



**IS MAQĀṢĪD AL-SHARĪ'A SUFFICIENT?  
REFLECTIONS ON ISLAM IN CONTEMPORARY  
MALAYSIA\***

**Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid**

School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, and currently Visiting Research Fellow, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia  
email: [afauzi@usm.my](mailto:afauzi@usm.my)

**Abstract:** During its brief 22-month administration (May 2018 – February 2020), Malaysia's *Pakatan Harapan* government put forward the idea of *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* or higher objectives of Islamic law as one of the precepts governing its Islamic agenda. While such an approach has demonstrated streaks of viability in extricating Islam from overly legalistic mores, it is epistemologically undetached from the sharia-centric paradigm that has dominated the post-colonial Muslim intellectual make-up. This article argues that proponents of *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* in Malaysia might have overlooked the more urgent need for a morally based framework that evaluates human action not on the extent to which humans observe external law but rather on how sensitively humans connect with God in the event of legal injunctions being adhered to, ignored or transgressed. What is needed in Malaysia in addition to *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* is *Maqāṣīd al-Akhlāq*, whose origins are rooted in the Islamic spiritual tradition of *taṣawwuf* or sufism.

**Keywords:** *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a*, *Maqāṣīd al-Akhlāq*, sufism, Malaysia

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujs.v24i2.406>

\* A preliminary version of this article was presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Multidisciplinary Research (iCMR), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang, 21-22 August 2019. The author would like to acknowledge the School of Distance Education, USM, for sponsoring his participation at iCMR; the *Islam Keseimbangan Acuan Malaysia* (Balanced Islam in the Malaysian Mould) research project under the auspices of the Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Bangi, Selangor, for providing funds (grant no: DCP-2017-012/3) for research leading to this article; and the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kuala Lumpur, for hosting the author as a visiting research fellow from 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020 during which the final version of this article was produced.

## Introduction

FROM MAY 2018 until February 2020, Malaysia was governed by the *Pakatan Harapan* (PH: Pact of Hope) ruling coalition made up of the multi-racial *Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (PKR: People's Justice Party), the social democratic but Chinese-dominated Democratic Action Party (DAP), the Islamist *Parti Amanah Negara* (AMANAH: National Trust Party) and the Malay-centric *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia* (PPBM: Malaysian United Indigenous Party) as its major component parties. Its turbulent 22 months in power was characterised by constant allegations by its political opponents regarding PH's more liberal approach in both racial divisions of power and practical application of Islam in the lives of Malaysians befitting multi-cultural realities of their way of life. One of the main planks of its Islamic agenda was fulfilment of *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* (higher objectives of Islamic law) in all its policies. The so-called *maqasidic* approach to Islamic injunctions calls for a holistic reading of scriptural sources, in particular the Quran and Sunnah, towards arriving at inclusive answers to modern societies of which Muslims form an integral part. It was meant to be implemented parallel with the other two precepts, namely the feasibility of a Malaysian model and the *Rahmah li al-'ālamīn* (mercy to the worlds) emphasis. This article aims to briefly examine the appositeness of the *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* framework in Malaysia in the wake of rising extremism among Malay-Muslim youth. It looks particularly at the extent to which *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* offers a comprehensive solution to Malaysia's ethno-religious problems. It looks especially at whether *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* can be successful as a standalone policy, or whether PH had unwittingly overlooked distantly related conceptions whose absence may threaten the utility and integrity of the *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* agenda.

## Conceptual background

It is not uncommon to read observations and assessments of Islam as lived and practised by Muslims in Malaysia and

Indonesia – the two easternmost Islamicate<sup>1</sup> countries of the *ummah* (global Muslim community), to be more culturally tolerant and religiously open to external influences.<sup>2</sup> This has consequently led to debates on whether Muslims of the Malay world could be regarded as religiously lax owing to a purported intransigence of refusing to follow Islamic scriptures by the book. Some past authors have sought to lay the blame for the Malays' relaxed religious attitudes to age-old religio-cultural traditions inherited from the sufis i.e. Muslim mystics credited in large part for the early spreading of Islam in Southeast Asia.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, if we were to conceptualise Islam in much broader terms than just legal categories, Islam's greatest contribution to Malay-Muslim heritage lies arguably in the field of *akhlāq*, broadly translated into English as morality or etiquette. There is a subtle difference between *akhlāq* and its Anglicised equivalents, however. While morality and etiquette can be practised in a purely horizontal human-to-human relationship and thus might be devoid of theological significance, *akhlāq* in Islam is a way of glorifying God by displaying sublime behaviour towards fellow humans worthy of respect as mortal creatures of God. *Ādamiyya* (humanity i.e. the fact that all humans derive their presence in the world from a genealogy that goes back to the Prophet Adam) serves as the dominant criterion here, and is inclusive of all humankind irrespective of ethnic identity and religious affiliation. According to this universalist perspective, one's very existence as a human being confers on him or her *'iṣmah* (inviolability). As far as worldly justice and peace is concerned, non-Muslims deserve

---

<sup>1</sup> A term introduced by historian Marshall Hodgson in his *Venture of Islam* (1974) to characterise regions in which Muslims were culturally dominant although not necessarily from a religiously legit point of view.

<sup>2</sup> Shadi Hamid, "What's Different about Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia?," *The Aspen Institute*, last modified July 1, 2016, accessed November 17, 2020, <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/whats-different-islam-malaysia-indonesia/>.

<sup>3</sup> See for example, A.C. Milner, "Islam and the Muslim State," in *Islam in Southeast Asia*, ed. M.B. Hooker (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983), 23–49; Nikki R. Keddie, "Islam and Society in Minangkabau and in the Middle East: Comparative Reflections," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 2, no. 1 (1987): 1–30.

respect and fair treatment as much as Muslims do. The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH: peace be upon him) own words during his farewell sermon form the basis for this humanistic worldview: 'O People, all mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; a white has no superiority over a black, nor does a black have any superiority over a white; [none have superiority over another] except by piety and good action.'<sup>4</sup>

In the Holy Quran, God praises the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for possessing *khuluqin 'azim* (supreme *akhlāq*): 'And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character' (Qs. al-Qalam 68: 4). Combining this with the Divine exhortation to follow the Prophet's example as *uswatun hasanah* (the good example), 'Ye have indeed in the Apostle of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct) ...' (Qs. al-Aḥzāb 33: 21), it is obvious that God expects noble values to be embedded as the integral aspect governing the lives of human beings as His servants. In several *ḥadīth* (words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad), the importance of inculcating virtuous *akhlāq* receives special emphasis. For example, he is reported to have declared, 'The best amongst you are those who have the best manners and character,'<sup>5</sup> and 'I have been sent to perfect good character.'<sup>6</sup>

### Good Manners in the Malay-Muslim Worldview

In Malay language, *akhlāq* is couched in the concepts of *budi pekerti* and *budi bahasa*, which translate loosely as moral character

---

<sup>4</sup> Recep Senturk, "Adamiyyah (Humanity) and "Ismah (Inviolability): Humanity as the Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islamic Law," in *The Islamic Tradition and the Human Rights Discourse*, ed. H.A. Hellyer (Washington DC: Atlantic Council, 2008), 39–41.

<sup>5</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari 3559, see "Hadith - Virtues and Merits of the Prophet (Pbuh) and His Companions - Sahih al-Bukhari - Sunnah.Com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم)," accessed September 17, 2020, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/61/68>.

<sup>6</sup> Al-Muwatta' 1614, see Abu Amina Elias, "Hadith on Character: The Prophet Was Sent to Perfect Good Character," February 2, 2011, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://abuaminaelias.com/dailyhadithonline/2011/02/01/prophet-sent-husn-akhlaq/>.

and good manners respectively. From the root word *budi*, which in Indonesia has been philosophically explicated and generically understood to have acquired a spiritual connotation in connection with the Divine, we derive its plural version of *budaya* and its cognate *kebudayaan*, both of which are used widely today to mean 'culture.' Etymologically, the core foundation of Malay culture revolves around the concept of *akhlāq*, which is simply the Arabic terminology which entered Malay parlance as Malays gradually adopted Islam as their faith. Without the praxis of virtuous *akhlāq* in the daily lives of Malays, their identity as Malay-Muslims known for refinement in character is compromised. Malay-Muslim identity is founded on a synergy between Malay cultural elements and Islamic elements with special emphases on qualities that prioritise the sowing and fostering of virtuous *akhlāq*.<sup>7</sup> In modern Malaysia, *akhlāq* has seeped into the country's Rukun Negara (Pillars of the Nation), the fifth of which is *kesopanan dan kesusilaan*, or 'good behaviour and morality.'

To the younger generation, however, *budi* is more often taken to mean favours or good deeds, which need not necessarily be reciprocated immediately in the belief that God will repay them to one's descendants if not later in one's lifetime. Politically, the term has been abused by Malay-Muslim politicians demanding that the government's and ruling party's *budi* in educating and enabling the Malay populace to climb the socio-economic ladder be remembered and repaid through votes, although these ulterior motives are often only indirectly expressed.<sup>8</sup> One is easily reminded of former Prime Minister Najib Razak's poignant reminder during the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) General Assembly of 2014 to be mindful that the rice<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Osman Bakar, *Islamic Civilisation and the Modern World: Thematic Essays* (Gadong, Brunei: UBD, 2014), 268–269.

<sup>8</sup> See for example, Aminuddin Mansor, "Budi dan bahasa dikenang sentiasa," *Utusan Malaysia*, February 2, 2011, accessed July 21, 2020, <https://www.utusan.com.my/pendidikan/sastera/budi-dan-bahasa-dikenang-sentiasa-1.782506>.

<sup>9</sup> Representing 'food' in general, since rice has been the staple diet of the Malays since time immemorial.

that the Malays enjoy nowadays in the comfort of their homes is the outcome of UMNO's long-standing struggle to uplift them.<sup>10</sup>

The importance of *akhlāq* aka *budi* in Malay-Muslim culture is highlighted in classical rhyming Malay stanzas called *pantun*. Consider for example the following quatrains:

*Pulau Pandan jauh ke tengah* (Pandan island furthest in the centre),  
*Gunung Daik bercabang tiga* (Daik mountain has three peaks),  
*Hancur badan dikandung tanah* (As the body decomposes underneath the earth),  
*Budi yang baik dikenang juga* (Our good deeds will still be remembered).<sup>11</sup>

*Di sana padi di sini padi* (Paddy there and here),  
*Itulah nama sawah dan bendang* (What we would call rice fields),  
*Di sana budi di sini budi* (Good character there and here),  
*Barulah sempurna bernama orang* (Only then could we properly call one a human being).<sup>12</sup>

*Biarlah orang mencabut cendawan* (Let others pluck the mushrooms),  
*Kita cabut padi kan mati* (If we pluck the paddy will die),  
*Biar orang berebut bangsawan* (Let others scramble for nobility),  
*Kita berebut budi pekerti* (We prefer good character).<sup>13</sup>

In a nutshell, in traditional Malay-Muslim culture, *akhlāq* or *budi* defines what it means to be human. Without *akhlāq*, humans demean themselves to the level of beasts and other soulless creatures who need not be accountable for their good or bad deeds in the Hereafter. Such was part of the sufi heritage inherited by the Malays. The tolerant culture adopted by sufi travelers who came to pre-colonial Southeast Asia as traders and missionaries

<sup>10</sup> PANDA Channel, *Setiap Butir Beras yang Dimakan Hasil Perjuangan UMNO, NAJIB RAZAK*, 2018, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WATuYKesX-U>.

<sup>11</sup> Raja Muhammad Azamuddin Bin Raja Haron, "Pulau Pandan jauh ke tengah, Gunung Daik bercabang tiga; Hancur badan dikandung tanah, Budi yang baik dikenang juga.," *UKM*, last modified 2018, accessed September 17, 2020, <http://malaycivilization.com.my/omeka/items/show/125874>.

<sup>12</sup> Mohd Rosli bin Saludin & Siti Hajar binti Raihan, "Di sana padi di sini padi, Itulah nama sawah dan bendang, Di sana budi disini budi, Barulah sempurna bernama orang.," *Mohd Rosli bin Saludin* (Telapak Adat Dan Budi Negeri Sembilan, 2018), last modified 2018, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.malaycivilization.com.my/items/show/100964>.

<sup>13</sup> "Biar orang mencabut cemdawan, Kita mencabut padi kan mati, Biar orang berebut bangsawan, Kita merebut budi pekerti," *Tunjuk Ajar Dalam Pantun Melayu*, n.d., accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.malaycivilization.com.my/items/show/77892>.

contributed to the largely peaceful scenario of Islamisation in the Malay world.<sup>14</sup> In contrast to the aggressive evangelisation that we encounter today in the likes of Dr Zakir Naik and his Peace TV,<sup>15</sup> the sufis of yesteryears initially compromised the externally stricter components of the *sharia* (Islamic law) in winning the hearts and minds of the native Malays, whose early religious lives had been conditioned around an admixture of Hinduism, Buddhism and animism. The following anecdote of how one of the illustrative *Wali Songo* (Nine Legendary Saints of Java) propagated Islam in Java is instructive:

Cock-fighting or *sabung ayam* was a popular sport in Java at that time and villagers would gather together in a big circle, each bringing their champion and throwing it into the arena. Sunan Ampel saw this. He joined them in their sport. He brought the smallest-sized chicken or rooster to the fighting arena. But before he started, he recited in front of the rooster, "Laa ilaha illa Allah..." And with God's will, his chicken beat all the champions. Soon, the people around him were following what he did. They also recited, "Laa ilaha illa Allah..." before they started getting their rooster to fight. And their chickens won! And so their hearts began to be attracted to the recitation of "Laa ilaha illa Allah...."<sup>16</sup>

What Malay-Muslims inherited from this sufi heritage is a non-judgmental attitude when it comes to religion. At a glance, this might be viewed by *sharia*-minded Muslims as lax; yet the trait that has won the hearts of many non-Muslims as the Islam as communicated to them by the Malays displayed less than pushy methods and complete trust that if God wills one's change of heart to Islam, the change will ultimately happen regardless of the

---

<sup>14</sup> Thomas W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, First edition Aligarh, 1896; second edition London, 1913. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1961), 367.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.peacetv.tv/>, accessed 21 July 2019. On Malaysia's reservations regarding his aggressive style despite the granting of permanent resident status to him, see Nur Hasliza Mohd Salleh, "Minister Hits out at Zakir Naik-Style Islamic Preaching," *Free Malaysia Today*, September 24, 2018, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2018/09/24/minister-hits-out-at-zakir-naik-style-islamic-preaching/>.

<sup>16</sup> Syed Hassan bin Muhammad Al-Attas, *The Spread of Islam and the Role of the Sufis* (Singapore: Ba'alwi Mosque, 2012), 15–16.

prevailing circumstances.<sup>17</sup> A non-Muslim migrant to Australia reminisces fondly about her adolescent years growing up in Malaysia and contrasts it with the prevailing climate she sees around her:

For most of my childhood, the Muslim call to prayer in the old colonial port town of Malacca, Malaysia was my alarm clock. In the purple gloom of a tropical dawn, I'd drift out of sleep to the sound of the *azan*, or the call to worship, as the muezzin at the neighbourhood mosque performed his first religious ritual of the day. "Allahu Akbar" was a musical stream of notes, unfurling like a silk ribbon. I was born in 1973, a non-Muslim in a Muslim country.... In the Malaysia I grew up in, we all mixed easily. To me, the Muslim faith was peaceful, warm and benign. My friends and I ate at each other's homes, celebrated each other's holidays. On Saturday mornings, an elderly teacher would come to our home to teach my sister and me the beautiful Arabic alphabet for writing Malay called Jawi. 'Alif, ba, ta, sa', we would chant after him... My aunty recalls wearing the *baju kurung* – the traditional Malay dress – in solidarity with her Muslim best friend during high school. In primary school, I would occasionally fast along in sympathy with my Malay school friends – or at least abstain from openly scoffing lollies – during the month of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting. My mum, too, remembers 'covertly' supplying a lunch of rice and curry to our hungry Muslim gardener, Mohammed, because she felt sorry for him during the fast. In the evenings, the streets would fill with families breaking the fast at market stalls with giant platters of aromatic beef and chicken rendang. And on Eid-ul Fitr, or Hari Raya Puasa, the traditional Malaysian tradition of open house would see us flock to our Malay friends' homes to gorge on *kek lapis* and pineapple tarts.... It was only when we emigrated to Australia in 1988 that another, more malign form of Islam emerged on my consciousness. This was the type of Islam seen on the news, a militant, warped offshoot associated with terrorism which erupted in murderous spotfires all over the globe over the next few decades, from Tunisia to New York, from Nice to Turkey. To me, it was strange and terrible. I didn't recognise it, couldn't process it. How did the musical 'Allahu Akbar' of my childhood morph into the chant of a jihadi bent on murder? Had Malaysia spawned a peculiarly inclusive and non-violent benign form of Islam or was I being too nostalgic? Had I simply not seen flaws in the fabric of faith around me?<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> See for example, Muslim Convert Stories, *Malaysia Made Me Embrace Islam* || *Muslim Convert Stories*, 2018, accessed September 17, 2020, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d3MUKgjX\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d3MUKgjX_4).

<sup>18</sup> Sharon Verghis, "A Non-Muslim in a Muslim Country: How I Remember Malaysia," SBS, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.sbs.com.au/topics/voices/culture/article/2017/01/06/non-muslim-muslim-country-how-i-remember-malaysia>.



Nothing could be more contrasting to the scenario above than the ethno-religious tension prevailing in post-millennial Malaysia, as brought out by Thomas Fann, a civil society activist who since October 2018 has been chairing the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) in a recent *Malaysiakini* piece. Recounting recent incidents of violence and threats of violence, whose severity would nonetheless pale by comparison to global standards of conflict, such as 'Muslim worshippers who attacked a motorist who honked incessantly when his path was blocked by indiscriminate parking outside a mosque in Johor Bahru during Friday prayer' and a 'slapping incident in front of a mosque in Penang by a protester who was offended by a question posed by Major (Rtd) Zaidi Ahmad, the information officer of the chief minister of Penang,' Fann reflects:

Before you start labelling me Islamophobic, let me say that I grew up believing that the Malay-Muslim people are some of the most wonderful people in this world. My memories of the Malays are a gracious, courteous, hospitable, kind and pious people, with strong family ties. These are the kind of values I admire and yearn for as a person. Many of my Malay friends still exemplify such values but more and more these positive images are being replaced by Malays who are intolerant, disrespectful, greedy, hateful, easily offended, bullying and violent to others who don't share the same beliefs as them and that includes other Muslims who are not Sunni and from the Shafi'i school of thought. They have no respect for anyone who does not see the world the way they see it. It's their way or burn in hell. No, rudeness, discrimination, bullying, hatred, violence and killings are just not acceptable in any society, let alone manifested in people who claim to be closer to God than others. We, as members of the human race, regardless of religion, race or creed, must unite against these deviants of the human race who uses [sic] their religion as a justification for bad behaviour and violence. If Muslims truly believe theirs is a religion of peace and want to defend God, then defend Him by speaking up and acting against these blind zealots.<sup>19</sup>

### **Skewedness of Contemporary Malay-Muslim Understanding and Practice of Islam**

The Islamic intellectual tradition as developed by the classical *ulama* (religious scholars) revolved around three fundamentals of

---

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Fann, "What in God's Name Is Happening to Malaysia?," *Malaysiakini*, last modified 11:00:00+08:00, accessed December 17, 2020, <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/385171>.

religious knowledge, viz. *tawhīd* (theology), *fiqh* (jurisprudence, literally ‘understanding’) and *taṣawwuf* (spirituality or Sufism). In traditional Muslim epistemology, *tawhīd*, *fiqh* and *taṣawwuf* are collectively recognised as *fard ‘ayn* (individual obligation) disciplines, meaning doctrinal and ritual obligations that must be acknowledged and practised by every adult male and female Muslim. History has witnessed the emergence and passing of various schools of thought in different branches of knowledge including *fard kifāyah*<sup>20</sup> disciplines encompassing both the religious and worldly sciences, based on wide-ranging and even varying interpretations of Islam’s scriptural sources, chiefly the Quran<sup>21</sup> and hadith. Myriad schools of thought emerged, progressed, flourished, declined and phased out due to lack of followers, as the ‘*ulamā* continually developed, debated, deconstructed and reconstructed branches of knowledge in highly systematic, broad-minded and diverse ways whereby differences of opinions were sorted out in a gentlemanly manner.

The tripartite classification of knowledge into *tawhīd*, *fiqh* and *taṣawwuf* was derived by scholars from the second *hadith* in the famous collection of forty hadith by Imam Nawawi (d. 1278 AD) which encapsulates the fundamental concepts of Islam. In the hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reported to have elaborated on the meanings of Islam, *īmān* (faith) and *iḥsān* as such:

Islam is that you should testify that there is no deity save Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, that you should perform *ṣalah* (ritual prayer), pay the *zakah*, fast during Ramadan, and perform *Hajj* (pilgrimage) to the House (the Ka’bah at Makkah), if you can find a way to it (or find the means for making the journey to it).... It (*īmān*) is that you believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and in the Last Day, and in fate (*qadar*), both in its good and in its evil aspects....It (*iḥsān*) is that you should

---

<sup>20</sup> *Fard kifayah* refers to collective obligations that must be observed by at least one unit of a group of believers so as to exempt the others from responsibility in the Hereafter. Examples of classical subjects are *al-ḥisab* (mathematics), *al-handasah* (geometry), *manṭiq* (logic), *al-ṭib* (medicine), *al-jighrafiya* (geography), *al-badi’* (metaphor) and *al-bayan* (rhetoric).

<sup>21</sup> Hence the sprouting of different *tafsir* (exegesis) of the Quran written by scholars from different schools of thought.

serve Allah as though you could see Him, for though you cannot see Him yet He sees you.<sup>22</sup>

In short, *īmān* has to do with inner beliefs systematised in studies of *tawhīd*. Islam refers to its five basic pillars which are forms of worship that are to be externally practised. The physical rules and regulations regarding the outward actions generated myriad of studies of *fiqh*. *Ihsān*, meanwhile, concerns actions of the heart in worshipping God, thus sparking in time studies of *taṣawwuf* - the Islamic science of spirituality. This triad of branches of knowledge, duly explicated, comprehended and internalised as part and parcel of a Muslim's way of life, constitute the *dīn* (religion). The overall guidance for a Muslim to conduct his or her life in accordance with the *dīn* is called the sharia (literally, the way), which in modern terminology has unfortunately been reduced to merely 'Islamic law,' minus its spiritual-ethical dimensions and hence resulting in excessive literalism and legalism. Without due consideration being given to its *maqāṣid* (higher objectives), sharia is reduced to mere *fiqh*, thus minimising its significance in the modern lives of both Muslims and non-Muslims.<sup>23</sup>

Sharia studies, in tandem, became obsessed with legal technicalities rather than innovation and creativity, in the belief that fixed precepts and decisions should not be challenged and improved upon even in the ever-changing realm of human relations (*mu'āmalah*). Whenever sharia is discussed as a modern concept, contemporary reforms taking place in the global Muslim legal landscape notwithstanding,<sup>24</sup> one gets a skewed impression of it as a rigid, uncompromising and even brutal code of law. Unfortunately, it is this constricted framework of sharia that has

---

<sup>22</sup>Jamal Ahmed Badi, *Sharh Arba'een an Nawawī Commentary of Forty Hadiths of An Nawawī By Dr. Jamal Ahmed Badi*, 2001, accessed December 17, 2020, <https://thequranblog.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/arbain-an-nawawi-forty-hadiths-of-an-nawawi.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup>Bakar, *Islamic Civilisation*, 310.

<sup>24</sup>Ahmed El Shamsy and Noel James Coulson, "Sharī'ah: Islamic Law," article, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shariah>.

heavily influenced Malay-Muslims of the post-Islamic resurgence era of the 1980s.<sup>25</sup> In the worst case scenario, sharia becomes the rallying cry of Muslim extremists who see the non-application of the *hudūd* (literally, 'limits')<sup>26</sup> criminal code as a sign that an ostensibly Muslim-led government has become *kāfir* (infidel) and could therefore be deposed, with violence if necessary.<sup>27</sup> In the extremist paradigm, sharia no longer serves as a means towards Godliness, instead, legalistically interpreted sharia becomes the definitive criterion defining Godliness. Law effectively becomes the be all and end all of Islam. Khaled Abou El Fadl explains the puritan aka extremist worldview in the following words:

God's will is accessible through God's law, not love. God's law is the full expression of God's will. One is not engaged in *knowing* God; one is engaged only in *obeying* God. Puritans hardly mention love as a desirable or even possible engagement between God and human beings. As a pure act of benevolence, God might love his servants, but there is no reciprocity in this relationship. In this puritan framework, people should properly fear God, not love Him. And even if they do love God, they gain no special knowledge, intimacy, proximity, or familiarity from that love. God remains the emotionally inaccessible Supreme Commander that expects obedience, not love. Ironically, however, puritans also believe that God is completely accessible through law. If one knows the laws of the Supreme Commander, one knows the Supreme Commander.<sup>28</sup>

### **Malay-Muslim Religious Dilemmas in Contemporary Malaysia: Is *Maqāṣīd al-Sharī'a* the Solution?**

In June 2014, the Malay-Muslim community was delivered a rude shock by the news that Malay-Muslim youth were waging a campaign of *jihād* (holy war) against the 'infidel' Syrian government of Bashar al-Assad. A handful of them, while

---

<sup>25</sup> Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, "Shariaization of Malay-Muslim Identity in Contemporary Malaysia," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 91, no. 2 (2018): 49–78.

<sup>26</sup> Criminal penalties instituted by the Quran and *Sunna* (exemplary traditions of Prophet Muhammad) after lawful conviction in a court of law.

<sup>27</sup> M. Zaki Mubarak and Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, "The Rise of Radicalism and Terrorism in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Review of Islam in Southeast Asia* 1, no. 1 (June 30, 2018): 29–43.

<sup>28</sup> Khaled Abou El Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam From The Extremists* (New York: HarperOne, 2005), 277–278.

ostensibly being aligned to the amorphous Free Syrian Army, somehow got entangled with the terrorist outfits Al-Qaeda via its affiliate *Jabhat al-Nusra* (Al-Nusra Front) and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).<sup>29</sup> ISIS is itself an offshoot of Al Qaeda in Iraq founded by the notorious Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi (1966-2006). Pronouncements of loyalty to their Islamist cause is more than enough to convince us of their politically skewed *Salafi*<sup>30</sup>-*jihadi* leanings.<sup>31</sup> *Salafi-jihadism*, an ideology deriving from the writings of ideologues such as Sayyid Qutb (1960-1966) and Abdullah Azzam (1941-1989), sanctions the use of force to install an Islamist regime that implements *sharia* to the letter of the law, even if such an endeavour necessitates violence.<sup>32</sup> In contrast to the general picture presented to the public of *madrrasah* (religious school) graduates turning jihadist, the bulk of Malay-Muslim converts to

---

<sup>29</sup> Ahmad El-Muhammady, "Countering the Threats of Daesh in Malaysia," in *Countering Daesh Extremism: European and Asian Responses*, ed. Beatrice Gorawantschy et al. (Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung and RSIS, 2016), 105–122.

<sup>30</sup> Deriving from the word *salaf*, which carries the literal meaning of 'those who precede' i.e. predecessors. The original Salafists or *salaf al-sālih* i.e. pious predecessors were faithful Muslims who organised their lives strictly around the traditions and commandments of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the first three hundred years following his demise in 632 AD. With regard to Salafism as a modern reincarnation, most people who categorise themselves as Salafists are in practice influenced by the Wahhabi school of thought, referring to the puritanical stream pioneered by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792) of Nejd in the Arab Peninsula and dominant in present-day Saudi Arabia. Marriage between the revolutionary thoughts of Egyptian radical thinker Sayyid Qutb and Wahhabism is generally deemed to be ideologically responsible for engendering the violence-legitimizing strand of *Salafi-jihadism*; see Shadi Hamid and Rashid Dar, "Islamism, Salafism, and Jihadism: A Primer," *Brookings*, November 30, 1AD, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2016/07/15/islamism-salafism-and-jihadism-a-primer/>. for a brief introduction.

<sup>31</sup> Kumar Ramakrishna, "Reflections of a Reformed Jihadist: The Story of Wan Min Wan Mat," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 38, no. 3, Reflections of a Reformed Jihadist: The Story of Wan Min Wan Mat," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 38, no. 3 (2016): 495–522 (2016): 495–522.

<sup>32</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 28, no. 2 (February 16, 2005): 75–97; Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 3 (May 1, 2006): 207–239.

*Salafi-jihadism* were in fact national school leavers who were drawn to the doctrine through their secondary and tertiary educational networks. To the question of whether it was true that *sekolah agama* (religious school) graduates formed a significant proportion of Malaysia's Islamist militants, police Special Branch Counter Terrorism Division chief Ayob Khan refuted such an oversimplification based on the arrests and convictions of a few miscreants.<sup>33</sup> On the flip side of the coin, among youths, a group particularly vulnerable to *jihadist* propaganda are national school leavers and technology-based university students. The story of one Muhammad Fadly Zainal Abidin who was apprehended by the Thai authorities in 2009 for preparing to wage physical *jihad* against the Thai military after becoming influenced by an extremist religious teacher is a case in point.<sup>34</sup>

As the present author has argued elsewhere,<sup>35</sup> it has become urgent to redress the sharia-centric bias in the national religious education curriculum, particularly the one designed for non-religious stream students up to university level. The prevailing bias has rendered an understanding of religion as first and

---

<sup>33</sup> Dato' Ayob Khan, "Tidak tegas punca ideologi IS mudah meresap," *Berita Harian Online*, last modified May 4, 2015, accessed September 18, 2020, <https://www.bharian.com.my/taxonomy/term/61/2015/05/52666/tidak-tegas-punca-ideologi-mudah-meresap>; Wan Zulkifli Wan Yaacob, "Tidak benar institusi pondok kembangkan fahaman pelampau - Ayob Utusan Online, 24 May 2016, accessed 25 July 2019," *Utusan Online*, February 2, 2011, accessed July 21, 2020, <https://www.utusan.com.my/berita/nasional/tidak-benar-institusi-pondok-kembangkan-fahaman-pelampau-ayob-1.333954>.

<sup>34</sup> Philip Golingai, "Accidental 'Jihadist' Tells His Story," February 28, 2009, accessed September 19, 2020, <http://philipgolingai.blogspot.com/2009/02/accidental-jihadist-tells-his-story.html>; Rashvinjeet S. Bedi, "Falling into the Extremists' Net," *The Star*, last modified July 4, 2010, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2010/07/04/falling-into-the-extremists-net>.

<sup>35</sup> Mohd Haris Zuan Jaharudin, "Islamic Education in Malaysia: Between Neoliberalism and Political Priorities in Light of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2015," in *Policies and Politics in Malaysian Education: Education Reforms, Nationalism and Neoliberalism*, ed. Cynthia Joseph (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 31-53, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/islamic-education-malaysia-ahmad-fauzi-abdul-hamid-mohd-haris-zuan-jaharudin/10.4324/9781315147215-3>.

foremost the internalisation of a series of physical injunctions and prohibitions. Emphases invariably placed on Islam's legalistic and creed-related aspects have relegated its spiritual, civilisational and philosophical aspects to the periphery. Thus subjects that encourage critical-mindedness and a holistic view of faith such as philosophy and *taṣawwuf* occupy peripheral places in the formation of worldviews of Islamic studies graduates in Malaysia.<sup>36</sup> Worse, comparative religion hardly features at all in Malaysia's higher education, and where it is taught such as at the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), it essentialises non-Islamic religious traditions in a less than appreciative way.<sup>37</sup> The impact of such closed-mindedness will diffuse to the population once graduates of such a system enter the workforce and assume respectable positions as *ustādh* and *ustādhah* (Muslim religious teachers). The youth are particularly vulnerable, and if any symptoms of extremist behaviour develop as a result of the skewed understanding of religion, it will most likely happen among the youthful audience of the teachers, duly Salafised via sessions in informal cells outside official work or study hours, usually with the help of visual technology to create a secondary trauma effect which accelerates radicalisation.<sup>38</sup>

On 9 May 2018, for the first time in Malaysian history, the ruling *Barisan Nasional* (BN: National Front) multi-ethnic but UMNO-led coalition lost power at the federal level, amassing just over thirty per cent of the popular vote and retaining only two states in Peninsular Malaysia viz. Perlis and Pahang. The unexpected victory of the erstwhile opposition bloc known as

---

<sup>36</sup> Che Zarrina Sa'ari, "Pengajian Tasawuf di institusi pengajian tinggi awam Malaysia," in *Pengajian Islam di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Malaysia*, ed. Mohd Fauzi Hamat, Joni Tomkin Borhan, and Ab. Aziz Mohd Zin (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Universiti Malaya, 2007), 73–94; Wan Suhaimi Wan Abdullah, "Pengajian Falsafah Islam di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Malaysia: Sukatan, Masalah dan Cabaran Pengajian," in *Pengajian Islam di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Malaysia*, ed. Mohd Fauzi Hamat, Joni Tomkin Borhan, and Ab. Aziz Mohd Zin (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Universiti Malaya, 2007), 35–56.

<sup>37</sup> Jeffrey T. Kenney, "Teaching Religious Studies at the International Islamic University Malaysia," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 18, no. 3 (2015): 280–285.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Samuel, "The Lure of Youth into Terrorism," *SEARCCT's Selection of Articles* 2 (2011): 107–119.

*Pakatan Harapan* (PH) brought new hopes for the reformation of the administration of Islam in Malaysia after decades of Salafisation, whether unwittingly or advertently under the guise of Islamisation and other programmes with similar nomenclature, under BN rule.<sup>39</sup> Under the leadership of 93-year old Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his second stint as Prime Minister, Malaysia's *Pakatan Harapan* government put forward the idea of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* or higher objectives of Islamic law as one of the three precepts governing its Islamic agenda, the other two being the feasibility of a Malaysian model of Islamic governance and the *Rahmatan lil-'alamin* (mercy to the worlds) emphasis. As articulated by newly minted Minister at the Prime Minister's Department Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa in his opening speech during a meeting between Prime Minister Dr Mahathir and selected Islamic scholars and intellectuals on 31 July 2018, PH's Islamic vision is built upon the convictions that Islam is a bountiful faith for all humankind, that the *maqāṣid* approach is most suitable for the solution to contemporary problems of life, and that Malaysia must be a model of Islam for the world, bearing in mind the seemingly insurmountable troubles currently besetting other parts of the *ummah*, especially the Middle East.<sup>40</sup>

The so-called *maqasidic* approach to Islamic injunctions calls for a holistic reading of scriptural sources, in particular the Quran and Sunnah (trodden path of the Prophet Muhammad), towards

---

<sup>39</sup> Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid, *The Extensive Salafization of Malaysian Islam*, Trends in Southeast Asia Monograph Series No. 09. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2016).

<sup>40</sup> The present author was one of the attendees of the 'by invitation only' meeting held at the Prime Minister's office from 3 to 5.30 pm, 31 July 2018; see the accompanying press reports in Bernama, "Kerajaan ulangi komitmen perkasa Islam ikut Al-Quran dan hadis sahih," *Astro Awani*, last modified July 31, 2018, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.astroawani.com/berita-malaysia/kerajaan-ulangi-komitmen-perkasa-islam-ikut-alquran-dan-hadis-sahih-181896>; "Tun M Jamin Islam di Malaysia ikut al-quran dan hadis sahih," *Berita Harian*, *Pressreader*, last modified August 1, 2018, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.pressreader.com/malaysia/berita-harian5831/20180801/281522226895505>. For a fuller treatment of the PH government's endeavour in putting into practice an inclusive Islamic worldview, see the essays in Panel Penyelidikan NUNJI, ed., *Islam dan Malaysia Baharu* (Puchong: Akademi NUNJI, 2020).



arriving at inclusive answers to modern societies of which Muslims form an integral part.<sup>41</sup> While such an approach has demonstrated streaks of viability in extricating Islam from overly legalistic mores, it is epistemologically undetached from the sharia-centric paradigm that has so dominated the post-colonial Muslim intellectual make-up, so much so that sharia studies has emerged as the major plank of Islamic studies, with sharia being seen as synonymous with Islam itself as commonly understood by the lay populace. This is underlined by perception surveys undertaken to assess the general population's impression of Islam.<sup>42</sup> Typical is an opinion expressed by a former schoolmate of the present author through the email group mcoba-mail@googlegroups.com on 25 July 2019, reproduced in anonymised form below:

It was in the States [United States of America] that I learned how beautiful Islam is. Not here in Malaysia. It was there that I saw how inclusive and loving is our religion. Totally humbled by the experience. Forgive me for saying this but imho [in my humble opinion], Malaysia's Islam is all about the negatives. You can't do this. You can't do that. You're wrong. Must repent. Islam has such a bleak and unhappy face here. It's mostly the holier than thou attitude of those in power. If you don't follow what I preach, it'd be hell for you. As far as LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender] goes, the Ustazs and Imams will in a heartbeat condemn them. Some even wanted to kill them by throwing them from a hill. I'm not an ustaz (not even active in BRU [Badan Revolusi Uagama i.e. Malay College Kuala Kangsar's Islamic Students' Body]). But this kind of reaction towards our social ills will only exacerbate the situation. Instead of pulling people in towards Islam, they are doing the opposite.

While there is no reason to doubt the honesty of the endeavour to implement *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* in Malaysia, its advocates, in their enthusiasm to foreground the rejuvenated concept as an alternative to BN-UMNO's mode of Islam, might have overlooked the more urgent need for a morally based framework that evaluates human action not on the extent to which humans observe external law but rather on how sensitively

---

<sup>41</sup> Jasser Auda, "A Maqāṣidī Approach to Contemporary Application of the Sharī'ah," *Intellectual Discourse* 19, no. 2 (December 2011): 193–217.

<sup>42</sup> As reported for instance by Patricia A. Martinez, "The Islamic State or the State of Islam in Malaysia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 23, no. 3 (2001): 474–503.

humans connect with God in the event of legal injunctions being adhered to, ignored or transgressed. The emphasis of lawmakers and law enforcers following the commission of a wrongdoing should be on repentance, forgiveness and readjustment in society, failing which then only is punishment resorted to, with preference given to forms of punishment with rehabilitative and re-educative functions.<sup>43</sup> It is time that policy makers take stock of the overall *akhlāq* environment based on input from not just religious scholars but also from professional educationists, sociologists, economists, psychologists and even scientists where circumstances are relevant. It is time to realise that punitiveness just for the sake of it does not have a magical effect in creating a morally conscious and godly society. As respected legal scholar M.B. Hooker once observed, ‘thousands of studies in Western and non-Western societies’ have shown that ‘law on its own’ cannot ‘succeed in changing individual behaviour for the better and thus create a better society.’<sup>44</sup>

### Concluding Remarks

Although the subject of *akhlāq* does feature in the modern education system which PH inherited from past BN governments, it has never occupied as central a place as *sharia*. From traditionally being the core concept that defines one’s humanity in one’s relationship with God and with fellow human beings, *akhlāq* now is conceptualised loosely as moral-cum-ethical values which need not necessarily encompass the inculcation of spiritual nourishment.<sup>45</sup> For Muslim graduates of such a system, the marginalisation of *akhlāq* studies within the rubric of the Islamic

---

<sup>43</sup> For similar concerns, see for example, Mohammad Hashim Kamali, “Civilian & Democratic Dimensions of Governance in Islam,” in *Islam and Civil Society*, ed. Hedieh Mirahmadi (Washington DC: World Organization for Resource Development and Education, 2005), 176.

<sup>44</sup> Michael Barry Hooker, “Submission to Allah? The Kelantan Syariah Criminal Code (II), 1993,” in *Malaysia: Islam, Society and Politics*, ed. Virginia Hooker and Norani Othman (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003), 95.

<sup>45</sup> See for example, Ab. Halim Tamuri, “Islamic Education Teachers’ Perceptions of the Teaching of Akhlaq in Malaysian Secondary Schools,” *Journal of Moral Education* 36, no. 3 (2007): 371–386.

sciences has had devastating consequences as far as the long term images of Islam and Muslims are concerned. We see for instance implicit condoning of violence in the general lack of Malay-Muslim empathy towards the grieving families of Pastor Koh and Amri Che Mat, the respective Christian evangelist and alleged Shi'a activist purportedly kidnapped by members of the police Special Branch during the dark days of the BN-UMNO regime and are still missing today.<sup>46</sup> In July 2019, a seminar planned by the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) to deliberate on the Amman Message that calls for the recognition of all major schools of thought in Islam including mainstream Shi'a sects, had to be cancelled after a bomb threat was received over social media.<sup>47</sup> A cursory glance through Malay language social media will reveal unbridled use of vulgar and obscene language, employed even on the pretext of defending Islam. A PH-related preacher, Wan Ji Wan Hussin, for instance, was vilified as *Syaitan Anjing Komunis DAP* (DAP's communist devil dog) amidst protests against his presence at a mosque in Malacca to deliver a talk.<sup>48</sup> Without dismissing the seditious nature of Wan Ji's once republican stance,<sup>49</sup> for which he was duly convicted under the

---

<sup>46</sup> Rashvinjeet S. Bedi, "Suhakam Says Amri Abducted by Bukit Aman," News, *The Star*, last modified April 3, 2019, accessed December 30, 2020, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/04/03/suhakam-says-amri-abducted-by-bukit-aman/>; Julia Roknifard, "The Growing Threat of Sectarianism in Malaysia," *Al Jazeera*, last modified July 25, 2019, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/7/25/the-growing-threat-of-sectarianism-in-malaysia>.

<sup>47</sup> Amy Chew, "Anti-Shia' Bomb Threats Force Organisers in Malaysia to Cancel Seminar about Ending Muslim Sectarianism," *South China Morning Post*, last modified July 12, 2019, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3018270/anti-shia-bomb-threats-force-organisers-malaysia-cancel>.

<sup>48</sup> Aemierulrizaki Rambli, "Polis Halau Penduduk dan NGO yang Bantah Kehadiran WANJI ANJING DAP di Masjid Kariah Mereka," *Facebook*, last modified July 21, 2019, accessed September 19, 2020, [https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10206070262831629&id=1713804820](https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10206070262831629&id=1713804820).

<sup>49</sup> Wan Ji Wan Hussin, [TERGEMPAR] *Ust Wan Ji Hapuskan Sistem Sultan*, 2013, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWwVVIAuZ9c>.

Sedition Act,<sup>50</sup> will such coarse language cursing him endear people to Islam? Separated from its sufi pedigree, the performance of *akhlāq* becomes mechanically related to human interests rather than being a sign of God's *Rahmah* (mercy) that traverses all denizens of the earth in sync with the slogan of *Islam Rahmah li al-'ālamīn*. What *taṣawwuf* does is to concomitantly call for the love of both God and fellow human beings to be practised hand in hand with upholding of the sharia. Unless and until sharia is understood and internalised in multi-dimensional terms beyond external manifestations of the Islamic faith as is currently fashionable,<sup>51</sup> *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* will be an incomplete package of Islamic reforms. What is needed further to accompany *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* in Malaysia are parallel *Maqāṣid al-'Aqīdah* (higher objectives of Islamic belief) and *Maqāṣid al-Akhlāq* (higher objectives of Islamic morality) schemes whose origins are not divorced from the Islamic spiritual tradition of *taṣawwuf*, as proposed by Dr Amran Muhammad of the Kuala Lumpur-based Islamic and Strategic Studies Institute (ISSI) during a townhall session with Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa.<sup>52</sup>

Taken together, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a*, *Maqāṣid al-'Aqīdah* and *Maqāṣid al-Akhlāq* effectively serve as enablers of *Maqasid al-Insāniyyah* – the higher objectives of humanity as couched in the

---

<sup>50</sup> Rafidah Mat Ruzki, "Terbit Perkataan Menghasut, Wan Ji Dipenjara 9 Bulan," *Berita Harian*, last modified April 9, 2018, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/kes/2018/04/409753/terbit-perkataan-menghasut-wan-ji-dipenjara-9-bulan>.

<sup>51</sup> See for example, Saadiah Ismail, "Kurang Penekanan 5 Elemen Maqasid Al-Syariah - IKIM," *Berita Harian*, last modified October 11, 2017, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2017/10/335925/kurang-penekanan-5-elemen-maqasid-al-syariah-ikim>.

<sup>52</sup> ISSI Malaysia, *Pandangan ISSI Mengenai 3 Teras Pentadbiran Hal Ehwal Islam Di Malaysia*, 2019, accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nMnB31qjUw>; Amran Muhammad, "Naratif Nusantara Siri 63: Wawasan Islam Negara Sewajarnya Bukan Sekadar Maqasid Syariah Tetapi Juga Maqasid Akidah Dan Maqasid Akhlak," *ISSI Malaysia* (admin, February 22, 2019), accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.issimalaysia.org.my/naratif-nusantara-siri-63/>; Dr Amran Muhammad is also Dean, School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Asia e University (AeU), Subang Jaya, Selangor.

triple obligations of *'ibādah* (worship), *khilāfah* (vicegerency) and *isti'mar* understood in its more positive rendition as 'prosperity' rather than pejoratively as 'colonialism.'<sup>53</sup> Freed from its traditional identification with the *usul fiqh* (origin of jurisprudence) methodology, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a* may as well be widened to encompass *ummah*-centric rather than just individual-centric concerns, but without *Maqasid Akhlāq* as an overseer, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a*-based endeavours towards *tajdīd ḥadārī* (civilisational renewal) of the *ummah* can only end up in disappointment.<sup>54</sup>

### References

- Abdul Hamid, Ahmad Fauzi. "Shariaization of Malay-Muslim Identity in Contemporary Malaysia." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 91, no. 2 (2018): 49–78.
- — —. *The Extensive Salafization of Malaysian Islam*. Trends in Southeast Asia Monograph Series No. 09. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2016.
- Al-Attas, Syed Hassan bin Muhammad. *The Spread of Islam and the Role of the Sufis*. Singapore: Ba'alwi Mosque, 2012.
- Arnold, Thomas W. *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*. First edition Aligarh, 1896; Second edition London, 1913. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1961.
- Auda, Jasser. "A Maqāṣidī Approach to Contemporary Application of the Sharī'ah." *Intellectual Discourse* 19, no. 2 (December 2011): 193–217.
- Badi, Jamal Ahmed. *Sharh Arba'een an Nawawī Commentary of Forty Hadiths of An Nawawī By Dr. Jamal Ahmed Badi*, 2001. Accessed December 17, 2020. <https://thequranblog.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/arbain-an-nawawi-forty-hadiths-of-an-nawawi.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup> Saari Sungib, *Menggerak Misi Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin: Di Atas Landasan Maqasid Al-Insaniyah, Maqasid Ar-Risalah wan-Nubuwwah dan Maqasid Al-Shari'ah* (Puchong: Akademi NUNJI, 2020).

<sup>54</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Maqasid Al-Shari'ah and Ijtihad as Instruments of Civilisational Renewal: A Methodological Perspective," *ICR Journal* 2, no. 2 (January 15, 2011): 245–271.

- Bakar, Osman. *Islamic Civilisation and the Modern World: Thematic Essays*. Gadong, Brunei: UBD, 2014.
- Bedi, Rashvinjeet S. "Falling into the Extremists' Net." *The Star*. Last modified July 4, 2010. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2010/07/04/falling-into-the-extremists-net>.
- — —. "Suhakam Says Amri Abducted by Bukit Aman." News. *The Star*. Last modified April 3, 2019. Accessed December 30, 2020. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/04/03/suhakam-says-amri-abducted-by-bukit-aman/>.
- Bernamea. "Kerajaan ulangi komitmen perkasa Islam ikut Al-Quran dan hadis sahih." *Astro Awani*. Last modified July 31, 2018. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.astroawani.com/berita-malaysia/kerajaan-ulangi-komitmen-perkasa-islam-ikut-alquran-dan-hadis-sahih-181896>.
- Chew, Amy. "Anti-Shia' Bomb Threats Force Organisers in Malaysia to Cancel Seminar about Ending Muslim Sectarianism." *South China Morning Post*. Last modified July 12, 2019. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3018270/anti-shia-bomb-threats-force-organisers-malaysia-cancel>.
- El Fadl, Khaled Abou. *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam From The Extremists*. New York: HarperOne, 2005.
- El Shamsy, Ahmed, and Noel James Coulson. "Shari'ah: Islamic Law." Article. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shariah>.
- Elias, Abu Amina. "Hadith on Character: The Prophet Was Sent to Perfect Good Character," February 2, 2011. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://abuaminaelias.com/dailyhadithonline/2011/02/01/prophet-sent-husn-akhlaq/>.
- El-Muhammady, Ahmad. "Countering the Threats of Daesh in Malaysia." In *Countering Daesh Extremism: European and Asian Responses*, edited by Beatrice Gorawantschy, Rohan

- Gunaratna, Megha Sarmah, and Patrick Rueppel, 105–122. Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung and RSIS, 2016.
- Fann, Thomas. "What in God's Name Is Happening to Malaysia?" *Malaysiakini*. Last modified 11:00:00+08:00. Accessed December 17, 2020. <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/385171>.
- Golingai, Philip. "Accidental 'Jihadist' Tells His Story," February 28, 2009. Accessed September 19, 2020. <http://philipgolingai.blogspot.com/2009/02/accidental-jihadist-tells-his-story.html>.
- Hamid, Shadi. "What's Different about Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia?" *The Aspen Institute*. Last modified July 1, 2016. Accessed November 17, 2020. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/whats-different-islam-malaysia-indonesia/>.
- Hamid, Shadi, and Rashid Dar. "Islamism, Salafism, and Jihadism: A Primer." *Brookings*, November 30, 1AD. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2016/07/15/islamism-salafism-and-jihadism-a-primer/>.
- Haron, Raja Muhammad Azamuddin Bin Raja. "Pulau Pandan jauh ke tengah, Gunung Daik bercabang tiga; Hancur badan dikandung tanah, Budi yang baik dikenang juga." *UKM*. Last modified 2018. Accessed September 17, 2020. <http://malaycivilization.com.my/omeka/items/show/125874>.
- Hooker, Michael Barry. "Submission to Allah? The Kelantan Syariah Criminal Code (II), 1993." In *Malaysia: Islam, Society and Politics*, edited by Virginia Hooker and Norani Othman, 80–90. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003.
- Ismail, Saadiah. "Kurang Penekanan 5 Elemen Maqasid Al-Syariah - IKIM." *Berita Harian*. Last modified October 11, 2017. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2017/10/335925/kurang-penekanan-5-elemen-maqasid-al-syariah-ikim>.
- ISSI Malaysia. *Pandangan ISSI Mengenai 3 Teras Pentadbiran Hal Ehwal Islam Di Malaysia*, 2019. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nMnB31qjUw>.
- Jaharudin, Mohd Haris Zuan. "Islamic Education in Malaysia: Between Neoliberalism and Political Priorities in Light of the

- Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2015." In *Policies and Politics in Malaysian Education: Education Reforms, Nationalism and Neoliberalism*, edited by Cynthia Joseph, 31–53. London and New York: Routledge, 2018. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/islamic-education-malaysia-ahmad-fauzi-abdul-hamid-mohd-haris-zuan-jaharudin/10.4324/9781315147215-3>.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. "Civilian & Democratic Dimensions of Governance in Islam." In *Islam and Civil Society*, edited by Hedieh Mirahmadi, 167–182. Washington DC: World Organization for Resource Development and Education, 2005.
- — —. "Maqasid Al-Shari'ah and Ijtihad as Instruments of Civilisational Renewal: A Methodological Perspective." *ICR Journal* 2, no. 2 (January 15, 2011): 245–271.
- Keddie, Nikki R. "Islam and Society in Minangkabau and in the Middle East: Comparative Reflections." *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 2, no. 1 (1987): 1–30.
- Kenney, Jeffrey T. "Teaching Religious Studies at the International Islamic University Malaysia." *Teaching Theology & Religion* 18, no. 3 (2015): 280–285.
- Khan, Dato' Ayob. "Tidak tegas punca ideologi IS mudah meresap." *Berita Harian Online*. Last modified May 4, 2015. Accessed September 18, 2020. <https://www.bharian.com.my/taxonomy/term/61/2015/05/52666/tidak-tegas-punca-ideologi-mudah-meresap>.
- Mansor, Aminuddin. "Budi dan bahasa dikenang sentiasa." *Utusan Malaysia*, February 2, 2011. Accessed July 21, 2020. <https://www.utusan.com.my/pendidikan/sastera/budi-dan-bahasa-dikenang-sentiasa-1.782506>.
- Martinez, Patricia A. "The Islamic State or the State of Islam in Malaysia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 23, no. 3 (2001): 474–503.
- Milner, A.C. "Islam and the Muslim State." In *Islam in Southeast Asia*, edited by M.B. Hooker, 23–49. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983.
- Mubarok, M. Zaki, and Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid. "The Rise of Radicalism and Terrorism in Indonesia and Malaysia." *Review of Islam in Southeast Asia* 1, no. 1 (June 30, 2018): 29–43.



- Muhammad, Amran. "Naratif Nusantara Siri 63: Wawasan Islam Negara Sewajarnya Bukan Sekadar Maqasid Syariah Tetapi Juga Maqasid Akidah Dan Maqasid Akhlak." *ISSI Malaysia*. admin, February 22, 2019. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.issimalaysia.org.my/naratif-nusantara-siri-63/>.
- Muslim Convert Stories. *Malaysia Made Me Embrace Islam || Muslim Convert Stories*, 2018. Accessed September 17, 2020. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d3MUKgjX\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d3MUKgjX_4).
- PANDA Channel. *Setiap Butir Beras yang Dimakan Hasil Perjuangan UMNO, NAJIB RAZAK*, 2018. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WATuYKESX-U>.
- Panel Penyelidikan NUNJI, ed. *Islam dan Malaysia Baharu*. Puchong: Akademi NUNJI, 2020.
- Raihan, Mohd Rosli bin Saludin & Siti Hajar binti. "Di sana padi di sini padi, Itulah nama sawah dan bendang, Di sana budi disini budi, Barulah sempurna bernama orang." *Mohd Rosli bin Saludin*. Telapak Adat Dan Budi Negeri Sembilan, 2018. Last modified 2018. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.malaycivilization.com.my/items/show/100964>.
- Ramakrishna, Kumar. "Reflections of a Reformed Jihadist: The Story of Wan Min Wan Mat." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 38, no. 3. Reflections of a Reformed Jihadist: The Story of Wan Min Wan Mat," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 38, no. 3 (2016): 495-522 (2016): 495-522.
- Rambli, Aemierulrizaki. "Polis Halau Penduduk dan NGO yang Bantah Kehadiran WANJI ANJING DAP di Masjid Kariah Mereka." *Facebook*. Last modified July 21, 2019. Accessed September 19, 2020. [https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10206070262831629&id=1713804820](https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10206070262831629&id=1713804820).
- Roknifard, Julia. "The Growing Threat of Sectarianism in Malaysia." *Al Jazeera*. Last modified July 25, 2019. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/7/25/the-growing-threat-of-sectarianism-in-malaysia>.
- Ruzki, Rafidah Mat. "Terbit Perkataan Menghasut, Wan Ji Dipenjara 9 Bulan." *Berita Harian*. Last modified April 9, 2018. Accessed September 19, 2020.

- <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/kes/2018/04/409753/terbit-perkataan-menghasut-wan-ji-dipenjara-9-bulan>.
- Sa'ari, Che Zarrina. "Pengajian Tasawuf di institusi pengajian tinggi awam Malaysia." In *Pengajian Islam di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Malaysia*, edited by Mohd Fauzi Hamat, Joni Tomkin Borhan, and Ab. Aziz Mohd Zin, 73–94. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Universiti Malaya, 2007.
- Salleh, Nur Hasliza Mohd. "Minister Hits out at Zakir Naik-Style Islamic Preaching." *Free Malaysia Today*, September 24, 2018. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2018/09/24/minister-hits-out-at-zakir-naik-style-islamic-preaching/>.
- Samuel, Thomas. "The Lure of Youth into Terrorism." *SEARCCCT's Selection of Articles 2* (2011): 107–119.
- Senturk, Recep. "Adamiyyah (Humanity) and "Ismah (Inviolability): Humanity as the Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islamic Law." In *The Islamic Tradition and the Human Rights Discourse*, edited by H.A. Hellyer, 39–41. Washington DC: Atlantic Council, 2008.
- Sungib, Saari. *Menggerak Misi Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin: Di Atas Landasan Maqasid Al-Insaniyah, Maqasid Ar-Risalah wan-Nubuwwah dan Maqasid Al-Shari'ah*. Puchong: Akademi NUNJI, 2020.
- Tamuri, Ab. Halim. "Islamic Education Teachers' Perceptions of the Teaching of Akhlaq in Malaysian Secondary Schools." *Journal of Moral Education* 36, no. 3 (2007): 371–386.
- Verghis, Sharon. "A Non-Muslim in a Muslim Country: How I Remember Malaysia." SBS. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.sbs.com.au/topics/voices/culture/article/2017/01/06/non-muslim-muslim-country-how-i-remember-malaysia>.
- Wan Abdullah, Wan Suhaimi. "Pengajian Falsafah Islam di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Malaysia: Sukatan, Masalah dan Cabaran Pengajian." In *Pengajian Islam di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Awam Malaysia*, edited by Mohd Fauzi Hamat, Joni Tomkin Borhan, and Ab. Aziz Mohd Zin, 35–56. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Universiti Malaya, 2007.

- Wan Hussin, Wan Ji. [TERGEMPAR] *Ust Wan Ji Hapuskan Sistem Sultan*, 2013. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWwVVIaUZ9c>.
- Wan Yaacob, Wan Zulkifli. "Tidak benar institusi pondok kembangkan fahaman pelampau - Ayob Utusan Online, 24 May 2016, accessed 25 July 2019,." *Utusan Online*, February 2, 2011. Accessed July 21, 2020. <https://www.utusan.com.my/berita/nasional/tidak-benar-institusi-pondok-kembangkan-fahaman-pelampau-ayob-1.333954>.
- Wiktorowicz, Quintan. "A Genealogy of Radical Islam." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 28, no. 2 (February 16, 2005): 75–97.
- — —. "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 3 (May 1, 2006): 207–239.
- "Biar orang mencabut cemdawan, Kita mencabut padi kan mati, Biar orang berebut bangsawan, Kita merebut budi pekerti." *Tunjuk Ajar Dalam Pantun Melayu*, n.d. Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://www.malaycivilization.com.my/items/show/77892>.
- "Hadith - Virtues and Merits of the Prophet (Pbuh) and His Companions - Sahih al-Bukhari - Sunnah.Com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم)." Accessed September 17, 2020. <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/61/68>.
- "Tun M Jamin Islam di Malaysia ikut al-quran dan hadis sahih." *Berita Harian. Pressreader*. Last modified August 1, 2018. Accessed September 19, 2020. <https://www.pressreader.com/malaysia/berita-harian5831/20180801/281522226895505>.
- All Quranic references are from *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali*, Durban: Islamic Propagation Centre International, n.d. (first edition 1934). The relevant chapter name and number are given, followed by the verse number; for example, 'And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character' (Al-Qalam 68: 4).