed a faith of broader application. If he moved beyond his own island he needed the Malay language and he needed acceptance and contacts in the trading cities. Islam provided both a faith and a social system for such traders. Few Visayans, for example, entered the markets of Melaka, Brunei or Banten clad only in a loin-cloth of tree-fibre cloth, tattooed and long-haired like his countrymen at home. Modification of dress towards the Malay pattern probably preceded formal acceptance of Islam by such traders.

Wherever an earlier Bhramanic influence had not reached, with its exalted sense of kingship sanctioned by religious ritual, there was little to oppose the steady assimilation towards the faith of the traders who brought new wealth and power. This was the case in the Philippines in the 16th century, and presumably also in the Moluccas in the 15th. Some Ternate traditions as later recorded make no distinction between the coming of the Muslim traders and the formal acceptance of Islam:

They say that they took these [royal] titles from the Javanese who made them Muslims and introduced coinage into their country, as well as the gong, the *serunqi*, ivory, the *kris* (dagger), and the law, and all the other good things they have.<sup>46</sup>

### The Major States

Elsewhere, in the major city-states, a situation quickly developed where 'the king is a pagan; the merchants are moors'.<sup>47</sup> This is how Rui de Brito described Brunei in 1514, and the same must have applied to Samudra in 1282 (when a non-Muslim king sent Muslim envoys to China), to Patani in the 14th century,<sup>48</sup> Melaka in the early 15th, Banjarmasin in the early and Makassar in the late 16th

<sup>45</sup> 'Relation of the Conquest of the Island of Luzon', 20 April 1572, in Blair & Robertson, III, p. 165; Also Blair & Robertson III, pp. 74, 297, 300; V, p. 83.

<sup>46</sup> *A Treatise on the Moluccas (c. 1544)*, ed. Hubert Th. Th. Jacobs (Rome, Jesuit Historical Institute, 1971), pp. 104-5. This text and other Portuguese sources date the introduction of Islam to Ternate at about 1460-70. The Ternate chronicles used by Valentijn and other Dutch writers, place the beginning of Islamic rule in the reign of Sultan Zainal Abidin (1486-1500?), though listing earlier 14th Century chieftains also with Arabic names and Javanese connections. This may suggest a two-stage process of Islamization, the first being very superficial. F.S.A. de Clercq, *Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Residentie Ternate* (Leiden, Brill, 1890), pp. 148-50; Z.J. Manusama, 'Hikayat Tanah Hitu' (Leiden dissertation, 1977), pp. 6-7, 45-6, 86-7.

<sup>47</sup> Rui de Brito Patalim to King, 6 January 1514, in A.E. de Sá (ed.) *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Portugues do Oriente: Insulândia* Vol. I (Lisboa, Agencia Geral do Ultramar, 1954), p. 68.

<sup>48</sup> *Hikayat Patani*, II, p. 222.

century.<sup>49</sup> Even in 14th century Majapahit and 15th-17th century Ayudhya, great centres of Buddhist civilisation, Muslim traders were firmly established at the capital, and appeared to have better links with the court than any other commercial element, including non-Muslim Chinese. Nevertheless, such courts possessed sacral traditions of Kingship which were clearly incompatible with Islam, and typically they looked down on the whole commercial community as of relatively low status. How then did the conversion of such courts come about?

Intermarriage between wealthy traders or *Shahbandars* and the court circle has been frequently mentioned in this connection. In a sense this is to beg the question however. Bhramano-Buddhist rulers might readily take girls of low estate into their palace as concubines or lesser wives, but to accept a marriage partner as of equal status was to set the seal on Islamization, rather than to bring it about. There had usually to be either a conscious decision to accept the new faith and social system, or else an element of force.

An important factor here was that each of these proud states which declined to accept Islam was in danger of being outflanked by rival states. Samudra-Pasai was not the first state in North Sumatra to adopt Islam - all sources agree that at least Perlak and Aru preceded it by a few years. Similarly Patani was probably preceded by Terengganu and Melaka by its neighbour Pahang not to mention its more distant rival Pasai.<sup>50</sup> In South Sulawesi it is Luwu, surprisingly not a particular centre of trade at all, which is acknowledged as the first Muslim state, a few years ahead of Makassar. On the one hand these pioneer Muslim states must have helped to make Islam respectable in the eyes of the more stubbornly Bhramanic courts, in some cases even apparently attracting rival members of the ruling dynasty to their side. On the other they posed the danger of a wholesale desertion by Muslim traders to the alternative centre.

In Java and in Javanised Banjarmasin, this sort of pressure and example was clearly insufficient. In some cases the Muslim *kauman*, as it would now be called, ceased to give allegiance to the ruling dynasty and entered a state of civil war from a rival capital. Grisek was apparently in such a state in the early 16th century when it was described by Tome Pires.<sup>51</sup> The ruler of one side of the river, Pate Cucuf (Patin Yusuf), was born in the trading community of Melaka of mixed Javanese-Malay parentage, and had command of much more wealth and men. His antagonist on the other side of the river, who must have been defeated soon after these words were written, 'sets himself up as a knight' (*presume de cavaleiro*) - obviously having a better claim to *priyayi* status. In Banjarmasin the great length of the Barito river gave better opportunities for the rival elements to keep out of each other's way. Raden Samudra, claimed by the *Hikayat Banjar* to be a nephew of the ruler, set up his rival capital much lower down the river near the site of the present Banjarmasin, and quickly attracted or forced (the *Hikayat* mentions only force) the traders to join him there. After

<sup>49</sup> *Hikajat Bandjar*, pp. 262, 370, 430. Anthony Reid, 'The Rise of Makassar', (unpublished paper for SSRC conference on South Sulawesi, Melbourne, 1981), pp. 18-21.

<sup>50</sup> *Hikayat Patani* I, pp. 3-4.

<sup>51</sup> *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, ed. Armando Cortesao (London, Hakluyt Society, 1944), p. 193.

this it was only a short step for him to make an alliance with the crusading centre of Demak, accept Islam, and make war against his more stubborn rival with the help of all these Islamic elements.<sup>52</sup>

Almost all the indigenous chronicles are at pains to establish continuity between the new Islamic rulers and the earlier dynasties – sometimes through rather transparent devices. The Portuguese on the other hand are inclined to stress the lowly origin of the Muslim rulers, particularly in Java. The truth may be closer to the former than the latter. Tome Pires' informants on Java were presumably Javanese, and their low estimate of the antecedents of the coastal rulers may have been in part a product of dynastic and political rivalries. Undoubtedly some Islamic centres, such as Banten, Grisek, and perhaps Demak, did break altogether with the Hindu dynasty, but most of the larger states were anxious to preserve tradition not only in their chronicles but in their court ceremonial, regalia, and etiquette. The magical aura of sovereignty (*daulat*), which surrounded a ruler of the correct credentials, was itself his major weapon in any contest for the throne. At least in the difficult case of Java we must give some attention to the ways in which Islam may have penetrated into the court circle itself.

#### Islam and the Court of Majapahit

According to Javanese traditions, recorded in a variety of forms from the 17th century onwards, the major external sources of Islamic influence were Champa and Pasai. The principal figure in these stories is the Puteri Cempa, a daughter of a ruler of Champa who became the bride of the King of Majapahit. According to the Javanese stories, the sister of this princess married a wealthy Arab trader in Champa, from which union sprang one or two sons who combined Islamic piety with the required exalted blood. The eldest of these sons, in the versions where he appears, went to Java to become Imam of the mosque of Grisek. The younger (or only) son was the famous Raden Rahmat, who visited his aunt at the court of Majapahit, where he was received with great favour. Eventually he was allowed by the ruler to proceed to Ampel, near Surabaya, to found a religious community and make converts of anybody he chose.<sup>53</sup>

In one tradition, the *Hikayat Banjar*, Pasai rather than Champa is given as the origin of Raden Rahmat. The Javanese traditions give Pasai as the origin of two other famous *wali* (apostles) of Java, Maulana Iskak (father of Sunan Giri) and Sunan Gunung Jati, the pioneer of Islam in Banten and Cheribon. This connection, however, appears to be later than the Champa one – early in the 16th century in the latter's case.<sup>54</sup>

The citations of Champa and Pasai in Javanese accounts of Islamization are too frequent to be ignored, particularly as neither kingdom was significant at the time the accounts were recorded. There is a problem however that the dates even of Raden Rahmat and Puteri Champa, which Pigeaud and De Graaf place

52 *Hikayat Banjar*, pp. 45–9 and 398–439.

53 De Graaf & Pigeaud *Eerste Moslems Vorstendommen*, pp. 19–21. T.S. Raffles, *The History of Java* (London, 1817 – reprinted Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1978), II, pp. 115–118.

54 De Graaf & Pigeaud, *Eerste Moslems Vorstendommen*, pp. 170 and 111–18.

in the middle of the 15th century, are too late to account for the growth of Muslim centres at Grisek and Japura as recorded by the Chinese, or for the Muslim graves at Troloyo near Majapahit, which cover the period 1376–1475. The latter indicate that there were Muslims of high status at the court of Majapahit in this early period, who were either Javanese or at least Javanised foreigners.<sup>55</sup>

A factor not sufficiently considered in the discussions of this difficult period in Javanese history is the relationship between Majapahit's external relations and Islamization. The evidence of the *Nagarakertagama* that the tributaries of King Hayam Wuruk extended as far as north Sumatra, Malaya, Champa, and the Moluccas<sup>56</sup> has been seen in terms of the possible influence of Java on these areas. We know, however, from the 'tributary' relationships of China, Siam, Melaka and elsewhere that the exchanges were mutual. Regular political and commercial relations between Majapahit and these distant kingdoms certainly occurred, since these are confirmed by the non-Javanese sources at the other end – the *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai*, *Sejarah Melayu*, *Silsilah Raja-raja Sambas*, *Hikayat Banjar*, as well as numerous oral traditions from the eastern islands. In view of the predominance of Muslims on the trade routes of the archipelago, these relations cannot have been maintained without using at least some Muslim ships, mariners, and traders. Some of the states claimed as Majapahit tributaries were themselves Muslim, including Haru, Perlak, Samudra (Pasai), Lamuri and Barus in Sumatra, and probably Terengganu in Malaya. In many others there would have been a significant commercial minority of Muslims likely to play a role in diplomatic as well as economic relations between the states. Just as China under the Yung-lo emperor made use of Muslim admirals and seamen to spread its influence abroad, Majapahit very probably mobilized the Muslim shipping in many ports it conquered or influenced to take part in missions yet further afield. One surviving example of the process are the *orang Timur* of Jambi, said to be the descendants of men from Sarawak and Brunei who came to Jambi as members of an invading Majapahit army in the 14th Century.<sup>57</sup> It may be possible to explain the evidence for a superficial and short-lived Muslim influence in 14th century Ternate (and much more problematically for a similar phenomenon in Brunei and Sulu), a century before a continuous tradition of Islam begins, by a burst of expansionist activity on the part of Majapahit which made use of Muslim seamen and soldiers.

As the *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai* reported of Majapahit, 'there was a ceaseless coming and going of people from the territories overseas which had submitted to the king'.<sup>58</sup> Some of these were certainly Muslims, including the captives brought back by Majapahit's successful expedition against Pasai:

As for the Pasai prisoners, the Emperor made a decree ordering them to remain in Java but allowing them liberty to settle in it anywhere they pleased. That is why

55 L.C. Damais, 'Etudes Javanaises 1. Les Tombes Musulmanes Datees de Tralaya', *BEFEO* 48 (1954), pp. 353–415. S.O. Robson, 'Java at the Crossroads', *BKI* 137 (1981), pp. 271–2.

56 The list of tributaries is given in Th.G. Pigeaud, *Java in the Fourteenth Century* (The Hague, Nijhoff, 1960), III, pp. 16–17.

57 J. Tideman, *Djambi* (Amsterdam, de Bussy, 1938), p. 78.

58 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai', *JMBRAS* 33, ii (19610, p. 161 (Malay text p. 102).



there are in Java so many *keramat* (holy graves) dating from the time of conquest of Pasai by Majapahit.<sup>59</sup>

Although such captives undoubtedly contained men of high rank, it is not there that we should look for the means by which Islam eventually penetrated to within the highest Javanese court circles. In the dynastic marriages which cemented relations between the most powerful 'tributary' states and Majapahit, on the other hand, this access could be expected. Although the *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai* has a fanciful tale of the abortive suit of a Pasai prince by a Majapahit princess, it is with Champa that these marriage relations are most significant.

Just as Javanese records show the Majapahit king marrying a Cham princess, it is Cham records which show the reverse process, in the marriage of King Jaya Simhavarman III of Champa to a Javanese princess at the beginning of the 14th century. These dynastic relations were close enough for a Cham king to take refuge in Java after a Vietnamese attack on his capital in 1318.<sup>60</sup> The *Sejarah Melayu* goes further, claiming that a ruler of Champa journeyed to Majapahit to make his homage, fathering there a child by a Majapahit princess who later grew up to become the last ruler of Champa before its capital at Vijaya fell to the Vietnamese in the mid-15th Century.<sup>61</sup> Certainly relations between the Cham court and the courts of Java and the Malay world appear to have been exceptionally close, regardless of religion, and despite the earlier relation with Java it was with Malay-Muslim courts that the Chams became associated after the fall of Vijaya. According to the *Sejarah Melayu* the defeated princess of Champa then fled to Melaka and Aceh, where they became Muslim,<sup>62</sup> while Makassar sources show Chams playing an honoured role there among the Malayo-Muslim merchant group.<sup>63</sup> In 1607 a Dutch fleet found that the vestigial kingdom of Champa still had exceptionally close and cordial relations with Johor, and that although the king was Hindu much of his court was Muslim or pro-Muslim.<sup>64</sup> The Cham aristocrats who found refuge in 15th Century Melaka became Muslim very readily (although that state was always tolerant of Hindus), yet they allegedly retained a taboo against killing a cow or drinking its milk.<sup>65</sup> All of this suggests that even though the Champa court retained a high sense of the sacral purity required of a Brahmanic ruler, it was very closely tied to the Muslim commercial element both within its own kingdom and in the wider

59 Ibid. p. 159 (Malay text p. 100). It seems possible that the writer of the original *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai* was himself among these captives, since his account of Pasai ends with a sympathetic account of the invasion of it by a glorious Majapahit, while the only known text was copied in 1814 from a text then in the possession of the bupati of Demak, one of the heirs of Majapahit's power in Java.

60 S.O. Robson, 'Java at the Crossroads', *BKI* 137 (1981), p. 276. I cannot, however follow Robson in accepting Maspero's dismissal of Islam in Champa before 1471 in apparent disregard of the contrary evidence assembled by Fatimi, pp. 42-57.

61 'Sejarah Melayu', pp. 109-10.

62 Ibid. pp. 110-11.

63 *Sedjarah Goa*, ed. G.J. Wolhoff and Abdurrahim (Makassar, Jajasan Kebudayaan, n.d.), p. 28.; *Sja'ir Perang Mengkasar (The Rhymed Chronicle of the Macassar War) by Entih' Amin*, ed. C. Skinner ('s-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 1963), pp. 146-7 and 269.

64 'Historische Verhaal van de treffelijke Reyse ... door den Manhaftent Admiral Cornelis Matelief de Jonge', p. 120, in *Begin ende Voortgangh* (1976 reprint Vol III).

65 'Sejarah Melayu', p. 109. Aslo ibid. p. 55, where the Cham nakhodas are given a very high ceremonial position at court.

Malay world beyond. The Javanese story of Raden Rahmat and Putri Cempa expresses exactly this situation, the marriage links leading from the Majapahit court to the Champa court to the Champa Muslim minority. It is in general through tribute and trading missions, and in particular through the Champa connection, that Islam appears to have gained respectability at the very heart of the Javanese state.

#### Force

Arnold's *Preaching of Islam* inaugurated a very salutary reaction against the crude caricature of an Islam spread by the sword. We risk distortion of another kind, however, if we overlook the extent to which relatively small but determined Muslim forces were able to impose their will on substantial areas of Southeast Asia. The chronicles themselves are usually not averse to emphasizing the victories of Muslim arms in the holy cause. In those areas where there was serious resistance to Islam, which included the whole of inland Java, South Sulawesi (with the Makassarese crusade against Wajo, Bone, and the other Bugis states), and Banjarmasin, war was required either to destroy the old dynasty completely or to persuade it to accept the new dispensation. Even in the Philippines the physical superiority of the Muslims did no harm to their cause. Without such wars Islam would have spread more slowly, and in such places as West and East Java might never have spread at all.

There are two elements in the superiority of Muslim arms against their Hindu-Buddhist adversaries. The first is the superior weaponry which wealth and international contacts made available to the Muslims. Although some of the most spectacularly large cannon did come from the Middle East, like the Turkish cannon which helped Aceh win many battles in the 16th century, most guns were probably either Chinese or home-made. Small Chinese brass guns, culverins, were in use by Muslims all over the Philippines, in Brunei, and probably in Melaka. Chinese Muslims themselves were often among the most useful gunners and manufacturers of guns in the Southeast Asian cities, notably in Giri, Gresik, and Banten. But from at least the 16th century the knowledge of gun-making was widespread among the commercial elements of Southeast Asia. When the Spanish sacked Manila in 1570 they found next to Raja Suleiman's house a foundry for making bronze guns. 'Some small and large cannon had just been begun. There were the clay and wax moulds, the largest of which was for a cannon 17 feet long, resembling a culverin'.<sup>66</sup> Similarly the Javanese in Melaka at the Portuguese conquest were reported to be active in 'the making of arquebuses and all other kinds of firearms'.<sup>67</sup> Traders were ready to defend their ships wherever they sailed, and many vessels appeared to be equipped with small guns. Foreign merchants were expected to assist the ruler of the port they were in during his campaigns, and of course proved useful allies. The Malays were often mentioned as prominent in the forces of Makassar, the Javanese and Gujeratis in Melaka, the Chinese in Java and a whole range of foreigners in Banjarmasin. Later, Europeans would find the same role expected of them.

66 'Relation of the Voyage to Luzon', May 1570, in Blair & Robertson III, p. 103.

67 *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, ed. M.L. Dames (London, Hakluyt Society, 1918), p. 193.

The other element was the Muslim faith itself. Where Muslims were in a small minority their faith gave them both solidarity and the confidence that heaven was on their side. When we consider the very religious conception of power among all the peoples of Southeast Asia this latter factor is not to be minimized. The magical potency of a ruler or war-leader, his skill at choosing auspicious days, invulnerable charms, and ritual preparations, had as much to do with success in battle as the weight of numbers or armaments. The first few casualties in a battle were therefore likely to decide the outcome. Whenever a determined force confident of its own destiny appeared in Southeast Asia, whether Muslim or Christian, it was able to achieve victories out of all proportion to its numbers.

### The Mainland Example

Muslim trade also played a major role in Thailand and Cambodia in the 16th and 17th centuries. The commercially-oriented Cham who fled their homeland and settled around the Cambodian capital near modern Pnom Penh were all Muslim, or at least had become so by 1600. The western Muslims, particularly Persians and Chulias from South India, dominated the trade routes overland from Mergui, Junkceylon (Phuket), and Kedah to the ports on the East Coast, and thence to Bangkok and Ayudhya. All along this route the governors of towns, nominally under Ayudhyan sovereignty, were Persian or Indian Muslims. In the middle of the 17th Century a Persian Muslim, Okphra Sinnarat, was the dominant official in charge of commerce (Barcalon) even in the capital, Ayudhya. The third and most numerous Muslim element was the community of Malay traders conducting trade between the Thai and Cambodian capitals and such ports as Patani, Johor, Aceh, Banten and Makassar. As the Dutch squeezed Muslim (and Portuguese) trade out of more and more centres in the Archipelago, Ayudhya and Cambodia tended to receive an increased number of politico-economic refugees.

The question therefore should be asked, why these ports too did not become Muslim in the 17th century. The factors which account for this difference shed a good deal of light on the process of Islamization in the remainder of Southeast Asia.

Firstly, it is of course true that commerce was less important to these two states than to those of the Archipelago. The option of closing themselves off altogether to outsiders, Europeans as well as Muslims, which the mainland states eventually took in the late 17th century, was not really open to the archipelago states — however hard Sultan Agung and his successors may have tried in Java. In the case of Thailand, but not Cambodia, we would have to add that a higher degree of integration of the country around the central institutions of Kingship and the Buddhist Sangha had probably been achieved by the 17th century than in any archipelago state. Yet even with these two factors taken into account, it was still an open issue whether these states would fall to the superior power of Muslim arms.

The Muslim element first showed its strength in the confused period in Cambodia following a Siamese invasion of 1593. Malays, Chams, Chinese,

Japanese, Spanish and Portuguese were all competing for influence in the Cambodian capital in the decade that followed, though it was the European adventurers who behaved with the greatest violence and greed. In 1598 the Spanish briefly placed their candidate on the Cambodian throne, earning the particular enmity of the Malays and Chams who had previously formed the basis of the royal guard. When this king sent his European mercenaries against the Muslim group, led by a Malay Laksamana from Johor, the Muslims succeeded in first routing the Europeans and then killing the king himself. As the Cambodian chronicle put it: 'The Cham named Chora and the Chhvea [Malay] named Laksamana, put the King to death'.<sup>68</sup> The Muslims had successfully foiled the Spanish bid for power, but no other force was strong enough to assume power until a measure of order was restored in 1602–3 by the renewed intervention of Ayudhya in support of a Thai-educated Cambodian prince.<sup>69</sup>

The Muslim element had however emerged from this crisis with some claim to being the real defenders of Cambodian independence, and so they remained through much of the 17th century. Their principal antagonists now became the Dutch VOC, here as throughout Southeast Asia. The Regent in authority in Cambodia in the period 1625–42 leaned towards concessions to the Dutch, who of course wanted a monopoly position in Cambodia. He thereby alienated the Muslims, who supported a coup d'état against him in 1642. This placed on the throne a usurper apparently named Chan, who ruled in conditions of considerable disorder, leaning ever more heavily on his Muslim supporters whom he further wooed by taking a Malay wife. A party of Dutch traders was massacred in 1643, and Dutch attempts to obtain revenge either directly or by stirring up Cambodia's neighbours were not entirely successful. Heavily dependent on Muslim arms, the new King himself became a Muslim, adopting the title Sultan Ibrahim and establishing on the Mekong a replica of a Malay court. Eventually his enemies became too numerous, however. The Dutch forced him to sign a humiliating treaty in 1653, and internal Buddhist opposition increased. This made it easier for the Vietnamese in turn to intervene in 1658–60, replacing Sultan Ibrahim with another Cambodian prince who had a Vietnamese mother. Cambodia remained a battleground for the rest of the century, but Vietnamese and Siamese influence was now more important than either Muslim or European.<sup>70</sup>

Thailand was of course in a better position to defend itself, yet the same pattern of rivalry between the Dutch and the Muslims for dominant external influence made itself felt there. Whereas Persians, Malays, and for that matter Portuguese, Chinese and Japanese, were willing to enter the service of rulers such as Prasat Thong (1630–56) and Narai (1658–88), the Dutch always

68 Francis Garnier, 'Chronique Royale du Cambodge', *Journal Asiatique* 6e Serie, 18 (1871), p. 359.

69 Gabriel Quiroga de San Antonio, *Breve et Veridique Relation des Evenements au Cambodge*, ed. Antoine Cabaton (Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1914). C.R. Boxer and B.P. Groslier, *Angkor et le Cambodge au XVIIe siecle* (Paris, Presse Universitaire de France, 1958). Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos*, pp. 119–36.

70 Hendrick Muller (ed.), *De O.I.C. in Cambodja en Laos. Verzameling van bescheiden van 1636 tot 1670* ('s-Gravenhage, Linschoten Vereeniging, 1917). Garnier, 'Chronique Royale', pp. 364–6. *Dagh-register gehouden int Casteel Batavia* ('s-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 1896–), 1643–4, pp. 17–18, 22–4 and 42–3; 1656–7, pp. 36–7. 118–19, 146–50.

loomed as a dangerous monolith working in the interests of monopolizing the trade of Southeast Asia for the VOC. This was a major reason why Thai kings, among others, tended to lean towards Muslim traders who offered both economic and military support against the Dutch. Muslim influence appears to have reached its peak towards the end of Prasat Thong's reign and the beginning of Narai's. The major Persian source for events in Siam insists that Persians had a large part in Narai's seizure of power, and were leading this king towards Islam in the early part of his reign.<sup>71</sup> Okphra Sinnorat was regarded by the Dutch, even after his conversion to Buddhism, as the centre of a very powerful pro-Muslim lobby at court.<sup>72</sup> In 1668 ambassadors from Golconda and Aceh arrived in quick succession at the Thai capital, both hoping that King Narai would accept Islam. They were well received with customary Thai hospitality, leading to great concern on the part of French missionaries who had been led to hope for great things by that same hospitality.<sup>73</sup>

There was apparently no overt military bid for Muslim power in Ayudhya, however, until it was clearly too late, with Muslim influence definitely on the wane. The supremacy of Constance Phaulkon at the Thai court after 1680 with his pro-French policy, pushed the Muslims into a corner in a similar manner as had occurred in Cambodia almost a century earlier. As in the Cambodian case, there must also have been sympathy for the Muslim rebels on the part of factions at court who resented the strength of European influence, and who were to revolt successfully against that influence in their turn in 1688. The Muslim revolt, however, came two years too early, in 1686, and ended in disarray. Whatever help had been expected either from within the country or from Malay forces outside it failed to materialise, and the only effective rebel force became the small Makassarese refugee community, at most a few hundred strong. Even so, the remarkable success of the Makassarese in holding out for several days against the Siamese army and its substantial European reinforcements, indicates once again the military potential of a determined Muslim minority.<sup>74</sup>

The mainland evidence appears to suggest that without the complication of powerful foreign intervention, by Europeans, Thais and Vietnamese in Cambodia, and Europeans in Ayudhya, the Muslim element might have played a similar role in these states as it had earlier in Java. By the seventeenth century European power was already in the ascendant and the Muslims were making their last stands at one point after another. We do not know whether or how far ethnic Thais and Cambodians were assimilating into the Muslim/Malay community of successful traders, as was happening elsewhere. Even if this were not occurring, however, the history of these countries confirms the importance of military power as one of the factors most critical in the rise of Islam in Southeast Asia.

In conclusion, then, we need to distinguish between the gradual progress made by Islam at a popular level, and its victory in the royal courts of the already-Indianized states. The key factors at a popular level were the rapid social change Southeast Asia was undergoing and the ability of Sufi practice as filtered through India in the 13th–16th centuries to cater for the world of spirits with which Southeast Asians were familiar. The fall of the Indianized courts to Islam, however, required some additional factors, including the network of commercial and tributary relations established by Majapahit, and the particular power balance prevailing in the Archipelago.

71 J. O'Kane (ed.), *The Ship of Sulaiman* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 77–8 and 94–106.

72 *Records of the Relations between Siam and Foreign Countries in the 17th Century* (Bangkok, Vajiranana National Library, 1915–16), II, pp. 208–12.

73 *Ibid.*, p. 92. John Anderson, *English Intercourse with Siam in the Seventeenth Century* (London, Trubner, 1890), p. 233; *The Ship of Sulaiman*, *passim*.

74 *The Ship of Sulaiman*, pp. 136–8; M. Turpin, *History of the Kingdom of Siam*, trans. B.O. Cartwright (Bangkok, Vajiranana National Library, 1908), pp. 53–64.