

Conjunctions in the Source Texts (ST) and Target Texts (TT)

	ST	TT
T1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Five years ago (Temp) 2. Or (Add) 3. This time (Temp) 4. No doubt (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 若是 (H) 2. 五年前 (Temp) 3. 不管 (H) 4. 那时 (Temp) 5. 并 (Add) 6. 而 (Add) 7. 不过 (Adv) 8. 这一次 (Temp)
T2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Certainly (C) 2. For example (A) 3. And (Adv) 4. However (Adv) 5. Similarly (A) 6. In short (Temp) 7. However (Adv) 8. finally (Temp) 9. Because (Cau) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 当然 (Cont) 2. 当然 (Cont) 3. 更 (moreover) (Add) 4. 不过 (Adv) 5. 同样的 (Add) 6. 简而言之 (Temp) 7. 不过 (Adv) 8. 终于 (Temp) 9. 还是 (Adv) 10. 因为 (Cau) 11. 如果 (H)
T3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secondly (Temp) 2. Furthermore (Add) 3. As such (Cau) 4. and (Add) 5. Interestingly (Cau) 6. As a result (Cau) 7. And (Add) 8. perhaps (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 第二 (Temp) 2. 因此 (Cau) 3. 另外 (Add) 4. 却 (instead) (Adv) 5. 因此 (Cau) 6. 如此一来 (Cau) 7. 值得玩味的是 (Cont) 8. 因为 (Cau) 9. 不但...也 (Adv) 10. 同时 (Temp)

	ST	TT
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. 而 (Add) 12. 也许 (Cont)
T4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thirdly (Temp) 2. and (Add) 3. because (Cau) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 第三 (Temp) 2. 因此 (Cau) 3. 而 (Add)

		4. 由于...因此 (Cau)
T5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Because (Cau) 2. Firstly (Temp) 3. As such (Cau) 4. Secondly (Temp) 5. As such (Cau) 6. In short (Temp) 7. unless(H) 8. However (Adv) 9. As such (Cau) 10. However (Adv) 11. And (Add) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 因为 (Cau) 2. 首先 (Temp) 3. 因此 (Cau) 4. 因为 (Cau) 5. 再者 (Add) 6. 简而言之 (Temp) 7. 除非 (H) 8. 然而 (Adv) 9. 如果 (H) 10. 不过 (Adv)
T6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only (Adv) 2. Meanwhile (Temp) 3. Interestingly (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 简单地说 (Temp) 2. 而(ADVER) (Adv) 3. 因 (Cau) 4. 然后 (Temp) 5. 却 (Adv) 6. 因此 (Cau) 7. 因为 (Cau) 8. 有趣的是 (Cont)
T7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firstly (Temp) 2. Obviously (Cont) 3. effectively (Cont) 4. Or rather (Adv) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 首先 (Temp) 2. 显而易见的是 (Cont) 3. 或者说 (Add)

	ST	TT
T8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. But (Adv) 2. Suddenly (Cont) 3. If (h) 4. finally (Temp) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 但是 (Adv) 2. 也 (Add) 3. 因此 (Cau) 4. 而(yet) (Adv) 5. 如果 (H) 6. 而且 (Add)
T9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. However (Adv) 2. well (Cont) 3. So (Cau) 4. Firstly (Temp) 5. Because (Cau) 6. Secondly (Temp) 7. If (H) 8. Then (Cau) 9. Thirdly (Temp) 10. And (Add) 11. Fourthly (Temp) 12. and (Add) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 据我所知 (Cont) 2. 也 (and) (Add) 3. 但是 (Adv) 4. 然后 (Temp) 5. 而且(and) (Add) 6. 以及 (Add) 7. 首先 (Temp) 8. 再者 (Add) 9. 如果...那么 (H) 10. 三者 (Temp) 11. 四者 (Temp) 12. 事实上 (Adv) 13. 尤其 (Add) 14. 以及 (Add)
T10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Certainly (Cont) 2. However (Adv) 3. On the one hand (Add) 4. And (Add) 5. on the other (Add) 6. Still (Adv) 7. On the other hand (Add) 8. Certainly (Cont) 9. However (Adv) 10. whilst (Adv) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 当然 (Cont) 2. 然而 (Cont) 3. 同时 (Temp) 4. 另一方面 (Add) 5. 当然 (Cont) 6. 不过 (Adv) 7. 因为 (Cau) 8. 而 (Adv)

	ST	TT
T11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the same time (Temp) 2. For example (Add) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 同时 (Temp) 2. 比方说 (Add) 3. 但 (Adv) 4. 并 (Add)
T12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secondly (Temp) 2. Despite (Adv) 3. and (Add) 4. whilst (Adv) 5. If (H) 6. Only (Adv) 7. Because (Cau) 8. Similarly (Add) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 再者 (Add) 2. 尽管 (Adv) 3. 然而 (Adv) 4. 因为(Cau) 5. 而 (Adv) 6. 而 (Adv) 7. 以及 (Add) 8. 因此 (Adv) 9. 而 (Adv)
T13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a result (Cau) 2. And (Adv) 3. in this respect (Cau) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 因此 (Adv) 2. 至少 (Adv) 3. 而 (and) (Add) 4. 在这一方面 (Add)
T14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Of course (Cont) 2. However (Adv) 3. and (Add) 4. Nonetheless (Adv) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 第四点 (T) 2. 当然 (Cont) 3. 只是 (Adv) 4. 如今 (Cont) 5. 不管怎样 (Cont) 6. 而 (add) (Add) 7. 而且 (Adv) 8. 但是 (Adv)
T15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. and (Add) 2. and (Add) 3. increasingly (Cont) 4. but (Adv) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 实际上(in reality) (Adv) 2. 毫无疑问的 (Cont) 3. 而 (and) (Add) 4. 可是 (but) (Adv)

	ST	TT
T16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the time (Temp) 2. Nonetheless (Adv) 3. for (Cau) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 那时 (Temp) 2. 以及 (Add) 3. 因 (Cau) 4. 而 (Cau) 5. 再加上 (Add) 6. 然而 (Adv) 7. 因 (Cau)
T17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maybe (Cont) 2. However (Adv) 3. And (Add) 4. Rather than (Adv) 5. Firstly (Temp) 6. Frankly (Cont) 7. If (H) 8. However (Adv) 9. in essence (Cont) 10. Whereas (Adv) 11. but (Adv) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 或许 (maybe) (Cont) 2. 只是 (Adv) 3. 因为(Cau) 4. 但 (Adv) 5. 虽...可是却 (though...but) (Adv) 6. 然而 (however) (Adv) 7. 却 (Adv) 8. 首先 (Temp) 9. 坦白说 (Cont) 10. 如果 (H) 11. 但是 (Adv) 12. 简单来说 (Cont) 13. 但是 (Adv) 14. 尽管 (Adv) 15. 可 (Adv)
T18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. however (Adv) 2. Needless to say (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 就算...也 (H) 2. 如果 (H) 3. 在本质上 (Cont) 4. 不用说 (Cont) 5. 但是 (Adv)

	ST	TT
T19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first (Temp) 2. Nonetheless (Adv) 3. Firstly (Temp) 4. Secondly (Temp) 5. And (Add) 6. Thirdly (Temp) 7. Certainly (Cont) 8. For example (Add) 9. Interestingly (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 首先 (Temp) 2. 可是 (Adv) 3. 不过 (Adv) 4. 首先 (Temp) 5. 再者 (Add) 6. 三者 (T) 7. 比如 (Add) 8. 有意思的是 (Cont)
T20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. However (Adv) 2. However (Adv) 3. And (Add) 4. Moreover (Add) 5. Clearly (Cont) 6. By way of comparison (Adv) 7. and (Add) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 只是 (adv) 2. 然而 (Adv) 3. 而 (add) 4. 以致 (as a result) (Cau) 5. 再者(moreover) (Add) 6. 而(and) (Add) 7. 显然的 (clearly) (Cont) 8. 相较之下(by way of comparison) (Add) 9. 不过 (Adv) 10. 因为 (Cau)
T21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Or (Add) 2. If (H) 3. Then (Cau) 4. and (Add) 5. Today (Temp) 6. Tomorrow (Temp) 7. And (Add) 8. The day after (Temp) 9. If (H) 10. sadly (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 抑或 (Add) 2. 举个例子 (Add) 3. 事实上 (Adv) 4. 而 (Adv) 5. 如果...那么 (H) 6. 并 (Add) 7. 今天 (Temp) 8. 明天 (Temp) 9. 再莱 (Add) 10. 如果 (H) 11. 可悲的是 (Cont)

	ST	TT
T22	--	1. 却是 (Adv) 2. 但是 (Adv)
T23	1. In short (Temp) 2. Moreover (Add) 3. Instead (Adv) 4. Furthermore (Add)	1. 简单地说 (Temp) 2. 再者 (Add) 3. 相反的 (Add) 4. 不过 (Adv)
T24	1. In essence (Cont) 2. In this respect (Cau) 3. in the past (Temp) 4. and even (Add)	1. 但 (Adv) 2. 简单地说 (Temp) 3. 在这一方面 (Cau) 4. 过去 (Temp) 5. 甚至 (Add)
T25	1. In addition (Add) 2. Firstly (Temp) 3. Secondly (Temp) 4. And (Add) 5. Thirdly (Temp) 6. If (H)	1. 因为(Cau) 2. 现在 (Cont) 3. 其实 (Adv) 4. 也 (Add) 5. 因为(and because) (Cau) 6. 不过 (Adv) 7. 首先 (Temp) 8. 再者 (Add) 9. 三者 (Temp) 10. 如果 (H)
T26	1. And (Add) 2. Moreover (Add) 3. Despite (Adv) 4. Still (Adv)	1. 而(and) (Add) 2. 但是 (Adv)
T27	1. Although (Adv) 2. Yet (Adv) 3. Firstly (Temp) 4. Secondly (Temp) 5. Thirdly (Temp) 6. Similarly (Add) 7. So (Cau) 8. essentially (Cont) 9. If (H)	1. 虽然。。。但是 (Adv) 2. 但是 (Adv) 3. 首先 (Temp) 4. 同时 (Temp) 5. 再者 (Add) 6. 第三 (Tem)

	ST	TT
		7. 同样的 (Add) 8. 再说 (besides) (Add) 9. 同时 (Temp) 10. 最主要的是 (Cont) 11. 如果。。。那么 (H)

T28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Essentially (Cont) 2. If (H) 3. As a consequence (Cau) 4. By way of comparison (Adv) 5. at the time (Temp) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 最主要的是 (Cont) 2. 如果...那么 (H) 3. 因此 (Cau) 4. 相较之下 (Add)
T29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. And (Add) 2. Furthermore (Add) 3. In fact (Adv) 4. yes (Cont) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 而 (Add) 2. 因为 (Cau) 3. 而(Cau) 4. 另外 (Add) 5. 还有 (Add) 6. 事实上 (Adv) 7. 没错 (Cont)

ENGLISH TEXTS

MODERATE MUSLIMS MUST SPEAK UP

The Business Times Singapore, October 13, 2001

Sin Chew Jit Poh, October 14, 2001

The Sun, October 21, 2001

Malaysia will be a key player in the eventual resolution of the events that have spiraled out of the '9/11' assault on the World Trade Center. I know this might sound ridiculous given the fact that all the present action – the bombings and the diplomatic salvos – are concentrated in the United States, Europe, Pakistan, Afghanistan and other parts of the Middle East.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the real conflict sparked off by the attacks concerns the world of ideas. There is a desperate need for the Islamic world to reinvent itself. Moderate Muslims must head off the civilisational clash and prevent the narrow-minded and bigoted practitioners of the faith from forcing believers in becoming more regressive and backward.

Malaysia has long been in the vanguard of practical and pragmatic Islamic thinking. When the time comes for the leaders of the Islamic world to address the issues of socio-economic development, civil society and modernity from an Islamic perspective, they will have to come to Malaysia.

In centuries to come, twenty-first century Kuala Lumpur will be cited alongside Spain's Cordoba and Harun al-Rashid's Baghdad as one of the great centers of Islamic world. It is for this reason that our friends in the west should be a deal more circumspect in their handling of Malaysia. The Malaysian model of Islam and modernity is a vital civilisational resource.

In addition, it should be remembered that the groups who planned the assault on the World Trade Center had three key objectives: firstly, to terrorize the American population; secondly, to polarize the world and divide Muslims for non-Muslims; and thirdly, to undermine moderate Islamic governments.

The second and third objectives are clearly aimed at countries such as Malaysia as well as the United States. The Kuala Lumpur that I know and love is as imperiled by events as Washington D.C. and New York. If Malaysians are not vigilant the attackers will also be able to undermine our prosperity and stability. One only has to observe the speed with which Indonesia – a remarkably moderate Islamic polity – is buckling under the onslaught of Islamic extremism, to grasp the potency of the threat.

Firstly, Americans no longer feel safe and secure in 'Fortress America'. Everyday life – waking up in the morning, commuting to office and switching on the computer – has become a series of potentially lethal acts.

Obviously I can't offer any solution to this multi-faceted threat except to observe that the '9/11' attacks were a coming of age for the United States. Effectively, the American people have been put on notice: their actions – or rather the actions of their leaders – will have serious ramifications on their lives, and isolationism is self-defeating. An ostrich is no less vulnerable when it buries its head in the sand.

Secondly, the television barrages me with images of anger and frustration. I am confronted by images of Muslims protesting in the streets, their faces contorted with venom and fury. Day by day the list of countries where the demonstrations are taking place grows longer: Philippines, Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia and now, even in Malaysia.

Of course, television is a superficial medium. It is stark, simplistic and unsubtle. It does not record the gradations of human experience so much as exaggerate the peaks and troughs, ignoring the commonplace. News footage is seldom representative of the reality on the ground. Television cameras thrive on certain level of emotional intensity – focusing on moments of anger, suffering and tragedy. On TV, Pakistan, a nation of over 130 million people, is merely a stage for Islamic clerics and hotheads to rally in the streets, chant slogans and burn American flags.

However, the proliferation of such images damages Islam, drawing the outside world's attention to the ugliest and most extreme face of the faith. These images separate us from the global community. Under television's ugly glare, 1.2 billion Muslims from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds are reduced to little more than an angry, violent and irrational mob on the margins of civilizations. This is a fact of life; it is unfair but true.

Whilst there is very little that Malaysians can do to bolster America's internal security, we are one of the very few nations that can possibly address the second and third objectives – essentially the civilisational issues. We have a role to play on the global level that far exceeds our international projection and this role is predicated by our achievements to date.

Malaysia stands out amongst the rogue gallery of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). We are a multi-racial democracy that tolerates religious diversity. Moreover, we have been enormously successful in economic terms – ploughing back the fruits of our endeavours into education, health care and alleviating rural poverty. That's the good news.

The bad news is that we have failed to address the civil society agenda head-on. The Anwar Ibrahim debacle is a testament to that weakness. Despite our manifest flaws, we are – with the sole exception of an embattled Indonesia, a crisis-prone Bangladesh and a shaky Turkey – the only prosperous democracy in the Islamic world. Still, we are the model Islamic nation for the twenty-first century.

Of course, television cameras are rarely interested in recording the millions of contented middle-class Malaysian Muslims happily going about their lives as doctors, engineers and managers. In television terms, they are irrelevant and unexciting when set against the image of a fist punching the air and the cry of 'Allahuakbar!' Moderation and forbearance don't constitute 'good' television. Who wants to see people who are not demonstrating or rioting? Certainly not CNN, CNBC or the BBC.

Malaysians must show the world (both the Muslim and the non-Muslim nations) that the so-called civilisational clash can be avoided and how. Our political leaders must show fortitude and restraint. Fadzil Noor's flag burning is exactly the type of act that we should condemn.

But what can ordinary Malaysians do?

Civil society organizations, professional associations (such as the Bar Council) and networking groups (Rotarians, Lions, YPOs, YEOs) should arrange inter-faith meetings and dialogues as well as memorial services for the civilian victims of the '9/11' tragedy and the American bombing in Afghanistan. Both sets of victims are innocent. The act of joining together to commemorate the losses would signify and strengthen our multi-religious character. We must show through example that dialogue and interaction foster greater mutual understanding and not distrust.

Moderate voices must speak up. Now is not the time to disagree quietly with extremism or intolerance. Furthermore, we must attract the attention of the world's media in an intelligent manner. We are carrying on our shoulders the good name of the faith. In time to come the margins of Islam will reinvent and renew the faith. If we are courageous and determined, our pragmatic religious practices will become the reality for the entire Islamic world.

THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE MOOD

The Business Times Singapore, March 3, 2001

The Sun, March 4, 2001

Although the next general election is over three years away and the MCA's internal party polls only kick off next year (2002), the political temperature within the Chinese community is climbing. At first glance, there would appear to be no reason for all the activity. Yet tension is palpable.

Firstly, there is the former DAP Penang Chairman Teoh Teik Huat's hotly contested application to join Keadilan as well as Lime Kit Siang's disquiet over his supposed ally's long-term intentions. Secondly, a mind-numbingly tedious power struggle within the MCA (yawn). Thirdly, there is mounting concern over the future of Chinese-language education. The continuing worries over the Vision School initiative and the recent demonstrations over the relocation of a Chinese vernacular school in Petaling Jaya have reinforced the Chinese community's doubts over the government's intentions.

Similarly, last year's Suqui controversy underlines the over-whelming importance of issues such as language, culture and education to the Chinese community. What is noteworthy is the community's growing assertiveness, not to mention the apparent willingness of the Malay opposition parties to encourage these demands.

So what does all this activity amount to? Essentially the political class – especially after Keadilan's victory in the Lunas by-election – has realized the importance of the Chinese vote. If the 'Lunas effect' were to be replicated across the nation in 2004, the Alternative Front would be swept into government.

As a consequence, the opposition parties accelerated their attempts to woo the community, competing for the Chinese vote in a bold and enterprising fashion. I would argue that PAS and Keadilan's outreach programmes have left UMNO far behind. By way of comparison, the leading Malay party is locked in the past. PAS's gestures in Kelantan and Terengganu, where land has been offered to Chinese language schools, are causing considerable waves within the community.

A good example of PAS's willingness to win support from the Chinese community can be seen in Dr Hatta Ramli's (party president Datuk Fadzil Noor's political secretary) outspokenness at the height of the Suqui controversy back in August 2000. At the time he said, "Let the Umno Malays be warned, they would have to step over the dead bodies of the Alternative Front Malays before they can harm the Chinese."

As the struggle for the hearts and minds of the Chinese community grows, it is important to note the four main reasons for this dramatic change as well as the key underlying theme that has to be addressed by those seeking to win (or retain) the hotly contested votes.

The first and most obvious reason for the altered situation is the disarray within the Malay community. However, as I've argued time and again, this disunity is a permanent feature of Malay politics. The uneven implementation of the NEP has resulted in the creation of different classes of Malays. Moreover, many of these classes have discovered that their

unhappiness with government of policies (ranging from privatization through to judicial reform) are shared by the non-Malays. This is extremely important because it shows that the fault lines in Malaysian politics are no longer merely racial.

Secondly, the Anwar Ibrahim debacle provided an opportunity for many new players (ambitious men and women) to enter politics. This younger generation are predominantly in their thirties. They – men like Tian Chua – are unencumbered by the trauma of 1969 and are willing to test the limits of government tolerance. Furthermore, they are fired on by the injustice of a system of positive discrimination that has excluded them, their friends and their families from government jobs, universities and contracts. As such, and often with the support of the Malay opposition parties, they are confident enough to challenge the NEP and its implementation.

Interestingly many of these players (men such as Suqui's general secretary Ser Choon Ing), have entered public life only after years of experience in the realm of NGO activism. The apprenticeship in the NGO world (especially with Chinese language associations) have been invaluable. As a result, they have a large network, community-wide credibility and the ability to articulate ideas as well as the organizational skills to mobilize people.

It should not be forgotten that many Gerakan leaders such as Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon also rose to prominence through this route, and that the identification with Chinese language rights is a guaranteed means to turbo-charging a career in politics. Perhaps the Barisan Nasional's Chinese-dominated parties need an infusion of fresh blood from the NGO world as well?

Thirdly, many from the thirty-something generation are frustrated with the poverty of talent in the upper echelons of Chinese political life (this includes the DAP). Many feel that the lack of change at the top hamper efforts to reform, and weak leadership has left the community poorly represented. A good example is the MCA's inability to win over its core constituency to the Vision Schools. The party's lack of credibility resulted in the near universal rejection of the programme. Because of their distrust of the government, the Chinese community essentially turned its back on an attempt to reform a system of educational apartheid.

Furthermore, it's arguable that the insistence on sticking to racially exclusive parties has limited the community's impact on a national level. Keadilan's multi-racial posture has attracted the younger generation who are enamoured by its new orientation and vision. However, it remains to be seen whether or not Keadilan's rhetoric will be continued if and when Anwar Ibrahim emerges from jail.

The fourth reason is the rise of China as a world power. It shouldn't be forgotten that the NEP was hatched and implemented at a time (the 1970s) when China was still recovering from the madness of the Cultural Revolution. By way of comparison, China is now Asia's sole superpower. The country's ability to withstand the Asian financial crisis, not to mention its courage in standing up to perceived American bullying are indicators of its global stature. With Ang Lee's movie, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, bursting into international popular culture, China has also become a global cultural-cum-entertainment power. These factors have a deep impact on the identity and self-worth of the Chinese, prompting a more upfront and aggressive approach from its interlocutors.

However, the underlying theme in Malaysian politics and a critical factor in understanding changes in the Chinese community is the realignment of the national political agenda. Politics is no longer racially exclusive. Class – socio-economic class – is beginning to play a major role, and this gives issue-driven politics a higher profile. This has meant that the lower income groups are able to reach across the racial divide and establish working alliances based on shared interests and objectives.

Furthermore, the perceived humility and integrity of PAS leaders and the relative absence of corruption in Kelantan and Terengganu has been well received by many Chinese businessmen, most of whom are repulsed by what they see as UMNO's rapacity and incompetence. In fact, one could go so far as to say that the small town, Chinese-educated class share certain conservative – yes, even 'Asian' values, with their brethren in PAS.

The transformation of the political landscape requires a positive response from Barisan Nasional. In many ways, UMNO, with its history of multi-racial accommodation, should be the best-positioned to ride the new political wave. The question now is simple: Can UMNO rise to the challenge?

INTELLECTUAL TERRORISM

Sin Chiew Jit Poh, February 24, 2002

The Star, February 24, 2002

The Business Times Singapore, February 26, 2002

The Persatuan Ulama Malaysia (PUM) recently submitted a memorandum to the Chairman of the Council of Rulers against two newspaper columnists and three other individuals whom they claimed had denigrated Islam. Amongst those cited by the PUM in their memorandum were Sisters in Islam executive director Zainah Anwar, academic and columnist Farish A. Noor, Universiti Malaya lecturer Patricia Martinez, The Sun columnist Akbar Ali and Malay intellectual Kassim Ahmad. Along with six other Islamic organizations, PUM argued in their memorandum that the individuals cited had disparaged the faith and the institution of *ulama*.

The memorandum has attracted considerably publicity and was covered extensively by the local media. However I suspect most Malaysians would have read the news, yawned and then turned over the page: a squabble between a bunch of writers and the *ulama*? Who cares?

Well they're wrong – very wrong. The face-off between PUM and the six individuals in an extremely important test for Malaysia and for the practice of Islam in Malaysia. It will have a major impact on how Malaysia copes with the issue of religious extremism, the position and orientation of the *ulama* as well as the overarching question of democracy within Islamic discourse. So why is this issue so important for Malaysia?

There are four reasons why: firstly, because Malaysia is a majority Muslim nation, Islamic practices will have a significant impact on the entire nation; secondly, if it is accepted that Malaysia's governance and administration should be based on Islamic principles, then the interpretation and implementation of those principles should be debated and widely considered; thirdly, that this discourse should not be limited to a small section of the population; and fourthly, that we are embarking on an extremely exciting – and let's face it – potentially bumpy ride as we endeavour to meld the virtues of democracy, good governance and modernity with the timeless principles elucidated in the Holy Koran.

What we are doing in Malaysia has not really been attempted elsewhere in the Islamic world. We are entrusted with an enormous burden. Given the incompetence, corruption and injustice in much of the Arab Muslim world, our model of Islamic practices, moderation, minority rights, development and social justice will become increasingly valuable for the entire globe. This means that we shouldn't rush things or deny space to serious and reasonable voices from outside the *ulama*.

As I said, everyone should be concerned with this issue – Muslims and non-Muslims alike, because Islam (unlike modern-day Christianity) cannot be relegated to the private and personal domain. Islam embraces all aspects of our lives.

Moreover, contrary to what many people think – the Islamic world is not monolithic. There is a great deal of diversity in how people practice the faith. Believe me. During my time in the States, I have been meeting with Muslims from all over the globe – from Egypt, Iran, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Morocco. Whilst we all share the same faith, our expression of that faith varies and our cultural practices matter in this respect. In fact, Islam both recognizes and celebrates freedom of expression. Moreover, there is a long-established tradition of *ikhtilaf* (difference of opinion) within Islam that actually seeks to acknowledge and respect these differences of opinion within a framework that is accommodating and moderate.

The confrontation between the PUM and the writers is concerned with the all-important question of who controls the interpretation of the Holy Koran. Should one set of people – the *ulamas* in PUM – monopolize the right to interpret the Holy Koran? Should we submit to their views alone or should we encourage a diversity of views? What about the *ulamas* not represented in PUM for example? What about the man on the street?

The central issue is not faith, it's power: pure and simple. If you accept that Islam infuses guides and subsumes all aspects of our lives, then the interpreters of the Holy Koran are very powerful people. They can shape our lives, determining the rights and position of men and women respectively, and decide on matters of public policy. Drawing their authority from the Holy Koran, they can pontificate on any and all aspects of our lives. Today, six writers are under attack. Tomorrow it could be entertainers such as Ella, Erra Fazira and Siti Nor Haliza, and the day after it could well be women who chose to work.

If we – the ordinary people – elect not to support the writers we are in effect saying that we don't want to have a 'say' in these all important matters, that we want the *ulamas* to be all-powerful. Sadly, most Malaysians and especially the middle classes of all races are extremely apathetic. After years of being brow-beaten by Dr Mahathir, they are used to letting others make decisions for them. This has got to change.

Interestingly, the fracas has not played out along the traditional political lines. For example, the writers have received support from a wide range of groups and individuals including NGOs such as ABIM and Just World as well as individuals such as Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi and PRM leader Syed Husin Ali.

Whilst the two groups and the two men represent diverse political views, all of them agree on the need for greater debate and dialogue on Islam. They reject intellectual terrorism. As such they have criticized PUM for their attempt to quash the openness of the discourse, albeit in differing ways. I should at this point mention the fact that the *ulamas* themselves are a very diverse collection of men and there are many among them who would advocate a far less condemnatory and black and white approach to Islamic discourse. They realize that instilling fear is counterproductive.

Unfortunately PAS – a party that subscribes to the view that the *ulamas* are the supreme and unchallengeable interpreters of the Holy Koran – have been the biggest supporters of PUM. This is a shame because the issue will end up being little more than a political football with UMNO on one side and PAS on the other.

This does not mean that liberals such as myself want to deny the *ulamas* the right to interpret the Holy Koran. Far from it. Instead we – as representatives of the people, because we are your voice – want to share the space. We want to show to the world that Malaysia is different from the rest of the Islamic world in that we have the confidence and the substance to be able to debate the issues of modernity and faith. We want to win the *ulamas* in PUM over to democracy and *ikhtilaf* and work together to ensure that our future here in Malaysia avoids the

disasters that have bedeviled the many Islamic societies where discourse, tolerance and moderation have been ignored. If ordinary Malaysians remain on the sidelines, we as a nation are doomed.

THE MODERN MALAY DILEMMA

The Star, April 28, 2002

Sin Chew Hit Poh, April 28, 2002

The Business Times Singapore, April 30, 2002

Berita Harian, May 6, 2002

The Malay world vision has narrowed drastically in the past five years. This is a national tragedy because parochial and pedantic thinking in the corridors of power will destroy the Malaysia we know and love. Why? Firstly, the country is multi-racial. As such the Malays – who are politically dominant – have to maintain their ability to speak (and listen) across the religious divide. Consensus-building is an important part of nation's success. Secondly, the nation's trade is far larger than our GDP. As such, the prosperity we see around us depends on an export-driven economy. In short, we cannot maintain our livelihood – the Protons, the bungalows and the holidays in Medan and Hong Kong – unless we look outwards. Our horizons have to be global.

However, a succession of missteps culminating with Anwar Ibrahim's ouster, detention and trial has emboldened the forces of religious conservatism. PAS's growth might have resulted in the heightening of religious and moral issues. As such the political debate has focused almost entirely on the battle for moral legitimacy and supremacy, shifting the attention inwards rather than outwards.

In many ways this is understandable. PAS, as a party led by *ulamas*, has concentrated on their core strength: Islam. They have attacked UMNO at the ruling party's weakest point – its perceived lack of religious credentials. This in turn has raised important questions about the efficacy and effectiveness of contemporary liberal democratic institutions such as the judiciary and the civil service. PAS poses the question: if corruption is truly endemic, shouldn't we be replacing the entire western system of governance? However, in their haste to denounce the government at every turn. PAS has neglected to present credible economic or diplomatic policy initiatives, and failed in essence to address the challenges of modernity.

Malaysians and especially the Malay community are in danger of becoming obsessed with microscopic issues of ritual and doctrine, to the exclusion of all else. Piety is all important. Only last week, one friend described the present Malays predicament neatly. He told me about two highly-educated Malay colleagues who were obsessed with the issue of the appropriate garb for women. He said that these two young men spent hours debating this subject, adding that "they seemed to have no interest in other more worldly issues." This 'closed' mentality has had a disastrous impact on our public life.

The nation's newspapers are engrossed by bizarre ideas like public flogging. Moral crusades against incest and homosexuality predominate as serious national issues are sidelined and ignored. Meanwhile, the Malay agenda – the uplifting of the Malay community through education, improved health-care and public services – has been forgotten. We spend our time praising the Bumiputra tycoons and ignoring the real heroes in society, the care-givers – the underpaid nurses and the over-worked teachers. Amidst the hype, young Malay males, for

example are being left behind. They are less well-educated and therefore more likely to end up unemployed and frustrated. In a twist of social-Darwinism the ‘chosen of the chosen’ are being eclipsed by their sisters and their girlfriends. Interestingly (and worrying) it’s the same under-performing Malay males who then take up positions of influence and authority later in life.

No one seems to be willing to ask why our education system is failing such a large (and potentially troublesome) chunk of the population. Why are employers less inclined to hire young Malays males? Why are we failing to create a cadre of globalised Malays that matches our economic aspirations? Could it be that their inability to speak English and or Mandarin makes them unprofitable and less attractive workers? Alternatively, can the government absorb the surplus? Are we sitting on a time bomb?

Similarly, last week when China’s Vice President Hu Jintao and heir apparent visited Kuala Lumpur, most Malaysian just yawned: the KLSE Index was more important for them. Very few Malaysian (and Malays in particular) realize the extent to which our export-driven prosperity is threatened by China’s gargantuan economy. If we are not careful our puny industries will be overwhelmed.

There is no one easy solution for the two challenges I’ve outlined. However there is an underlying theme – that of openness. We cannot address the country’s weaknesses, domestically and internationally, unless and until we try to create a truly global agenda for the Malay community. This in turn will help strengthen racial understanding as well as an all-encompassing Malaysian identity.

Firstly, the Malay community has got to wake up. Whilst faith is vital, religious practices do not prevent us from addressing the challenges of everyday life. We must equip ourselves with contemporary knowledge— with science, economics and technology— in order to defend our way of life. Economics and business are going to have to be the drivers of this re-tooling of the Malay mindset. The engagement with China is a good illustration of what I mean by retooling. We have to learn about the world’s most populous nation and create niches for ourselves in tourism, educational services, agriculture and natural resources.

We will need a vast pool of Mandarin-speaking Malaysians in order to achieve this goal. We can of course turn to the Malaysian Chinese community and task them with the interaction. But that is not a sensible long-term solution. Instead, the Malay community must also get involved in what is potentially the world’s largest marketplace. The Malays must be equipped to handle the relationship head-on, globalizing their mindset.

This brings me back to the disturbing educational record of Malay males. Frankly, our national education system does not encourage the Malay community to be sufficiently open to other cultures and languages. This resistance to external ideas and influences is prejudicial to the community’s employment prospects and long-term future. If it isn’t halted now, the exclusivity and isolationism will only worsen.

In order to create ‘global’ Malays we need to inculcate a more dynamic, forward-looking ethos. Tragically, the New Economic Policy has hampered this development. As long as jobs and other opportunities are controlled by government, the incentive to work and study hard is removed. However in the real world, ‘knowledge’, unlike capital, land and labour, cannot be mandated. Openness then also refers to the need to ‘open’ the community up to the harsh realities of globalization. Only exposure to greater competition will make the Malays more resilient and competitive. Continuing the present policies encourages mediocrity, laziness and stupidity.

Creativity, independent thinking and risk-taking must also-be encouraged. Diversity (racial and religious) has to be underlined. Malay students (as well as all Malaysians, irrespective of race) must become trilingual. Language proficiency in English, Malay and Chinese has to become a minimum requirement in the national education system. Moreover the cultures and philosophies underpinning the respective languages must also be taught. Muslims

must learn about Christianity, Buddhism and Confucianism and vice versa. How else to foster religious understanding? Young Malay males must be trained to succeed in whatever careers they want, wherever they want (including China, Europe and North America). The 'global' Malay and the truly Malaysian identity is only a step away. Are we open to change?

DR MAHATHIR – TWENTY YEARS ON

The Business Times Singapore, July 14, 2001

The Sun, July 15, 2001

The Straits Times, July 17, 2001

Sin Chew Jit Poh, September 16, 2001

Asiaweek, September 21, 2001

Yesterday marked Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's twentieth year in office. After two decades as prime minister, the Kedah-born doctor continues to shock and amaze, and often simultaneously. The 76 year-old leader has never shied away from controversy. Only last month, at the opening of the annual UMNO general assembly, Dr Mahathir presented the delegates with yet another vintage performance as he lambasted the Malay community for its failings and then derided the opposition.

In an era when politicians the world over are obsessed with wooing the electorate – with spin-doctors and pollsters – Dr Mahathir bucks the trend. Throwing caution to the wind on that occasion, Dr Mahathir chose to make a bruising frontal assault on the Malay psyche, outraging many in the audience.

I have observed and written about the Prime Minister for my entire adult life, first interviewing him for my university newspaper some eighteen years ago. In that time, I have come to realize that, despite his paradoxical nature, the man can be utterly predictable. The key to comprehending his mercurial and at times frighteningly aggressive personality lies in recognizing the forces that drive the man as well his current priorities.

But let me begin with what I consider to be the two key aspects of Dr Mahathir's political persona. The first is the intensity of his passions and the second is his surprising ability to compromise – a duality that distinguishes him from anyone else in UMNO politics, with the sole exception of Anwar Ibrahim.

Dr Mahathir's grand passion – the uplifting of the Malay community – has never distracted him from the need to preserve national stability. This accounts for the remarkable way in which he has won over the support of the Chinese community while still brandishing his colours as a Malay ultra.

In essence, he will do the deal with anyone, as long as he and his vision for the Malay community prevail. In this respect, his ability to surprise and confound should not be underestimated. In the past, he has welcomed bitter personal enemies such as Tengku Razaleigh, compromised with Chinese NGO Suqui, and even offered to relinquish bumiputera educational quotas for university entrance. As I said earlier, Dr Mahathir is a man with a mission. Back in the 1940s and 1950s, he identified the importance of overcoming Malay backwardness. From very early on, he was keenly aware of the humiliating position of the Malays, as mere tenants in their own land, beggars at the colonial feast. At the time, he singled out the community's predilection for superstition and the crippling impact of feudalism and fatalism. After half a

century of cajoling and criticizing, as well as the intervention of the New Economic Policy (NEP), there is no doubt that many of these challenges have been overcome.

Trumpeting the importance of education and knowledge, Dr Mahathir has been unflagging in his devotion to alleviating Malay poverty and ignorance. This is a consistent theme in all his work. His writings (beginning with his articles in the late 1940s when he first contributed commentaries under the pseudonym 'Che Det'), his speeches and his interviews have always focused on the Malays.

Nonetheless, in recent years, his implementation of the NEP has drawn considerable criticism. He has been attacked for the way he has emphasized bumiputera or Malay wealth accumulation at the expense of income inequality.

Many economists have argued, and justifiably, that he has devoted far too much of the nation's precious resources to trying to create a cadre of Malay entrepreneurs. As with all politicians of conviction, Dr Mahathir has scant concern for his critics. He has always sought to implement his vision regardless of the political consequences. However, at times, the fallout has been severe, if not devastating.

As a lawyer and a writer, I can confirm that the civil society agenda and all forms of participatory politics have been at the receiving end of his withering scorn, leaving the judiciary (until recently), the civil service and the media emasculated.

However, in recent years, Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) has presented a potent challenge to the modern Malay agenda, and the Prime Minister is all too aware of the opposition's strength within the community. It has become clear since the 1999 general election that the Malays are willing to make a radical volte-face. Angered by UMNO and its leaders, many in the community have turned their backs on the party. Moreover, UMNO has lost the moral high ground since the Anwar Ibrahim episode.

Lacking the moral authority of the past, both the party and Dr Mahathir are now facing a major intellectual threat that could lead to the nation's transformation. PAS wishes to dismantle what it considers to be UMNO's secular administration with an avowedly Islamic government. Dr Mahathir, for his part, sees the full-scale imposition of the Syariah and the dominant role of the ulama as a dead-end for the Malay community.

Clearly, his blueprint, Vision 2020, would not survive such a transition. By way of comparison, the political schism with Tengku Razaleigh's Semangat 46 in the late 1980s was personal. Today's rift is ideological. Given the disunity within the Malay community, the Prime Minister has launched his attack on PAS with his customary vigour and, as with former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, age has not mellowed his rage and indignation.

Which brings me to my last point.

In order to protect and then ensure the survival of his legacy, and prevent PAS from winning power, Dr Mahathir may well end up having to do a deal. He will need to co-opt and win over figures from the opposition and bolster those within the administration who possess sufficient credibility in terms of Islam.

In many ways, he has already done this.

The position of Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi (the only senior Umno leader with impeccable Islamic credentials) as his anointed successor reveals Dr Mahathir's willingness to change course in mid-stream, taking on a man who had been an adversary in the past.

Increasingly, his energies and UMNO's resources will be directed at tackling PAS's mounting strength. He will do whatever it takes to secure UMNO's future – his intensity and passion will ensure that – but his survival instincts will mean that compromise cannot be ruled out.

For Dr Mahathir the didactic ideologue, the challenges today are not dissimilar to those of 1969. He continues to see events through the prism of his own experiences. As far as he is concerned, the Malay community is in jeopardy and he must fight to save his beloved people from PAS, if not themselves.

For Malaysia and Malaysians, the questions are more complex and less succinct. When will he relinquish his hold over the nation? Will his passions cloud his judgment? Can the nation withstand another bout of Dr Mahathir's brinkmanship? Are his solutions still valid in the new millennium? Is it too late? Have the Malays already changed?

Finally, can Dr Mahathir heal the deep rift within the *ummah* or will he merely exacerbate the divide?

THE SINGAPORE DILEMMA

Business Times Singapore, March 23, 2002

Sin Chew Jit Poh, March 31, 2002

The Star, March 31, 2002

Malaysia-Singapore bilateral relations are among the most ridiculous in the Asia-Pacific. Since I'm neither a member of the People's Action Party nor the Barisan Nasional, I ignore the nonsense, get on with my own affairs, and leave the squabbling to the politicians.

However, there are three key themes in the relationship that people tend to forget. The first is the Malaysian-Malay sense of inferiority on the one hand, and the Singaporean-Chinese sense of insecurity on the other. The second is the Singaporean refusal to acknowledge the impact of 'perception' in its diplomacy; although this is matched by a perceived Malaysian sleight-handedness when it comes to actual negotiations. The third is the growing cultural and linguistic divide between the city-state and Malaysia, not to mention the rest of the region.

While I've been writing about Malaysia for over ten years, I've not had the same opportunity to turn my attention to Singapore. I like to think I've built up a fairly extensive knowledge of the island republic and several of its leading personalities. Certainly, there's a need in Singapore for alternative voices as it grapples with the changing face of economics and politics in the Asia-Pacific. Excluding bright and independent thinkers seems to be the highest art form in the city-state. Still, I've grown quite fond of the place and that warmth infuses what I say because I'm too aware of the island republic's charms, as well as its inconsistencies and flaws.

In fact, while I've been in the United States on a Fulbright fellowship. I've spent more time with Singaporeans than with Malaysians. I've dined with former journalist Cherian George in Stanford, shared a panel at the World Economic Forum with United Nations Permanent Representative Kishore Mahbubani, discussed bilateral relations with Minister of Information and the Arts David Lim, and hung out with Ong Beng Seng's daughter, Melissa Ong, at Columbia University. Clearly, we share a lot more with one another than we care (or dare) to acknowledge.

Pride is a major barrier to good bilateral relations. Many Malaysians and especially Malays have long felt a sense of gnawing inferiority when confronted with Singapore's dramatic economic achievements. Of course, most Malaysians – myself included – have often got to be reminded of the city-state's anxiety about its security, given its small size. Sadly, when these two forces collide, bilateral relations are inevitably derailed. These sentiments explode to the surface in intemperate and emotional outbursts.

To Malaysians, Singapore has always seemed extremely strong and prosperous. It was better organized, better managed and more efficient and so much richer. Just imagine the frustration. But this is no longer the case. The surprising success of the Port of Tanjung Pelapas (PTP) in Johor has startled Malaysians and turned PTP's owner, Syed Mokhtar, into a national hero.

His ability to compete head-on with one of Singapore's core competencies – its ports – has altered the terms of the engagement. Suddenly, Singapore does not look so invulnerable or so superior. If a former rice-trader can figure out a way of competing against Singaporeans and successfully, others can too. Malaysians have finally stumbled onto a winning formula that combines cheap and well-located infrastructure, and international capital and managerial expertise

The second issue concerns perception. Singaporeans must learn to acknowledge that legalese and the language of diplomacy is swiftly knocked aside by public opinion. I know this is lamentable. Being trained in law, I should promote the efficacy of contracts and agreements. However, as President George W. Bush demonstrated recently in his handling of the U.S. steel industry's demands, political considerations often undermine the best intentions.

For example, while Singapore as a sovereign nation is fully entitled to strike whatever bilateral free trade agreements it wishes I've personally found Singapore's pursuit of them as indicative of the city-state's lack of commitment to the region.

All states must identify their national interests and pursue those goals. Sometimes, however, the determined pursuit of those objectives can end up irritating and alienating the neighbours, especially if the aims are stated too bluntly. Technocrats are often the worst communicators and squander vital goodwill.

The third issue is the one that troubles me the most and makes me worry for Singapore's future. I have discerned in Singapore a deliberate de-emphasising of the region – in terms of language policies, culture and politics.

Try as it might, Singapore will never be a great global city like New York, London or Paris. Singapore is thoroughly provincial though not quite as provincial as Kuala Lumpur or Jakarta. However, the region's other capital cities enjoy the benefit of an extensive hinterland, providing a greater depth of cultural and political diversity. If you doubt my conclusion, read the city-state's newspapers and examine the cultural concerns of the citizenry: the banality is astounding. But that doesn't mean that Singapore can't be an important regional centre.

A further complication is the fact that young Singaporeans don't seem to possess the same facility as their parents to meet and mix with fellow Southeast Asians. The fixation with the global agenda has made many Singaporeans lose sight of the imperatives of geography, turning their backs on the region. The hinterland is steadily being forgotten and, like a dream, it's beginning to drift away with the morning mist. For example, less and less Singaporeans can speak Malay – even pasar Malay eludes them.

I've had to keep reminding my Singaporean friends that the nation is located in the heart of Southeast Asia. It's not floating off North America – it is neither Long Island nor Catalina Island. As it happens, many young Singaporeans who responded to the global agenda have packed their bags and moved on. During my lecture tour of the United States, I've been

amazed by the number of Singaporeans at top-notch Ivy League universities. However, only one or two showed a willingness to return home.

Having raised expectations, the government seems to have failed in providing the environment for these extraordinarily accomplished young people to live and work at home. Hell, I was reduced to trying to 'sell' them the attractions of Singapore and I'm a Malaysian. I did so because this is a challenge we all share in the region.

For a while, the Internet boom seemed to offer a fantastic prospect of 'hooking up' with the world. The mirage has evaporated and geography has reasserted itself. Singapore's future lies in the region and with the region.

Does Singapore have enough Malay, Hindi, Thai, Vietnamese and Filipino speakers to capitalize on this? Has the government encouraged engagement with the region? Or has it, in pushing the global agenda, led the populace to forget the region as well as the city state's all-important hinterland? This is a core challenge for Singapore that requires immediate rectification.

PAK LAH – THE UNDERSESTIMATED MAN

The Business Times Singapore, February 6, 2001

The Straits Times, February 7, 2001

The Jakarta Post, February 8, 2001

The Sun, February 11, 2001

Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Abdulla Ahmad Badawi defies political convention. In an age of ideologues, hypocrites and rabble-rousers, he is conciliatory, he is dull and he is a gentleman. Overlooked and ignored for much of his career, he now stands within a whisper of the premiership, prompting those who observe Malaysian politics to ponder how he would fare in the highest office. Is he merely a relic of a discredited age or is he a force for change? Can he heal the nation's still painful wounds?

With the Barisan Nasional government facing an unprecedented onslaught on four interlocking fronts – Islam, race relations, corporate governance and a range of civil society issues – I feel Pak Lah should be able to deal confidently with the first two areas. I suspect the third and fourth will present the greatest challenges. However, if he wants to ensure that UMNO does not share the same fate as Taiwan's Kuomintang or India's Congress, he will have to tackle the much needed economic and political reforms head-on.

One of his strongest assets is that he does not elicit hatred (or love) in the same measure as either Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad or Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, both of whom, by dint of their charismatic personalities and take-no-prisoners approach to politics, have acquired hundreds if not thousands of virulent, life-long enemies. This asset is reinforced by Pak Lah's continued loyalty to UMNO, the party, and not to any particular faction within the party: the distinction is fine but important.

As a consequence, angering many of the prime minister's enemies – he is both respectful and dutiful in his dealings with Mahathir. Unlike Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, he will not be manoeuvring to replace his boss. Because of this and his own unwavering confidence in UMNO's ability to drive Malaysia's political and socio-economic reforms, many of his pronouncements may well seem anodyne. Nonetheless, it is interesting to observe how he has been tackling the four major challenges facing the UMNO-led administration

The first, Islam, is one of Pak Lah's strengths. The deputy prime minister is the only member of the UMNO hierarchy who can articulate the party's modernist religious position. Pak Lah has demonstrated a surprising sense of moderation and progress when discussing Islam, advocates, in one speech last year, "an Islam that is dynamic and modern ... not one that is static, obscurantist, rigid and entrenched in literalism." His espousal of contemporary *ijtihad* (interpretation) of the Koran sets him head-to-head with the *ulama* led PAS. Nonetheless, he enjoys a degree of credibility in the Islamic arena for three reasons: firstly, his background as an Islamic student; secondly, his impeccable family life; and thirdly, by dint of his grandfather, the late Sheikh Abdullah Fahim, a former mufti of Penang and a renowned Islamic scholar.

These factors have tempered the tone of opposition attacks. Certainly the taunts bear no comparison to those leveled against Dr Mahathir. For example, when Datuk Fadzil Noor, the leader of the opposition, accused the deputy minister – at the time of the encephalitis epidemic and attendant pig culling – of being little more than a pig herder, the insult backfired, drawing a barrage of angry criticism on the PAS leader. Interestingly, even Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat, the *Mursyidul-Am*, or spiritual leader of PAS, and Menteri Besar (Chief Minister) of Kelantan has conceded that Pak Lah, as the descendant of a notable cleric, shares certain characteristics with himself.

Secondly, the handling of racial issues. Pak Lah's religious background is matched by his roots in Penang's cosmopolitanism. In his speeches, he has stressed his multi-racial credentials. Many NGOs, despite their unhappiness with the government, had to concede that Pak is a man of his word. In this respect, his integrity at the negotiating table is unquestioned. Moreover, he has worked very hard to lower the political temperature surrounding Chinese community NGO Suqui's 87-point memorandum in late December, 2000. He rejected confrontation and insisted on the need for dialogue. This represents a refreshing change in UMNO's approach to race relations. Interestingly, he also enlisted a number of bright twenty-something graduates to assist with the negotiations – showing himself ready and willing to embrace the younger generation, their ideas, their enthusiasm and their professionalism.

Similarly, the recent decision not to permit the Malay Action Front's demonstration in Kampung Baru underlines his rejection of incendiary race-based politics. As he said in a recent speech, "Malay leaders must realize that communal rhetoric is outdated and does great damage to national unity."

The third issue – transparency and cronyism – will, I suspect, be one of the most difficult for Pak Lah to address. Having never held a prominent economic portfolio in the past, his inexperience may work against him, especially if he allows others too much freedom in their management of the economy. However, there are those who argue (and quite persuasively) that having been ignored by the business community during most of his political career, he has not acquired a coterie of business associates.

The recent MAS share sale and the ongoing saga of Renong and UEM have highlighted once again the iniquities of the New Economic Policy (NEP), sparking off a firestorm of criticism. To his credit, Pak Lah has conceded the importance of rethinking the NEP. He has stressed the need to ensure that the redistribution of wealth and opportunities is more effective and efficient. But in tackling these issues he will be coming face-to-face with powerful, entrenched interests.

If he is serious in pursuing these objectives, Pak will need to protect his credibility. It goes without saying that all his dealings (and especially those of his family) with the corporate world have to be wholly transparent. Any backsliding on this front will – and very swiftly, as Indonesia's President Abdurrahman Wahid is discovering to his chagrin – destroy much of the goodwill Pak Lah currently enjoys.

Fourthly, the civil society arena. The formation of the National Human Rights Commission (SUHAKAM) and its growing credibility under Tan Sri Musa Hitam, as well as

certain judicial appointments show an improvement in the government's civil society position. However, in many ways Anwar Ibrahim's case remains the litmus test of the government's civil society agenda, and in the years ahead, Pak Lah will have to turn his attention to the knotty problem of his former rival.

But as Michael Vatikiotis, the managing editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and a seasoned regional commentator, says of the courtly, if diffident politician: "He is the epitome of the gentleman politician. He considers himself a dutiful public servant. Both qualities make for a softer approach to issues and a tendency to seek compromise rather than confrontation. Some consider this a weakness – they are qualities nonetheless."

After two decades of extraordinary growth and traumatic socio-political change, Malaysia needs a period of reconciliation and consolidation. Maybe Pak Lah – the most underestimated man in Malaysian politics – will be able to heal the country's wounds and prepare the people for the future.

LEE KUAN YEW VISITS MALAYSIA

The Business Times Singapore, August 25, 2000

The Sun, August 27, 2001

The Straits Times, August 28, 2000

How times change. Five years ago, Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew's comments about Dr Mahathir's handling of the Anwar Ibrahim issue – or any form of criticism whatsoever – would have sparked off a diplomatic incident.

There would have been intemperate demonstrations at the Singapore High Commission, effigies burnt at the Causeway and threats to turn off the water supply. Within days, UMNO Youth's emotionalism would have been matched by a flurry of angry letter to *The Straits Times* and outraged statements from grassroots leaders in Geylang and Ang Mo Kio.

This time, the only sound is the baying of the international media, no doubt dismayed by an uncustomary display of equanimity on the part of the Malaysian political class. Have the two sides finally grown up? Has maturity and common sense triumphed? Well, yes and no.

I have three key points to make. The first is the emotional undercurrent to the undercurrent to the Senior Minister's trip. The second and third are intertwined and concern the two major changes in the Malaysian political landscape – the increasing role of conservative Islam and the weakening hold of the traditional elite on the political process. As these trends develop, bilateral relations will alter forever.

Certainly, Mr Lee's recent trip to Malaysia – a valedictory tour – was designed to be as non-confrontational as possible. His public lecture, for example, was deliberately anodyne. The Malaysian establishment turned out in force to show respect to a great postwar leader, and, to my surprise, fond regard as well. While he fluffed answers and ducked questions in a most unLKY-like fashion, the emotional connection was there for all to see and feel.

However, for confirmed cynics such as myself, his performance revealed the true nature of the visit: Build bonds, don't break them. Similarly, Dr Mahathir preferred to smooth over differences rather than accentuate them.

After the debacle of the SingTel bid for Time dotcom, I detect in both men a realization that as the region continues to flounder, Singapore and Malaysia have to work together in order to survive. In short, outstanding issues must be resolved and deals concluded.

However, it is also important to stress once again the historical and emotional aspect of the trip. After ten long years, the Senior Minister has finally crossed the causeway, revisiting the scene of his greatest failure – Malaysia. The fact that he did drive across the brackish water that divides Singapore from Johor marks an enormous step forward both for him and the entire city-state, because without his lead, the wound that is Separation will never be healed.

Arriving in Kuala Lumpur, I would imagine he must have been pleasantly surprised by the scale of the city's development. Notwithstanding the changes to the skyline, Kuala Lumpur remains at heart of 'company town', an UMNO town, a place where the past is always present.

The upper ranks of UMNO are still peppered with names that are more redolent of history than current affairs. Meeting Datuk Seri Syed Hamid, son of Syed Jaafar Albar; Datuk Seri Najib, son of Tun Razak; and Datuk Hishammuddin, son of Tun Hussein Onn, it is all too easy to become seduced by the false allure of dynasty. The reality is very different, and while touching base with old friends is rewarding on a personal level, it would be unwise to take the familiarity and calm for granted.

The modern, progressive and multi-racial elite that have run Malaysia over the past four decades is facing its biggest challenge. The circle of power and influence has widened immeasurably, opening up competing sources of authority such as PAS-inclined *ulama*.

Judging from his comments at the open forum about the madrasah education system in Singapore. Mr Lee is well aware of the potential pitfalls that accompany the melding of politics, governance and religion. Umno, and the Barisan Nasional in particular, must grapple with the intricacies of the three and present a workable solution. However, the ideological battles that are being fought every day in ceramahs (lectures) up and down the peninsula will in time be resolved, and when that happens, the nation's attention will turn outwards.

Conservative Islam is here to stay. As a result, Singapore (as with Thailand and the Philippines with their sizeable Muslim populations) will not be spared in the long run. A wealthy and empowered theocracy will not necessarily respect the basic tenets of international relations and diplomacy. Issues of sovereignty will appear nugatory in the face of perceived injustice and mistreatment of a Muslim minority. How will the increasingly powerful *ulama* view Singapore? It is unlikely that Islamic chauvinism will be any easier to deal with than Malay chauvinism. Delivering in terms of political and socio-economic benefits is far easier than the spiritual and theological, and a nation as secular as Singapore will be faced with an enormous challenge in this respect. Unlike Indonesia where reform and renewal is inevitably accompanied by bloodshed and uproar change manifests itself very slowly in Malaysia.

For a start, Malaysia is becoming less and less a 'top-down' society. The split in the Malay community is deep, challenging UMNO as it seeks to reinvent itself. An indication of this trend is the appointment of a political novice and UMNO Youth Executive Committee member, Mohd Khir Toyo, to the post of Menteri Besar of Selangor.

Making much of the ordinariness of the man's background, Utusan Malaysia even went so far as to call him budak sampah (garbage boy), in reference to the fact that he used to earn money by collecting old newspapers.

And it is this preoccupation with the internal dynamics of the Muslim Malaysia and the twin challenges of credibility and legitimacy – stemming from last year's election and the Sauk incident – that has resulted in UNO's domestic focus. In order to survive as the sole party of the Malays, Umno is battling for the community's soul.

In this context, relations with Singapore are secondary. Moreover, part of the reason the senior Minister's comments did not elicit a firestorm of controversy is, quite simply, the fact that Umno's grip has receded.

Dealing with party luminaries in Kuala Lumpur or winning and dining with the party faithful will not give much of an idea of the sentiment on the 'ground' as the 'ground' has become more truculent, disbelieving and querulous. The top-down, quasi-feudal UMNO political machinery has spluttered to an untimely halt while the party members undergo a re-engineering. The centre can no longer dictate reactions at the periphery. This is a sign of increasing democratization in Malaysia. However, greater freedom of action will in the end make the bilateral relations far more complicated and their management far less simple. So while Singapore and the Senior Minister can enjoy a respite in their relations with Malaysia, the future will demand a more complex and subtle engagement.

AMERICA – THE LONE RANGER

The Business Times Singapore, September 29, 2001

The Sun, September 30, 2001

Sin Chew Jit Poh, October 7, 2001

Maybe, it's just me but I loathe hypocrisy and jingoism. Living in Malaysia has made brought me into regular contact with both and on a daily basis. My readers will know that I despise the Malaysian propensity for table-thumping. It depresses me when my countrymen and women are wrapping themselves up in national flags and singing patriotic songs rather than bothering to understand the unpleasant truths about our society, the injustice and corruption, the ignorance and bigotry.

However, in the aftermath of the awful events in New York late last year, I have been equally shocked by the hypocrisy and jingoism emanating from the United States, a country I have long admired.

I prefer to listen rather than to preach, and having just returned from London a few days ago, there are a few thoughts I'd like to share with my readers about the American response to the barbaric and evil terrorists attacks in New York and Washington D.C.

Firstly, I have discovered (and this worries me) that Americans consider the loss of American lives on American soil to be of greater importance than, shall we say, Rwandan lives on Rwandan soil. Frankly, this is not unexpected. If 6,000 Malaysian were to be killed in an attack on the Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, you can bet your bottom dollar that Malaysian would be outraged, upset and distraught. Nothing else would matter in Kuala Lumpur. However, I have begun to realize that Americans also expect me – a non-American – to believe the same thing: to believe that one American life is worth more than one Rwandan, on Bangladeshi, one Chinese or one Macedonian.

In essence, an assault on America is an assault on humanity whereas a barbarous program in Rwanda leaving tens of thousands dead is merely a tragedy. I leave my readers to think it through. The word you are thinking of begins with the letter 'h'.

Another aspect of the same point is the fact that many Americans (not all, mind you) can't seem to comprehend that whilst we are shocked and appalled by the terrorist attack, we do not wish to be involved in the retaliation, nor do we support it unreservedly. Sympathy is one thing: revenge dressed up as justice is another. But our reservations are immediately seen as an indication of anti-Americanism and god forbid, anti-semiticism.

As a lawyer, I believe that anyone, however heinous their alleged crime, deserves a legal hearing. The Nazis were tried for their war crimes as is former Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic.

Retribution must follow the due process of the law. When we circumvent the law and proceed unilaterally (as judge, jury and prosecution rolled into one) we descend to the level of the uncivilized – we are no better in essence than those whom we accuse and then attack. Respect for the law in turn earns up respect. Needless to say this is a lesson that the Malaysian government often refuses to heed as well. However, I would expect better of the world's indispensable nation.

Secondly, there is a great deal more uncertainty in the North Atlantic Alliance than many would realize from listening to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair. Despite the fact that Tony Blair's face is firmly buried in George W. Bush's fundament, many Brits (and these are not just Guardian-reading pacifists), whilst horrified by the terrorist assault, are dismayed by a number of things.

They are perplexed by the American refusal to acknowledge to acknowledge how their own past actions might have outraged the rest of the world. I watched an astounding piece of 'live' TV in the U.K. (BBC's *Question Time*) where a studio audience tore apart a visibly distressed former American diplomat. The seething anger shocked me, if only because this was taking place in London and not Beijing or Baghdad. The audience that night (and these were British people, not Libyans or Cubans) asked questions about the American policy in the Middle East, about the Kyoto Protocol and the Nuclear Missile Defence. Bush's past attitude to foreign policy – 'my way or the highway' – came under detailed scrutiny and attack. Similarly, America's flagrant bias towards Israel has alienated many in the Arab world for decades. The manifest refusal to confront this fact stuns me time and again.

The audience was also chary of the prospect of an intemperate and ill-considered American response to the assault and the possible impact on their lives. No one seemed keen to allow the Americans a blank cheque with regard to the military action.

A few years ago I remember being lectured by many Americans on the sanctity of the market. I was told, and in very high-minded moralizing terms, that the free-market should determine all price-levels and at all times. I thought we weren't supposed to meddle with the markets, to intervene in Wall Street and prop up ailing businesses? Obviously I wasn't listening closely enough because there is proviso to such advice, namely, that whenever American financial interests are at stake, such laws can be ignored.

I have long admired the Americans for their tolerance of diverse political and social views. The ability is a towering source of strength. Of course as a writer my opinions are skewered by my personal concerns: freedom of speech is not a Malaysian virtue, shall we say?

In the United States, however, freedom of speech is a hallmark of American democracy and is currently coming under assault in the so-called interests of national security and the need to bolster public sentiment. I am concerned by the growing clamour to curtail this freedom and the pressure that is now being put on journalists at the Voice of America to report positive news – positive to an official – American position – and not to report the Taliban viewpoint. I am not a fan of the Taliban or any form of Islamic extremism; nonetheless, I am deeply disappointed by the pressure to curb such reports. It strikes at the heart of America's fundamental liberties.

In conclusion, all I can say is that tragedy reveals an individual's true strengths and weaknesses. The same is true of nations and whilst I am deeply sorry for the atrocious violence perpetrated on American soil, I am becoming equally saddened by the irrational and foolish response it has provoked in a country that I have long admired.

THE CLASH OF LIBERAL AND LITERAL ISLAM

The Star, May 5, 2002

The Business Times Singapore, May 6, 2002

South China Morning Post, May 6, 2002

Jakarta Post, May 7, 2002

Sin Chew Jit Poh, May 12, 2002

Foreign Policy, July 2002

Who will win over the hearts and minds of Indonesia's two hundred million Muslims? Certainly, the images of extremism and violence have monopolized the headlines. However, the struggle between two contrasting visions of Islam – 'liberal' on the one hand and 'literalist' on the other is on-going. Still, in Indonesia, the moderates are a force to be reckoned with. Unlike most other Muslim countries such as Pakistan and Egypt, moderate scholars, thinkers and political activists occupy key positions in Indonesia.

The internationally celebrated scholar, Nurcholish Majid, Azyurmardi Azra, Dean of the leading mainstream Indonesian seminary, and IAIN's (State Academy of Islamic Sciences) Syarif Hidayatullah, are among the leading moderates. The two men are known for their willingness to address the challenges of modernity, their tolerance of other faiths as well as their sensitivity to gender rights. There are also a number of young-generation figures – such as the irrepressible political commentator Rizal Mallarangeng and the academic Luthfi Assyauckanie.

On the other hand, there are ultra-conservative leaders such as Hidayat Nur Wahid of the Justice Party and the recently detained Ja'afar Umar Thalib of Laskar Jihad. Both espouse a more radical agenda that calls for the wholesale imposition of the Syariah Law.

Certainly, there is no fondness between the two groups. Recently, the Laskar Jihad leader was quoted in the Indonesian newsweekly *Gatra* as saying "the difference between us and them (the liberals) is the same as between the followers of Islam and non-believers". However, the moderates are not running scared. Whilst the majority of Indonesians are middle-of-the-road in terms of religious practices, the republic's liberals have in fact achieved a critical mass.

As the world's most populous Muslim nation and Southeast Asia's silent giant, Indonesia's fate will inevitably impact on the rest of the region. The vision of a radicalized *ummah* stretching from Aceh in the northwest to Irian Jaya in the east, straddling sensitive shipping lanes and controlling vital natural resources, scares many western strategists.

Part of the reason is that under Suharto's New Order regime, the religious establishment – both the NU and Muhammadiyah, steered clear of government. The NU with its roots in the privately owned *pesantrens* (religious schools) of East Java such as Tebuireng, Tambakberas and Denanyar has had a long history of autonomy. This feistiness stretches back to the days of Dutch colonialism. Conversely, the loose-knit structure has, at times undermined the effectiveness of the NU. The arm's length relationship has meant that both organizations with an estimated membership of thirty million members apiece have managed to retain their credibility in the eyes of the people.

The NU also directed a great deal of their energies towards education. Unencumbered by political ambition, NU's *kiyai* (scholars) such as Abdurrahim Wahid (or Gus Dur) focused on the pursuit of knowledge. They spent time trying to balance western enlightenment ideas with traditional Islamic precepts. Having been on the receiving end of the Suharto government, the NU developed a passionate and enduring commitment to human rights.

As Sharon Siddique, a leading regional sociologist, says of the thirty million strong association: "whilst the NU is committed to tradition, it has demonstrated a surprising readiness to embrace new ideas." Some would also add that this is due in part to the feudal but benign leadership in Gus Dur.

In this respect, Indonesia is extremely unusual. Elsewhere in the Islamic world, the religious establishment has often sacrificed its independence in working hand-in-glove with the authorities. At the same time, liberally-inclined writers and thinkers are generally embattled and isolated. In Egypt, for example, Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz was even the subject of a brutal assassination attempt in 1994.

Indonesia's liberals are not going to be victims. They are mobilizing. They think strategically. They understand the media and they plan for the future. A good example is the work being conducted by the Jaringan Islam Liberal – the Islamic Liberal Network. The group has focused on shaping public opinion. They appear on TV and radio shows, they write very regularly and syndicate their commentaries in newspapers across the archipelago.

The country's liberals are not effete, western-educated secularists. Most of them have emerged from *pesantrens*. They are fluent in Arabic and trained in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Their background gives them the confidence to debate substantive religious issues. They do not retreat from confrontation. As Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, the NU's head of human resource development, says: "We come from within the tradition. We can challenge the conservatives head-on."

Exposed to a wide range of classical works by many different Islamic scholars, including all the great legal traditions (the *Maliki*, the *Hanbali*, the *Hanafi* and of course, the *Shafi'i*), most of the students have developed an innate understanding of the "internal dissension" and dialogue that lies at the heart of Islamic jurisprudence. In short, they realise that there is no 'one' answer for any given question.

Their scholarship is prodigious and detailed. As deeply committed Muslims, they approach the Holy Koran with enormous respect, intense piety and intellectual rigour. Some have combined their profound knowledge of the Holy Koran and the Sunnah with a stint in leading western universities such as Canada's McGill and the Netherlands' Leiden. Newly-learned philosophies and techniques such as hermeneutics and semantics are then employed in their research.

Moreover, they've grasped a fundamental truth – that Islam is a religion that emphasizes both *iman* (correct belief) and *amal* (correct action). To their mind, reform movements cannot merely tinker around with policies and procedures. Instead, the core challenge is nothing less than a revisitation of the meaning and the application of Holy Koran.

Furthermore, they believe that modernity – human rights, democracy, science and technology – can be reconciled with Islam and that the two are not opposing forces. As Ulil explains, "In exploring these values, we are drawn to the spirit of criticism and questioning that is a hallmark of centuries of Islamic discourse."

A recent example is *Wajah Baru Relasi Suami Isteri (The New Face of Husband/Wife Relations)* – a re-examination of a respected kitab kuning (religious text) from the 1800s. Composed by Sheikh Nawawi, the text has become a stalwart teaching material in *pesantrens*

across the archipelago. However, for many progressives it represents some of the most misogynistic attitudes.

A study group led by Ibu Sinta Nuriah, the wife of former President Abdurrahman Wahid, set out to reappraise the book and redress the in-built gender bias of the original. The reinterpretation of nineteenth-century text is tackled diligently, line-by-line. Each and every *hadis* cited in the original is scrutinized and verified according to long-established rules of exegesis and authentication. Nasaruddin Umar, a Professor at IAIN, argues, “Sheikh Nawawi’s book is very Arabic in culture. This needs to be addressed along with the discrimination of women in the original. One must never forget that the ultimate goal of the Syariah is always Justice and Peace.”

Whilst the struggle between the forces will be prolonged, there is no doubt that in Indonesia, at least the liberals and their opponents are evenly matched.

CHINESE TEXTS

温和派穆斯林应该发言！

Moderate Muslim Must Speak Up!

在 9 月 11 日世贸中心的突袭事件余波中，马来西亚将在最后解决方案中，扮演一个吃重的角色。我知道这么说可能听起来很怪诞，为现有的所有行动，炮轰和外交纠纷都是集中在美国、欧洲、中东、阿富汗和巴基斯坦。

现在越来越明显的事实是，这场袭击事件真正引发的冲突，其实关乎的是思想层面。伊斯兰世界迫切需要重新定位。稳健的穆斯林必须免除文明的冲突，防止思想狭隘和顽固信仰者迫使其他信徒走向退化和开倒车的方向。

马来西亚一直以来是实用派伊斯兰思想的先锋。伊斯兰世界领袖若要从伊斯兰层面去谈社会经济发展、公民社会和现代化的时候，他们必须来马来西亚看看。

在接下来的世纪，21 世纪的吉隆坡将会像西班牙的科尔多瓦(Cordoba)和哈伦拉昔德(Harunal-Rashid)的巴格达(Baghdad)一样，被认为是伊斯兰世界的其中一个重要中心点。也因为这个原因，我们西方的朋友在处理马来西亚事务上，也显得格外小心谨慎。马来西亚式的伊斯兰及现代化，是文明资源中不可或缺的元素。

不过，我们要牢记的是，那一群袭击世贸中心的策划者有三个主要的目的：首先，他们要引起美国人民的恐惧，再者，以穆斯林及非穆斯林来把世界两极化，三者，逐步侵蚀温和派的伊斯兰政权。

第二及第三个目标很明显的是针对像马来西亚和美国这样的国家。我所熟悉并深爱的吉隆坡像华盛顿和纽约一样，陷入危险境地。如果马来西亚不格外小心谨慎，这些袭击者也能够逐步侵蚀我们国家的繁荣和安定。我们只要观察印尼这个出色的温和派伊斯兰政权被伊斯兰极端主义侵袭的速度就可以知道这个威胁的影响力有多大了。

首先，置身美国主要城市的美国人不再有安全感了，他们每一天例常的生活——早上起身后，通勤到办公室去，按下电脑按钮已经成为一系列可能致死的动作了。

显而易见的是，我不能为这个多层面的威胁提供任何解决方案，我只能观察到“九一一”事件让美国人进入另一个时代。这个事件有效的提高了美国人的警觉性，他们的行为，或者说他们领袖的行为会严重的影响到他们的生命，孤立主义是一种自我毁灭的行为，一只把头埋进沙堆里的鸵鸟一样是容易受伤的。

再者，电视让我的脑海中充斥着愤怒和沮丧的画面，我看到的是穆斯林在街头示威。恶言和愤怒扭曲了他们的面容，日复一日，出现示威抗议的国家名单越来越长，菲律宾、土耳其、巴基斯坦、埃及、印尼，现在甚至连马来西亚也榜上有名了。

当然，电视是一种肤浅的传播媒介，僵硬、刻板又表面。它不记录人类渐进的经验，只是集中扩大其中的高潮和低潮，省略了一般性的地带。另外，新闻的取材鲜少能反映一般性的事实。电视摄影机多集中在特定的激烈情绪化事件上，他们的焦点是愤怒、受难和悲剧。在电视镜头下，巴基斯坦，一个拥有超过一亿三千万人口的国家只是一个伊斯兰传教士和狂热分子走上街头、高喊口号，焚烧美国国旗的国家。

但是，这种急剧增加的影像侵害了伊斯兰，把外在世界的注意力全锁定在这个宗教最极端和丑恶的一面。这些影像把地球村的凝聚力分散了。在丑恶的电视镜头下，来自不同文化和社会经济背景的十二亿穆斯林在文化层次上被描绘成一群愤怒、充满暴力和不讲理的暴徒，这是事实，它是不公平的，不过却是千真万确的。

对美国国内的安全，马来西亚能做的有限，我们是第二和第三个目标所提及的少数国家之一，特别是在文明的课题上。我们在全球课题上所扮演的角色并不只是对国际实事的关注，而这个角色决定了我们未来的作为和成就。

马来西亚在流氓作风的回教大会组织(Organization of Islamic Conferences, 简称 OIC)中站起来，我们是一个多元种族，且容忍不同宗教的民主国家。我们在经济发展上也相当成功，这些都是我们在教育、健康和减少乡区贫穷问题的努力成果，那是好消息。

不好的消息是，我们没有正面的去正视公民社会议程。安华案的崩裂是这个弱点的铁证。但是我们这些显而易见的裂缝，和动乱的印尼、危机密布的孟加拉和动荡不安的土耳其，这个伊斯兰世界中唯一的民主国家相比较，马来西亚还是 21 世纪伊斯兰国家的典范。

当然，电视镜头鲜少有兴趣记录那些满足于现况的马来西亚伊斯兰中产阶级如何快乐的过着医生、工程师和经理的生活。以电视节目的术语来说，和那些在空中挥着拳头。咬牙切齿高喊“真主万岁”的宗教极端分子相比之下，这些人是不合用又引不起兴趣的。不用多说的是，现代化和容忍性不能构成好的电视节目。谁想要看一些没有示威或动乱的人呢？那当然不是 CNN、CNBC 或 BBC 了。

马来西亚人要表现给穆斯林和非穆斯林看的是我们可以并如何避免所谓的文明冲突。我们的政治领袖必须表现出他们不屈不挠的精神和谨慎的态度。法兹诺焚烧国旗的举动就是我们应当加以谴责的行为。

一般的马来西亚人能做什么？

公民社会组织、专业协会(如马来亚律师公会)和网状组织团体（扶轮社、狮子会、YPOs, YEOs）应该安排对话，并为在“九一一”事件及美国轰炸阿富汗中的罹难者举办追悼会，他们都是无辜的罹难者。联合举行追悼会的行为可以标榜并加强我们多元宗教信仰的特色。我们必须以身作则来证明对话和交流可以助长的不是不信任，而是双向的了解。

温和派的心声应该大声的讲出来，现在不是安静抗议极端主义或不人道行为的时候。另外，我们必须吸引全球传媒的注意力，我们肩负的是宗教信仰的美名。在未来的世界里，伊斯兰将被重新定位，信仰也会被更新。如果我们有勇气和有毅力的，我们所持守的实用宗教将成为整个伊斯兰世界的事实。

2001 年 10 月 13 日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2001 年 10 月 14 日刊于《星洲日报》

2001 年 10 月 21 日刊于《太阳报》

马来西亚华族情意结 The Malaysian Chinese Mood

虽然下一届全国大选距今还有三年之久，马华内部党选也要等到明年（2002 年）才会举行，但是华社里的政治温度却一再攀升。乍看之下，似乎所有活动都如常进行，但是却很容易就可以察觉到其中的紧张局势。

首先让人议论纷纷的就是檳城前行动党主席张德发申请加入公正党的事件，同时也牵扯到林吉祥为即将联结一起的政治同盟所设下的长远目标而寝食难安。再者，马华内部长久以来一直都在上演没完没了的权利斗争（打哈欠）。第三，越来越多人开始关心华文教育

的未来。长久以来对宏愿学校的担忧和近来针对灵市一所华小搬迁纠纷所引发的示威抗议活动，都让华社更加怀疑政府的居心和用意。

同样的，去年因“诉求”引发的冲突事件也凸显了华社里对语言、文化和教育课题的重视程度。再说，这个社群越来越高涨的维护意识更需要获得密切关注。同时也别忘了，马来反对党显然很乐意鼓吹赞同这些诉求。

这些活动背后意味着什么？最主要的是，政治阶级（特别是在公正党赢得了鲁乃改选之后）开始意识到华人选票的重要性。如果“鲁乃效应”在 2004 年再次席卷全国，那么替阵可能因此入主中央，成为执政党。

因此，替阵各政党更竭尽全力来讨好华社，更积极地争取华社选票。我可以说不回教党和公正党的各种亲民活动已经远远超越巫统。相较之下，这个掌握执政权的马来政党还是固步自封。回教党在吉兰丹和丁加奴的政治姿态，拨地给华校的作风，都在华社里引起相当大的回响。

回教党希望赢得华社支持的最好范例可以从哈达南利（HattaRamli，党主席拿督法兹诺的政治秘书）在 2000 年 8 月的诉求冲突中直言不讳的表现看出一斑。当时他说，“巫统马来人要注意，在他们伤害华人之前，他们要先踏过替阵马来人的尸体。”

正当越来越多政党争相博取华社支持之际，我们必须注意导致这种巨大转变的四个原因，还有那些想争夺多数票取胜（或保住席位）的候选人所不能不知的关键问题。

首先，最显而易见的原因是马来社群的内部团结已因派系纷争而被扰乱了。不过，我经常都一再强调，这种不团结的现象本来就已是马来政治圈内的常态。新经济政策下不均匀的资源分配让马来人之间开始出现不同阶级。另外，在不同阶级里也有很多人发现他们和非马来人一样，对政府的政策（从私有化到司法重组）同样有所不满。这一点非常重要，因为它显示出马来西亚政策的偏差如今已不再是种族的问题了。

第二，安华的垮台让很多新人（那些野心勃勃的男男女女）有机会挤进政坛大展拳脚。新生代中绝大多数是三十岁上下的青年，他们都像蔡添强那样不曾经历过 1969 年的“五一三”悲剧，因此总是爱挑战政府的能耐。另外，理应在资源分配中优惠他们的政策，却忽略了他们及他们身边的亲朋戚友，导致他们在争取政府公职、大学学位以及合约工程方面得不到好处，因此这种不公平的现象也让他们感到极度不满。如此一来，加上马来替阵政党在背后鼎力支持，这些新人自然有足够的自信心去挑战新经济政策和政府的施政。

值得玩味的是，在众多新人当中，有很多人（如《诉求》工委会秘书谢春荣）也只不过曾在非政府组织里待了几年，就跃上政坛从政。他们非政府组织里所接受的磨练（特别是在华团里）是非常宝贵的经验。因为这样，他们才掌握了广泛的人脉，不但在社团中建立一定程度的信誉，也有能力去整合各种想法，同时兼具领导能力，组织动员。

我们不该忘记有很多民政党领袖，像丹斯里许子根也是经由这一种管道训练而成的。而捍卫华语的权力是他们在政坛谋得一席之地的主要保证。也许国阵华人政党也需要从非政府组织那里注入一些新血吧？

第三，许多三十来岁的新生代对华社政党高层（包括行动党在内）多年来层出不穷的人才严重短缺现象感到失望。很多人认为政党高层缺乏更动，因此阻挠了改革的努力，而懦弱的华裔政党领袖根本也无法代表全体华社发言。一个很好的例子就是马华，他们在处理宏愿学校课题上屡次显现无能为力的一面，导致当时大失民心。由于马华缺乏可信性，因此这项计划几乎完全被华社否决。在这种情况下，华社无法相信政府，甚至想乾脆自己改革重组一个独立性的教育制度。

此外也有人争议说，如果坚持只参加带有种族色彩的单元族群政党，这将局限该族群对国家政治的影响力。因此，公正党以崭新的多元种族面貌和愿景，吸引了不少新生代加盟。

然而，公正党那些口号和宣言是否能在安华出狱后仍然持续坚守下去，那倒是大家拭目以待的事情。

第四个原因就是中国崛起世界强权。我们不该忘记一个事实，那就是当年我国积极推动新经济政策的时候（70年代），中国还在文化大革命的创伤中复原。相较之下，如今中国已然成为亚洲唯一的超级强国。这个国家能够挡得住亚洲经济风暴，她有勇气站起来对抗美国的欺凌，这就足以说明她当今的世界地位了。随着李安的电影《卧虎藏龙》成功打进了全球流行文化的市场，中国也就成了全球文化娱乐的强国。这些事实都再再提高了华人的自我身份认同和民族意识，更能在众人面前扬眉吐气。

不过，马来西亚政治的基调，以及用来理解华社里种种转变的最重要因素，就是国家政治议程的重新整合。政治不再属于特定的族群。阶级——社会经济阶级，开始成为最吃重的角色，而这也让向来以课题为主导的政坛显得更高调。这意味着低收入族群能够因为共同的利益和目标，而超越种族界限，和其他人建立合作关系。

另外，回教党领袖们的谦恭与修养，还有已很难在吉兰丹和丁加奴州看到贪污腐败现象，让很多华裔商人都能欣然接受他们。这些人绝大多数都厌恶巫统的贪婪和无能。事实上，我们甚至可以说，在小市镇里，接受华文教育的老百姓和回教党成员，同样抱着类似的保守心态。没错，这种心态甚至可以说是“亚洲”价值观。

政治风貌的转型需要国阵正面回应。在很多方面，巫统这个历来都包容多元种族的政党，应该是驰骋在这一波新政治浪潮里的最佳选择。问题其实也很简单：巫统可以挺身来面对这种挑战吗？

2001年3月3日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2001年3月4日刊于《太阳报》

智慧型恐怖主义 Intellectual Terrorism

马来西亚宗教学者协会（PUM）最近呈交了一份备忘录给统治者理事会的主席，对他们宣称为污蔑伊斯兰的两位报章专栏作者和另外三个人提出严重抗议。“榜上有名”的有伊斯兰姐妹组织执行总监再娜安华、学者兼专栏作家法立诺、马大讲师马尔蒂尼兹（Patricia Martinez）、《太阳报》专栏作家阿克巴阿里（Akhar Ali）和马来知识分子卡星阿末（Kassim Ahmad）。在他们的备忘录中，马来西亚宗教学者协会连同其他六个伊斯兰组织争论道，上述人士藐视信仰和宗教学者组织。

据我所知，这份备忘录吸引了公众的注意力，也在本地媒体上大肆报导，但是我怀疑大多数马来西亚人只是看看这些新闻，然后打着哈欠翻到另一页去，一小撮作家和宗教学者之间的小口角，谁会在乎呢？

我想他们错了，而且是大错特错。马来西亚宗教学者协会和上述六人的对峙对马来西亚和马来西亚的伊斯兰教义来说，是一项极其重要的验。它对马来西亚如何处理宗教极端主义、宗教学者的定位和立场，以及伊斯兰内部民主对的键性问题有着重大的冲击。

为什么这个课题对马来西亚这么重要呢？原因有四个。首先，马来西亚是一个穆斯林居多的国家，伊斯兰教义对整个国家将造成相当大的冲击。再者，如果我们接受马来西亚政府和管理层应该以伊斯兰理念为基准，那么我们就应该针对些理念的诠释进行广泛讨论，并多加关注。三者，类似这种对话不应只局限于一小撮人。四者，在我们试图宣告，自己因遵循可兰经的理念而拥有民主、优秀的政府以及现代化等优势的时候，我们正置身于惊险、颠簸的路途上。

事实上，我们在马来西亚所做的，其他伊斯兰世界的国家都还没有真正做到。我们肩负大任重责。尤其在阿拉伯伊斯兰世界的无能、腐败和不公义的相较之下，我们为伊斯兰理念的实行所树立的典范，以及对现代化、少数族群的权益、发展和社会公义这些问题的重视，予全球的发展而言，将变得越来越重要。这意味着我们不该匆促了事或拒绝宗教学者以外那些认真又合理的声音。

诚如我所说的，每个人都应该关注这个课题，穆斯林和非穆斯林都一样，因为伊斯兰（和现代的基督信仰不同）重视的不是私我，它和我们生活的每一部分息息相关、紧密相连。

再者，伊斯兰世界并不是单一架构的，这和很多人的想法正好相反。伊斯兰世界里，有很多不同的信仰方式的想法，相信我，当我在美国的时候，我和来自埃及、伊朗、美国、巴勒斯坦、沙地阿拉伯、巴基斯坦及摩洛哥的穆斯林碰面，我们和全世界的穆斯林有着同样的信仰，但是我们对信仰的表现方式却不尽相同的，这是不同文化背景所使然。事实上，伊斯兰既认同，也欣然接受自由表现的方式，再者，伊斯兰内部自古以来就存有接纳不同意见的雅量和传统（Ikhtilaf）。在一个架构内，对不同意见的尊重和认同，实际上就是伊斯兰包容和温和的作风。

马来西亚宗教学者协会和作家的这场冲突，最重要的问题是可兰经的诠释权掌控在谁的手里？马来西亚宗教师协会中的这一小群人拥有独断诠释可兰经的权力吗？对他们的看法，我们就应该言听计从吗？抑或我们应该鼓励不同的看法？举个例子，那些不是马来西亚宗教学者协会会员的宗教师的观点又如何？平民百姓的观点又是怎么样的呢？

事实上，这个课题的轴心不在于信仰，而是“权力”，就这么简单扼要。如果你认同伊斯兰是我们生活中各方面的基准和指导，那么可兰经的诠释者就是非常有权势的人，他们可以塑造我们的生活，决定男人和女人的权力和定位，并定夺公共政策的对策。他们可以从可兰经中取得权力来决定我们生活中的每一样事物。今天，六位作家备受抨击，明天他们抨击的对象可能会是像艾拉（Ella）、艾拉法丝拉（ErraFazira）和茜蒂诺哈丽莎（SitiNurhaliza）的娱乐圈人士，再来他们评击的可能就是在外工作的女性了。

如果普罗大众选择不支持这些作家，我们本身也会受到波及，在这些最重要的课题上不想有任何意见，就意味着我们想要让这些宗教学者成为最有权势的人。可悲的是多数马来西亚人，特别是各族群中的中产阶级都是极度冷漠的，他们被马哈迪医生恫吓了多年之后，已经习惯于让别人为他们做决定，我们要改变这种现象。

有趣的是，这种争执并没有持续沿着传统路线发展下去，比方说，那些作家得了不少团体个人的支持，其中包括了像马来西亚伊斯兰青年运动（ABIM，在马来西亚原称回教青年运动，简称回青）和世界公正运动组织（JustWorld）等非政府组织，以及个人如副首相阿都拉巴达威与人民党领袖赛胡申阿里。

虽然上述两个团体和两个人都有着不同的政治观点，但是他们都一致认为伊斯兰需要更多的辩论和对话，他们反对知识恐怖主义。因此，他们抨击马来西亚宗教学者协会试图废止开放的对话，虽然他们的方式有点不同。在这里我得坦承，宗教学者协会形形色色的成员当中，也有许多倡导温和伊斯兰对话的人，他们意识到恐吓会导致负面效果。

不幸的是，回教党认同了宗教学者是至高无上、不可挑战的伊斯兰诠释者。成为马来西亚宗教学者协会最大的支持者，这是一个耻辱，因为这个课题可能到最后会演变成巫统和回教党的另一场政治角力。

不过这并不意味着开通者如我想要否定宗教学者对可兰经的诠释权。相对的，代表人民的我们只是想要和他们分享其中的空间。我们想要让全世界的人知道，马来西亚和其他伊斯兰世界不一样，我们有信心也有实力能和其他人辩论现代化和信仰的课题，我们想要以民主和对不同意见的包容（Ikhtilaf）来超越并战胜马来西亚宗教学者协会。大家应该携手合作，确保我们在马来西亚的未来。如此，我们便可以避免一些羁绊很多伊斯兰国的悲剧，那

些曾经因为漠视对话、包容和温和作风而引发的悲剧。如果一般马来西亚人民对这些课题仍然不闻不问，那我们这个国家就注定是会失败的了。

2002年2月24日刊于《星洲日报》

2002年2月24日刊于《星报》

2002年2月26日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

现代马来人的困境 The Modern Malay Dilemma

过去五年来，马来人的世界观变得十分狭窄。这是民族的悲剧，因为在权力的走廊上，那些狭隘和迂腐的观念将会摧毁我们所热爱并熟悉的马来西亚。为什么？首先，这是个多元种族的国家，因此，在政治上处于领导地位的马来人必须坚持提出(并且聆听)跨越宗教鸿沟的倡议。因为，只有同心协力才是这个国家得以成功的重要关键。再者，我们的贸易额远较国民生产总值高，我们的财富须依赖出口导向的经济。简而言之，我们日后恐怕无法再维持目前所享有的一切——拥有普腾国产车、别墅和到棉兰及香港去度假，除非我们对外开放，放眼世界。

然而，随着安华被罢黜、囚禁，进而接受审讯，这一连串的失误助长了宗教保守主义者的气焰。回教党势力的增强，也许就是宗教与道德课题不断加温的成果。政治辩论所强调的，几乎全是道德规范与霸权，把民众的目光从外转向内，从长远转向短浅。

我们可以从多方面来理解这种现象。回教党，这个由宗教司主导的政党向来都把重心放在“伊斯兰”课题上。他们抨击巫统的弱点，指责巫统明显的缺乏宗教特性。这继而燃起了一个重要的问题，即司法制度和政府服务机关等现代自由民主机制的效率何在。回教党紧咬着这课题不放。依他们看来，如果腐败已蔚然成风并危害了我们的国家，那么我们是否应该以别的系统来取代西方的治国体系？不过，每次在他们急急忙忙的抨击政府之际，回教党却未能提出有效的经济策略，他们显然根本经不起现代化的冲击。

简单的说，马来西亚人，特别是马来族群，至今已陷入危机当中。他们越来越强调形式和教义，而罔顾了其他更重要的事项。宗教是他们的所有，是他们的整个宇宙。上个星期，我的朋友清楚地分析了现代马来人的困境，他告诉我，他那两个受过高等教育的马来同事，正热衷于探究女性的适当穿着这个课题。他说，这两个年轻人因此事而花了不少时间议论争辩，然后他补充一句：“他们似乎对其他更全球性的课题完全兴趣索然。”这种思想上的“封闭”，正逐步地侵蚀着我们的生活。

我们的报章很容易就被一些奇怪又狭隘的课题分散了注意力。他们以道德伦理来声讨乱伦、同性恋和那些被指控为亵渎可兰经的人。政治上亦如此，我们忽视了重要的国家课题，让它们通通靠边站。我们忘了马来人的真正议题，即如何以教育、改善保健及公共服务来提高马来族群的素质。在我们迫不及待的去称赞土著大亨，又为自己的成就沾沾自喜的时候，却忽略了谁才是这个社会的真正英雄，尤其是那些任劳任怨而薪金过低的护士及操劳过度的老师们。在这种华而不实的骗局中，马来男性青年往往成了落后的一群。他们的教育水平不高，因此常常因为找不到工作而沮丧不已。达尔文社会主义中强调的“适者生存”论调，让这群上帝的子民活在他们的姐妹和女朋友的阴影之下。有趣的是(而且也令人担忧的是)，这一群郁郁不得志的马来男性青年，将在未来的日子里出任一些足以影响我们生活的重要职位。

好像没有人想问，为什么我们的教育制度会误了这么一大群(而且可能会带来麻烦的)子弟？为什么公司老板都不太想聘用马来男性青年？为什么我们不能勾绘出全球化马来人

的轮廓？是不是因为他们不会讲英语和华语，导致他们成为欠缺吸引力，也没什么利用价值的工人？相对的，政府可以消化这些“囤货”吗？我们是不是正坐在一颗计时炸弹上面？

同样的，很多吉隆坡人对胡锦涛这位中国国家副主席和未来政权继承人于上周结束的首次马来西亚之行，都没啥兴趣，他们更关心的是吉隆坡的股票交易。很少马来西亚人(特别是马来人)意识到，中国的强大已经对我们的出口导向经济造成威胁，中国这一部巨大的出口导向机器将来或许会吞没我们的小型工业，除非我们现时能立即采取行动。

我所提出来的两项挑战，到目前为止还是找不到对策，然而事情却隐匿了一个重点，那就是“开放”。我们无法找到解决国家弱点的对策，不管是国内或国际上的弱点，除非我们愿意试着去为马来族群开创出一种真实的全球性议题，不过这还需要真正有素质和计划。

马来族群必须要苏醒过来，我们要保有信仰，可是我们没有必要因为宗教生活而不去面对日常生活的现代化挑战。为了维护我们的生活，我们必须作好准备，增强自己在科学、经济以及科技方面的知识。经济和贸易必须成为重组马来人观念的推动力。而改善和中国的关系就是我认为“重组”的最好典范了。我们必须了解这个全球人口最多的国家，我们必须在旅游业、教育方针、农业和自然资源方面找到足以抗衡的对策。

我们需要一大群会讲华语的马来西亚人，我们当然可以求助于马来西亚华社，让他们成为我们和中国之间沟通的桥梁，但这并不是长远的解决之道。在和中国这个全球最具发展潜能的市场周旋之际，马来族群是不能退缩的。马来族群必须装备自己，以直接处理和中国的关系，他们必须把本身的注意力重新投注在国际事务和务实的议题之上。

这也让我回到马来男性青年那让人忧心忡忡的教育背景。坦白说，我们的国家教育制度并不鼓励马来族群学习其他族群的文化和语言。对外来思想与影响的抗拒将逐渐减损这个族群的工作机会，危害他们长远的未来。如果这种观念没有及时被纠正过来，唯我独尊的心态与孤立主义只会使情况愈演愈烈，一发不可收拾。

如果我们想要有全球化特质的马来人，我们就需要在这个社会注入更有冲劲、更具前瞻性的文化精神。很可悲的，新经济政策却成了这项发展计划的绊脚石。只要工作与其他机会仍在政府牢牢的掌控中，努力学习和勤奋工作的动力便会消失殆尽。然而在真实的世界里，“知识”，和资本、土地以及劳工不同，它是无法继承，也非与生俱来的。“开放”也意味着要打开这个族群的心门，迎向全球化残酷的现实。马来人只有在面临更强大竞争的时候，才会变得更具弹性、更有斗志。持续实行目前的政策只会助长甘愿平庸、懒散与愚昧的歪风而已。

政府应该极力鼓吹创意、独立思考以及勇于接受挑战的这类观念。马来族群和其他族群，必须能不分彼我，掌握英语、马来语和华语这三种语言，这将会是国民教育系统最基本的要求。再者，我们也应该学习其相应的文化与哲理。穆斯林必须对基督教、佛教以及儒家思想有更深入的认识，反之亦然。除此之外，不同宗教间的相互体谅该如何培养呢？马来男性青年必须接受训练，好让他们能掌握任何想要的工作，能去任何想去的地方(包括中国、欧洲和北美)发展。全球化”的马来人和真正的“马来西亚人”只有一步之差而已，只是，我们可以放开怀抱去接受改变吗？

2002年4月28日刊于《星报》

2002年4月28日刊于《星洲日报》

2002年4月30日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2002年5月6日刊于《每日新闻》

马哈迪医生：在位二十载 Dr Mahathir – Twenty Years On

马哈迪医生担任马来西亚首相一职已经超过二十年了，担任二十年的首相，这个出身于吉打的医生继续让各界惊讶、惊叹、而且这两者往往是同时发生的。这位已届七十六高龄的领袖，向来是个争议性人物。于上个月巫统大会的开幕仪式上，马哈迪医生又在众代表面前呈现了另一场精彩绝伦的演出，他痛责马来社会的失败，又向反对阵营大表不屑。

在这个全世界的政客都是选民导向的年代，马哈迪医生却和潮流唱反调。他在上述大会上选择正面攻击马来人的精神堡垒，羞辱了很多在场的人。

我耗尽了我整个年轻时代，去观察和撰写与首相有关的事。第一次和他作访问是为了完成《大学报》的报导，那也已是大约十八年前的事了。当时我就意识到尽管他本性是矛盾的，但我们仍可全盘预见这个人的心思。如果你试着去了解塑造马哈迪的力量，同时注意他目前所关心的议题，你就能掌握他那让人害怕的激进型性格背后的关键所在。

不过做为一个开始，让我先讲一讲我认为是马哈迪政治人格面具中的两大要素。首先是其澎湃的热情，其次是他惊人的折衷能力。此两者使他和其他巫统要员有着极为显著的差异，当然，安华依布拉欣是个例外。

马哈迪医生将其热情倾注于提升马来社会这一个议题上。但，这种热情却并未阻扰他为维护国家安宁而作出的努力。这说明了为何他能在挥舞着自身马来民族身份的同时，还能赢得华社的支持。

简单地说，只要那个人是占优势的，他就会和那个人达成协议。在这一方面，我们不能低估他随时会为我们带来惊喜与困惑的能力。过去，他曾迎回自己的政敌敦姑拉萨利（Tengku Razaleigh），也曾敞开胸怀和华社的非政府组织寻求和解的方案，甚至曾经提议摒弃保障土著大学学额的固打制度。正如我早前所说的，马哈迪医生是个有抱负的人。回溯四、五十年代，他一眼辨出克服马来族群没落情景的必要性。很早以前，他已清楚意识到马来人备受屈辱的处境，他们仅仅是自己国土上的居民，殖民飨宴里的乞丐。那时，马来族群的困境在于对迷信的热切偏好，以及因封建思想和宿命论而惹来的焦头烂额。经过半个世纪的蒙骗和批判，再加上新经济政策的出现，毫无疑问的，这些挑战已一一迎刃而解。

在努力地鼓吹着教育与知识是何等重要之际，马哈迪医生依然冲劲十足地为舒缓马来族群中的贫困和无知现象献出一分力量。这是他所有工作的中心意念。他的文章（他从1940年代起，以“CheDet”为笔名，撰写评论性文章）、演说，甚至于他所作的访问，都一而再地把目光投注于马来人身上。

然而近年来，新经济政策的落实却为他招惹相当多的批评。他因过于强调“土著”以及在收入不均的情况下累积马来族群的财富而遭受抨击。

许多经济学家以确实的凭据争议他将太多国家宝贵的资源投入在建立起一群有组织架构的马来企业家。面对着政治家们的责难，马哈迪医生却充耳不闻。一直以来，为了实现自身的理想与愿景，他对任何政治性的结果都毫不在乎。只是有时候，后果实在非常严重，甚至已达致毁灭性的境地。身为一名律师和作家，我可以肯定的说，公民社会的程序及参与式的政治一直遭受到他的轻蔑，使到司法制度（直到近期）、公共服务及媒体陷入无能的状态。

然而近年来，回教党却相对的展现了一股惊人的力量，奋力挑战马来人的现代化议程，而首相也察觉到反对党的势力正逐步渗入此族群之中。自 1999 年的国民大选以后，马来族群已然显现了作出彻底转变的意愿。巫统和其领袖激怒了他们，以致许多马来人纷纷背离巫统，投入反对阵营的怀抱。再者，自安华事件以后，巫统已丧失了其崇高的道德操守。

失去了昔日传承下来的道德权威，巫统和马哈迪医生如今正面对着一个由知识分子引燃的急切危机，而国家也会随之面临戏剧性的转变。回教党希望以公开的伊斯兰政府，来捣毁巫统不具宗教色彩的行政作业方式。马哈迪医生清楚地看到，伊斯兰法令的强制实行与宗教司的主导性地位，将使马来族群没入绝境。

显然的，他所倡导的 2020 宏愿，会随着此次转变而荡然无存。相较之下，1980 年代末和由敦姑拉萨利领导的 46 精神党之间的分化纠纷，不过是私人恩怨罢了。因为马来族群的内部分裂，首相以惯有的活力，开始向回教党展开猛烈的攻击。和英国前首相铁娘子撒尔切夫人（Margaret Thatcher）一样，他的怒气与愤慨并未随着年龄的增长而消退。

这也把我带到最后一个要点。为了维护并确保他的神话能长存历史，防止回教党入主中央舞台，马哈迪医生可能必须以折衷的方式告终。他必须和反对阵营合作，赢得他们的支持，并支援提拔行政体系内拥有足够伊斯兰教育背景的人。

实际上，在很多方面，他已经这么做了。

钦定阿都拉巴达威（这名唯一拥有无可挑剔的伊斯兰资历的巫统高层）为其继承者这件事，正反映出这位首相勇于中流转换航道的意愿，让昔日的对手承袭自己的地位。

毫无疑问的，他将自身的能量与巫统的资源集合起来，以打击回教党日益壮大的势力。为了维护巫统的未来，他决意豁出去了，而他澎湃的热情将确保他会这么做。可是他的生存本能却告诉他，折衷与妥协并无法解除困境。

于马哈迪医生而言，说教意味浓厚的意识型态与今日所面对的挑战已和 1969 年大为不同。他继续以自身的经验看透世情。他所关切的，是马来人已陷入险境这一个事实，而他必须挺身而出，助他亲爱的子民逃出回教党的魔掌。同样的，子民们也必须设法自救。

对马来西亚和马来西亚人来说，此问题远比想像中复杂。他将于何时放弃国家的掌控权？他的热情会不会蒙蔽了他的判断？国家能否从马哈迪医生另一回合的冒险政策中幸存下来？他的解决方案在千禧年依旧那么有效吗？还是一切都已太迟了？马来人已经作出了改变吗？

最终，马哈迪医生能否愈合与宗教司之间的深刻裂痕？还是，他只会使整个局势急速恶化呢？

2001 年 7 月 14 日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2001 年 7 月 15 日刊于《太阳报》

2001 年 7 月 17 日刊于《海峡时报》

2001 年 9 月 16 日刊于《星洲日报》

2001 年 9 月 21 日刊于《亚洲周刊》

新加坡人的困境

The Singaporean Dilemma

亚太地区的国际关系，最荒谬者莫过于马来西亚和新加坡的双边关系。我既不是人民行动党的一员，又非国阵党员，所以我大可自扫门前雪，根本可以不用去理会他们的是非，那些乱七八糟的言论，还是留给政治人物去解决比较好。

不过，人们常常忘了马新关系里的三个关键性课题。首先是马来西亚马来人的自卑感（目前正在经历一场大变动）以及新加坡华人欠缺安全感。再者，尽管在谈判桌前，马来西亚的反复无常让它无所适从，但是新加坡仍拒绝承认“观念分歧”对其外交所造成的冲击。三者，两国之间的文化和语言鸿沟日益悬殊，和其他国家的交集就更甬讲了。

尽管这十年来，我写了许多关于马来西亚的文章，却始终没有机会，将目光转向新加坡。我自认对这个岛国和其几个显著的特性有着相当程度的了解。当然，新加坡在与亚太区域瞬息万变的经济和政治面貌斗得难解难分之际，急需放开其胸怀，听一听各方不同的声音。然而，自作聪明、各自为政的思想家所发表的言论，却应排除在外，尽管这些言论似乎已成了此一城邦最受崇敬的艺术形式。虽然如此，我对新加坡的喜爱却是与日俱增的，我的言论因而注入了一丝暖意和关怀。我深深意识到这个岛屿所散发出来的魅力，以及她所具有的矛盾与缺陷。

事实上，在我因博尔布莱特奖学金于美国逗留的那段期间，和新加坡人相处的时间比较长。我在史丹佛大学和前报人 Cherian George 一同用膳、在世界经济论坛和驻联合国永久代表马贺布巴尼（Kishore Mahbubani），同属一个讨论小组、与新闻、通信及艺术部长林得恩（David Lim）畅谈马新双边关系、和王明星的女儿在哥伦比亚大学到处闲逛。显然的，我们之间的共通点，比我们所愿意承认的还要多。

自尊是促进双边关系的主要障碍，新加坡卓越的经济成就让很多马来西亚人，特别是马来人萌生一种不可言喻的自卑感。当然，很多马来西亚人，包括我自己常常都需要别人的提醒，其实新加坡人也是没有安全感的，因为他们的国土太小了。可悲的是，在这两股力量的拉锯之间，双边关系就脱轨了，这些负面情绪到后来就引发了激烈的情绪反弹。

马来西亚人眼中的新加坡是一个强大又富有的国家，它比马来西亚更井然有序、更富足，它的治理方式比马来西亚更好、更有效率，你可以想像马来西亚人的沮丧和挫折感。但是现在情况可就大大的不一样了。柔佛丹绒柏勒巴斯港口（Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP)）出乎意料之外的成功让马来西亚人看傻了眼，丹绒柏勒巴斯港口的业主赛莫达（Syed Mokhtar）也因此一举成名，成了国家英雄人物。

港口竞争向来是新加坡的强项，而他竟然能和新加坡一较长短，这不但扭转了整个局势，也把向来高高在上又无懈可击的新加坡在一夜之间缩小变弱了。如果一个前米商有办法和新加坡政府竞争，而且还赢了个马鼻，其他人也一样可以做得到。优越的地理位置、廉宜的基本设施、配合国际资金和专业化的管理方式，马来西亚人终于找到了一个必胜的妙方。这种意识大大的扭转了双方的关系，也转换了未来的跑道。

再来我们谈一谈观念上的不同。新加坡人必须学着去接受一个事实：公众舆论的压力可以让法律和外交用词完全无用武之地。我知道这是很可悲的；受过法律训练的我，本应标榜契约和协议的功效与作用，但是，诚如美国总统布什最近处理美国钢铁工业者的要求时的立场一样，政治考量往往更甚于一切。

比方说，新加坡为一个主权完整的国家，它绝对有权利和任何一个国家签订自由贸易协定，可是我个人却认为，新加坡对这些协定的穷追不舍，让人觉得她似乎对这个区域没有什么使命感。

当然，任何国家都必须清楚知道本国的利益，并以此为努力的目标，但有时候，这种对目标的穷追不舍而大肆宣扬，必然会惹来邻近国家的厌烦。技术官僚往往是最差劲的沟通者，他们常常弄巧反拙，破坏了双边的友好关系。

接着，是我最烦恼的事，这件事也让我不禁为新加坡的未来担忧。我察觉到新加坡在政治立场上、文化甚至是政策上都刻意贬低这个区域的重要性。

不管再怎么努力，新加坡始终不会成为像纽约、伦敦或巴黎一样的国际大都会，新加坡虽然比吉隆坡或雅加达繁盛，但她始终还是一个地域性的城市。相反的，其他都会却享有着广大腹地所带来的种种好处，她们的文化与经济面貌也因此更为丰富而多元。如果你质疑我的看法，你大可以去看看新加坡的报章，去探索一下新加坡人的文化素养。他们的无知和肤浅会让人难以置信。但这并非意味着新加坡不能成为一个重要的区域中心。

更复杂的是，新加坡人和其他东南亚国家人民的沟通能力似乎失传了。年轻一代的新加坡人不像他们的父母那么善于和其他人沟通、交流。对全球化议程的关注，让新加坡人忘了自己的国家身在何处，再往外看的同时，他们背弃了自己身处的这个区域。这个地域，正逐渐地被遗忘，像梦一样随着清晨的迷雾，飘然远去。举例来说，越来越少的新加坡人会说马来语，甚至连“巴刹式”马来语亦显陌生。

我一直都在提醒我的新加坡朋友们，新加坡位处东南亚的中枢，她不是漂浮在北美洲附近的一个国家，她不是长岛（Long Island）也不是卡塔利娜岛（Catalina Island）。可是很多新加坡的年轻人为了回应政府全球化的呼吁，收拾了包袱就到国外去。我美国担任客座讲师期间，惊见美国顶尖大学中挤满了新加坡学生，但是，却只有一两个学生想回去新加坡。

新加坡政府有效的提升了人民对生活的期望，但似乎还没有为这些出类拔萃的年轻人营造一个生活和工作的环境。天啊！新加坡人还要靠我这一个马来西亚人来劝说他们的子弟回家去。我之所以这么做，是因为我们身处同一个区域，我们面临的挑战也是一样的。

前一阵子，互联网似乎为我们提供了一个管道，把我们和全球各地衔接起来了。不过这个幻影很快就破灭了；地理位置再次重申，新加坡的未来和这个区域是唇齿相依，息息相关的。

新加坡有足够的巫语、印度语、泰语、越南语和菲律宾语人才，来展现本国的优势吗？新加坡政府有鼓励人民和本区域互动吗？抑或是在高举全球化标志的同时，政府让新加坡人忘了自己身处的地域？这是新加坡面对的严峻挑战，她必须尽快整肃、调整，才能迎向这个挑战。

2002年3月23日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2002年3月31日刊于《星洲日报》

2002年3月31日刊于《星报》

伯拉，被低估的人

Pak Lah — the Underestimated Man

马来西亚副首相阿都拉阿未巴达威(Abdullah Ahmad Badawi)挑战政坛惯例。在这个满是空想理论、虚伪不实、到处有人煽风点火的时代，他却是如此温和、低调又有君子风范。他的很多作为向来不为人所知，也一直被忽视，但是现在他却稳坐首相身边的第二把交椅，这让很多关心马来西亚政治的人开始揣想，他会怎样幸存于首相署办事处。他只是信誉缺缺的政权中一枚苟延残喘的棋子，抑或是改变马来西亚政治气候的一股力量？他能够抚平这个国家还隐隐作痛的伤口吗？

现在，国阵政府正面对着四种相互牵连的重挫——伊斯兰、种族关系、合作政府和一连串公民社会的课题。我觉得伯拉应该可以很有自信的处理前两者。但是我想后二者可能会是他极大的挑战。不过，如果他想确保巫统的命运不会落得像台湾国民党或印度国会般的结局，那么他就要妥善处理当前的经济和政治改革。

他的强处之一是他没有像马哈迪医生或安华那样到处树敌招怨。这两个人的领袖个性和完美主义的政治理念，让他们树敌无数，甚至有的成了毕生的宿敌。伯拉持续效忠巫统，而没有效忠党内特定的内部势力，强化了他的这一项强处。这其中的区别很细微，但是却相当重要。

结果，他也惹恼了很多首相的宿敌，因为他对马哈迪是非常敬重又负责任的。不像亚罗约(Grolia Macapagal Arroyo)，他不会设计阴谋来取代他的上司。因为他的如此作风，因为他自己坚定不移的相信巫统能够推动马来西亚的政治和社会经济改革，他所说的很多话都成了消肿除痛的清凉剂。不过，看着他如何处理巫统领导层所面对的几个主要挑战也是挺有意思的。

首先，伊斯兰是伯拉的强项之一。这位副首相在巫统高层内，可是唯一一位能明确表达巫统现代宗教见解的人。伯拉在讨论伊斯兰课题上处处凸显了惊人的现代观点和进步思想。在去年的一次演讲中，他鼓吹“一种具有推动力又现代的伊斯兰，不是那一种静如死水、反文明开化、刻板又拘泥于字句教条的宗教”。

对当代可兰经诠释的全力支持，让他和由宗教司主导的回教党建立了友好关系。不过，他之所以能在穆斯林圈子里享有如此的信誉，主要原因有三：首先，他有伊斯兰学生的教育背景，再者，他无懈可击的家庭生活，三者，他的祖父，已故的赛阿都拉法欣(Sheikh Abdullah Fahim)，即是檳城的伊斯兰法典诠释者，也是一位德高望重的伊斯兰学者。

这些要素缓和了反对阵线的攻击。这些当然和辱骂马哈迪医生的声浪是不能相提并论的。比如，当日本脑炎肆虐的时候，反对党领袖拿督法兹诺(Datuk Fadzil Noor)指控副首相和猪农没什么两样。这样的羞辱引发了一连串对回教党领袖的愤怒指控。有意思的是，就连拿督聂阿兹曼(Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat)或回教党的精神领袖和吉兰丹州务大臣都俯首承认伯拉这个有名伊斯兰长者的后代，和他的先人一样，有着一一定的修养和操守。

其次，处理种族课题。伯拉的宗教背景和他扎根在檳城那种包容性强的环境条件是一致的。在他的演说中，他一再强调他的多元种族特质。很多非政府组织虽然对政府非常不满，但是他们还是要承认伯拉是一位言行一致的人。在这方面，他在谈判桌前的正直和信誉是不容置疑的。而且，在 2000 年 12 月，他还极力纾解非政府组织诉求工委会所引发的政治高温。他拒绝对质，但强调对话的必要。这显示了巫统处理种族关系的一项清新改变。有意思的是，他还招募了一群聪慧的二十来岁大学生来参与洽谈，这也显示出他自己已经准备好，也愿意接纳新生代:他们的想法，他们的热忱和他们的专才。

同样的，近来他决定不准许马来前线行动(Malay Action Front)在新村的游行示威，也再再昭示了他杜绝煽动种族政策者的决心。就像他近来在一场演说中所说的“马来领袖们应该要意识到族群色彩浓厚的言论已经过时，对国家的团结也会造成莫大的伤害。”

第三个课题——透明化与裙带关系，我会认为那会是伯拉最棘手的其中一项难题。过去从来没有触及经济课题的伯拉，他的生涩会影响他的表现，尤其如果他又让其他人在经济管理上有太多自主权。不过，也有人说（还挺有说服力的），就是因为伯拉在工作上都没有机会触及工商业界，他也因此没有和工商业界的小团体有什么来往或交情。

日前马航托售股权事件和玲珑与马友乃德持续不断的长篇记事，也再次凸显了新经济政策的不当，引发了连串的批评。值得记上一笔的是，伯拉已经认同重新审查新经济政策的重要性。他强调要确保财富和机会的重新分配，是更有效，更有用的。但是如果他要证实这些课题，他始终会和那些掌权者碰上，他终究会侵犯他们的既得利益。

如果他真的想要落实这些目标，伯拉就必须维护自己的信誉。想当然尔，就是他和企业界的所有交易（特别是他的家人和亲戚）都必须全盘透明化。任何一项背信和欺诈，都会很快的摧毁伯拉目前所享有的所有亲善和友好关系，就像印尼总统瓦希德一样，身败名裂。

第四，公民社会范畴。人权委员会的创立，在丹斯里慕沙希旦（Tan Sri Musa Hitam）的领导下信誉日增，还有一些特定的司法人员更动，都显示出政府在公民社会方面的改进。不过，安华的案子却再再成为政府公民社会议程的重大考验，而在未来的数年里，伯拉还是得把注意力转移到他前任对手棘手的问题上去。

但是，诚如《远东经济评论》的总编辑，同时也是经验丰富的区域性评论员麦克瓦的久迪斯(Michael Vatikiotis)对这个谦恭又有点腼腆的政治家所提出的看法，“他是政治君子的代表。他自认是一个有责任的公仆。这样的两种特质，让他在处理课题上比较温和、婉转。他比较喜欢调节、折衷，不喜欢正面对质。有些人认为这些是他的弱点，但是这些其实都是政治家的特质。”

经过长达二十年的非凡成长和痛苦又难忘的社会政治蜕变后，马来西亚需要一段时间来调整和整合。也许伯拉，这个在马来西亚政坛最为他人所低估的人，能够抚平这个国家的创伤，并为马来西亚培育出一批未来的主人翁。

2001年2月6日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2001年2月7日刊于《新海峡时报》

2001年2月8日刊于《雅加达邮报》

2001年2月11日刊于《太阳报》

李光耀访马之行 Lee Kuan Yew Visits Malaysia

时间真的能改变一切。若是在五年前，新加坡资政李光耀不管怎么批评或谴责马哈迪医生处理安华事件的手法，势必会引发一场外交危机。

那时，新加坡驻马最高专员署外就会出现一大群愤怒的民众集会示威，他们在长堤上焚烧肖像，并恫言切断食水供应。在短短几天之内，巫青团里那些意气用事的人肯定会暴跳如雷，雪花般的读者来函也不约而同投往《新加坡海峡时报》怒吼，而芽笼（Geylang）及宏茂桥（Ang Mo Kio）的草根领袖们也都会站出来表示不满。

不过，这一次只有国际媒体在吵翻天，人人对马来西亚政界不寻常的沉着和泰然应对都感到惊愕。这两国政府真的终于“长大”了吗？他们是否比以前更加冷静、成熟了？唔，我的答案模棱两可——“是”也“不是”。

我要提出三个重点。第一点是针对李光耀此行所潜在的不满情绪。第二及第三点和马来西亚政坛上两个主要的转变相关，两者都有连带关系。那是因为伊斯兰保守派的角色如

今日益吃重，另外传统派政治精英在政治局势的演进过程中，势力已大不如前。这些趋势使双边关系也从此不一样了。

当然，李光耀此次访马只是作告别式的官访，原本的用意就是尽量让此行不引起任何对峙和冲突。他的公开演说也刻意回避谈论敏感话题。国内领袖当然也勉为其难的表现出他们对这位伟大战后英雄的崇敬，更让我意外的是，他们甚至是非常的敬重他。当李光耀一反常态，尽量避重就轻的回答问题时，在场的每个人都可以看到，也可以感受到两国情感上的联系。

不过，这一切在我们这些愤世嫉俗者看来，李光耀的表现反映出他此行真正的目的：要建立友好关系，不要搞破坏。同样的，马哈迪医生也宁愿缓和两国之间的不和，尽量拉近彼此的距离。

新电信（Sing Tel）在收购时光网（Time Dotcom）失败以后，我发觉这两位领袖都意识到，在这个竞争愈加剧烈的区域内，新加坡和马来西亚必须携手合作才能在这个环境下求存发展。简而言之，长期悬而未决的问题必须尽快并彻底的解决掉，一了百了。

不过，我们也必须重申李光耀此行所蕴含的历史意义和个中心情。过了整整十个年头，李资政终于还是要越过长堤，重访马来西亚这个曾让他饱受挫败的地方。当他开车越过分隔新加坡和柔佛的那条海峡，对他个人和整个城市国家而言，都是一个大跃进。因为如果他带头做起，两国之间的那一道裂痕就永远无法弥合。

来到吉隆坡，我想他肯定对这个城市里的发展赞叹不已。尽管吉隆坡和往日已大不相同，但是她仍然还是一座“巫统城市”，这里还是可以常常看到过去的存在。

巫统高层当中还有多位出身于政治世家的领袖，而他们的名字总会让人联想起历史往事。在那里就有赛嘉化阿巴（Syed Jaafar Albar）的儿子拿督斯里塞哈密（Datuk Seri Syed Hamid）、敦拉萨（Tun Razak）的儿子拿督斯里纳吉（Datuk Seri Najib）、以及敦胡先翁（Tun Hussein Onn）的儿子拿督希山慕丁（Datuk Hishammuddin）。面对这些历史人物的后代，我们很容易又犯上缅怀旧时政朝的毛病。然而现实却已是个截然不同的世界了。尽管和老朋友叙旧对个人来说并无不妥，但是若把别人的亲切与温和款待视为理所当然的事，就不是明智之举了。

积极进取且现代化的多元种族政治领袖，统辖马来西亚已有四十年了。他们如今面对着有史以来最严峻的挑战，因为随着国内政治圈内的权势和影响不断地扩展，如今已有其他政党（譬如被宗教司主导的回教党）进来争夺主权。

以李光耀在公开论坛中对新加坡伊斯兰教育制度的评论来看，他显然很清楚看到了政治、政体和宗教合并所将引发的危机。巫统，特别是国阵必须好好处理这三者之间错综复杂的关系，找出一个可行的解决方案。不过，每天在国内各地讲堂里辩驳得不可开交的舌战迟早会获得解决。到时候，这个国家的注意力就能转向国外。

伊斯兰保守派在这里已大树盘根了。因此，从长远的角度来看，新加坡（和穆斯林人数众多的泰国及菲律宾一样）是无法避开这个问题的。一个有财有势的神权政体未必会要遵从国际关系和外交基本准则。独立自主权的课题在那些自觉深受不公平对待、饱受虐待的少数民族——穆斯林眼中，简直是无关紧要的事。势力日益壮大的宗教司将如何看待新加坡？伊斯兰沙文主义不比马来沙文主义来得更容易对付。至少，传达政治与社会经济利益的言论，相较于传达灵修和神学言论要来得容易。而新加坡这类世俗国家在这一方面可能会面对巨大的挑战。马来西亚的情况和印尼不同，他们的国家政治改革和重组，经常引起血腥暴动的剧烈反弹。在这里，任何的改变都是循序渐进的。

马来西亚已不再是以往那个“由上而下”的专制社会了。然而马来社群里的隔阂与裂痕仍然还很深，而这也成了巫统在重振之际的一大挑战。从委任巫青团理事莫哈末基尔

(Mohd Khir Toyo) 这名政治新手担任雪兰莪州务大臣的事件中，我们就可以清楚看到这种情况。

《马来前锋报》甚至大幅度报道这位新人的平凡背景，还给他取了“垃圾小孩”的称号，只因他曾经靠收旧报纸谋生。

由于国内穆斯林社群所存有的内部偏见与不和，加上政党信誉与司法公正的双重挑战，这些因去年改选和索克族事件引发的问题，如今成为巫统内部所密切关注的要点。为了要成为马来人社群的唯一代表，巫统势必挽回族群的灵魂。

在这个大前提下，马来西亚和新加坡的关系自然已没有那么重要了。而且，李资政的言论在这里没有引发浩然轰动，背后原因其实很简单，那就是巫统大势已去，再也无法激起大风浪。

如今，若只是在吉隆坡和政党高层谈话交流，抑或和政党忠实支持者吃饭聊天，其实也无法深入了解“基层”的情绪和想法。因为这些所谓的“基层”，已变得越来越不讲理、互不信任又满腹牢骚。由上而下，几近封建的巫统政治体系已走到一个瓶颈了，而内部党员却同时不断的在重组。党中央已无法牢控外围的反应，而这也是马来西亚走向民主化的表征。不过，人民掌握更多的行动自由，到头来可能会让双边关系变得更复杂，也更难执行管理工作。因此，尽管目前的两国关系可以让新加坡和李资政稍微喘口气，但将来两国之间的关系可能会变得更加复杂、更形微妙。

2000年8月25日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2001年8月27日刊于《太阳报》

2000年8月28日刊于《海峡时报》

美国，孤独的巡警 America-the Lone Ranger

或许只是因为我厌倦伪善和侵略主义。但，在马来西亚的我却必需每天和这两者保持频密的接触。我的读者可能会认为，这是我蔑视马来西亚人而做出的愤怒表现。我感到很失望的是，我们的国民虽身裹国旗、口唱爱国歌曲，可是却不想了解关于我们社会中这些不太好的真相、不公平和道德腐败、无知与偏见。

然而，在月初纽约惨剧的余波中，我也同样的被美国这个我景仰已久的国家，所流露出来的伪善和侵略主义震撼了。

我宁可在一旁仔细聆听，也不想说些正义凛然、满口道义的言词，然而，数天前刚从英国回来的我，却想和我的读者们分享一些我对美国人在这起恐怖袭击事件中的反应之想法。

首先，我发现（这让我担心）美国人认为在美国土地上丧失生命的美国人，比任何一个在卢旺达土地上丧失生命的卢旺达人更形重要。坦白说，这一点也不奇怪。如果在吉隆坡双峰塔的一起袭击事件中，死了六千个马来西亚人，我敢跟你打赌，马来西亚人同样也会感到受辱、苦恼甚至痛不欲生。对吉隆坡来说，没有什么比这件事情更为严重。但是，我开始意识到美国人也寄望我这么一个非美国人去相信同样的一件事，去相信美国的一条人命比一个卢旺达人、孟加拉人、中国人甚或马其顿人更为珍贵。

简单来说，一场对美国的袭击是一场对全人类的袭击，但是一场在卢旺达的集体屠杀在他们眼中，还及不上一出悲剧。我把这个问题留给我的读者去思考。这个将在你脑中跃出的名词，第一个字母为“H”（即“伪善”，hyprocrisy）。

从另一个角度来看，很多美国人（提醒你，不是所有美国人）实际上都无法理解，尽管我们明白恐怖袭击事件所带来的震撼和恐慌，可我们却不想参与报复行动，也不想毫无保留的去支持它。同情是一回事，以“正义”来粉饰报复行为又是另一回事。我们的保留态度马上就被视为反美主义和阻挠神旨，反犹太主义。

身为一名律师，我相信每一个人在被定罪前，都应该获得法律审讯的机会。纳粹党的战争罪行是这样，塞尔维亚籍的前南斯拉夫总统米洛西维奇（SlobodanMilosevic）也是如此。

就算是天谴，也应符合法律程序。如果我们违背司法程序、以片面之词做定夺（集法官、陪审团和控方律师于一身），我们所秉持的做法就不文明了。在本质上，我们不见得比那些被我们指控和攻击的人要来得好。尊重法律反而赢得我们的尊重。不用说，这也是一个马来西亚政府常常拒绝去正视的教训，但是对于这个世界上不可或缺的国家，我可能会要求他们做得更好一些。

再者，北约联盟中的不稳定情况远比英国首相布莱尔所说的更严重。尽管布莱尔和布什站在同一个阵线上，然而对很多英国人来说，在这起恐怖袭击事件中，有一些事情更让他们觉得沮丧。

让他们不解的是，美国拒绝承认他们过去的种种作为可能已经侵害了美国以外的世界。我在英国看了一段震撼非常的电视直播节目（英国广播公司的“问答时间”）。在那个节目里，一个现场观众把美国过去的外交政策批评得一文不值。这种怒发冲冠的情况让我震惊，因为这件事情是发生在伦敦，而不是在北京或巴格达。那天晚上的观众（他们都是英国人，而不是比利亚人或古巴人）问了很多问题。他们严厉的批评了美国在中东的政策，京都合约、全球防御导弹系统，以及布什过去在外交政策上所持有的强硬态度，一如他的名言“Mywayorthehighway”（不跟从我的做法就拉倒）。长久以来，美国对以色列的偏袒已经是恶名昭彰，许多阿伯拉世界的国家因此而疏远它。美国表明拒绝面对这个事实，再一次的让我震惊。

他们也批评美国在这次袭击事件中的激愤和不顾一切的反应，及对他们的生活可能造成的冲击。看起来，没有人会允许美国就军事行动所开出的空头支票。

三者，神圣不可侵犯的自由市场。我记得几年前，我曾经在神圣不可侵犯的自由市场这个问题上，被很多美国人训话。他们以非常崇高的理念，用了不少道德字眼来告诉我，在任何时候，所有价格都应取决于自由市场。我以为我们不应该干预市场、不应介入华尔街，支持奄奄一息的公司企业。显而易见的，我并没有听出话中玄机，因为那些训诫附带了一个必要条件，只要涉及美国的经济利益，那些条例都可以被废弃。

第四点，言论自由。美国人对不同政见和社论的包容是我长久以来所景仰的。那种能力是强大力量的源头。当然，身为一名作家，我的意见常常被个人所关切的课题渗透：言论自由并不是马来西亚的价值观，我们可以这么说吗？

一直以来，“言论自由”是美国民主的标志。只是如今，这概念却被维护国家安全和支持国民情操等名堂所侵害。不管怎样，我所关切的是，要求政府抑制言论自由的民怨正愈形高涨，而“美国之音”电台记者也正面临着必须报导正面新闻的压力。他们必须对美国官方作出有利且正面的报导，而且绝不能发表塔勒班政权的观点。我不是塔勒班的拥护者，也不是什么伊斯兰极端分子。但是对于那种强加在新闻报导上的压力，使我深觉失望，它直击了美国基本自由的核心。

总而言之，那一场悲剧揭示了一个个体的真正力量和弱点，同样的，也揭示了国家的真正面目。在我为发生在美国国土上的暴力行动深表哀切的同时，这个我素来景仰的国家，却因惨剧的发生而萌起了如此荒诞且愚蠢的行径。这种景象着实让我异常心痛。

2001年9月29日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2001年9月30日刊于《太阳报》

2001年10月7日刊于《星洲日报》

伊斯兰自由派和原教旨派之间的冲突 The Clash of Liberal and Literal Islam

谁会赢得印尼两亿名穆斯林的心？当然，偏激和暴力图像往往会独占报章封面头条。然而，伊斯兰世界里的两大派系之争，即“自由”伊斯兰和“原教旨”伊斯兰的纷扰仍然没完没了。在印尼，温和派的势力不容忽视。这里(印尼)的情况和其他伊斯兰国家如巴基斯坦和埃及等不一样，温和派学者、思想家和政治分子主导了国家主要的政权。

举世闻名的学者马吉(NurcholishMajid)和印尼首屈一指的伊斯兰学院——国家伊斯兰科学学术研究所(IAIN)所长阿兹拉(AzyurmadiAzra),都是温和派中的佼佼者。上述两人最为人所称道的是他们愿意正视现代化的挑战，包括其他信仰和对性别平等课题的敏感。同时也有一批年轻后浪崛起，如伊斯兰教士联合会(NahadatulUlama,在马来西亚原称回教教士联合会，简称回联)中桀骜不驯的人力资源发展部主任乌立阿布沙阿达拉(UlilAbshar-Abdalla)和学者鲁特菲阿斯雅乌卡尼(LutfiAssyaukanie)等。

另一方面，还有一些超级保守的领袖，如公正党的希达雅特努尔华希(HidayatNurWahid)和圣战军的嘉阿法乌玛达立布(JaafarUmarThalib),这两人就希望能够在印尼全面实施伊斯兰法令。

当然，两股势力之间都彼此不咬弦。近来，《印尼新闻周报》(Gatra)就引述了圣战军领袖的一番话：“我们和他们之间的差异就像穆斯林和非穆斯林之间的差异一样。”不过，温和派并不因此胆怯，因为绝大多数的印尼人在宗教方面都抱持中立态度；而实际上，印尼的自由开放风气也造就了一群有批判意识的群众。

印尼是全球人口最多的伊斯兰国，也是伫立在东南亚的沉默巨人，印尼的命运牵引着整个区域内的其他国家。激进派穆斯林的愿景从西北的亚齐一直伸展到东边的伊里安查亚，跨越敏感的大洋航线，并控制必要的天然资源，让西方的战略家心惊胆颤。

一部分原因是在苏哈多的新政治体系下，两大宗教性团体——伊斯兰教士联合会及穆罕默德运动都已和政府划清界线。尤其是伊斯兰教士联合会长久以来就是一个自主性很强的组织，在爪哇东部如Teburing、Tambakberas及Denanyar等地区的私立宗教学校已牢牢扎根。这种活跃的特性可以追溯到荷兰殖民时代。相反的，他们松散的组织结构也会影响组织的效率。在印尼人民眼中，这两个分别拥有三千万名成员的组织迄今仍保有他们本身的信誉。

伊斯兰教士联合会也把大部分精力投注在教育方面，伊斯兰教士联合会学者如瓦希德便常专注于学问的探索，他们花时间去试着寻找西方启蒙思想和伊斯兰传统理念的平衡点。此外，尽管是在苏哈多掌权时，他们经历了人权被侵犯的时代，但他们仍对许多公众的社会议程许下承诺。

著名社会学家沙隆西迪(SharonSiddique)曾对这个强大组织发表其看法：“虽然印尼圣战理事会坚守传统，但是它却出乎意料的愿意张开双臂怀抱新理念。这主要还是源自瓦希德那种既封建又宽厚的领袖素质。”

在这一方面，印尼是与众不同的。在伊斯兰世界的其他国家中，宗教团体为了要和掌权者配合，常常需要牺牲它们的自主性；同时，有自由倾向的作家和思想家通常都会被监视或孤立起来。比方说在埃及，诺贝尔文学奖得主吉布马哈福兹(NaguibMahfouz)曾经是1994年残酷屠杀行动的暗杀对象。

但印尼的自由主义者绝对不会成为受害者。他们全体总动员，他们做策略性的思考，他们了解媒体运用，也会为未来打算。一个很好的例子是伊斯兰自由网站(Islamlibcom)所做的工作：专注在雕塑民众的想法和意见；他们出现在电视和电台节目中，他们勤于写作，并在印尼全国各地的报章上同步发表评论。

这个国家的自由主义者并不是孤陋寡闻的。他们是受西方教育的现世主义者，大部分都是毕业于宗教学校，讲得一口流利的阿拉伯语，也接受过伊斯兰法学训练；他们的训练背景让他们有信心独当一面的辩论宗教课题，他们在正面交锋时从不打退堂鼓。一如伊斯兰教士联合会人力资源发展部主任乌立说的：“我们都来自传统的体系，我们可以正面挑战保守派系。”

大部分学生在广泛接触了许多不同伊斯兰学者的经典之作，包括所有伟大的合法传统(theMaliki,the Hanbali,the Hnafi,theShafi'i)后，对“内在分歧”和以伊斯兰法学为根本的对话有了更实在的认识，简单的说，他们意识到所有问题的答案都不只“一个”。

他们的学术成就是非常令人惊叹且深入的。身为敬虔的穆斯林，他们遵照可兰经的教导，对人极尽恭敬、善良孝顺，严格要求本身的知识涵养。有些人甚至把可兰经的知识和圣训，和西方顶尖大学如加拿大的麦杰尔大学和荷兰莱登大学中的学问结合起来，让新发现的哲理和技术成为他们研究的一部分。

再者，他们抓紧基本真理；伊斯兰是一种强调正确思想和正确举止的宗教，在他们的想法中，改革运动不能只是政策或程序的修整，相反的，可兰经的意义和实用性的修订是他们最重要的挑战。

不过，他们也相信现代化——人权、民主、科学和技术可以弥补伊斯兰中的不足，这两股力量不是对峙的。就像乌立的解释：“探究这些价值观，我们能更深切的体认到：批判和质疑的精神是世纪以来伊斯兰对话的正字招牌。”

眼前一个例子就是——“夫妻关系新面貌”(Wajahbarurelasisuamiisteri)，这是一份对源自 1800 年传统经文的重新评鉴，由赛那哇威(SheikhNawawi)草拟。这份经文已经成为印尼全境宗教学校中心必备的教材，**不过**对很多革新派人士来说，它是伊斯兰中藐视女人的象征。

由前总统瓦希德夫人欣达努里娅(IbuSintaNuriah)为主导的研究小组重新评估了这本书，并重新评估了伊斯兰教义中固有的性别歧视。他们煞费心思的重新整理，和解释这段 19 世纪的经文；他们详细检查了原始圣训中的每一项规定，并依长久以来的诠释法和验证法来证实其价值和可信度。国家伊斯兰科学学术研究所的教授那沙鲁汀乌玛(NasarudddinUmar)争论：“赛那哇威的书有非常阿拉伯式的文化，我们在讨论原典中对女性的歧视时，必须注意这个特性。我们不能忘记伊斯兰法令的终极目标一直是标榜公义与和平的。”

这两股势力的拉锯战可能会僵持很久，不过一个不容置疑的事实是，**至少**在印尼，自由派人士和他们的对手是势力相当，绝对可以相提并论的。

2002 年 5 月 5 日刊于《星报》

2002 年 5 月 6 日刊于《新加坡商业时报》

2002 年 5 月 6 日刊于《南华早报》

2002 年 5 月 7 日刊于《雅加达报》

2002 年 5 月 12 日刊于《星洲日报》

2002 年 7 月刊于《外交政策杂志》