# ISLAM AND THE CHALLENGE OF MANAGING GLOBALISATION:
## The Case of Islam in Southeast Asia

*By: Ahmad Syafii Maarif**

*Abstrak*

*Globalisasi Islam bagi sementara pihak seringkali dilihat sebagai suatu momok menakutkan yang menjadi ancaman serius bagi peradaban Barat, dan secara lebih ekstensif bagi peradaban manusia. Pandangan semacam ini semakin menguat setelah adanya serangan 11 September 2001 terhadap World Trade Center (WTC) yang merupakan simbol kekuatan global dunia (Amerika). Pada paper ini, penulis mengkaitkan pandangan yang minor terhadap Islam dalam konteks Islam Asia Tenggara. Menurut penulis, Islam di Asia Tenggara merupakan bagian dari ummah Islam global yang memiliki kekhasan tersendiri, sekaligus kemiripan-kemiripan dengan Islam yang ada di Timur Tengah. Pertanyaan yang muncul kemudian, apakah tuduhan terhadap Islam dan gerakan globalisasinya juga berlaku untuk kawasan ini. Pertanyaan ini menjadi semakin spesifik, karena Islam di Asia Tenggara juga besar dan negara-negara muslim di kawasan ini sedang memasuki era globalisasi. Ada beberapa pertanyaan yang hendak dikemukakan penulis dalam paper ini, bagaimana globalisasi mempengaruhi muslim di Asia Tenggara? Dalam konteks Indonesia, bagaimana melihat fenomena tumbuhnya radikalisme di negeri ini? Dan kemudian bagaimana upaya menuju masa depan yang lebih baik bagi Islam dan Barat dalam era globalisasi.*

خلاصة

عولمة الإسلام كما رآها البعض شيء مخيف يهدد الحضارة الغربية والعالم. وتتزايد هذه الرأية بعد حادثة ١١ سبتمبر عام ٢٠٠١ على مبنى التجارة ( WTC ) وهو رمز نفوذ العولمة الأمركية . و في هذا البحث قارن الكاتب الرأية الخاطئة للإسلام ومسلمي جنوب شرقي آسيا خاصة. يرى الكاتب أن المسلمين في جنوب شرقي آسيا جزء من الأمة الإسلامية في العالم. فالسؤال هل التهمة الذي وجهه الغرب على الإسلام والعولمة الذي يعيش فيها هو بذاتها قمة للمسلمين في هذه المنطقة. والسؤال يدور مهما لأن عدد المسلمين في هذه المنطقة فوق عدد المسلمين في الشرق الأوسط. ثم طرح الباحث عدة أسئلة : كيف يتأثر المسلمون بالعولمة في هذه المنطقة ؟ وفي إندونيسيا نفسها كيف نظر إلى ظاهرة الحركة المتطرفة في هذا البلاد؟ وماذا سعينا للوصول إلى خير المستقبل للجميع.

*Keywords: Islam, Globalisation, Southeast Asia*

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* Professpor at UNY and the Chairman, Central Executive Board Muhammadiyah, Indonesia.

## A. Introduction

When the Berlin Wall collapsed in 1989, the dramatic event was celebrated as the beginning of a new world order. It was expected that the world, after being freed from ideological conflict between two superpowers, would be a better and a more peaceful place to live. Such confidence in a better and more peaceful world, however, soon proved to be short-lived. When the world began to witness the intensification of other types of conflicts, previously swept under the rug of superpower rivalry during the Cold War era, a new pessimism began to creep in. The world began to see the frenzy of murders in countries plagued with ethnic and religious conflicts, the growing trend of ethno-nationalism, and the increase of incidents of transnational crimes, as "new" types of threats to world order. The post cold War's confidence in a better world was shaken further when Professor Samuel Huntington declared that the coming conflict will be fought along civilisation's fault lines: between Islam and the West and between Confucianism and the West. Huntington's imagination reminds us of Thomas Hobbes` world of " war of all against all."

˙    Even though Huntington's "clash of civilisations" thesis soon became a subject of intense debates among academia, politicians, religious leaders, NGOs alike, many disagreed and even refuted his simplistic view of the world. When the thesis was almost forgotten, however, the horrific terrorist attacks in the US on September 11 have somewhat changed the balance. It should be acknowledged that many have now come to see what might now be termed as Huntingtonian New World Order as a possible scenario. The September 11 tragedy, either by design or by default, has put Islam in a greater focus then ever. Islam inevitably becomes a new centre of attention, both in positive and negative terms. When some of us begin to see the September 11 as the evidence for "the clash of civilisation" between Islam and the West, the future of humankind, and indeed civilisation itself, Islam now at the most critical juncture of history.

Questions began to be asked in the U.S. in particular, and the Western world in general: Why and how did it happen?[1] Does it have something to do with Islam?[2] Why do they hate America?[3] What Went Wrong?[4] These are, in fact, a series of complex question with no simple answer. Unfortunately, some of us a keen to resort to simple answer: Islam, globalisation, and the

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[1] See, for example, James F. Hoge, Jr. and Gideon Rose, eds., 2001, *How Did This Happen?: Terrorism and the New War*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations.

[2] Strobe Talbot and Nayan Chanda, 2001, "Introduction," in Strobe Talbott and Nayan Chanda, eds., *The Age of Terror: American and the World After September 11*. New York: Basic Book, p. xi

[3] Fareed Zakaria, 2001, "Why They Hate America " *News Week*, 15 October.

combination of the two. Islam has become a suspect in this regard. Then, when the attack on the WTC come to be seen as a symbolic attack against the very essence of American power—global wealth, global outreach and global power—the other culprit has been the uneven effect of globalization. And, unfortunately, Islam and globalisation has come to be seen by some as a lethal combination that poses a serious threat to the west, and by extension, to human civilisation. In that context, intensification of dialogue and greater contacts in order to foster deeper mutual understanding between the two civilisations become imperative.

As Islam in Southeast Asia Islam part of the global Islamic *ummah,* despite its differences and similarities with that of in the Middle East, it has also been exposed to these questions. Due to the globalisation, the "clash of the civilisation" thesis and its reinvigoration after the September 11 attacks, and the subsequent U.S-led global war against terrorism, the inevitably put southeast Asia's Islam on the spotlight. Here, the questions become more specific: as the presence of Islam southeast Asia Islam also large, and Muslim countries in this region are also experiencing the uneven process of globalisation, would it not pose a threat to the U.S. and to the Western civilisation too? Will Southeast Asia's Islam become a hotbed for terrorist organisation? Could Southeast Asia's tolerant brand of Islam give way to militant fundamentalism following September 11?[5]

This paper sets out to examine four main questions. First, how has globalisation affected Muslims in Southeast Asia, what are the challenges and their consequences, and what went wrong? Second, how do we understand the growth of radicalism in Indonesia? Finally, how should the path towards a better future for both Islam and the west in an area of globalisation be crafted?

## B. Challenges of Globalisation: The Predicament of Southeast Asian Muslims

Globalisation, in economic sense, has been characterised as "the widening and deepening of international flows of trade, finance and information in a single, integrated global market."[6] It has both positive and negative sides, and also its winners and losers. On the positive sides, it has been argued that the average economic growth rates in countries that take part in the process of globalisation, especially by opening up their economies, had increased

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[4] Bernard Lewis, 2002, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response,* New York: Oxford University Press.

[5] Lyall Breckon, 2001, "Solid in Support of the U.S.... So Far," *Comparative Connection,* 3rd Quarter 2001, July-September.

[6] UNDP, *Human Development Report 1997,* Oxford: Oxford University Press for UNDP, p. 82

from 2.9 percent in the 1970s to 3.5 percent in the 1980s and 5 percent in the 1990s. Meanwhile, those countries not globalising saw a decline in their economic growth from 3.3 percent per year in 1970s. to 0.8 percent in the 1980s, recovering to only 1.4 percent in 1990s.[7] It has also presented developing nations with new economic opportunities, primarily through the influx of foreign direct investment which often, but not always, open wider access towards technology, science, and knowledge. During the height of economic growth in Indonesia, for example, we were told by former President Suharto that globalisation "provides a greater opportunity for improving national development in order to achieve national prosperity."[8]

The central issue here, however, is not the positive side of globalisation. The problem lies in the negative side of it, and it is towards the dark side of globalisation that individuals, communities, and nations in postcolonial world, including the Muslim word, have expressed their discontents.[9] At the global level alone, globalisation has been blamed for the widening of the poverty and income gap. Globalization has also been singled out as the reason for the growing disparity between the rich and poor from 30: 1 in 1960 to 60: 1 in 1990, and 74: 1 in 1997. While a few hundreds people enjoy the status as billionaires , more than  1.2 billion individuals around the world still earn less than US$1 a day, with 0.5 billion others live in extreme poverty. When the developed world, which only has 22 percent of world's population, consumes 70 percent of total world resources, the contrast between the winners and losers in the globalisation game could have been more striking.

## C. *Globalisation and the Plight of The Deprived Muslims*

Throughout Southeast Asia, like in many other parts of the developing world, globalisation is also embraced and seen by regional countries with a degree of suspicion. As the impact of globalisation on society and nations across the world has been uneven, either in negative or positive terms, it is inevitable that some groups, societies or nations fell that they are being marginalized and deprived by the process. For these groups or nations, the suspicions of globalization are far greater than within those groups, societies or nations that benefit the most from it. In such circumstances, it is important to note that the grievances over the negative process of globalisation are often shared across culture and nations. A view from Bhutan, for example, has noted globalisation as a conspiracy by developed countries to establish and

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[7] Paul Blustein, "Cause, Effect and the Wealth of Nations," *The Washington Post,* 4 November 2001.

[8] *Suara Karya,* 12 March 1997.

[9] Over the last few years, the general discontents against globalization has been increasingly expressed also in part of the developed world. Anti-globalization protests have always marked economic gatherings of leaders of the developed worlds; and in the WTO meetings.

maintain a *status quo* global order in which they can consolidate their privileged status and vested interests.[10]

Within the Muslim community in Southeast Asia, such grievances against globalisation are also often heard. There is a widespread belief in some quarters that globalisation is a form of global conspiracy of the West aimed at undermining Islam and the Muslim community. It is seen as an instrument of the West to erode the *aqidah Islamiyah* –the basic and fundamental doctrinal beliefs – that forms the core of Islamic faith. It is seen as a challenge to *Syariah;* a concerted effort of the West to secularize Islam, pushing it to the realm of the private and the spiritual, and removed from the earthy world. The globalization process is also often regarded as nothing but a process to undermine Islamic moral principles *(Akhlâq)*. The end goal of this process, some of us believe, is none but to re-colonize Islam and turns it into an appendix of the Western civilisation.

Such feeling and suspicion has not developed in a vacuum. Nor does it emerge out of an inherent and embedded belief in the incompatibility between Islam and the West. It emerges out of a specific social, political, economic, and historical context primarily within domestic political order, and also within the global order. In Southeast Asia, for example, more than 70 millions Muslims continue to live in extreme poverty, with no adequate access to proper education, decent jobs and health services. For them the reality is an unpleasant one. Despite all government's talks about people's economy, free trade, economic liberalisation, and the importance of small-scale enterprises, the process of development continues to benefit the few. Corruption has become norms rather than an exception. When they look up to the justice system, they often find that justice is not for them, but for those in upper places within the society.

At the other end of the reality, they are presented with a new way of live on daily basis, performed unashamedly by "the new rich," the benefactors of globalisation. While few hundreds parents send their children abroad for better education, tens of millions others are still struggling to buy even a simple book for their children. When some of these "New Rich" insist to send their children to best hospitals around the world even when they catch a simple flu, millions of other parent can only pray and watch their children lying on the simple wooden beds helplessly, fighting to recover from all kind of serious diseases due to sustained malnutrition. Millions of Muslims cannot understand why hedonism and consumerism, with all its consequences for morality and ethics, are allowed to flourish unabated by the state.

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[10] Lyonpo Jigmi Thinley, "Globalization: a View From Bhutan," *Newsletter,* Regional Center for Strategic Studies, Colombo, vol. 8, no. 1, January 2002

In that context, globalisation has come to the be seen as a direct challenge, if not an assault, not only to the identity and way of life of a community, but also to the very existence of that community itself. The forces of change, with sweep before their eyes and infiltrate their private and public live, have not always been easy to be understood and comprehended, let alone controlled. When the imperative of change becomes a dominant and intimidating narrative, presents itself as an inevitable phenomena, and leaves no alternative but to be on board or left behind, the capacity of some people to make an informed choice significantly reduced in the absence of a level playing field between the privileged and the deprived in the society. When the pressure grow stronger in the absence of globalisation's real progress for the deprived, they soon feel confused, alienated, and forced into a " precarious retreat ".

In such circumstances, a chain of self-transformation, that forces and individual to question his / her right and place within the society, is in order. First, when the deprived see that to state and the government have not come to their defense, they feel abandoned. Second, when they see the problem becomes a waiting game without a clear end, they get frustrated and plunge into despair. Third, when they see the state becomes and accomplice in maintaining the uneven progress between the privileged and the deprived, they get angry. Confusion, frustration, despair, and anger would soon find its expression in many forms, some through violent means, initially aimed at what they see as injustice, moral decadence, and religious bankruptcy within a domestic order. When this process take place on a collective basis, then what you have is a breeding ground for growing radicalism in the society. In such society, religion-indeed any religion-is often seen as a refuge, as a source for an alternative mode of defense mechanism against the effects of modernity and the janus face of globalisation. Here, the state often comes in as catalyst that forces the deprived to resort to violent acts through regime's policy of repressing political dissent and denying political participation.

## What Went Wrong?

Here, it is almost a cliche to say that the sources of problems faced by any society are in fact both exogenous and indigenous. However, one of the greatest problems faced by some within the Muslim community in Southeast Asia, and indeed the world over, is the tendency and the habit of finding the blame somewhere else, outside itself, for all its problem. Instead for asking themselves what wrong within the community, they tend to look to somewhere else, often looking at the post colonial global structure as the only reason behind the plight of Muslim countries. True, the unjust international order also contributes to the problem. What they often missed, however, is

the fact that the wide-spread injustice within their society, with serves to create a sense of despair and frustration, is largely caused by absence of good governance and wide-spread corruption, exacerbated by the absence of democratic political institutions to check abuses of power by the rulers.

The second problem is the preoccupation of some element in the Muslim world with ahistorical exercise that rejects all aspects of the so-called " modernity project " –including democracy, human right, state based an rule of law, and nation-state-on the basis of a strong belief that Islam is consisted of a unique and comprehensive social-political system.[11] The argument that Islam is not compatible with democracy would certainly sustain the irony of injustice, corruption, opression, despotism, and authoritarianism so pervasive in many part of the Muslim world. In the hand of the advocates of incompatibility between Islam and democracy, Islam has become an excuse to preserve despotism in the name of religion.[12] Islam, if one looks at both the Qur'an and *Hadiths,* is full with references to the principles of democracy and pluralism, and the importance of human right. Islam strongly emphasizes the principles of *Nasiha* ( advice ), *Shura* (consultation), *Ikhtilaf* (airing and resolving disagreement ), *Tasamuh* (tolerance), *Hisbah* (public accountability and ombudsmanship) in governing the relationship between the ruler and the ruled; all refer to what we now call democracy. In fact, Islam even teaches that a Muslim should accept and atheist as his/her neighbour.[13] Unfortunately, some in West also dismiss the possibility for the compatibility between Islam and the idea of freedom. According to *Der Spiegel,* for example "freedom of is, like every other human right in Islam, unIslamic "[14]

The third problem is the obession with the glorious past. In responding to the challenges of globalisation, there is a tendency within the Muslim community to engage in excessive excersise of romanticizing the past. The glorious Islamic past (from 8th to 13th centuries) is not seen through a critical lenses, often dismissing the fact that, internally, the Islamic civilisation during this period did not demonstrate the presence of political justice, and in fact was often marked by inter-dynastic rivalry that led to the destruction of the civilisation itself. At the present, Islam still lack a conscious and coordinated movement aimed at reformulating its understanding of doctrine in a fundamental way. There is a need for the Muslim to engage in an all-encompassing attempt to reformulate its theology, philosophy, sufiism, law system, social principles, economy, politics, science and knowledge, and art, with the Qur'an as the most importance and

[11] See my argument in Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif, 1995, *Membumikan Islam* [ Bringing Islam to Earth ], Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, p. 95

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

[13] I stress this point in my interview, *Tempo,* 11 November 2001

[14] Quoted in Andrea Lueg, " The Perception of Islam in Western Debate", in Jochen Hippler ans Andrea Lueg,. 1995.eds, *The Next Threat: Western Perception of Islam,* London: Pluto Press, p. 22.

highest reference. Few realizes that a new Islamic civilisation will stay as an utopia if the Muslim have not changed its attitude towards a positive, and dynamic one in coping with the world marked by rapid change.[15]

When such problems are matched with the unfortunate place of Islam in the psychological ream of the wets, the seeds for misunderstandings and mutual opposition would continue to bloom. Islam is still, and increasingly se in the aftermath of September 11, primarily framed in contested terms such as militant Islam, fundamentalist Islam, Islamic bombs, Islamic fanatics, or Islamic terrorism. Here, globalisation, despite its promise for an increasingly more open and borderless world, also has its mistery. Despite its central role in spearheading the process of globalisation, with unlimited and unrestricted access to information facilitated by the revolution in information technology (IT), Islam strangely remains largely a realm of "the unknown" to the West, the implosion of IT, and enhanced interaction between Islam in the West as not yet removed the habit of stereotyping Islam so prevalent in the some quarters in the West.

The image of Islam as a violent religion posing an eternal threat to Western civilisation, more to since September 11, easily be found even in the educated minds among the Westerners. The unfortunate remarks by Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi, who claimed Western civilisation far more superior than that of Islam, clearly demonstrate the magnitude of this problem. As a scholar has aptly noted, "...today we are witnessing the creation of a new myth. The impending confrontation between Islam and the West is presented as part of an historical pattern of Muslim belligerency and agression..."[16] Indeed, the growing feeling of disenfranchisement, resentment, and despair among some Muslims and the continuing reluctance to learning and understanding more about Islam in some quarters in the West proves to be mutually reinforcing in a negative way. It is like adding the dry grass to the fire.

The resurgence of Islamic movements in many parts of the Muslim world should be understood within this context. Indeed, it has been pointed out that the basic concerns of past Muslim leaders and thinkers—such as Abu A'la Maududi and Muhammad Iqbal in Pakistan, Muhammad Abduh and Hasan al-Bana in Egypt, and Ali Shariati in Iran—"were how to solve the pervasive sense of disenfranchisement that engulfed ordinary Muslim as the they grappled with the forces of changes."[17] In contemporary context, such concerns re-

[15] For further discussion on this point, see A. Syafi'i Ma'arif, 2000, *Independensi Muhammadiyah Di Tengah Pergumulan Pemikiran Islam dan Politik* [Muhammadiyah's independency Amids the Struggle between Islamic Thought and politics], Jakarta: Cidesindo, p. 61-68

[16] John L. Esposito, "Clash of Civilizations? Contemporary Images of Islam in the West," in Gema Martin Munoz, 1999, ed., *Islam, Modernism, and the West*, London, I.B. Taurus, p.96.

[17] Hussin Mutalib, "Beyond Pride and Prejudice: Western Perceptions of Islam and The Muslims," in Zafar Ishaq Ansari and John L. Eposito, 2001, eds., *Muslim and the West: Encounter and Dialogue*, Islamabad, Islamic Research Institute, p. 94.

main in the core of the struggle for Justice in many parts of Muslims world. It is also the concerns being shared and experienced by million of Muslim in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia.

## D. The Case Of Indonesia: Understanding and Coping With Radicalism

As mentioned earlier, globalisation, for many Indonesian Muslims, has its positive and negative sides. The outbreak of the worst economic crisis in decades clearly demonstrates Indonesia's failure in coping with the effects of globalisation. Under President Suharto, it had refused to undertake necessary policy adjustments needed to protect the poor and the disadvantaged within the society. Consequently, when the economy collapsed, more than 45 millions Indonesia were forced to live *under* the poverty line, not to mention tens of million other lived just *on* the poverty line. That was a dramatic increase from 11 present in 1996 to 20 present in 1998. Under such circumstances, the concerns and resentments against negative aspects of globalisation has taken a new turn and manifested in many forms. The process of the radicalisation in some quarters within Indonesia's Muslim community have been one of issues that attract much attention from within outside the country.

How do we understand the so-call phenomena of "Islamic radicalism" in the country in relation to the effects of globalization? What are the efforts undertaken to remedy the situation? The picture, on balance, is not radically different from other parts of the Muslim world in general, and in Southeast Asia in particular. In fact, Indonesian Muslims constitute the majority of Muslim in Southeast Asia. The uneven process economic developments, has set the context for the radicalisation within the community.

However, it should be noted that greater attention to the religious radicalism in Indonesia began when few hundreds people, under the banner of Islam, took the streets amid the impeding America's plan to attack Afghanistan, a poor country accused of harboring terrorists. Some of these Muslim went to the extent of making noisy threats to sweep Americans in Indonesia expell them from the country. Such display of radicalism and militancy over the street the Jakarta and few other major cities in Indonesia, unfortunately, has strengthened the misperception of Islam throughout the world. it has created an unpleasant image of Indonesia's Islam to the outside world. Question began to be posed to Indonesia whether Islam in the country is experiencing a rapid radicalisation. Worse, there have also been allegations that Indonesia has become a safe haven for International terrorist groups.

No one denies the existence of radical groups in Indonesia. However, it is important not to equate "radicalism" with "terrorism". While the former refers to a set of attitude and ways to express it, the letter clearly embraces criminal acts for political purpose. As a set of attitude, radicalism may or may not turn into

terrorism. Dealing with the two requires a different set of actions. Radicalism is an intra-religious problem that should be death by the Muslim community itself. Meanwhile, terrorism is a global phenomenon the requires a global effort to combat it. And, such efforts should not be linked to any religion. Terrorism is simply a despicable criminal act, committed by evil people against humanity.

In the context of growing radicalism in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah (the second largest Muslim organisation in Indonesia) has set for itself the task of revealing the real face of Islam and its adherents in Indonesian as the most populous Muslim country in the world.[18] This task becomes a pressing one as there is still deep misunderstanding and misperceptions among those who believe that the radical Muslims represent the entire Muslim community in Indonesia. In this context, it is important to acknowledge and appreciate the fact that radical and extremist Islam is not the mainstream movement in Indonesia. It only a small group within the entire Muslim population in the country numbering 190 millions adherents.

It is also equally important, however, to understand why radicalism emerged here in Indonesia and elsewhere in the world. In Indonesia, most of those people are energetic and impatient youth who no longer trust the corrupt government system and impotent legal and security apparatus. They want instant change and abrupt action to stop any irregularities in society. The attacks by these groups on gambling houses and entertainment centres, for example, clearly reflected a degree of moral concerns in the adventure of strict law enforcement by the state. In fact, a common thread among most these groups is that they are reactions to contemporary social and economic problems. They, however, do not equip them selves with intellectual instrument to articulate their ideas in a civil way. They are also not able to explain the motivation behind such radical actions.

In the short-term, their actions might appear fruit full but certainly not in the long-term. It is therefore very dangerous if one idealizes their actions. Militancy is always dangerous as it always views things through a pair of black and white spectacles. More over, such radical and militant action could harm the image of Islam as a peace-loving religion that preaches tolerance and civil ways of solving problems. al-Qur'an clearly obliges all Muslim to *"Invite to Godness, to enjoin equity to forbid evil"*. (Q.S. (3):104), but they are also reminded : *"call unto the way of Allah with wisdom and godly exhortation, and contend with them on the basis of that which is best"*. (QS.(16):125). In that context, it is the duty of Muhammadiyah in particular, and Indonesian Muslim in general, to create a more loving and peaceful of Islam through their religious and cultural *da'wah* (propagations).

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[18] The next three paragraphs are drawn from author's interview with *The Jakarta Post*, 26 January 2002.

## E. Path Ways to the future: Toward cooperative peaceful co-existence

For Muslims the world over, the issue is not whether Islam should oppose globalisation or accept it. The real issue is how to manage globalisation so that it's positive aspects can be maximized and the negative ones minimized, if not eliminated. This requires a critical thinking and attitude in responding to globalisation. Yusuf Qardlawi, a leading Muslim scholar, has noted that Islam should take a middle way, namely, taking the positive sides of globalisation, and living it negative ones.[19] Failure to do this surely invites troubles. In this context, it is of paramount importance for us to understand that the failed development polices of pro- globalisation regimes, endemic corruption, structural poverty, bad governance and crisis of legitimacy serve as the root-cause for the growth of radicalism the urban and lower classes.

As challenges confronting both the Islamic community and the West are rapidly becoming more complex due to globalisation, then it is imperative for both sides to initiate a joint effort to search for the pathways to the future. A number of points need to be stressed in this regard. First, this endevour requires a strong political will on both sides to see the merits of constructive engagement with each other to forge a cooperative·peaceful co-existence. That would require a herder work on both sides to establish mutual understanding and mutual respect, as the basis for cooperation, through a reinterpretation of history of relationship between the two. History has been too often used and abused to sustain mutual suspicion and enmity on both sides. This requires the return of history into its right full place. A leading Muslim scholar, Muhammad Arkoun, has reminded us that "historians particularly must continue to struggle relentlessly to mitigate the ravaging effects of all official historiographies placed at the service of the will for power."[20]

Second, Islam and the West should begin to work together and step up their efforts to address the down sides of globalisation. Both parties should eliminate injustices, poverty, prejudices, practices of discrimination, and all forms of evil acts at national in correcting such condition has been clearly spelled out by Prophet Muhammad, who said *"when you see an evil act you have to stop it with your hand. If you can't, then at least speak out against it with your tongue. If you can't, then at least you have to hate it with all your heart. And this is the weakest of faith "* (Shahih Muslim, Book 1, Number 79). This common endeavour can begin with the awareness of both sides to emphasize similarities, rather difference, as the basis for a constructive peaceful-co-existence.

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[19] Yusuf Qardhawi, 2001, *Islam dan Globalisasi Dunia*, Jakarta, Indonesian Trans. Al-Kautsar, p. 141

[20] Muhammad Arkoun, "History as an Ideologi of Legitimation: A comparative Approach in Islamic and European Contex," in Munoz, e, *Islam, Modernism, and the West*, p.37

Of course, there are those, both within the Muslim community and the community of the West, who do not believe in dialogue. In the West, for example, the resistance to dialogue is clearly exemplified in such remarks that claims " the West continue to conquer peoples, even if it means a confrontation with another civilization, Islam, firmly entrenched where it was 1400 years ago." Within Islam, as Yusuf Qardhawi has admitted, "there are Muslim extremists who claim that are common grounds between us and Christians and Jews."[21] And, as he has asserted "this is a wrong understanding of the Islamic viewpoint."[22] Islam strongly believes in the value of dialogue. The Qur'an is full of reference to dialogues, and " even with Satan, God Almighty holds dialogue.[23]

Third, a world comprised of different streams of culture and civilisations should not, and need not, be resisted. One world, in the sense of uniformity, would certainly be a very boring place to live. Plurality, and civil ways in managing differences within that plurality, would demonstrate the true meaning of civilisation. Indeed, for Muslims, such a world is not without purpose. As revealed in the Qur'an, "*O people! We have formed you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another*" (QS: 49:13) Difference according to the Qur'an is not only to be tolerated and accepted. It is to be celebrated as the object of creation itself. Again, the holy Qur'an also notes "*And had your lord so willed, he could surely have made the whole mankind one single community, but he willed it otherwise, and s they continue to differ save among those on whom God has bestowed his grace and for this He has created them*"(QS.:11:118). In other words, the celebration of differences in Islam is clearly reflected in the emphasis on the concept of *at Ta'aruf* or acquaintance.

Four, a better and more fruitful way towards the future lies in the willingness of both Islam and the west to move beyond the current impasse in their understanding of each other. On the one hand, to echo the call by Ismail Ragi Al-Faruqi, Islamic activism should be prepared to move beyond opposition to implementation. It is no longer enough to decry what one is against. While it is still important to proclaim what one is for, the time has come to craft specific and concrete plans in order to build a bridge between the Muslim world and the west, between the Muslim world and the Rests.[24] On the other hand, the West and the Rests should move beyond their current preoccupa-

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[21] Yusuf al-Qardhawi, "*Why Muslim and Christian Scholars Come Together.*" Speech delivered at Islamic-Christian Summit, Rome, 3-4 October 2001.

[22] *Ibid*

[23] *Ibid*

[24] A Brief description on the thinking of Ismail Ragi Al-Faruqi can be found in John L. Esposito and John O. Voll.2001. "*Makers of Contemporary Islam*", New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter 1, p. 31.

tion with the nation of Islam as a "threat" or "terror" and be prepared to see and understand Islam with all its complexity and plurality. As Edward Said has said, "Demonisation of the Other is not a sufficient basis for any kind of decent politics, certainly not now when the roots of terror in injustice can be addressed, and the terrorists isolated, deterred or put out of business."[25] Through this willingness to learn about each other in a honest way, a mutually constructive engagement between Islam and the west should not be too difficult to achieve. The creation of a relationships characterised by cooperative peaceful co-existence between two great civilisations would not be an utopia.

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[25] Edward Said, "*Islam And The West Are Inadequate Banners*," The Guardian, 16 September 2001.

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