

Islam and Civil Society: Messages From Southeast Asia

by
Professor Mitsuo Nakamura

Mitsuo Nakamura: Thank you, Professor Ikenberry, it is indeed a great honor for me to be with you and with such a distinguished audience this evening. I feel especially privileged to have Professor John Esposito and Professor Osman Bakar as my discussants. I'm sure that their comments will contribute greatly to the significance of this evening's program.

What I'm going to present to you in the next 35 to 40 minutes is, basically, a transmission of voices from Islamic intellectuals of Southeast Asia on civil society. A conference sponsored by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation on the theme of Islam and Civil Society was convened in November 1999 in Japan. All together, eleven Southeast Asian Muslim intellectuals, including Professor Osman Bakar himself, and nine Japanese scholars, including my wife Hisako and myself, participated in the conference as paper contributors and commentators.

The result of this conference is going to be published shortly, as Professor Ikenberry mentioned, from the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. I suppose you have already picked up the flier for the book at the entrance - if not, please do so later. I also suppose that you have already picked up the introduction of the book, as material for tonight. What I'm presenting here shortly is a summary of my introduction to the book in order to highlight what seemed to be important points made by Muslim colleagues of mine, and some comments of my own.

At the beginning, it may be helpful to state what is meant by civil society in the coming book. Briefly, the term refers to the public space between the state and the individual with the following two aspects: a) voluntary associational life on the one hand, and b)

civility or civic virtues on the other. In the former usage, the term is used to refer to a wide range of voluntary organizations including traditional volitional institutions as well as contemporary civic institutions and associations, including NGOs (non-government organizations), POs, (people's organizations), NPOs, (non-profit organizations), and philanthropic organizations like the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. In the latter case, values or normative principles constituting the foundation of society and regulating social relationships, most importantly, state/society relationships, become the focus of concern.

Results of Exploration of Islamic Civil Society

The pairing of Islam and civil society underlines an awareness that the relevance of Islam — for civic values, as well as significance of associational life among Muslims — for the civility of the entire society should become the target of serious intellectual inquiry. More urgently, it is assumed that these two aspects of Islamic civil society should be approached from the viewpoint of exploring their roles in the dynamic process of democratization and the empowerment of people in contemporary Asia. The coming book presents the result of this exploration, based upon recent Muslim experiences.

Let me also mention briefly, the following five points as intellectual background to the conference. One, rising concern for civil society in Europe and the United States, which has been represented by the monumental work by Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Yet, as Chaiwat Satha-Anand, one of the contributors in the conference has observed, they did not cover Muslim civil society in the Islamic world at all. Muslim civil society has remained as a lacuna.

Growing Awareness in Japan of Significance of NGOs and NPOs

Two, growing awareness in Japan of the significance of NGOs and NPOs in public life. The Hanshin earthquake in 1995, which devastated the core of Kobe, has had a catalytic effect upon the emergence of volunteerism and the enactment of NPO law in 1998, which has placed a milestone in the development of philanthropy and volunteerism in Japan. Internationally, in addition to its already huge amount of official development assistance, ODA, the Japanese government started to engage in much closer cooperation with NGOs, domestically as well as overseas. The Japanese government, as well as NGOs, however, hesitated to approach Islamic civil society in its overseas aid activities for a long time. This was partly because of the fact that the constitution of Japan requires the strict separation of government from religion.

Three, to be mentioned as background, is the emergence of civil society in the Asia-Pacific region. A series of drastic developments changed the public scene in the Asia-Pacific region. That is, the rapid and massive rise of civil society with the process of democratization, most notably in the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand in the 1980s and 1990s. All these trends were well documented in a useful resource book compiled by Mr. Tadashi Yamamoto and his staff at the Japan Center for International Cooperation, JCIC, *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Region*. I'm sure that many of you are already familiar with the work. In fact, the publication of the book itself was a reflection of the fact that Japan's NGOs and NPOs and philanthropic organizations were developing closer cooperation with their counterparts in the Asia-Pacific region, and coming to play a pivotal role in the region. The paucity of information on Islamic civil society in the region is, nevertheless, evident, even in this work.

Relationship of Islam and Democracy Debated

Point four. "Discovery" of Islamic civil society in the Middle East and North Africa. Most contemporary Western intellectual conventions have assumed that modern civil society was born only through Western capitalism. In contrast, Islam has been depicted as something anathema to modern civil society. The Islamic polity, which supposedly does not allow the separation of state from church, has been regarded as typically "Oriental despotism," with no room for the autonomy of citizenry. As is well known, Samuel Huntington has recently presented an epitome of this view in the book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, and has reinforced the image that Islam is anti-democratic by nature.

Yet a number of Western scholars have observed that vigorous efforts have been going on from within the Islamic world to reinterpret traditional resources in pursuit of democracy, civility, and civil society. They have argued that Islam should not and cannot be represented by extremist minorities and have drawn attention to ongoing contests among those Muslims who promote democratization in Islamic perspectives and those who oppose or remain indifferent to it. John Esposito has been one of the most eloquent speakers for this argument.

Recently, the significance of Islamic civil society has begun to attract not only academic but also practical concerns of the Western world. For example, it was a U.S.A.I.D field worker, Dennis Sullivan, who noticed the fact that quite a large number of private, voluntary organizations — what he calls PVOs (private voluntary organizations) — were operating in the fields of education, medical care, and social welfare at the grassroots level of contemporary Egyptian society. More recently, a compendium of survey results on civil society in the Middle East and North Africa has effectively refuted the view that negates its

presence in the Islamic world. I am referring here to August Richard Norton's two-volume work entitled *Civil Society in the Middle East*. In a similar vein, a Swedish symposium held in Turkey in 1996 explored the complexity of Muslim civil society and its relationship with democracy (*Civil Society, Democracy and the Muslim World*).

Point five. Assertiveness of Islamic civil society for democratization in Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia, the focus of the coming book, is a geographical area in which the world's largest number of Muslims is concentrated. Approximately 200 million Muslims living in the region, mostly Malay, variants in language and culture, represent about one-sixth of the world's total Muslim population, much larger than the total number of Arab-speaking Muslims. Significant social processes have occurred in the Muslim communities of the region — in recent decades, with profound bearings on the increasing assertiveness of Islamic civil society. They are, a) rapid economic growth, b) emergence of the middle class, c) resurgence of Islam, and d) increasing popular demand for democratization. These processes have also developed in the context of increasing globalization of the world economy and the use of information technology.

Against this background that I have just described, the attention of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) was directed to Islamic civil society in Southeast Asia. Mr. Akira Iriyama, President of SPF who is present here this evening, was instrumental in this initiative. The promotion of international networking of civil society has been one of the foundation's main concerns. The foundation's new interest in Islam and civil society in Southeast Asia is thus a significant step forward in its effort to widen the coverage on civil society into a truly global perspective, without neglecting the Islamic sector of the international community. It is hoped that this coming book will help to fill the lack of information on the part of the outside world about Islamic civil society in Southeast Asia.

Recent Developments in Indonesia and Malaysia

Now, let me skip over the next section in my introduction, which is basically a historical overview, and go to page nine. Let me just mention, in talking about civil society's development in Southeast Asia, the most recent developments in Indonesia and Malaysia; they were both rather dramatic. In Indonesia, President Suharto was forced to step down in the face of nationwide demonstrations by students and urban riots, from March to May 1998. Vice-President Habibie assumed the presidency promising *reformarsi*, i.e. democratic reformation in the pursuit of civil society, *masyarakat madani*. The notion of civil society quickly became a part of public political discourse in post-Suharto Indonesia.

After the general elections, held in June 1999, Abdurrahman Wahid, chairperson of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Muslim voluntary organization in Indonesia, established in 1926 and a consistent advocate of democratic pluralism, was elected to be the fourth president of the Republic by the People's Consultative Assembly in October 1999. This development represented a dramatic turnabout in which a civil society leader was named the head of state.

In Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim, the former leader of ABIM, Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement, who was designated by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed as his heir apparent, was gathering his own political momentum by introducing the idea of civil society, *masyrakat madani*, into the political arena. In the middle 1990s, civil society was quickly made a new catchword representing trans-ethnic aspirations for a democratic, transparent and accountable government, challenging implicitly the established alliance of oligarchs among the three major ethnic groups, i.e., Malays, Chinese, and Indians.

With the downfall of Anwar, however, in 1998, civil society has become, according to

Professor Osman, not exactly a forbidden, but an avoided word. The term, in public, was only to be used continuously by the opposition parties, including the new Justice Party, headed by the wife of Anwar, Dr. Wan Azizah. It made significant inroads into the Malay Islam communities in the general elections held in November 1999, in alliance with Chinese and Indian opposition forces. Civil society in Malaysia is fighting an uphill battle today.

Now, let me go to page 11 of my introduction, "Resources for Muslim Voluntarism." Muslim voluntarism has firm roots in the religious resources of Islam, i.e., the Koran and Hadith. Help for the poor and needy out of compassion is obligatory and its fulfillment is to be rewarded in the afterlife. A series of individuals, as well as collective duties for the common good of the Muslim community, *ummah*, are explicitly stated in those texts.

Individual Muslim Duties

Textually, the following are included as individual Muslim duties: the payment of *zakat maal* (annual wealth tax), *zakat fitrah* (annual poll tax), and *sadaqah* (ad hoc contribution in cash or service), and *waqf* (permanent endowment of property.) The fulfillment of these duties constitutes not only the discharge of religious obligations but also economic redistribution of wealth and income between the haves and have-nots, constituting the "flow" in Muslim moral economy.

The constant flow of money, goods, and services, through the various schemes of voluntary acts help to integrate local Muslim communities on which the wider Muslim solidarity is firmly based. Contemporary Muslim civil society is part and parcel of this Muslim volitional tradition and its modern adaptation and extension.

Among these individual voluntary actions, *waqf*, i.e. permanent provisions for supporting welfare activities, often develop significant

social contributions. Under *waqf* arrangements, property is dedicated to a cause so that only the income flowing from it is available for current expenditure in that cause. Thus *waqf* seems to be the "stock" in Muslim moral economy. The most conspicuous example of this is the world famous Al Azhar Mosque and Al Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Income from the *waqf* property of Al Azhar market covers the entire expenditures of both the mosque and the university, including the salaries of the teachers and personnel. Students accepted into the universities are not charged tuition or fees at all, and some even receive scholarships. Funding at the university is also sufficient to send a number of teachers of Arabic language and Islamic studies to every corner of the world.

Collective and Social Obligatory Duties

Furthermore, there are numerous collective and social obligatory duties to be carried out on behalf of the entire society, *fard kifayah*. Individuals and groups take initiatives by themselves to respond to the call of the Koran, enjoining right conduct and forbidding wrong. In recognition of these duties, permanent, multipurpose voluntary organizations in pursuit of the common good have been established in modern times. The Muhammadiyah, established in 1912, and the Nahdlatul Ulama in 1926 in Indonesia are typical cases of this generalized volunteerism. Such multipurpose volunteer organizations also behave as a watchdog and flag waiver for the moral conduct of Muslims, hence the political implications of those voluntary organizations.

The resilience and vitality of Islamic civil society in traditional as well as modern forms is clear. However, there arises a serious question regarding the relevance of Islamic society for civility and democracy. Is the growth of Muslim civil society conducive to democratization? Huntington's pessimistic prospect was based, in part, on his observation of the fact that increasing vitality of Muslim voluntary associations is feeding anti-Western

tendencies and he assumed this to be anti-democratic.

Ernest Gellner's pessimism was also based upon his view that *ummah* is an ideological community with no room for pluralism. This pessimistic view conjures a scenario in which the growth of Islamic civil society will strengthen Muslim communalism, vis-à-vis communalism of other regions, leading to inter-religious strife and eventual Balkanization, i.e., the disintegration of the nation-state along religious, ethnic lines.

The strengthening of Muslim civil society might not always lead automatically to democratic civility. This is one of the critical points that need to be examined. With this point in mind, let us listen to the voices of Muslim intellectuals from Southeast Asia. I will be talking about the conference itself.

The SPF conference entitled, "Islam and Civil Society, Messages from Southeast Asia," was held primarily as a learning session for the Japanese participants. It had also a definite activist orientation, as the preparation of the conference was undertaken in close cooperation with several key figures of civil society movements of the region, including the new Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid. Among others, particular efforts were made to have articulate speakers from such influential Muslim organizations as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatu Ulama. As a result, all of the Southeast Asian participants to the conference were selected from among not merely established scholars, but also from among experienced activists or at least active participant observers of the civil society in their respective countries.

The outline of the book is as follows. It consists of four parts after my introduction. Parts one and two concern Indonesia and Malaysia, the two majority Muslim countries in the region. Part three is on the Muslim minority countries, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore. Part four contains three

theoretical contributions.

Part one centers on *reformarsi* in Indonesia and the relationship of civil society to the state. The two contributors, Fajrul Falaakh and Amin Abdullah, belong to the top leadership of Nadlatul Ulama, respectively. Fajrul Falaakh comes from a family of *kyai*, head of the traditional Islamic boarding school, *pesantren*. He comments on the enormous transformation that the NU has undergone since its birth in 1926 up to the 1990s to become the "last bastion of civil society," which has successfully counter-challenged the control of Suharto.

NU Aspires to Develop a Democratic Civil Society in Indonesia

According to Fajrul Falaah, the NU aspires to develop a democratic civil society in Indonesia, which is basically non-Islamic and non-military. Fajrul's answer to the question of the danger of communalism or exclusivism, in the language of Indonesian politics mentioned above, is a repeated emphasis on the inclusive nature and tolerance of Islam that NU is espousing.

Amin Abdullah was heading, at the time of the SPF conference, the Muhammadiyah Council for Theoretical and Legal Deliberation, *Majelis Tarjih*. He was re-elected at the National Congress of Muhammadiyah in July 2000 to a position as one of the top five people. He is convinced of the Muhammadiyah's commitment to civic virtues and specifically mentioned the following points: a) the Muhammadiyah's dedication to community development that is always approached in the bottom-up fashion with local support; b) democratic ways in which decisions are made internally; and c) such civic virtues as open-mindedness, tolerance, pluralism and relativism in religion that Muhammadiyah cherishes, according to Amin. All of these constitute a firm guarantee that the organization cannot behave other than democratically.

Inter-Relationship Between Islamization and Ethnic Relations in Malaysia

Part two of the book deals with the inter-relationship between Islamization and ethnic relations in Malaysia. Situations in Malaysia, where politics and ethnicity have been inseparable, have long justified the identification of Islam and Malayness as hegemonic ideology in the “multi-racial state.” However, the emergence of Muslim civil society, with its implication for trans-ethnic egalitarianism, has started to challenge its hegemony.

Mohammad Abu Bakar, associate professor of the University of Malaya, who has been close to the nerve center of Islamic resurgence in Kuala Lumpur, discussed his observation on this challenge. According to him, the search for an Islamic solution to communalism has been going on for a long time. Attempts have been made to break through the established walls of communalism, first via proselytization (*dakwah*), next, via Islamic universalism, and lately through inter-civilizational dialogue. All of these, ironically, have so far enhanced civil formation on the part of non-Muslims. Mohammad Abu Bakar is not, however, necessarily pessimistic about communalism, since it also provides an opportunity for civil society development.

Sharifah Zaleha is concerned with micro-process of the resurgence of Islam at the grass roots or *kampung* in the new college town in Selangor, where she is a resident observer. She is a social anthropologist. The process takes the form of community development around the *surau*, prayer house. Without having formal affiliations with national organizations, the *surau*-centered activities have evolved into a number of voluntary groups for education, social welfare, and even traditional medical care. She believes that these types of *surau*-centered groups mushrooming in new urban areas can create “the space for participation and action for the residents of the new town outside the sphere of formal party politics, thus enhancing civil

society formation for Malay Muslims.”

Part three contains four contributions on the Muslim minority situations, two on Thailand, one each for the Philippines and Singapore. The two Thai contributors discuss the situation in Bangkok and northeast, where they work as scholars as well as civil society activists, respectively. Chaiwat Satha-Anand is a very popular teacher and productive scholar at a leading university in Bangkok. He’s also an acknowledged expert in conflict resolution with whom the government, as well as Muslim community leaders, often seek consultation.

Chaiwat takes up the case of a well-established Cham Muslim community in Ban Krua, Bangkok. The question raised is an important one and parallel to the one mentioned before: Does civic action on the basis of ethnic identity, communalism, jeopardize or enhance the civility of the entire society? In the case of Bangkok, the Muslim community’s action to prevent the removal of a historic mosque and cemetery known as *waqf* property for centuries from an urban development plan “seems to work for all,” transcending religious affiliation. The Muslim protest is no longer seen as disruptive or subversive.

One of the points Preeda Prapertchob, another Thai contributor, makes is that the mainstreaming of Muslim intellectuals in Thai politics in recent years — epitomized by the rise of Wan Mohammad Noor to the presidency of the National Assembly and Surin Pitsuwan to minister of foreign affairs in the former Chuan cabinet — has been an indispensable part of the pro-democracy movement promoted by student activists on university campuses over many decades. Mutual trust, or even comradeship has developed across religious differences among the new generation of Thai politicians.

Michael Mastura, our contributor from the Philippines, is a key figure, not only linking traditional *Maguindanao* Muslim polity with

the Republic as a descendant of the Sultanate of Kudarat, but also for his expertise as a Western-trained lawyer. Having withdrawn from life as a congressman, Mastura's efforts are now concentrated on building non-state institutions of Islam in public life. His contribution to this volume is based on his recent experience in the managing of the *Waqf* Foundation, Al Khairiah, the Islamic Welfare Society, whose presence is indispensable for the local community in providing education, social welfare, income-earning economic activities, and a social safety network in general where the government was incapable of delivering these.

New Generation of Singaporean Muslims Is Emerging

Sharon Siddique has contributed a report on the activities of the AMP, Association of Muslim Professionals in Singapore, of which she's a founding member. The AMP gives us a fresh image of Singaporean Muslims in contrast to the stereotypical ones so far being held by outsiders. According to her, a new generation of Singaporean Muslims is emerging: well educated, urbane, and competitive in the forefront of the post-industrial market economy, with a mastery in information technology. Also, contrary to the outside image of Singapore being under the tight control of a single-party government, social order and integration of this multi-ethnic island state seems to depend not so much on coercion, but rather on "self-help" efforts of component ethnic groups to a large extent. Hence the emphasis on synergies of the state and civil society from the government side.

The three contributions in part four are theoretical. Nurcholish Madjid, one of the foremost intellectual leaders of "civil Islam," to borrow Robert Heffner's latest terminology, has given a concise recapitulation of his arguments for the notion of civil society. According to him, the notion of civil society or civilized society coined in the constitution of Medina by the Prophet Mohammed in the

seventh century BCE makes a genuine part of common heritage of mankind. He believes that this awareness would provide a starting point for both Muslims and non-Muslims in supporting "the widest possible shaping and sharing of all values among all human beings."

Osman Bakar has produced a sort of prolegomena to the Malaysian Muslim's manifesto on inter-civilization dialog. He has done this while glancing at Samuel Huntington, on his right-hand side, and Iranian President Syed Mohammad Khatami on his left. Like Nurcholish, Osman believes that Islam is firmly based upon the acknowledgment of pluralism as a God-given human condition. Islamic universalism is not just addressing the Muslims but the whole of mankind. Human diversity requires efforts for mutual acquaintance and understanding, which is a Koranic injunction.

Plurality Characterizes Muslim Communities in SE Asia

Finally, Omar Farouk rounds up the discourse on Islam and civil society in Southeast Asia. He does this from the viewpoint of his strategic marginal-man position where the common experience of Southeast Asian Muslims, i.e., living in "interlocking and overlapping relationships with the other communities," is most typically embodied. He is a Malaysian national, originated from a family of Arab descent, having lived in Southeast Asia for many generations, trained in a university in the United Kingdom, married to a Japanese lady, residing and teaching in the Japanese city of Hiroshima. He expounds the point that Muslim communities in Southeast Asia are not monolithic and living with multi-layered and multifaceted plurality in everyday life. Southeast Asians are characteristic of their adaptability and flexibility in this pluralistic situation. Omar attempts to explore implications of this situation, with a growth of civil society in the region.

I was to go over the rest of my introduction,

but time is limited. So let me skip all of the general part and come to some concluding remarks. I'm going to make two specific points. First, I'd like to draw your attention to the recent development in which the Japanese government has started to pursue what they call, "Silk-Road diplomacy." In this diplomacy, a number of Muslim countries in the Eurasian continent will be covered, and it will also respond positively to the recent call for inter-civilizational dialog proposed by President Khatami of Iran and adopted by the United Nations as one of its official activities. The seriousness of the Japanese government is indicated by the fact that the Foreign Minister Yohei Kono has recently established an advisory group of scholars on Islam with a view to incorporate their academic input into policy formulation. I happened to be invited to give a talk to this group.

Second, a new age of Japan's approach to the Islamic world is going to take shape soon. NGOs and NPOs and the philanthropic organizations in Japan are also starting to pay attention to their Muslim counterparts. Messages from Muslims in Southeast Asia and elsewhere from the Islamic world will be finding more receptive ears in Japan in the near future.

Finally, in the way of ending my talk, I'd like to mention a remarkable development that was obtained very recently in the United States. I am referring to the inaugural speech of your new president, Mr. George W. Bush. He has stated, for the first time, in the history of U.S. presidential inaugurations, to the best of my knowledge, that American democracy grows on the basis of faith-based communities and has mentioned explicitly church, synagogue, and mosque. The domestic political implication of this statement is one thing.

U.S. Government Acknowledged Muslim Community as Integral Part of Polity

Another more important aspect about it seems to be that the new U.S. government has

acknowledged, officially, the presence of Muslim communities as an integral part of its polity. European countries have already been endeavoring in various ways in dealing with their Muslim populations for some time, in addition to its bitter experience with the Balkans. Now the Japanese turn is coming, epitomized by the recent instance of *fatwa*, a legal judgment of *haram* by the Indonesian Council of *Ulama* (Islamic scholars) upon *ajinomoto* (monosodium glutamate), the Japanese equivalent of Coca-Cola in the global consumer's market. The non-Muslim world is getting inseparable from the Muslim world.

Let me stop here, with thanks for discussants, in advance, thank you.

John Ikenberry: Thank you Dr. Nakamura. Professor Esposito, would you like to start?

John Esposito: I spent thirty years insisting that I have to stand to think, however I just got back last night from two countries and six cities and so I'm just a little jet-lagged at present. Let me say that I'm delighted to be here tonight, especially to hear Professor Nakamura, who I've been a great fan of for years and we finally met last year at Bangkok, at a conference that my center ran in Bangkok on Asian Islam in the 21st century.

I think that the subject of Islam and civil society in Southeast Asia needs to be contextualized and indeed, Professor Nakamura began to do that in his presentation, in regard to the broader Muslim world as we try to understand also the dynamics in Indonesia. I appreciated the fact that in his presentation he talked about the fact that civil society was not unknown in Muslim societies in the past. There is a way in which some define civil society in a kind of very modern, post-modern sense, and in that sense one can exclude the past. But otherwise, a variety of notions, whether it's *waqf*, whether it's development of Islamic law and Islamic law schools - which really developed outside the state in public

space — become important to understand. I think as we look at the emergence of the issue of Islam and civil society and democratization in the Muslim world, it's important to note the following. I'll make some broad comments about the Muslim world, and then speak directly about Indonesia.

In the 1980s, the dominant concern was Iran and the export of revolution or guerrilla movements, like the Jihad movement that assassinated Anwar Sadat. And so, in many ways, the sort of reassertion of Islam or the re-emergence of Islam in Muslim politics was seen very much as a very specific and direct revolutionary threat. Nobody was talking about the relationship of Islam to mainstream society or to civil society, yet it was going on but it was dominated by these kinds of images.

I would argue that part of that reason is that our expectations were such, as a result of modernization and development theory, developed by Sam Huntington and others, which tended to underestimate the role of religion. That is interesting because Sam, having underestimated the role of religion, then overestimates it when he has to deal with reality and the clash of civilizations. Parenthetically I should say this, when I was in Saudi Arabia, he and I were invited there to debate the clash of civilizations. In fact, Sam initially gave a whole talk on modernization and development theory and how they had failed. He never mentioned that he was one of the fathers of modernization theory, so it was this whole notion of “we had this theory out there that failed and now we're struggling to understand this world in which we function.”

Underestimation of Religion

As a result, the underestimation of religion did not prepare people for the Iranian revolution and in many ways, people were reeling in the '80s and over-reacting because, suddenly, having thought that modernization meant the marginalization of religion, how do you explain that the re-assertion of Islam took

place in Iran, Egypt, and Lebanon — the foremost of the developing countries in the Muslim world — rather than saying with modernization and development theory, that it would occur in the more traditional Islamic societies?

Now what happened at the end of the eighties and the early nineties is that one began to note what I and others have called a “quiet revolution,” which is really the emergence, or re-emergence of Islam in civil society that had been there but not noticed until the late eighties. Why in the late eighties? Because, along with social activism, in which Islam was taking its place in developing institutions of civil society, education, legal, social welfare, that had not been noted, as well as other things, like banks and insurance companies, Islam suddenly emerged as a mainstream political reality.

Islam's Emergence as a Leading Oppositional Force

Why? Because repressive authoritarian governments — and I think this is the key to understanding the issues throughout the Muslim world — including Indonesia. Repressive authoritarian governments that have perpetuated a society and culture of authoritarianism, not a society and culture of civil society, having their economic plans fail, felt a need to crack open the door of democratization and to hold elections. And so suddenly, forced by economic situations, not out of any great desire to develop a strong civil society, they opened up the intellectual process, and suddenly Islam emerged as a leading oppositional force.

Islam Is a Threat to Authoritarian Regimes

The result is not to say the 1980s and early 90s demonstrate the extent to which political Islam or the emergence of Islam in politics and society is mainstream as well as extremist, than to the extent that it's mainstream. This is something to be comfortable with. But, in

fact, Islam becomes even more of a threat. Why? It's a threat to authoritarian regimes. Mainstream Islam is more of a threat than extremist Islam. Mainstream Islam shows that there is a popular base. Mainstream Islam demonstrates a form of Islam that is much harder to crush. If you can say to your opposition, you're like the communists of old, you can justify why human rights don't prevail in your country.

For Western countries, it's a problem because it's an unknown and it threatens established alliances and allies. For Western countries, as during the Cold War period, the most important thing is having allies that you can count on. You may not like them, but if they deliver what you want, you're comfortable with it. The example is the United States assistant secretary of state gives a speech on U.S. policy towards Islam and says, "We don't have a problem with Islam, we don't have a problem with political Islam and Islamic movements. They should be able to participate in the system like any other movements." Along comes Algeria and the United States freezes, as does France, and Britain, etc., because, having uttered the statement, nobody is able to deal with the political reality.

So suddenly we have these governments, on the one hand, shutting the door, Western governments ambivalent, and Bernard Lewis and Sam Huntington and others talking about the fact that Islam is a triple threat, a political threat, a civilizational threat and a demographic threat, much of which I play around with in my book, *The Islamic Threat*.

Religious Accommodation With Democracy

We raise the question, are Islam and democracy compatible? Are Islam and civil society compatible? It's an interesting kind of a priori question that we ask. We don't ask empirically; we ask a priori; it's fascinating to me. We forget, for example, that Huntington, some 20 years ago, said that he thought that Judaism and Christianity had made an

accommodation with democracy, but he wondered about and doubted that one religion could make that accommodation, and it wasn't Islam, it was Roman Catholicism. Catholicism took a long time to catch up; it didn't do it until Vatican II, but it was a testimony to the fact that religious faiths — those of us who are historians of religion, know that, in fact, religious faiths are dynamic, even when they seem static historically.

So to raise a priori the idea of "is Islam compatible with democracy" is beyond belief, it's absurd. It reminds me of a few years ago, Abdurrahman Wahid and I were speaking in Japan at a closed meeting on Islam and political development in Southeast Asia. But then we spoke publicly in a huge ballroom, I remember looking at the ballroom and thinking, they'll never fill this ballroom, it had something like 500 seats. And it filled with Japanese diplomats and businesspeople. But the prevailing question, over and over again, no matter what Wahid said and no matter what I said, was "Are Islam and modernization compatible, in terms of politics and technology?" And the only way I could finally get some people's attention was to say, "As a young man growing up in Brooklyn, if somebody gave me a gift and it said, 'Made in Japan,' I thought, it can't be good, it's got to be cheap. We all know the Japanese and the Asians can't do it as well as the Americans do." And then I said, "Today, I'm proud to say I own a Lexus," and I'm glad four years later to say I own another Lexus. But when I said that, that we now, in fact, as everybody knows, everybody buys these products.

So somehow Japanese culture proved that it could do it, Asian culture proved that it could do it, why do we still doubt or are very slow to recognize Southeast Asian culture? Even when Malaysia was doing it, people wanted to say, well, it's a kind of imitative form, which is exactly what Americans said about Japanese technology, even when it was doing well. They said, "Well, the Americans have the ideas, and the Japanese, in a grand way, can

imitate what we say,” which was a terrific back-handed compliment.

So, when we look at the Southeast Asian situation, what do we wind up seeing? Indonesia, like much of the Muslim world, is a country that betrays evidences, the whole problem of the culture of authoritarianism, whether secular or religious. Indonesia, like most of the Muslim world, went through a period of colonialism. One must realize European colonial powers were not about improving democratization in civil society. That wasn't what they were concerned about. Indonesia, like most Muslim countries, then proved to have a modern nation-state with leaders that were not elected. If you look at the Muslim world, who are the leaders in the Muslim world? Kings, military, and ex-military, and now we have a new form evidenced by Syria where the son of a president can succeed. This may send a signal to Egypt and many other countries in the Muslim world, providing some hope.

But the point is that you have societies in which, under Sukarno and Suharto, like much of the Muslim world, you have in fact a perpetuation of a society and a culture and values of authoritarianism, whether secular or religious. Any enlightened leader who comes to power — whether military or somehow seizing power but wishing to implement democracy — what's the first thing they will do? They will clean out the military and the police because, of course, they are dominated by the former regime. And they will invariably discover that the process of implementing a democratic electoral system has to be put off a little longer than they thought.

We can think of a thousand examples, Zia Ul-Haq in Pakistan, Musharraf now in Pakistan, you can go right across. This is part of the reality we're dealing with, you see. As one of my colleagues, John Intelis, an expert in North Africa, said at a conference here in Washington in response to the two schools of thought on this — one, a number of us

represent, and the other is represented by Bernard Lewis, Daniel Pipes, and Martin Kramer, for those of you who follow this. Intelis said, “you know the other side likes to say that what we need to do is, we can't encourage governments to move quickly to democracy, the people aren't ready for it. But we'll encourage our authoritarian regimes to develop strong civil societies.”

John Intelis said, “authoritarian regimes are not about developing strong civil societies.” It's almost a contradiction in terms. This is part of the challenge. Sukarno made sure that religion was excluded from the political arena, certain that Islam was marginalized. Suharto took it out of the social arena. Most people thought Islam was dead in Indonesia, and certainly it was there, and vibrant, but in fact, it perpetuated itself as a strong culture and values through the NU and Muhammadiyah, through a whole network of, if you will, Muslim NGOs, trade unions, etc.

Islam's Reemergence After Downfall of Suharto

Now the problem is, for those who ignored it - and that includes a good deal of Southeast Asian experts — if you go back and look at many of them in terms of taking seriously the role of Islam when it then re-emerges with the downfall of Suharto, both in the process and afterwards, people wake up and realize, “my God, the president, the heads of the DPR and the MPR, the foreign minister, all have very strong Islamic credentials. How are we supposed to deal with this, how are we supposed to respond to it?”

In many ways, their reflections can be those of Emmanuel Savan. Emmanuel Savan is an Israeli academic who wrote a book called *Radical Islam*, with which I had major problems. But he wrote a very interesting piece on the re-emergence of civil society in Egypt and other places, and it's true, I think, in Southeast Asia. He called it “civil society strikes back.” It's an interesting phrase; you

would think that civil society becoming strong is a positive, but he's in effect saying it strikes back, why? Because Islamic groups have now informed the institutions of civil society. And I think that what we see in Indonesia, what we see in Malaysia, is that kind of re-assertion. We've seen it stymied by the political developments in Indonesia and also by those in Malaysia, in terms of the imprisonment of Anwar Ibrahim and other political events.

In terms of Indonesia itself, let me just end with a few observations. One of the questions is, to what extent will one be able to produce in this country a sort of viable form of government that can hold the country together? I mean for those of us who can talk about democratization in civil society, the irony is that there is another side of the argument that can say that as bad as Suharto was, that kind of authoritarian regime could deal with the thousands of islands that make up Indonesia. In the post-independence period, the challenge to Wahid and others is to show that somehow they can deal with the realities of Indonesia, that they can somehow open up a society but deal with the fact that Aceh and other areas want autonomy, want independence. I mean, how are they going to deal with them? When you look at the so-called Islamically-oriented leaders, their differences emerge. The rivalry between Amin Rais and Abdurrahman Wahid, and that rivalry's going on right now. How does one judge the situation?

Whatever one may think about the sort of genius and/or the vacillating approach of Abdurrahman Wahid in this fragile time, when Amin Rais and others make a move to ask him to step aside, the question becomes, step aside for what? If Megawati comes into power, will that mean a return of a more military-oriented government? Will some say, this will save the day. But on the other hand, in saving the day, what will that mean for the development of civil society and democratization in Indonesia? I'll end there and then we can get into

other things during the discussion.

Osman Bakar: Thank you, Professor Ikenberry, and my fellow panelists. As a contributor to the book edited by Professor Nakamura, I'm supposed to give strong backing to his presentation. But I must say that I agree with Professor Nakamura, that the subject of Islamic civil society in Southeast Asia has been very little studied.

Whereas the subject, this field can provide us with a lot of information about other things as well. By studying Islamic civil society, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia, we can also, for example, gain a better understanding of the interaction between tradition and modernity in the experience of Malay-Indonesian Muslims. It is precisely because there has been a long tradition of civil society in this practical aspect, in its practical dimensions, that it certainly pertains to the pre-arrival of Western powers. So how this aspect of Islamic civil society has progressed, has readjusted and adapted to new and changing circumstances is a very interesting field of inquiry, indeed.

Islamic Civil Society Can Give Rise to a Self-Limiting State

I also agree with Nakamura, when he asked the question regarding Hefner's view in his book, *Civil Islam* — Hefner makes a very important point, which Professor Nakamura tried to relate to in commenting on the article by one of the contributors. That's the question of whether Islamic civil society can generate democratic culture, can give rise to democratic values, can strengthen democratic institutions and process in the region? The view held by Hefner is that there is a kind of two-way relationship between Islamic civil society and the idea of a strong, civilized state, a self-limiting state. He made this clear when he said that Islamic civil society can give rise to a self-limiting state, and, conversely, a self-limiting state will generate an Islamic civil society.

Now, why do many Muslims agree with that statement, with that view? They would answer by going back to the traditions of Islam itself. That is, there's a kind of inclusive relationship between the concept of civil society in Islam and the role of the state. I would like to quote here the statement made by the Fourth Caliph of Islam, Caliph Osman, when he said that in Islam there should be the barest, minimum level of state regulation and state interaction. Of course, he meant something like 10 percent of the state involvement in people's lives should be reduced to the barest, most minimum level. I think it's very, very interesting that, in other words, the space or the sphere of the public will increase and at the same time the space for the state's role in *ummah* will become less.

I would also like to touch here on the significance of the term *madani*, which Professor Nakamura raised at the beginning of his presentation, because I thought it was too significant a term to leave without any comment. To some, it's a small matter, but to me the introduction of the word *madani* in the discourse on Islamic civil society in Southeast Asia is very significant indeed. Number one, it is significant because it is now the word that is being adopted in almost every Muslim language, in Malay, in Indonesian, in Urdu, in Persian, and of course, in Arabic. What does it mean? It means that there is a conscious attempt to go back to the past to understand whether Islam, at its best, has ever discoursed upon the concept of civil society. So the word *madani* now is a common term for all Muslims.

So there is going to be more and more intellectual interaction, not just among the Malay Muslims and Indonesian Muslims, but outside the region as well, and this, on a theoretical level, adds the theoretical formulation of Islam in society. There is going to be more interaction. But as far as the region is concerned, the introduction of the term marks the beginning of a new phase of development in intellectual discourse on Islamic civil society.

In Malaysia, the term was introduced by Anwar Ibrahim. I said to Professor Nakamura in our private conversation regarding his introduction to the book. He talks about how now the term is being forbidden, and Islamic civil society is fighting an uphill battle in Malaysia. "Well," I said, "be careful, you may need to qualify that." Actually, the term is not forbidden; what happened is this: in the present political crisis in Malaysia, there is a very influential faction within UMNO, the government party, who are opposed to Anwar and want to eradicate every trace of Anwar's influence within the party. So that includes the term *madani*. Imagine that in the UMNO language, the term *madani* is to be eradicated. But within UMNO itself, there is another faction that supports Anwar and you can see that these people use the word *madani* because that is recognized as a legacy for the Islamically-minded Muslims. So, not only does the opposition continue to use the word *madani*, but even within UMNO there is a sizable faction doing the same. But more than that, I think that the impact of the discussion has reached a stage where, for example, in academia, it is a term here to stay. It is an important term; *madani* is an accepted term in academia.

I'd like to say something about Professor Nakamura's comment on the situation in Indonesia. Although there is a political crisis, I think Islamic civil society, even within the context of the present political crisis, has not suffered much. It is again just entering a new phase in the sense that now there is an intercultural approach to civil society issues, whereas before, each ethnic group, each cultural group was discussing the concept along separate lines.

More Interaction Between Cultural Groups in Malaysia

Now there is a more visible interaction between the various cultural, ethnic and religious groups in Malaysia talking about civil society. This was also, I think, one of

the consequences of the effects of the inter-civilization dialogue which has been conducted in Malaysia since '95, especially the Islam-Confucian dialogue. That dialogue has really given rise to new cooperation and understanding, for example, among the Chinese groups, the Indian groups, and the Malay groups on issues related to a civil society. So it will be a very interesting thing to see that in Malaysia, the topic of civil society is being discoursed by Muslims in partnership with non-Muslims at a more intensive level.

Just one more point. I would like to go further to discuss the point raised by Professor Esposito regarding Islam resurgence. I would like to say that there has not been a study, really, of the impact of Islamic resurgence in Malaysia, in Asia, on Islamic civil society. The impact of Islamic resurgence has brought about a new flowering, a kind of prosperous development for mosque-centered, voluntary organizations and work. Yes, traditionally, there have always been mosque-centered voluntary organizations and activities.

Islamic Resurgence Has Adapted to Contemporary Challenges

But what the Islamic resurgence has done is intensified that. Certainly, it has diversified the kinds of voluntary organizations and has adjusted, has adapted to the needs of contemporary challenges. For example, the mosque now is getting "wired," it's getting the Internet. So for the mosque, the Islamic resurgence has given rise also to a lot of activities that are more centered there, precisely because there is this principle or this belief that they want to return to "original Islam." They want to return to "original Islam" that's one of the slogans of Islamic resurgence.

A return to the original Islam is therefore a return to the role of the mosque as the center of social activities, economic activities, and political activities. Because they know what they want to do is not supported or is not

encouraged by their governments, or the state, these organizations have to depend on their own services.

Now the question of *waqf* in education, which Professor Nakamura has raised. It's very important to ask, why the Islamic resurgence has given rise to a flurry of activities related to *waqf*? *Waqf* is mainly related to educational activities.

There was a debate between the Islamic organizations that promote Islamic resurgence and the state. They said, "Well, the state is pursuing educational policies, and educational philosophy; that is not the business of Islam. Therefore, we want to produce, we want to build our own schools, we want to build our own educational institutions so that we can offer education based on the Islamic philosophy of education." So there's a reason, then, why Islamic resurgence has given rise to more *waqf*-related activities.

Similarly, the rise of Muslim clinics, the rise of Muslim hospitals simply rise from the fact that a nurse who wants to get a job would prefer to work in the clinics and hospitals surrounded by Islamic organizations. This is because at one time Muslim nurses in Malaysia were not allowed to wear the *hijab*.

Now, I understand there is a ruling that is going to be introduced not to allow them again, which is very surprising. Now, of course, the question of treatment for women who would prefer to be treated by women doctors, they say in the private clinics and hospitals they can have that option.

Q & A

John Ikenberry: That's terrific. I think what we'll do now is open it up to the audience for questions and comments. If you'd like to keep your comments short, we've got fifteen minutes. We'll take two or three of them, and identify yourself and ask a quick question and then we'll collect some of them and then we'll take it from there.

Questioner: Is it possible that an alternative to the civil society exists based on Oriental experience in a non-Eurocentric paradigm of civil society? Most probably, Nakamura has done that, at a theoretical level.

Secondly, my understanding of civil society and the common discourse of civil society that we've been discussing worldwide, basically is based on the European experience; it is not necessarily universal and global.

Thirdly, being Muslim, I know monumental *manumenta monvera* is the microcosm of universal Islamic society. Basically what my experience in Malaysia is telling me is that we have to go back to the practice of the modern *tomoriwara muneta* or idea of *tomunowara*, providing a concrete model of universal Islamically-functioning civil society.

What Nakamura mentioned earlier was, basically, the struggle of the current Islamic movement, the Islamic NGOs, and the problem of the institutionalization of the concept. Knowing the fact that modernization is taking place, uprooting our society from its traditional roots, the question is how to modernize the concept within the paradigm of the social society in Southeast Asia and Orient.

Thank you.

Nakamura: I think the two questions posed are related. The first one, in the Oriental or non-Western model, you are implying that the core of that model can be Islamic in terms of the original *madani* society. Now, I myself am interested in revitalizing and expanding the concept of civil society across the cultures, and not sticking to the Western model, but developing more cross-culturally applicable concepts. And in that I would really think that the dichotomous demarcation, like the *gemeinschaft* vs. *gesellschaft*, is not as usable these days, especially when looking at the civil society discourse.

Definitions of Islamic Civil Society

Many of the definitions of Islamic civil society take the individual or the family as the starting point. But I think there are gradations, starting from the individuals and families, neighborhoods, community, and so forth. It is really difficult to demarcate the gradations in terms of state versus civil society. It's a continuum, I would say, and it's not clear cut. So I think the argument on synergy between the state and civil society makes more sense as an approach to reality than dichotomy.

With that in mind, let me address the second question. Can the original *madani*, under the leadership of Muhammad, be taken as *the* model — that can be a model. That's my answer. The common elements found in other societies, compared to the Muhammad's *madani* society, can be generalized to produce the shared values, shared concepts of *madani*, i.e. civil society. And in this regard, let me point out the argument presented by Fajrul Fallakh and also by Abdurrahman Wahid himself, as the NU's discourse on civil society. They avoid, very explicitly, the employment of term *masyarakat madani* itself, because the term implies Islamic genealogy of the concept, with the nuance of excluding other approaches to civil society.

So Hikam, Fajrul, and all of those NU thinkers or philosophers emphasize secular nature of *masyarakat madani*, and so they use the term *masyarakat sipil* instead of the term *masyarakat madani*. I think this debate, this discourse, is really interesting and should be taken seriously, not only by Muslims, but also by outside, non-Muslims, because this indicates the dimension of where they are arguing.

Thank you.

Questioner: Al-Farouki did mention legal pluralism in the sense that we fall back to the

mada to monowara to this Medina, the Islamic constitution of Medina, even the Prophet, by definition, agreed. The application of the Christian law and the Jewish law, redeemed the law of the land, belonged to Islam. Therefore, if that can be done, I think pluralism in Malaysia can be settled by applying the *madani* within the context of pluralism in Indonesia, because it was agreed that legal pluralism would be allowed, law of the land is Islam still. The religious can still have their own *makama*, their own courts to settle their own disputes among themselves. That had not been done before under the current, modern state system. Even America didn't allow law other than the American Constitution. Islamic law, in some states, that can be done and shows how tolerant Islam is — that's why I think the challenge is basically how to introduce that into the modernist idea.

That's what my comment is.

Pluralism in Islam

Esposito: You're talking about Ismael Al-Farouki? Ismael was my mentor — I was his first Ph.D., so I feel a little bit comfortable making some comment. I'm about to agree and disagree. I think that you make a very important point, and I think a lot of people forget the extent to which pluralism existed within early Islam, beyond anything that was known, for example, in Christendom. So, for example, Jews and Christians could, in fact, function in practice under the law, in theory, as well as in practice, although sometimes it varied, to an extent it did not occur under Christendom. I think it is the challenge that many Muslims face today, and you see people like Nurcholish Madjid in Indonesia, but you work your way from Indonesia all the way over to Egypt and even to the United States and Europe.

Recently Abdulaziz Sachedina just had a book come out a month ago from Oxford University Press on Islam and religious pluralism, I

forget the exact title (*The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* — editor). The challenge that I think some Muslims like Sachedina are rising to today is to say, "Okay, what existed in the past provides a precedent, but it's a precedent that has to be reinterpreted and expanded because that precedent, within a modern pluralistic context, would still amount to a second-class form of citizenship." But, what they will argue is, if you understand the way in which that precedent developed and you understand the context within which it developed, one can then very comfortably move forward and say within a new context that concept can be redefined and reinterpreted to support a modern, or, if you will, a post-modern, Islamically-informed understanding of pluralism.

But I think that, from my point of view, both Muslim thinkers and non-Muslim thinkers, or, if you will, those in the Muslim world and in the West, are challenged to redefine their understanding of pluralism and tolerance. Part of the difficulty of older notions of pluralism is that too often they were embedded in a notion of tolerance which in effect said: tolerance means that I accept your right to exist; that I create a little bit of space in which you can function.

It seems to me that in the 21st century, pluralism and tolerance in multi-ethnic, multicultural societies will mean: to what extent can we move to a point where we develop a respect for the other based on understanding? That respect means that I understand and respect what you stand for; it doesn't mean that I agree with everything. We have our differences, but it's based much more on understanding and respect rather than simply, in a hesitant way, getting a modicum of public space. In other words, it's a much more positive rather than restrictive notion. And I see people from "Saleem Alagwa," "Havala Mad" to people like Osman and Kamal Hassan in Malaysia to Nurchilish, Wahid and Rais in Indonesia grappling with that dilemma in differing ways.

Questioner: In talking about this, what state or states do you think offer the best examples of the cooperation or the incorporation of Islam into democracy and modernization? What state is the best example of progress in Islamic civil society?

Nakamura: I don't think I can point out which is the best model. There are many ways of approaching the best, according to the communities' own traditions and basic tendencies, for example. But one thing, quite sure, is that there is a lot of experimentation going on. There is mutual learning with some successes and some failures. So I don't think there is any single model to follow, as I said before. Just constant efforts, trial and errors will bring us closer to the best practices of civil society.

Esposito: Let me begin by saying that if this were a couple of years ago, I would refer you to a piece I wrote in *Asia Week*, which dealt with the periphery being the future, rather than the center of the Muslim world, meaning that I identified places like Malaysia, and potentially others. I think that in many ways one can say that about Malaysia a few years ago under Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim, both in terms of developing the notion of pluralism in civil society. And Osman Bakar played a major role in terms of his university and the role that it played in others.

This article is to be reprinted, which means we can revise our studies of Pakistan and Malaysia, and not only tack on updates at the end, but we convinced the editors that we can go into the text, which means I can look like less of a fool as I edit some of what I said a short time ago. This is my way of saying that one of the things that we forget when we look at the Muslim world is the upheaval and conflict development caused in the West. That's why I introduced this idea of a couple of years of European colonialism and the nature of the governments that have followed.

When Western governments made their

transition from feudal, divine right kingdoms into what we call the sort of modern nation-state, it involved a process of several hundred years, accompanied by major revolutions, like the French Revolution and the American Revolution, which were bloody wars, then accompanied by the Reformation and the Enlightenment, which were not simply a kind of intellectual process. The Reformation was a bloody, revolutionary war, only this one was fought on church grounds.

Muslim World Caught in a Time of Experimentation

The Muslim world and other areas of the world have had to grapple with this kind of reality within a compressed period of time. After having gone through a period of colonialism, it's grappling with it now, but still functioning under authoritarian regimes. So that if I want to give you the Malaysian example or the Turkish example, it's going to be a kind of vacillating situation. I'm basically saying that the Muslim world is caught up in a process which is, in fact, a process, and process means a time of experimentation. Experimentation, whether it's a social process of experimentation or a scientific process of experimentation, means that you better expect a lot of failures along with the successes.

So, in a way, the analogy would be, look at drug companies and their development of drugs. How many failures do you go through before you have a success? Well, look at the French Revolution. After the French Revolution did you have democracy? Look at the American Revolution. Did you have democracy? No, you had a civil war a short time later in which more bloodshed occurred and we played it out.

Finally, I can't resist this, I turn this over to Osman. What I have learned tonight from Osman Bakar, whom I learn from all the time, is that the Caliph Osman was the first Republican.

Bakar: I heard this same argument when Ronald Reagan became president, giving the philosophy of medieval government and....

Just one more point. I agree with John that three years ago I could point to my own country as a place where I could place my hope. But now the thing is this: we need intellectual freedom in order to create a tradition of democratic values and civil society. We do not have that yet. Intellectual freedom only exists to a limited extent in practically every Muslim country, although there are a few Muslim countries now who are interesting for us to watch and see their development. For example, Iran, precisely because in Iran the president is a scholar and a politician.

Best Thought on Islam Will Come From U.S. and UK

I have this view. I think the best minds, the best thought in the 21st century on Islamic views on democracy, and civil society and so on, will not come from the Muslim countries, but from the Muslim community in the West. This may surprise some people, but we are going to get the best thought about Islam and civil society and democracy from America, from Britain, because this is where there is intellectual freedom for the best Muslim minds to think about their traditions in the light of the 21st century. (End)

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Main Speaker **Dr. Mitsuo Nakamura** is Professor Emeritus, Department of Cultural Anthropology at Chiba University. Prior to Chiba University, he was affiliated with the Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, Harvard University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and the Center for the Study of World Religions. Professor Nakamura is currently involved with such projects as: Islam and Social Transformation in Contemporary Indonesia; Islam in ASEAN, studying the impact of Islam in ASEAN; and Islam and Civil Society in Southeast Asia. He holds an M.A. from Tokyo University and a Ph.D. from Cornell. Professor Nakamura's writings include "Prospects for Islam in post-Suharto Indonesia," *Asia-Pacific Review* 6:1 (Institute for Policy Studies, 1999), "Foreign Policy of Indonesia: Islam and Politics," (in Japanese) in *Foreign Policy of Islamic Countries*, Y. Kosugi, editor (Institute of International Affairs, 1998). A book covering Islam and Civil Society will be published by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, in March 2001.

Discussants **Dr. John L. Esposito** is Professor of Religion and International Affairs at Georgetown University. He is the founding director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, and he is the Editor-in-Chief of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* and *The Oxford History of Islam*. His other publications include: *Islam in Asia: Religion, Politics, and Society*; *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*; *Islam: The Straight Path*; *Islam and Democracy* and *Makers of Contemporary Islam* (with John O. Voll); *Islam and Politics*; *Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform?*; *Women in Muslim Family Law*; *Iran at the Crossroads* (with R.K. Ramazani); *Islam and Secularism in the Middle East* (with Azzam Tamimi); *Islam, Gender and Social Change* (with Yvonne Haddad).

Dr. Osman Bakar is currently Malaysia Chair of Islam in Southeast Asia at Center For Muslim-Christian Understanding, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. He is also chair, professor of philosophy of science at the University of Malaya, Malaysia, where he had served as Deputy Vice-Chancellor/Vice President in charge of Academic Affairs (1995-2000). Professor Bakar was formally President of the Malaysian Islamic Academy of Science of which he was a co-founder. In 1992, he was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar to the Department of History of Science, Harvard University. Professor Bakar earned his B.Sc. and M.Sc. at London University, and his doctorate from Temple University. He has published 12 books and more than 100 articles on Islamic Philosophy, Science, Sufism, Southeast Asian Islam, and Contemporary Islam. Among his books are *Classification of Knowledge in Islam*, *Islam and Confucianism: A Civilizational Dialogue* (ed.), and *Islam and Civilizational Dialogue*.

Moderator **Dr. G. John Ikenberry** is Professor of Government and International Affairs at Georgetown University. In addition, he has been a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Dr. Ikenberry is the author of numerous publications, including *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (2001) and *Reasons of State: Oil Politics and the Capacities of American Government* (1988).