

ISLAM AND ASIAN SECURITY

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The violence of September 11, 2001, and the Afghanistan campaign that followed raised troubling new questions about security in the Muslim world. Nowhere have these questions taken on greater urgency than in the diverse Muslim communities of Central, South, and Southeast Asia. Although most westerners identify Islam with the Arab Middle East, some 60 percent of the world's 1.2 billion Muslims resides in Asia. The Muslim population inhabits a swath of territory stretching from the mountains and deserts of Central Asia to the rice paddies and cities of tropical Southeast Asia. Lacking an Arab or Persian cultural core, Asian Muslims display far greater ethnic and civilizational variation than their Middle Eastern counterparts. Although small numbers of believers can be found in almost all Asian countries, Muslims are an especially important presence in the 11 countries where they comprise an outright majority (the five Central Asian states, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia) and in the five others where they constitute a politically prominent

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religious minority (India, northwest China, Singapore, southern Thailand, and the Philippines).

It is not simply the demographic girth of Asian Islam that has captured policymakers' attention. During the long jihad against Soviet occupation (1979–89) and the fierce Taliban campaign against rival Muslims (1994–2001), an estimated 50,000 volunteers from 60 Muslim countries traveled to Afghanistan to join with the *mujahidin* (jihad fighters). Tens of thousands more made their way to conservative Islamist *madrassas* (religious schools) along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan where the Taliban leadership had studied earlier. In these fiercely independent institutions, students were instructed in an ideologized and entirely untraditional variant of their faith. They learned, among other things, that the Muslim community is locked in a fight to the finish with belligerent unbelievers led by the United States and Israel in alliance with Russia, India, and other secular powers. A peculiar response to globalization, this *jihadi* Islam blends the modern preoccupation with state power and global inequalities with an austere social conservatism, not least of all as regards the status of women and non-Muslims. In the late 1990s, after Osama bin Laden established his training camps in Afghanistan, 6,000 foreign nationals went a step further, undergoing initiation into the now infamous Al Qaeda.¹

Although no precise estimate is possible, many of the foreigners who fought alongside the Taliban or joined Al Qaeda were from Asia. Most of the Asian recruits came from Pakistan and the Central Asian states, especially Uzbekistan. However, hundreds more came from more distant places such as Indonesia and the southern Philippines. Some of these remained behind in Afghanistan after completing their training, eventually joining the Taliban resistance to the American campaign. Others, however, returned to their homelands determined to do battle, not so much with Israel and the United States, but with secular and moderate Muslims in their own countries. In the 1990s, this radical Islamism was making itself known in places like Indian Kashmir, the southern Philippines, and China's Xinjiang region—areas where poverty and ethno-religious inequalities inclined some Muslims toward a radicalized interpretation of their faith. In the five former Soviet republics of Central Asia, 70 years of communist repression of Islam gave way in the 1990s to a great Islamic resurgence. In a handful of years, tens of thousands of mosques and *madrassas* were built for the region's almost 50 million Muslims.² Most of the newly pious were apolitical or politically moderate. At the margins of the mainstream community, however, militants worked to take advantage of popular disaffection with regime corruption, economic depression, and *apparatchik* repression to incite revolutionary change. Even in countries like Singapore, Malaysia,

and Indonesia, where Muslim politics had long been moderate, the 1990s saw efforts by *jihadi* militants to expand their radical networks. No Islamist Internationale directed the radicals' efforts. Few of their organizations received direct support from Al Qaeda. Nonetheless, with their global finances, keen sense of mission, mastery of new communications, and hostility to moderate Islam, the radicals constituted a militant reserve willing and able to take advantage of any weakening of the political center. The Asian financial crisis of 1997–98 and the September 11 attacks in the United States provided two such opportunities.

The events of September 11 raised troubling questions about the breadth and depth of the new *jihadi* radicalism. The questions were given special urgency after the collapse of the Taliban regime in late 2001. This flushed remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda into Pakistan and the Central Asian states. It also gave rise to concerns that, under pressure from the American-led alliance, Al Qaeda might attempt to reposition some of its forces away from the front lines of conflict to territories like Kyrgyzstan, Kashmir, northwest Pakistan, the southern Philippines, and Indonesia.³ In all of these locales, rugged terrain and weak state administration enhanced the prospects for safe haven. The discovery of Al Qaeda cells in Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines at the end of 2001 raised fears that the network was indeed spreading.

The seriousness of these developments makes it imperative to go beyond reports in the mass media and attempt a balanced assessment of Muslim politics and its implications for security in Asia. This assessment is difficult because the Asian Muslim community is more culturally and politically diverse than its counterpart in the Arab Middle East. The purpose of this chapter is to provide just such a comparative assessment of Asian Muslim politics. The discussion begins with an overview of the social and political history of Islam in the region—important because it offers insight into the great variety of cultures that influence Muslim politics today. It then turns to the impact of the Islamic resurgence that swept Muslim Asia in the 1980s and 1990s, and whose primary trait was not a particular political orientation, least of all anti-western, but growing piety among Muslims previously indifferent to the ritual demands of their faith.

Having sketched this background, the next section of the chapter assesses the way in which developments since September 11 have impacted state and society in Muslim Asia. As the global campaign against terrorism has advanced, its impact has been anything but uniform. Because other chapters in this book provide country-specific assessments of post-September 11 events, the discussion here focuses on transnational linkages within and between Central, South, and Southeast Asia. The final section

examines future trends for Muslim politics in Asia and the relative impact of Islamist radicalism on regional security, and offers several observations for consideration with regard to U.S. policy toward Muslim Asia.

It is clear that *jihadi* Islamists have been able to take advantage of globalizing trends in the media, markets, and politics; in so doing, their movements have introduced a destabilizing element into politics and society in Muslim Asia. Although the threat posed by these movements is real, analysts need to distinguish between the radicals resolutely opposed to the global order and the far larger community of ordinary Muslims indifferent or opposed to radical appeals. Over the long term, the most effective policies toward Muslim Asia will be those that contain extremism while working with, rather than against, the Muslim majority's aspirations for social and economic improvement.

Legacy

Commentators from Muslim Asia often make a point of saying that their region has traditionally been more tolerant and moderate than the Muslim Middle East. This alleged difference often is explained with reference to the fact that unlike the early Islamic expansion in the Middle East and North Africa, Islam arrived in Asia not on the heels of conquering Arab armies but through the peaceful activities of traders, mystics, and high-minded rulers.⁴ Arabs did play a role in the early diffusion of Islam in Asia. Arab traders had established themselves in trading ports in southern China and caravan centers in Central Asia by the end of the seventh century. Arab armies made incursions as well, reaching Central Asia in 650 and the western border of the expanding Chinese empire in 751. An Arabic-speaking kingdom was established in northern India in 711.⁵ Even after Arab rulers had long since disappeared from Asia, Islamic schools in Egypt and Arabia continued to host Muslim students from the continent. During the great migrations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, hundreds of religious scholars (*ulama*) from southern Arabia established themselves in the booming cities of colonial Asia, going on to play a role in the religious reformation that swept the region at that time.⁶

Notwithstanding these influences, it is true that Islam in Asia acquired a civilizational ballast different from that of the Arab Middle East. The Arab kingdoms established in Central Asia gave way in a little more than a century to Muslim polities led by indigenous rulers. From that period on, rulers in Central and South Asia looked to Persian and Turkic rather than Arab prototypes for their models of civilizational excellence. In Southeast Asia, the Muslim kingdoms were from the beginning led by native potentates.⁷ Most conversion to Islam occurred well after the first centuries of the Arab

expansion, was the fruit not of Arab labors but of Asian Muslims, and generally took place in an undramatic and incremental fashion.

Even where formal conversion occurred, it typically did not entail an immediate rupture with local traditions, a fact that helps to explain the complex tapestry of Muslim traditions across Asia today. On the steppes of north-central Asia, the conversion of Kazakh nomads to Islam was still going on as late as the seventeenth century; to this day, many Kazakhs identify as much with their ethnic traditions as they do with Islam. In the Indian subcontinent, many Muslims participated in mystical activities with Hindus at the shrines of saints deemed holy to both religions, practices that declined only with the Islamic reform of the late nineteenth century.⁸ In insular Southeast Asia, conversion to Islam began in the thirteenth century but continued until the eighteenth. The public culture of Islam in Southeast Asia was also distinctive. Prior to the Islamic resurgence of the 1970s, few women wore veils, the cloistering of women (*pardah*) was rare, and the application of harsh Islamic criminal laws, such as the stoning of adulterers or severing of thieves' hands, was almost unknown.⁹

These historical details aside, the early history of Islam in Asia illustrates a point directly relevant for policy analysis today—that the spread of Islam in the continent was not accompanied by the Arabization or imperial unification seen in the Middle East. Islam in Asia did not bring a uniform political culture or, least of all, ideological agreement. In what are today Pakistan and Afghanistan, sectarian rivalries between majority Sunnis and minority Shi'a created a bitter legacy that endures to this day. (Shi'ism is virtually absent from Southeast Asia, but is found as a minority tradition in South and Central Asia.)¹⁰ On the Southeast Asian islands of Sumatra and Java, Muslims united to do battle against Hindu-Buddhist rulers at the beginning of the sixteenth century. After the Muslim triumph, however, the alliance gave way to bloody dynastic wars between coastal and interior kingdoms, each committed to a different profession of Islam. This variety in Indonesian Islam exists to this day. In Central Asia, questions of Islamic piety have been regularly drawn into ethnic conflicts, such as those pitting Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, casual in their profession of Islam, against puritanical Uzbeks. In these and other examples, conversion to Islam did not serve as a melting pot for Asia's varied social groups, but added yet another ingredient to the ethno-religious stew.

European colonialism took this ethnocultural fragmentation and relocated it within the borders of what were to become modern Asia's nation-states. The Spanish took all but the southern (Muslim) islands of the Philippines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, leaving the task of conquering the Muslim south to the United States after the Spanish-Ameri-

can war. The Dutch stole into portions of Indonesia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, completing their conquest of the archipelago only at the beginning of the twentieth. The British encroached on Muslim-ruled India from the mid-eighteenth century. Having welcomed Muslim sojourners for almost a thousand years, the Chinese moved west into eastern Turkestan in the eighteenth century. The Russians annexed Siberia in 1650, then pushed south in 1715 to invade the Kazakh steppe, and brought most of present-day Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan under their dominion at the end of the nineteenth century.

These historical facts speak directly to contemporary political realities. The absence of a great Arab expansion and the ethnic fragmentation of Asia's Muslim states ensured that Muslim Asia brought a legacy of fractious division and intra-Muslim rivalry to the twentieth century. European colonialism maintained and, in some cases, worsened these divisions. Unlike the Muslim Middle East, Muslim Asia witnessed no serious attempt to foster a pan-Asian Islamic nationalism. The changes experienced in the modern era were instead broadly consistent with the pluricentrism long characteristic of Asian Islam.

Religious Reform and Resurgence

If modern developments did not foster political unity among Asian Muslims, they nonetheless did usher in basic changes in the profession of Islam. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European colonial rule brought telegraphs, railways, and, in insular Asia, steamships. These new technologies increased Asian Muslims' communications with the Middle East, as well as their participation in the annual pilgrimage (*haj*) and in schools in Egypt and Arabia. The Europeans also brought printing presses that allowed for the mass production of Islamic books and newspapers. European influence stimulated the growth of new forms of civic and political association, some of which paved the way for the independence movements that swept South and Southeast Asia after the Second World War.

The development of modern communications, education, and urbanization in twentieth century Asia challenged existing patterns of authority in the Muslim community. In cities with large numbers of educated Muslims such as Delhi, Lahore, Singapore, and Batavia (present-day Jakarta), the first decades of the twentieth century saw the appearance of a new class of modernizing reformers, intent on removing Islam from the hands of rulers, Sufi mystics, and classically-trained religious scholars traditionally responsible for the management of the religion. The reformers were determined to use the machinery of modern education and bureaucratic organization to purify Islam of local cultural accretions. In so doing, they

hoped, Muslims would respond more effectively to the challenge of the West. The modernist message met with little enthusiasm in remote parts of Asia and in backward countries like Afghanistan; in Asia's bustling cities, however, it had great appeal.¹¹

During and immediately after the great nationalist struggles of the mid-twentieth century, however, politics in Muslim Asia continued to be dominated by nationalist and socialist appeals rather than Islamist ideologies. Aside from a few formulaic references to the Prophet, the main political groupings in Muslim Asia relied little on Islamic precedents in devising their plans for government. The world's largest majority-Muslim country today, Indonesia in the late 1950s boasted the largest communist party in the non-communist world. Even in Pakistan, a country founded as a homeland for South Asia's Muslims, voters consistently rejected Islamist appeals to turn the nation into an Islamic state.

Religious developments during the late 1970s and 1980s, however, challenged the nationalists' hegemony and established the parameters for an ideological contest that is still raging in Muslim Asia today. The primary characteristic of the resurgence was not so much political as it was an increase in mosque construction, religious education, pilgrimage to Mecca, and Islamic publishing—in short, public piety. The precise causes of the increase in religious piety varied from country to country, as did its political disposition.¹² However, the fact that the resurgence brought Islamic ideas and organizations into public prominence meant that, if and when political rivalries intensified, some among the contestants would be tempted to use Muslim symbols for their mobilizational appeals. In the Soviet Union's Central Asian republics during the 1980s, non-Russians responded to Russian dominance by asserting their identity as Muslims.¹³ Even in Pakistan and Indonesia, where the ideals of nationhood were officially multiethnic, national politics had long been dominated by leaders from large ethnic groups. Against this perceived slight, many members of smaller ethnic groups affirmed their common identity as Muslims.¹⁴

There was also a transnational influence on the resurgence. After the rise in petroleum prices during 1973, Saudi Arabia and several other Middle Eastern states increased their assistance to Muslim organizations in Asia. Most of the Middle Eastern donors directed their largesse toward groups willing to promote a theologically conservative interpretation of Islam. In the aftermath of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979, this assistance took a military tack. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states joined the United States to provide \$10 billion in military assistance to Afghan *mujahidin* fighters. Pakistan's powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) directorate managed most of this assistance and directed the lion's share to conser-

vative Islamists. Committed to their own puritanical interpretation of Islam, the Saudis went along with this conservative bias. On a lesser scale, Libya also became active in the provision of international assistance from the late 1970s.¹⁵

Although Iran had offered a dramatic demonstration of Islam's revolutionary potential a few years earlier, ultimately it was the *mujahidin* struggle in Afghanistan that had the most decisive impact on the rise of radical Islamism in Asia. Afghanistan became a training ground for tens of thousands of militant Muslims from Asia and the rest of the Muslim world. Some of the military assistance intended for *mujahidin* made its way into the hands of militants in Uzbekistan, Xinjiang, and Southeast Asia. The Afghan model of Muslim politics was deeply conservative, even anti-modern, especially as regards the status of women and non-Muslims. It was premised on an alliance between two types of radicals previously not prone to collaboration: transnational Islamists like Osama bin Laden, with wildly utopian visions of international revolution, and local Muslims frustrated by regional and ethnic inequalities. The small network of radical internationalists had found what it hoped would be its mass base.

Radicalization

To discuss the resurgence in purely political terms, however, obscures the fact that the great majority of people drawn into the revival were not motivated by political concerns. In the Soviet republics of Central Asia, for example, apolitical Sufi orders were more popular in the 1980s than was political Islam.¹⁶ The majority of newly pious in India, Malaysia, and Indonesia were moderate in orientation. Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia in particular were prominent in the ranks of local democracy movements.¹⁷

Although the resurgence was for most Muslims a matter of personal religiosity, it nonetheless benefited the radical fringe. The resurgence contributed to the further fragmentation of Muslim religious authority and to the growing debate among Muslims over the political uses of Islam. While mainstream Muslims are not united in their political views, radical Islamists share certain common convictions. They emphasize three points: that the essence of Islam is *shari'at* (literally "the way," such as divine law or commandment); that only *shari'at* can solve the world's problems; and that only one understanding of *shari'at* is allowed. The science and culture of classical Muslim civilization, the grappling of modernist Muslims with the challenges of our age, and traditional scholars' awareness that God's will allows diverse interpretations—these and other achievements of earlier Muslim civilizations are cast aside for a totalizing and millenarian understanding of the law.

In idealizing *shari'at* in this manner, the radicals differ both from traditional Muslims and moderate reformers. For most ordinary Muslims, *shari'at* is not the sum total of Islam's message, any more than the Ten Commandments are to their faith for traditional Christians. Sufi mystics and pietistic Muslims may insist that devotionism and spiritual peace, not public punishment or (least of all) state power, are what is central to Islam. Even many Muslim traditionalists, who agree that *shari'at* must be upheld, will insist that its interpretation is varied and its implementation best left to individuals and communities, not government bureaucrats. Moderate Muslims in Iran, India, Indonesia, and Malaysia take this reservation one step further. They point out that to surrender responsibility for religion to the state is to invite religion's subordination to petty rulers and party bosses.¹⁸

By itself, however, the conservative interpretation of the *shari'at* need not be radicalizing. Saudi Arabia has long applied Islamic law, and, although starkly conservative, is not known for revolutionary adventurism. The romance of *shari'at* becomes more seriously destabilizing where warfare, corruption, and social disintegration undermine established authorities and create a public thirst for radical change. In circumstances like these, the delicate balance of interests that underlies the everyday practice of Islam may be destroyed, and the totalizing appeals of radical Islamists may for the first time receive a broad hearing. In calling for a statist and totalitarian profession of Islam, of course, radical Islamism bears more than a passing resemblance to another modern millenarian offspring, Marxism-Leninism. The similarity is not merely ideological. Radical Islamists use a system of organization that relies on underground networks and militant cells similar to that pioneered by Lenin. Where, as in the Central Asian states in the 1990s, authoritarian rulers repress even moderate Islam, those activists best able to weather the storm tend to be radicals equipped with this combination of absolutist ideology and ruthless organization.

Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s was a prime example of just such a destruction of the moderate tradition of Islam and the rise of radical Islamism. The Soviet invasion in 1979 came on the heels of several years of internal conflict. The occupation (1979–89) and subsequent civil war destroyed the country's traditions of Muslim pluralism and diversity. As Larry Goodson notes, "the Afghan War totally destroyed the progress toward nation building of more than two centuries. It also destroyed much of the country."¹⁹ Out of a population of 23 million, two million were killed; an equal number were seriously injured. Two million Afghans were internally displaced, and six million fled the country entirely. Half of the country's 24,000 villages were destroyed. Many of its cities were reduced to rubble.²⁰

Beyond its physical horrors, the war also destroyed the pluralist fabric of Afghan life. Prior to the Soviet occupation, Afghanistan had a reputation as a deeply Islamic society. However, a people's commitment even to conservative Islam is not the same as political extremism. "Traditionally Islam in Afghanistan has been immensely tolerant—to other Muslim sects, other religions, and modern lifestyles.... Until 1992, Hindus, Sikhs, and Jews played a significant role in the country's economy."²¹ The country's low rates of literacy and general backwardness had served to insulate rural Muslims from the calls for puritanical reform emanating from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. In this regard Afghanistan resembled its neighbors in Soviet Central Asia more than it did Iran or Pakistan.²²

Twenty years of warfare, however, allowed what had once been a radical fringe to move to the center. The war against the Soviets wreaked havoc with the economy. Opium production and drug trafficking moved into the gap, creating an alliance of Islamist revolutionaries and drug traffickers. In addition, "the war destroyed the pre-war elites and the social system that supported them, leading to the development of new political elites... founded on a newly prominent role for youths and Islamist ideologues."²³ The Taliban leaders were not recruited from mainstream society or the ranks of traditional religious authorities but from among youths living in refugee camps located in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan Province, and Tribal Areas. Most of the *madrassas* in which these youths were trained were operated by Pakistanis associated with the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islami (JUI), an ultra-conservative and anti-western group.²⁴

Although *madrassas* have long played a role in Islamic education, the *jihadi madrassas* had appeared only in the 1980s. This was a decade of crisis in Pakistan's educational system, with many poor youths unable to afford public education. Neighboring Afghanistan was at the same time in the throes of Soviet occupation. With the help of donors in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, and with the full knowledge of Pakistani and western intelligence services, the *madrassas* took advantage of the crisis to direct their appeals toward Afghan refugees and Pakistan's poor. Long before the Taliban's rise in 1994, the conservative *madrassas* had become a training ground for militants from South and Central Asia. The future leaders of the *jihadi* groups fighting in Indian Kashmir, such as the Harkat-e-Jihadi Islami, were also alumni of these schools.²⁵

If the Afghan case sheds light on the conditions that allow a radical fringe to transform itself into the vanguard of Islamist revolution, it also reveals the limits of the example. No other Muslim society in contemporary Asia has experienced the devastation of Afghanistan. None has seen its religious, intellectual, and political elites so thoroughly decimated. These

facts remind us of how unusual Afghanistan's experience was, and of the improbability of a revolutionary Islamist movement on the scale of that country's arising in other parts of Muslim Asia.²⁶

However, if a radical movement on the scale of Afghanistan's seems a remote possibility, extremist-inspired conflict and political instability do not, particularly where established regimes experience a crisis of legitimacy. Over the last decade Islamist extremists have succeeded at implanting themselves in most countries in Muslim Asia. Effective policy requires a clear understanding of the scale of their organization, which varies greatly from country to country, as well as the varied impact of September 11.

Central Asia

After the collapse of the Taliban in late 2001, no area of Muslim Asia seemed more likely to experience radical destabilization than the former Soviet republics of Central Asia: Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. In addition to their proximity to Afghanistan and their troubled administrations, all five states have citizens who had traveled to Taliban training camps in Afghanistan. Earlier, hundreds of Central Asian students had also trained in Pakistani *madrassas* linked to the JUI and other hardline groups. Worse still, several radical Islamist groups, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU—discussed below and in Martha Olcott's chapter in this volume), had direct ties with Al Qaeda.

Prior to 2001, all of the Central Asian states had experienced some Islamist unrest. The five are predominantly Muslim, although Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have large Russian minorities as well.²⁷ All had experienced an Islamic religious revival after Soviet authorities relaxed restrictions on Muslim activities in the late 1980s. The resurgence took on political overtones in the 1990s in response to the region's deepening political crisis.

The problems these countries faced at first had little to do with religion. They were in severe economic decline in the 1990s, a slide which had begun the previous decade as a result of the economic downturn in the Soviet Union. The decline was compounded by the Soviet withdrawal of subsidies to the republics in 1990, prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991. The change left the states' economies unable to accommodate the large numbers of young people entering the work force each year.²⁸ Even when a country is endowed with oil and gas resources, as in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, political instability and corruption made foreign firms reluctant to invest. The economic instability in turn increased the role played by heroin trafficking in several states. Traffickers made deals with Islamist paramilitaries on the model of their arrangements with *mujahidin* fighters in Afghanistan.

Table 10.1. Muslim Central Asia—Economy (2000–01)

	GDP (\$bn)	GDP growth (%)	Inflation rate (%)	Unemployment (%)	Poverty (%)
Kazakhstan	22.5	9.6	13.2	3.7	35 ^a
Kyrgyzstan	4.4	5.0	18.7	7.5	51 ^b
Tajikistan	2.4	8.3	24.0	2.7	80
Turkmenistan	7.2	17.6	13.3	...	neg.
Uzbekistan	12.0	4.0	44.3	0.4	...

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*, for GDP, GDP growth, and inflation; World Bank, *Country Notes*, for inflation; Asian Development Bank, *Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries* for unemployment and poverty. Notes: a) Data from 1996 survey; b) Data from 1997 survey (World Bank).

Table 10.2. Muslim Central Asia—Population (2000–01)

	Population (mil.)	Pop. growth (2000)	Muslim share of pop. (%)	Muslim pop. (mil.)	Refugee pop. (000s)
Kazakhstan	14.9	-0.4	47	7.0	119.5
Kyrgyzstan	4.9	1.0	75	3.7	9.8
Tajikistan	6.2	0.2	85	5.3	18.1
Turkmenistan	5.2	2.0	89	4.6	14.5
Uzbekistan	24.8	1.4	88	21.8	40.9

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*, for population and population growth; Department of State, *Country Background Notes*, for Muslim share of population; Muslim population is calculated; UNHCR, *2001 Population Statistics* for refugee population.

In the end, however, the states weathered the economic downturn of the 1990s and seemed to be on their way to recovery in 2001. Even with the conflict in neighboring Afghanistan, their economies managed to achieve rates of growth in 2001 that ranged from five percent to seven percent in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to more than 10 percent in Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.²⁹ Today the economic circumstances do not appear nearly as dire as analysts had feared in the mid-1990s. The more vexing question as regards the five states and the future of political Islam concerns their ongoing political transitions. Government in Central Asia is still dominated by ex-communist *apparatchiks* who, rather than inviting moderate Muslims to join the political process, have blocked their access. Repression has weakened the moderate Muslim opposition while strengthening the extremists. The precise balance of power among Muslim groupings, however, varies greatly by country.³⁰

Kazakhstan

With its booming economy, large Russian minority, and many secular Muslims, Kazakhstan remains the least vulnerable to radical destabiliza-

tion. The Kazakhs were latecomers to Islam, and their urban middle class is the most westernized in Central Asia. Where the Islamic resurgence has taken hold, it has typically taken on pietistic or mystical tones, emphasizing personal devotion rather than public politics. When radicals like those in the IMU (which, despite its name, is active across Central Asia) have attempted to launch initiatives in Kazakhstan, they have met with limited success, typically only among the two to three percent of the population that is ethnically Uzbek.

A more serious influence on radical Muslim politics in Kazakhstan has been the repressive hand of the state itself. The government is led by President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the former first secretary of the Kazakhstan Communist Party, and now the leader of its successor, the Unity Party. Nazarbayev has recently signaled his intention to create a family dynasty, passing the presidency to his daughter and the internal security apparatus to her husband. Repression of Muslim organizations has pushed small numbers of young activists underground, into the ranks of the IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir. The latter is a pan-Central Asian organization dedicated to the overthrow of existing regimes and the imposition of *shari'at* law.³¹ Although the IMU has launched guerrilla attacks in the south of Kazakhstan, its appeal so far has been limited. This could change, however, if moderate Muslims continue to be excluded from the political process and from the benefits of economic growth.

Uzbekistan

If Kazakhstan seems as yet resistant to radical destabilization, neighboring Uzbekistan appears more vulnerable.³² With almost half of Central Asia's population and two of its most important religious centers (Bukhara and Samarkand), Uzbekistan has long been the cultural and political heartland of Muslim Central Asia. Ethnic Uzbeks were among the region's first converts to Islam, and they were also responsible for some of its greatest cultural achievements.

Uzbekistan has been slow to implement structural reforms in the economy. Nonetheless, the country's agricultural sector recovered in 2000, led by cotton exports. The country's vast energy and mineral reserves and sizable industrial sector ensure that the economy remains reasonably diversified. Although like its neighbors it has a high rate of population growth, Uzbekistan may yet be able to provide economic opportunities for young people entering the workforce. Here again, however, the most serious influence on Muslim politics is not the country's economy, but rather an authoritarian regime and the powerful Islamist underground movement that has arisen to oppose it—the IMU.

Like most of the Central Asian leaders, the president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, is a former first secretary of the Communist Party who in recent years has refashioned himself as an ethnonationalist. Karimov has been the most assertive of Central Asia's leaders in the post-Soviet period. He has defied Moscow's wishes, threatened his Central Asian neighbors, and refused to court even a moderate opposition. In 1992 Karimov suppressed a democratic coalition, which, with its mixture of liberals and moderate Muslims, was among Central Asia's most enlightened. Shortly thereafter, Karimov directed his aim at Muslim organizations, accusing even moderate Muslims of having ties to the Afghan *mujahidin*. After an assassination attempt against Karimov in February 1999, the regime arrested thousands of Muslims and pro-democracy reformers on the suspicion that they had conspired against the president.

Uzbekistan has nonetheless become an important supporter in the war on terrorism. Karimov was among the first Central Asian leaders to allow joint exercises with NATO troops, which began in 1998. He had also allowed his intelligence services to cooperate secretly with U.S. intelligence officers several years earlier as part of an effort to track Osama bin Laden.³³ In the fall of 2001, Karimov permitted the United States to station 1,000 troops on bases several hundred kilometers from the Afghan border. Since September 11, his regime has been the largest beneficiary of western military aid in Central Asia.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

The IMU, with 2,000 to 3,000 fighters, was established at a meeting in Kabul in 1998, although its leadership and organization had taken shape 10 years earlier, when the Soviet Union was at war in Afghanistan and Central Asia was beginning its slide into political-economic crisis. That leadership came not from the ranks of religious scholars but from among young, alienated graduates of the Soviet social and educational system. For most of its existence, the IMU's leader was Tohir Abdouhalilovitch Yuldeshev, known later by his battle name Juma Namangani. An ardent backer of the Taliban, Namangani (who was killed in Afghanistan in November 2001) was a man of action, who combined military prowess with a superficial understanding of Islam. In 1987 he served as a conscript with Soviet forces in Afghanistan. There he is said to have developed such respect for his Afghan opponents that he underwent a reversion to his birth religion.³⁴ Back in Uzbekistan, Namangani made contacts with Muslim activists, slowly developing the network of militants that was to become the core of the IMU.

Some among Namangani's aides had studied in Saudi Arabia in the late 1980s. There they secured the financial backing of Saudi-based Uzbeks,

descendants of fighters who had fled the Soviet Union after the last great Muslim revolt against Soviet rule in the 1920s (the so-called Basmachi rebellion). Having won financial backing, the young activists returned to Uzbekistan in the early 1990s. Working from the mosques and schools springing up across the country at that time, Namangani and his friends quickly attracted a hard-core following of several hundred men. Buoyed by their rapid growth and alert to the opportunities presented by the collapse of the Soviet Union, Namangani went public in early 1992, demanding that Karimov implement Islamic law. From their urban strongholds, Namangani's associates formed vigilante patrols that forced women to adopt conservative dress and required men to attend the Friday prayers.

At first Karimov seemed uncertain as to how to respond to the militants, but in March 1992 he cracked down, and the IMU leadership fled to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan. Like the Taliban, with whom they would eventually collaborate, several of the future IMU leaders used their travels to make contact with JUI officials in Pakistan. The JUI raised funds for the Uzbek militants and agreed to sponsor dozens of Uzbek students at *madrassas* along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. During the first Chechen war against Russia (1994–96), Namangani traveled to Chechnya to meet with rebel commanders; he also made fund-raising excursions to Turkey. His base of operations during these years was a conservative *madrassa* in Peshawar, Pakistan. From there he made trips into Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, organizing the underground cells that, after 1998, came to comprise the armed wing of the IMU.³⁵ During these same years, the IMU leadership became involved in drug trafficking. Before their military setbacks in the fall of 2001, IMU leaders were thought to control the largest share of the region's booming heroin trade.

Although the majority of its recruits are ethnic Uzbeks, the IMU has followers in other Central Asian states. Indeed, despite its close identification with Uzbekistan, the organization is dedicated to the creation of Islamic states across the region. On numerous occasions this commitment has been translated into action. During 1992–93, militants linked to Namangani crossed from Uzbekistan into Tajikistan to assist Muslim fighters involved in the Tajik civil war. That conflict ended in 1997, but the IMU took advantage of Tajikistan's weak government to operate bases inside the country, from which it launched raids into Uzbekistan during 1999 and 2000. As Namangani and his associates escalated their campaign against Karimov, they established contacts with Osama bin Laden. He agreed to provide the group with communications equipment and automatic weapons. The Taliban also allowed the IMU to establish military bases on the northern Afghani border adjacent to Uzbekistan. The continuing IMU threat

in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan prompted the United States, Russia, China, and several other nations to increase their military assistance to the two countries, and in September 2000, the Clinton administration placed the IMU on its list of international terrorist organizations.

When the U.S.-backed alliance began operations in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001, the IMU stepped up its assistance to the Taliban, fighting alongside until the regime collapsed. The severity of the U.S. bombing in northeastern Afghanistan and the collapse of the Taliban regime have dealt a serious blow to the IMU. The IMU may have lost several hundred fighters in Afghanistan, although the smaller of its two military wings is thought to have stayed on the sidelines of the conflict. U.S. bombing is also thought to have destroyed the largest of the IMU bases along the Afghanistan-Uzbekistan border. However, a large body of the IMU probably remains intact, and its surviving leader, Tohir Yuldash, has political skills that Namangani lacked. Moreover, although compromised by battle losses and arrests, the IMU appears still to have an extensive underground network in Uzbekistan. Rather than the major guerrilla incursions attempted by Namangani in 1999 and 2000, the organization in years to come may shift to a campaign of targeted violence against the Karimov regime.

The greatest hope for the IMU is that Karimov's repressive regime will give rise to a new generation of *jihadi* fighters. Karimov's policies toward Muslims have changed little since September 11. Many practicing Muslims in Uzbekistan "do not want to belong to any of the Islamist political groups but remain deeply resentful of the government's policy on religion.... The conditions that helped create and sustain the IMU remain unchanged."³⁶ Although the improved security situation has encouraged moderates in the government to press for reforms, hardline figures around Karimov continue to resist these calls. The arrest and torture of thousands of Islamists in secretive groups like the Hizb-ut-Tahrir keep the likelihood of future unrest high.

Hizb-ut-Tahrir

The Hizb-ut-Tahrir's leadership has gone underground since September 11. Nonetheless, western intelligence reports indicate that the organization has continued to recruit new members and has transformed itself into the largest Islamist movement in Uzbekistan, and perhaps all of Central Asia. Officially the organization's leaders forswear violence, but their organization is dedicated to the overthrow of the existing regimes in Central Asia and their replacement with a unified Islamic state (caliphate). This ambition has brought them squarely into conflict with the governments in the region, especially in Uzbekistan, where thousands of Hizb-ut-Tahrir followers have

been arrested and tortured. Since September 11, some of the rank and file in Hizb-ut-Tahrir have been so outraged by the repression that they have indicated a willingness to take up arms against the government. “The failure of the Karimov government to distinguish between moderate Islamist forces in Uzbekistan and more radical elements only tends to radicalize larger and larger segments of the religious community.”³⁷

Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

The future of the other three Central Asian states, especially Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, will depend heavily on the outcome of the political struggle unfolding in Uzbekistan. None has a hardline movement comparable in size to that in Uzbekistan. Having at first experimented with political pluralism and a moderate policy toward Islam, Kyrgyzstan was pressured by Uzbekistan to curtail its democratic reforms and crack down on Muslim organizations in the mid-1990s. Neighboring Tajikistan has experienced an equally somber evolution. One quarter of Tajikistan’s six million people are ethnic Uzbeks, and tensions between the two ethnic groups threaten stability. Radical Islamists, including the IMU, occasionally mount operations in the country. However, the growing strength of Tajik nationalism, the moderation of most Tajik Muslims, and public anxieties about the threat from Uzbekistan have encouraged Tajik Muslims to downplay religious differences in favor of broad-based cooperation.³⁸

In the short term, the continuing presence of U.S. forces in Central Asia, as well as assistance from the United States, Russia, and Western Europe, will limit the possibility of a full-blown IMU revival. At the same time, however, the chances of serious political unrest, particularly in Uzbekistan, remain high. The Hizb-ut-Tahrir is now the region’s most powerful Islamist organization. Although its leaders officially renounce violence and have distanced themselves from Al Qaeda, state repression may yet push them toward violent action. Over the long term, political stabilization and Muslim moderation will depend on efforts to reorient Central Asia’s economies and, most important, initiate reforms that allow all its people to participate in the political process in a meaningful and peaceful manner.

China—Xinjiang

Muslims have lived in China for 1,300 years. They played a key role in the medieval caravan trade through western China and Central Asia, as well as in southern China’s maritime trade with India and Southeast Asia. Estimates of the number of Muslims in China today range from 17.5 million (the official 1990 figure) to 36 million. The actual number probably lies to-

ward the lower end of this range. The Muslim population is spread across China, with almost all counties reporting some Muslim residents.³⁹

Specialists of Islam in China distinguish the 8.6 million Hui, who, despite significant variation in their own customs, have adopted many elements of Han Chinese culture, from the mostly Turkic-speaking Muslims who preserve more distinct ethnic identities. With a population of more than seven million, the largest of these latter groups is the Uighur. Unlike the widely dispersed Hui, Uighurs are concentrated in northwestern China in Xinjiang Autonomous Region. In recent years unrest of a broadly Islamist cast has been seen among this ethno-religious minority. Little is known about the organization and leadership of the Uighur groups involved in the most militant actions other than that some hope to establish an independent homeland called East Turkestan. Mainstream Uighur leaders reject calls for an independent state, but have appealed to Chinese authorities for greater political autonomy.

After September 11, Beijing attempted to take advantage of the U.S. campaign against terrorism by escalating their crackdown on Uighur activists. In December 2001, a foreign ministry spokesperson claimed to have proof that Uighur separatists were part of the “bin Laden clique.”⁴⁰ According to another report, China claimed that 10,000 Uighurs had traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan for religious and military training.⁴¹ This figure is certainly too high, although some Uighur students have studied in JUI *madrassas* in Pakistan and some fought alongside the IMU and Taliban in northern Afghanistan. While praising Chinese officials for cooperating with the counter-terrorism campaign, U.S. authorities have resisted efforts to link Uighur separatists to Al Qaeda. At a meeting in Beijing on December 6, 2001, General Frank Taylor, U.S. ambassador-at-large for counter-terrorism, said that the “legitimate economic and social issues” in northwest China needed “political solutions, not counter-terrorism.”⁴²

The restlessness in Xinjiang has less to do with Islam than it does the region’s recent political and demographic transformation. The Qing dynasty conquered much of the region in the 1750s.⁴³ The Uighurs chafed under Chinese rule, but they were able to keep most of their social and religious institutions intact well into the twentieth century. When the Chinese state weakened in the 1930s, Uighur nationalists declared their independence, first in 1933 and then again in 1944, although Chinese authorities were able to suppress both initiatives.

When the People’s Republic of China was founded, the population of Xinjiang was still 90 to 95 percent Muslim. Determined to enhance control of his border territories, however, Mao Zedong in the 1950s encouraged the mass migration of Han Chinese to the region. This remains the

government's policy today, and the 2000 census put the share of Chinese in Xinjiang at 40 percent of the total population, as opposed to 47 percent who are Uighur. Although fertility rates among the Uighurs are considerably higher than among Chinese, the Chinese population continues to grow at twice the Uighur rate due to immigration.⁴⁴

During China's Great Leap Forward (1958–61) and the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), the government placed strict limits on ethnic and religious associations in Xinjiang. Mosques and Quranic schools were closed, religious publications were banned, and residents were barred from traveling to Muslim countries. Restrictions were eased in the 1980s, in keeping with a general softening of state policies on minorities. These were the same years of Islamic resurgence in neighboring Central Asia, and the revitalization had a strong effect in Xinjiang. Uighur youths traveled to Central Asia for religious education; a smaller number went to Pakistan and Afghanistan for military training; and a Uighur separatist party was established in October 1993.

Chinese authorities responded by reimposing travel restrictions and launching a general crackdown on separatists in late 1996. In February 1997, the government suppressed a Uighur protest near the border with Kazakhstan at a cost of 300 lives. Shortly thereafter, Uighur separatists escalated their attacks on government officials. In 1997 the government blamed Xinjiang rebels for a bombing in Beijing. Indian officials have also reported capturing Uighurs among Pakistani-backed guerrilla units fighting in Indian Kashmir.⁴⁵

Chinese authorities have responded to these events by encouraging even more Han migration and penalizing Uighurs too zealous in their profession of Islam. In the months since September 11, the repression has increased. China also bolstered its forces on the border with Pakistan and Afghanistan, tightened visa controls on visitors from Islamic countries, and provided military assistance to Central Asian governments fighting Muslim militants.

Despite the Chinese crackdown, unrest in Xinjiang continues. The majority of Uighurs appear realistic about their long-term prospects and aspire to greater autonomy within China rather than independence. Although China seems reluctant to make concessions, unrest in the region seems resolvable under a political framework sensitive to these concerns. Nevertheless, Xinjiang's wealth of mineral and oil resources and location, bordering Central Asia to its west and Russian Siberia to the north, means that the region is of great strategic importance to China. For these reasons, it is unlikely that Chinese authorities will grant heightened political autonomy to Xinjiang's Uighurs in the near future.

Pakistan and India

Since September 11, the political situation in South Asia has become the most dangerous in all of Muslim Asia. This is so not because of the sentiments of the Muslim community as such, but because Muslim affairs in this region implicate two states that each have nuclear weapons, a large army, and a history of antipathy for the other. India's Muslim population comprises 12 percent of the country's total, estimated at one billion. Muslims are found in most portions of the country, with the largest numbers concentrated in the northern and western states as well as in booming commercial cities. Prior to the traumatic partition of Pakistan and India in 1947, Muslims comprised a full quarter of the population of British India. Muslims who chose to remain in India are varied in ideological orientation. As a minority in a majority Hindu society, most accept the legitimacy of the nationalist state and support multiconfessional parties. The notable exception to this pattern is the Muslim population in Jammu-Kashmir.

The rise of the Hindu nationalist movement during the 1980s and 1990s has greatly complicated the situation of India's Muslims. Hindu nationalists have made a point of emphasizing that India is not a multireligious state but a Hindu nation. Violent communal conflicts like those that followed the destruction of the Ayodhya mosque in December 1992 and the riots in Gujarat in March 2002 have tarnished India's tradition of civic tolerance.⁴⁶ It is only in the disputed state of Kashmir, however, that tensions like these have taken on dangerously destabilizing proportions. Some 70 percent of Kashmir's population is Muslim, although there is a large Hindu minority in the south of the state and a smaller Buddhist minority in the east. At the time of partition in 1947–48, the state was ruled by a Hindu maharaja who opted to join India rather than Pakistan. For Pakistani Muslims, the incorporation of Kashmir into India flew in the face of their country's founding principle, that Pakistan should be a homeland for the subcontinent's Muslims. Over the next 25 years, Pakistan and India went to war three times over the territory: in 1947, 1965, and 1971. In the 1947 conflict, Pakistani forces were able to win a large portion of the northwest of the state but were unable to take its economic and demographic heartland, the Srinagar Valley.⁴⁷

These three wars in Kashmir involved conventional armies. The conflict took a more ominous turn in 1989, however, with the outbreak of a guerrilla insurgency. Today, some two dozen Muslim secessionist groups operate in the state. Their organization is irregular, with most groups operating independently of one another. Estimates put the strength of the guerrilla force in the thousands.⁴⁸ Officially the Indian government has a force of 125,000 in the state, but Pakistani officials estimate the total as more

Table 10.3. Muslim South Asia—Economy (2000–01)

	GDP (\$bn)	GDP growth (%)	Inflation (%)	Unemployment (%)	Poverty (%)
Afghanistan	6.9
Bangladesh	48.9	5.9	2.4	2.5	35.6 ^a
India	466.7	3.9	4.0	...	26.0 ^b
Pakistan	71.3	4.4	4.4	5.9	34.0 ^b

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*, for GDP, GDP growth, and inflation; Asian Development Bank, *Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries* for unemployment and poverty. Notes: a) Data from 1996 survey; b) Data from 1999 survey.

Table 10.4. Muslim South Asia—Population (2000–01)

	Population (mil.)	Pop. growth (2000)	Muslim share of pop. (%)	Muslim pop. (mil.)	Refugee pop. (000s)
Afghanistan	26.6	2.6	99	26.3	1,226.1 ^a
Bangladesh	131.1	1.7	88	115.4	22.2
India	1,015.9	1.8	12	120.0	169.8
Pakistan	138.1	2.4	97	134.0	2,199.4

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*, for population and population growth; Department of State, *Country Background Notes*, for Muslim share of population; Muslim population is calculated; UNHCR, *2001 Population Statistics* for refugee population. Note: a) 3.8 million refugees (14 percent of the total population) had fled Afghanistan as of 2001.

than 500,000. Some 35,000 people have died in the Kashmir conflict since 1990, the majority of them non-combatants.

The first generation of Kashmiri secessionists was ethno-nationalist rather than Islamist in orientation. The Jammu-Kashmir Liberation Front was the most prominent group, but its influence has declined since the early 1990s in favor of paramilitaries of a more Islamist cast. Even with these changes, however, not all supporters of secession are radical or violent. A separatist alliance tolerated by the Indian authorities, the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, includes organizations committed to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir question. On May 22, 2002, however, its leader, Abdul Ghani Lone, was gunned down as he left a public rally in Srinagar.⁴⁹ No group claimed responsibility.

The extreme Islamists in Kashmir endorse a more-or-less conventional *jihadi* philosophy. They speak of an international conspiracy against Islam, decry India as infidel, and advocate the use of violence against civilians. One of the most famous of these latter groups is the Lashkar-e-Toiba (“Army of the Pure”). The Lashkar was founded in 1993 and currently has several hundred members. Most are Pakistani, not Kashmiri, and many are veterans of the Afghan war and Pakistani *madrassas*. The Lashkar has declared its ultimate aim is nothing less than the restoration of Islamic rule

over the whole of India. The militia has sent squadrons of fighters on suicide missions against Indian bases in Kashmir and has attempted to assassinate hardline Hindu nationalist leaders in other Indian states. In 2000 it carried out an armed assault on the Red Fort in Delhi.

Another militant grouping, the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JM), was founded in 2000. It has several hundred fighters active in both Pakistan and Kashmir and operated training camps in Afghanistan prior to the fall of the Taliban.⁵⁰ The JM's leader, Maulana Masood Azhar, was imprisoned by Indian officials in 1994 but was freed in December 1999 as part of the demands of hijackers of an Indian Airlines flight to Kabul.⁵¹ Since September 11, 2001, Azhar's organization has escalated its use of terror. Indian officials charge that JM was responsible for a bloody suicide attack on the Kashmir state assembly in October 2001 in which 40 people died. Although no group claimed responsibility for the action, Indian officials also blame JM and Lashkar-e-Toiba for an attack on the Indian parliament on December 13, 2001 in which 14 people died. On May 14, 2002, three suicide fighters clad in Indian army uniforms attacked an army camp in southwestern Kashmir, killing 31 people, including many women and children.⁵² Indian officials blamed this attack on Lashkar-e-Toiba and JM. Pakistani authorities responded by re-arresting the founder of Lashkar-e-Toiba, who had earlier been detained but then released.

The brazenness of these attacks has led to speculation that elements of the Pakistani intelligence services, unhappy with President Pervez Musharraf's new relationship with the United States, may have played a role in sponsoring the attacks. Pakistan's armed forces have long provided assistance to the Kashmir rebels. The secretive ISI, the same intelligence body that coordinated Pakistan's support for the Afghan *mujahidin* and the Taliban, has provided the lion's share of training, tactical support, and supplies. However the influence of the violence in Kashmir now extends well beyond Kashmir and Pakistan. Since the mid-1990s, the conflict has become a *cause célèbre* in radical Islamist circles around the world, on par with the Chechen struggle against Russia. Militants from Central Asia, Chechnya, and Xinjiang have fought alongside the Kashmir guerillas.

Indian authorities continue to lay blame for the guerrilla attacks squarely on Pakistan's ISI. The allegation has placed President Musharraf in a quandary. Musharraf has gambled his presidency on forging a new alliance with the United States, ending his country's sponsorship of the Taliban, and reintegrating Pakistan into the global economy. Kashmir is the Achilles' heel in this bold experiment. For Musharraf to renounce his country's commitment to Kashmiri self-determination would be viewed by the political establishment as a betrayal of Pakistan's founding ambitions. But however

limited his ability or complex his motives, Musharraf appears to want to curtail his country's support for extremism. In late December he launched a crackdown on Islamist extremists in Pakistan proper, directing his efforts against Sunni and Shi'a militants (from the Sipah-e-Sahaba and Tehrik-e-Jaffria, respectively) long involved in sectarian violence.⁵³ In January 2002 Musharraf banned two groups identified by Indian authorities as responsible for bloody attacks in India. Anxious not to wound nationalist pride, however, the president has refused to hand over militants whom Indian authorities consider responsible for the October attack on Kashmir's assembly. Many of the militants detained in the December and January crackdowns have also been released.

Whatever Musharraf's precise intentions, Kashmiri hardliners continue to defy his authority and launch violent attacks on Indian civilians. Many observers speculate that these attacks are intended to push India and Pakistan to the brink of war and, in so doing, destroy two of the most important links in the U.S. campaign against terrorism. It remains unclear to what degree the Kashmiri militants are acting on their own or in cooperation with actors in Pakistani intelligence. As Indian authorities charge, Al Qaeda operatives may also now be operating in Kashmir. Whatever its precise nature, the conflict in Kashmir represents the single most serious challenge to efforts to moderate Islamist politics in South Asia.

Muslim Southeast Asia

There are more than 200 million Muslims in Southeast Asia. Although resident in all the region's countries, Muslims are most numerous in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the southern Philippines, and southern Thailand. Muslim culture in this region has long defied conventional stereotypes. From the earliest of times, Muslim women played prominent roles in the marketplace. In modern times they have moved with ease into higher education and the professions. In the 1960s and 1970s, Southeast Asian Muslims looked to the United States with a spirit of cooperation and friendship, supporting the American effort to contain communism. In the 1980s and 1990s, Muslim political leaders in Malaysia and Indonesia were at the forefront of those seeking to promote the integration of national businesses into the global economy. In the 1990s, Muslim leaders like Anwar Ibrahim of Malaysia and Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia received international acclaim for their efforts to promote pluralism, tolerance, and civil society. Southeast Asia has long seemed an almost textbook example of Muslim societies evolving toward democracy, prosperity, and tolerance.

Unfortunately, the situation in Muslim Southeast Asia was always more complicated than these hopeful observations imply, and it has become more

Table 10.5. Muslim Southeast Asia—Economy (2000–01)

	GDP (\$ bn)	GDP growth (%)	Inflation (%)	Unemployment (%)	Poverty (%)
Brunei	5.7 ^a	1.0 ^a
Indonesia	209.1	4.8	3.7	6.1	27.1 ^b
Malaysia	111.6	8.3	1.5	3.0	8.0
Philippines	88.2	4.0	4.4	10.1	39.0
Singapore	113.4	9.9	1.4	4.4	...
Thailand	170.3	4.3	1.6	2.4	15.9

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*, for GDP, inflation, and unemployment; World Bank, *Country Notes* and Asian Development Bank, *Asian Development Outlook 2002* for poverty. Notes: a) Data for 1998; b) Data from 1999 survey.

so in recent years. Although mainstream groupings like Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah (the first and second largest Muslim social organizations in the world, respectively) have long been forces for moderation, Indonesia has also always had a radical fringe. The 1950s saw rebellions aimed at establishing an Islamic state. Calls for jihad were also skillfully exploited by the leadership of the armed forces during 1965 and 1966 in an effort to mobilize Muslims against the Communist Party.⁵⁴

Thailand

Since the 1960s, Thailand's three southern provinces (Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat) have been plagued by low-intensity separatist violence. The provinces are 80 percent Malay Muslim, having been brought under Thai suzerainty only at the end of the eighteenth century. As the Thai government intensified its efforts at nation-building in the 1930s, it identified Thai nationalism with Buddhism and took measures to suppress Islam in the south. These efforts sparked widespread discontent and, in the 1960s, gave rise to a separatist movement. Today there are 20 separatist organizations, the most prominent of which are the National Revolutionary Front (BRN), the Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO), and the New PULO.⁵⁵

Founded in 1960, the BRN is the oldest of the secessionist organizations. Although established by Malay Muslims, the BRN is secular-socialist in orientation. After the Islamic resurgence of the 1970s and 1980s, the BRN's popularity declined, while that of Islamist groupings like PULO increased. The Islamist groups also tend to be more militant than their nationalist counterparts. Armed units associated with PULO have been involved in attacks on government offices, schools, Buddhist temples, and other symbols of Thai culture.⁵⁶ PULO escalated its armed campaign in the 1990s. It also became more active internationally, strengthening its ties to

Table 10.6. Muslim Southeast Asia—Population (2000–01)

	Population (mil.)	Pop. growth rate (%)	Muslim share of pop. (%)	Muslim pop. (mil.)	Refugee pop. (000s)
Brunei	0.3	2.4	67	0.2	...
Indonesia	210.4	1.6	87	183.0	74.4
Malaysia	23.3	2.4	53	12.3	50.7
Philippines	75.6	1.9	5	3.8	2.2
Singapore	4.0	1.7	16	0.6	neg.
Thailand	60.7	0.8	4	2.4	111.1

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2002*, for population and population growth; *Department of State, Country Background Notes*, for Muslim share of population; Muslim population is calculated; UNHCR, *2001 Population Statistics* for refugee population.

extremists in the Middle East and South Asia. Thai authorities claim that in 1994 PULO played a key role in an attempted bombing of the Israeli embassy in Bangkok. The authorities claimed the effort had been organized by Hezbollah with the help of Iranian intelligence.⁵⁷

Despite differences of leadership and ideology, PULO began to coordinate its attacks with the New PULO after 1997. Responding to appeals from Thai authorities, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia cracked down on militants' camps in northern Malaysia shortly thereafter. Attacks on Thai institutions continued nonetheless, though on a reduced scale. There was no notable escalation in violence after September 11. Individuals claiming to be linked to PULO did call for Muslims to unite against the U.S.-led campaign. For the time being, however, the situation in southern Thailand appears to have settled into a pattern of low-intensity sabotage and personal violence.

Philippines

Unlike southern Thailand, the situation among Muslims in the southern Philippines has become significantly more unsettled since September 11. Approximately six percent of the Philippine population is Muslim, with most of it concentrated in the south on the large island of Mindanao. Although the Spanish never obtained any more than a foothold in this region, the Muslim south was included in the 1898 transfer of sovereignty from Spain to the United States at the end of the Spanish-American War. It took 15 years and several thousand Muslim lives for American forces to pacify the territory.⁵⁸ In the aftermath of the military campaign, the United States encouraged immigration by Christian Filipinos to Mindanao. It was only in the 1960s and 1970s, however, that the Christian immigration grew to such proportions that it altered the island's ethnic and religious balance (by 1975,

60 percent of the population on once-Muslim Mindanao was Christian). These and other developments led to the formation in 1971 of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

From the beginning, the MNLF combined military operations with a relatively pragmatic attitude toward negotiations with the government. During the 1970s, the organization also demonstrated diplomatic skill, winning the recognition of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and securing steady increases in aid from the Middle East. Libya has been an especially generous donor, but Saudi and Pakistani foundations have also provided resources. In the early years, the Libyans helped arrange arms purchases. The Saudis have preferred to focus their aid on religious education (*da'wah*), using their funds to bolster groups like the Jamiat-ul Al Islamic Tabligh, a conservative organization dedicated to combating western influence.⁵⁹

Even in its early years, the MNLF held talks with the Philippine authorities, and in September 1996 it signed an agreement (the Davao Consensus) with the government. In exchange for the establishment of a limited autonomous Muslim enclave in the south of Mindanao, the MNLF agreed to cease hostilities and integrate its forces into the Philippine security forces. The accord was rejected by two groups that had earlier split from the MNLF, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Abu Sayyaf group. These groups are more radically Islamist than the MNLF and include in their ranks veterans from the Afghan war. Both also call for the establishment of an Islamic state in which *shari'at* is fully implemented.

With some 11,000 armed supporters, the MILF is the larger of these two hardline groups. Although it has launched regular attacks on government institutions, the MILF has avoided targeting civilians. In 1997, however, Philippine authorities claim to have uncovered a secret MILF cell consisting of Pakistani and Saudi instructors who were training MILF cadres in assassination and suicide bombing techniques. The allegations, however, have never been confirmed.⁶⁰ The MILF did call for jihad against the United States in December 1998 after U.S. attacks on Baghdad and the Sudan. However, during this same period the organization's leadership continued to engage in behind-the-scenes negotiations with Philippine authorities. The two sides reached a tentative accord in November 1997, although fighting broke out again in 1998. Nonetheless, the MILF responded cautiously to the events of September 2001, taking care to distance itself from Abu Sayyaf.

The Abu Sayyaf group was formed in 1993 by militants who had fought in Afghanistan during the 1980s after being recruited by Muhammad Jamal Khalifa, Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law.⁶¹ The Abu Sayyaf group calls

for the establishment of a fully independent Islamic state and the expulsion of all Christians from Muslim territories in the southern Philippines. The organization's fighting strength is thought to have peaked in early 2001 at 1,200 fighters, up from just 200 in the mid-1990s, although it has plummeted since the arrival of U.S. military advisors in the Philippines. The Abu Sayyaf group has a tightly organized cell structure and a secretive leadership. It also regularly engages in acts of robbery, extortion, kidnapping, and beheading. Its successes during 2000 and 2001 allowed it to double the number of its fighters and upgrade their armaments. However, its reputation for criminal adventurism has irritated other Muslim rebels. A few weeks after the September 11 attacks, the MNLF agreed to cooperate with Philippine authorities in hunting down Abu Sayyaf operatives.

The Abu Sayyaf group has long had at least informal ties to Al Qaeda operatives. Searches of a Manila apartment rented to Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, the man convicted of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York, revealed details of a planned joint operation between the Abu Sayyaf and Yousef scheduled for 1994 or 1995. The operation's objectives included plans to assassinate the Pope during his visit to the Philippines in 1995, launch suicide assaults on the FBI and CIA headquarters in the United States, and blow up 11 American passenger jets over the Pacific. The Abu Sayyaf was linked to the actual bombing of a Philippine Airlines jet in 1994, an act thought to have been a trial run for the planned 1995 hijackings.

Following the ouster of President Joseph Estrada from the Philippine presidency in early 2001, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo increased the government's efforts to extend the peace deal negotiated with the MNLF to the MILF. The president's efforts have not yet proven successful, but they do appear to have isolated the Abu Sayyaf group from other rebel groupings. Abu Sayyaf fighters have responded by intensifying their attacks on civilians in the south and unleashing a campaign of bombing in the Christian north. In May 2001, Abu Sayyaf militants abducted hostages from a resort on Palawan island and Lamitan, and in early August the fighters launched an attack on a Christian village.

At the end of January 2002, the United States initiated its first direct military intervention outside Afghanistan when it began joint anti-terror exercises with the Philippine military.⁶² The operation involved 600 U.S. and 7,000 Philippines special forces. Its stated aim was to free U.S. and Philippine hostages and neutralize the Abu Sayyaf. Despite Philippine nationalists' reservations about the U.S. presence on Philippine soil, the public generally welcomed the U.S. assistance. A long-term U.S. presence, however, would likely increase these nationalist concerns. In spite of the campaign, however, the Abu Sayyaf has been able to carry out numerous acts

of violence, including a bombing in April 2002 that killed 15 civilians. In contrast to the rapid advances of U.S. and Northern Alliance forces in Afghanistan, the campaign in the Philippines is moving slowly.

Indonesia

The activities of the Abu Sayyaf have raised questions about the extent to which there might be links between extremists in the southern Philippines and Indonesia. Although a few groups may have had contacts, there are great differences between them. After the collapse of the Suharto regime in May 1998, Indonesia saw a proliferation of hundreds of locally-based Islamist organizations.⁶³ However, a few groups, like the Laskar Jihad and the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam), were not purely parochial creations, but were organized by radical Islamists with secret ties to an Islamist faction in the armed forces. Since the mid-1990s, a small number of Indonesian military officers have sponsored Islamist paramilitaries to defend their business interests, attack members of the democracy movement and, more recently, contain regional unrest. Although its background is complex, the religious violence in the troubled provinces of Maluku and North Maluku in eastern Indonesia, where some 8,000 people have died in fighting between Christians and Muslims since 1999, has been exacerbated by this sponsorship of *jihadi* paramilitaries. (It should be noted that other security units have provided support to the Christian side.⁶⁴)

As the Maluku example illustrates, the armed forces are deeply divided on the question of Islam. Western intelligence reports and intra-service skirmishes suggest that many commanders disapprove of the support provided by some officers for Islamist paramilitaries. The Islamist paramilitaries also vary in their attitude toward the armed forces. Although the Laskar Jihad and Islamic Defenders' Front have close ties to certain military commanders, another group, the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI—Indonesian Council of Jihad Fighters), has long had a hostile relationship with the army command. Founded in August 2000 with the aim of fighting for the implementation of Islamic law, the MMI includes among its senior leadership figures identified decades earlier with a Muslim rebel group called the Darul Islam.⁶⁵

The MMI's spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, previously had ties to the Darul Islam. Ba'asyir was sentenced to prison in the late 1970s for his opposition to Suharto. When, in the mid-1990s, some hardline Islamists reconciled with Suharto and backed his repression of the democracy movement (which they portrayed as Christian-secularist conspiracies to weaken Muslim Indonesia), Ba'asyir and his associates kept their distance. This legacy explains why Ba'asyir and the MMI have frosty ties with the armed

forces.⁶⁶ In November 2001, Malaysian and Philippine authorities alleged that Ba'asyir was the leader of a pan-Southeast Asian terror organization with ties to Al Qaeda known as the Jemaah Islamiyah, but Indonesian authorities refused to arrest Ba'asyir, claiming that the evidence was weak.

Unlike the MMI, the Laskar Jihad has long enjoyed the patronage of a small but important faction in the armed forces.⁶⁷ The Laskar Jihad grew out of a conservative religious movement founded in the early 1990s by a young Arab Indonesian, Jafar Umar Thalib. Thalib studied in Saudi Arabia during 1986 and, under the auspices of the Saudi-sponsored Muslim World League, fought briefly in Afghanistan in 1988. He admits having met with Osama bin Laden while in Afghanistan, but insists (credibly) that he worked with a *mujahidin* faction closer to the Saudis than to bin Laden. In interviews, Thalib has admitted having uninvited contacts with Al Qaeda representatives as recently as May 2001. Thalib denies reports, however, that Al Qaeda fighters have assisted his forces in Maluku. In late September 2001, he also denied the allegation of a militant from a rival Islamist organization that bin Laden had given Thalib \$240,000.

Nonetheless, in November 2001, western journalists traveling in Sulawesi reported seeing Afghan and Arab fighters, and on December 12, 2001, Indonesia's intelligence chief, Lieutenant General Abdullah Hendropriyono, confirmed these reports, commenting that Al Qaeda had established a training camp in Indonesia and was assisting jihad fighters in Maluku and central Sulawesi. The next day Minister of Defense Matori Abdul Djilil declared that he had "full confidence" in the validity of Hendropriyono's comments. Court documents provided by Spanish authorities after the arrest of Al Qaeda agents in Spain during November 2001 also spoke of an Islamist training camp in eastern Indonesia.⁶⁸ Indonesian observers expressed doubts about the quality of this evidence, however, and speculated that the intelligence chief may have made his charges in an effort to improve the military's relations with the United States, which have been strained since the early 1990s. With the exception of Matori, no cabinet officials backed Hendropriyono's charges, and three days later, faced with a barrage of criticism, Hendropriyono retracted his statement. In a widely publicized comment, he claimed he had been "misunderstood," and insisted he had never meant to say Al Qaeda had cells in Indonesia or ties to the Laskar Jihad.⁶⁹

Although his lieutenants expressed enthusiasm for bin Laden in several interviews they gave in 2000, since September 11, Thalib has gone to great lengths to condemn the radical leader. Tellingly, however, Thalib did not condemn bin Laden because of the mass killing in the United States, but because of bin Laden's opposition to the government of Saudi Arabia.

Whatever his Middle Eastern contacts, there are sound domestic reasons for Thalib to keep his distance from Al Qaeda. The Laskar Jihad has been dependent on domestic backing from civilians linked to the former Suharto regime since its establishment in early 2000. These individuals have assisted the organization's military campaign. The influence of Suharto holdovers continues to complicate efforts to contain Islamist radicalism in Indonesia. Complicating matters further, President Megawati leads a fractious coalition government, and at the moment appears unable to move decisively. Vice President Hamzah Haz, moreover, has defied her and expressed sympathy for the Laskar Jihad.

The reluctance of Indonesian authorities to take action has been seen by some observers as proof that some in the government and military want to protect Muslim extremists. However, there has never been more than a small faction in the armed forces who support extremism of this sort. The greater obstacle to Indonesian cooperation with the U.S. campaign is the crisis of governance afflicting Indonesian society as a whole and the inability of any single faction in government to act decisively. Complicating the issue further is the military's resentment of U.S. criticism over its actions in East Timor and Aceh.

In early 2002, the Bush administration hinted that it was interested in renewing dialogue with the Indonesian armed forces. Shortly after this announcement, Indonesian authorities began to rein in Laskar Jihad activities in Maluku province. In early May, as U.S.-Indonesian relations thawed, the police arrested the leader of the Laskar Jihad after he gave a inflammatory speech opposing government efforts to bring peace to the troubled Malukus. Many analysts have applauded these actions as first steps toward halting the paramilitarist violence that plagues Indonesia. However, other observers warn bluntly that the warming of relations should not be presented to the Indonesian authorities as "rewarding the TNI [Indonesian armed forces] for progress in human rights accountability when there has been none."⁷⁰

Malaysia

If Indonesian authorities have reacted hesitantly to the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia has put his government squarely behind the effort. He has done so even while emphasizing that, on questions like the Israel-Palestine conflict, he continues to take exception to U.S. policy. Historically, mainstream Muslims in Malaysia have been more theologically conservative in their views than their counterparts in Indonesia. At the same time, however, Malaysia has seen little of the paramilitary violence that has plagued Indonesia. Even

conservative Muslims in Malaysia show a willingness to play by the rules of constitutional politics. The main opposition party, the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), has long advocated Malaysia's transformation into an Islamic state, but it has been content to pursue this goal through the ballot box.⁷¹ The party has governed the northern state of Kelantan for many years and has controlled the state government in neighboring Trengganu since 1999. In both states PAS has acquired a reputation for honest government, even while being deeply conservative in its interpretation of Islamic law. PAS's campaign to implement Islamic law at the state level has included advocating severe penalties for crimes of theft and adultery, but its efforts in this regard have been blocked by federal authorities.

With the arrest of Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in 1998 and his subsequent sentencing to 15 years in prison on sodomy and corruption charges, relations between Washington and Kuala Lumpur cooled. Mahathir's allegation the previous year that George Soros and the "Jews" may have had a role in the currency crisis savaging the Malaysian economy at that time had already contributed to U.S. displeasure. But whatever his reputation in international dialogue or the handling of dissidents, on matters of Islam Mahathir has long been known as a reform-minded modernizer. He has supported Muslim women's calls for equal rights and, while backing the Palestinian cause, has been a fierce critic of Islamist violence.

The post-September 11 campaign against terrorism offered the United States and Malaysia an opportunity to find new grounds for agreement on questions of Islam and the West. While continuing to emphasize his differences with U.S. policies in the Middle East, Mahathir made a series of bold speeches in late 2001 and early 2002 in which he appealed to Muslims around the world to condemn terrorism and take measures to modernize their societies.⁷² His comments stood in stark contrast to those of the leaders of PAS. In late September 2001, as the United States prepared to take action against the Taliban, PAS spokespersons voiced their support for the Taliban regime and warned that if Washington attacked Afghanistan, Muslims everywhere would be obliged to wage jihad against the United States.

In the months following September 11, the Malaysian authorities arrested some 60 individuals on charges that they were associated with groups plotting to attack western targets. PAS officials dismissed the arrests as part of a general crackdown on the opposition.⁷³ However, the Malaysian charges were given a measure of credibility in December 2001, when Singaporean authorities arrested 14 Singaporeans and one Malaysian on grounds that they were plotting to attack western embassies and businesses in Singapore.⁷⁴

Muslim politics in Southeast Asia is the most varied in all of Muslim Asia. On one hand, this region boasts some of the most outspoken moderate Muslim leaders, as well as the largest and best organized moderate organizations. Since September 11, however, it has also seen a serious escalation in radical Islamist agitation, some of it sponsored by groups suspected of having ties to Al Qaeda, through networks like the Jemaah Islamiyah. The complex balance of forces in the region will require an equally nuanced policy response.

Prospects and Policy

Three conclusions stand out from this survey of Muslim politics in Asia. The first is that in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, a new and more militant form of transnational Islam succeeded in establishing a loose network in parts of Asia. Relative to the mainstream Muslim community, the network is small, but it is capable of exercising an influence disproportionate to its representation in society. Although it may have the backing of some international funders, most of the network is not a centrally directed Islamist Internationale. Instead, it is a loosely structured array of affinity groups, among which only a few coordinate activities. Although some groups (the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, and Kashmir's Jaish-e-Muhammad, among others) have received support from Al Qaeda, most have not. Detailed information is lacking, but some groups have certainly received assistance from private foundations in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf. However, this assistance has not led to the creation of a coordinated movement in any technical sense of this term. As with the Majelis Mujahidin and Laskar Jihad in Indonesia, groups that share certain general ideological values often become rivals.

A second point follows from this first and touches on the question of the radicals' future. Although surveys and ethnographic studies indicate that they represent but a small portion of the Muslim population, the radicals are likely to remain a destabilizing presence in Asian Muslim politics for some time to come. The reason for this has to do not with their numbers, but with the circumstances out of which they emerged. The radical Islamists are not merely an update of a traditional Muslim politics, and although they may claim that they model their actions on the life of the Prophet, they represent a politics as new to the Muslim world as fascism and Marxism-Leninism were to the modern West.

Sociologically speaking, the radicals originate at the confluence of two great currents of our age, the ethno-religious revival that occurred at the end of the twentieth century and the political and cultural globalization of the new millennium. The ethno-religious revival is not peculiar to the Mus-

lim world, but has affected large portions of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Its political impact has been greatest, however, where economic decline has combined with regime crises to place received ideas of nation and tradition in question. The Muslim world's revival occurred against the backdrop of the decline of Marxism (once popular in Muslim Asia) and the crisis of secular nationalism. Leaving aside backward countries like Afghanistan, the resurgence also occurred in a context of urbanization, mass education, and pluralization of religious authority.

Countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and India saw the emergence of a moderate Islam that stressed the compatibility of the religion with modern pluralism and tolerance. A key theme stressed by this moderate Islam is the need to contextualize Islamic ideals by linking their emphasis on justice and equality to modern constitutional structures.⁷⁵ However, another branch of the Islamic resurgence, a radically conservative one, is anything but democratic. Rather than affirming the need to contextualize and renew, the radicals insist that Islam's meanings are the same for all ages. The radicals' effort to cloak themselves in the mantle of tradition, of course, ignores that, in their preoccupation with power and their reliance on Leninist models of organization, they are a thoroughly modern creation.

Cultural and economic globalization has been the second major influence on the rise of radical Islamism, and it is this influence more than any other that makes it likely that the radicals will be around for some years to come. With its pilgrimage sites, its great classical centers of religious learning, and its extensive involvement in international trade, historical Islam was from its beginnings transnational or globalizing. However, the globalization with which the new radicals are associated is of a different stripe than the old. In addition to its heightened mobility of people and goods, the new globalization is able to move ideas, images, and capital around the world faster than ever before. This accelerated circulation allows for the creation of specialized and "deterritorialized" communities. These are groups of people who are able to share ideas and resources even though they do not occupy contiguous territory. Far more than in the past, people today can create virtual communities that share a world-view without having physical proximity. Technologies like the Internet lower communication costs and allow a radical segmentation in the marketplace of Muslim ideas.

For ideas to have a practical impact, however, virtual connections must at some point be translated into concrete actions, organization, and power. Here too, the new radicals have been able to compensate for their disadvantage in numbers by taking advantage of the easy flow of people, ideas, and capital. The violence of September 11 required only inexpensive hard-

ware and a small number of personnel. As long as radical groups are able to recruit a few true-believers and organize a strike force, this type of terrorism is, unfortunately, likely to continue. If this is true, the key policy question then becomes, "How great will the extremists' influence be?"

The ability to constitute a terror network is different, of course, from building a mass movement or controlling an entire country. The likelihood of a full-blown insurgency like that which brought the Taliban to power in Afghanistan appears remote in most of Muslim Asia. For the moment, even the Central Asian states are not experiencing economic depression, social dislocation, and destruction of the moderate center on a scale sufficient to create a full-scale revolution. If such a country-wide insurgency seems unlikely, there are nonetheless pockets in Muslim Asia where ethno-religious tensions have the potential for chronic instability. Xinjiang in China is one such locale. The conflict in this territory was primarily ethno-nationalist in origin, and today it still has less to do with radical Islamism than with the political and demographic displacement of the Uighurs indigenous to the region. Were Chinese authorities willing to extend autonomy and freedoms to the much marginalized Uighurs, this conflict could be easily contained, although it is likely to be dealt with on less civil terms.

The southern Philippines is another region where the political and demographic marginalization of indigenous Muslims has given rise to broad dissatisfaction and a smaller radical fringe. The Abu Sayyaf group's strange mixture of brutality and criminality has ensured that mainstream Muslim groupings, even rebel ones, have taken pains to distance themselves from this terrorist organization. Further complications include the presence of U.S. advisors, which will test Philippine nationalists' patience, and the failure of the Philippine government to fulfill all the terms of the earlier agreement with the MNLF. Ethno-religious tensions will remain a chronic feature of political life in the southern Philippines, but with a sustained government commitment to development and political autonomy in the Muslim south, this conflict may yet be resolved.

No country illustrates better the ability of small groups of radical Islamists to exercise an influence disproportionate with their numbers than Indonesia. Although tiny compared to moderate organizations like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, the radical extreme has set many of the terms of post-Suharto politics. The irony is that, in the 1990s, Indonesia developed the largest movement for a moderate Islam in the world. Rather than nurturing these civil Islamic seedlings, the Suharto regime tried to rip them out. However, to blame everything on Suharto or the pro-Islamist military would be to ignore the enormity of the crisis of governance and national identity Indonesia is experiencing. Rebuilding governance and

civil society after the depredations of authoritarian rule will require that the armed forces agree to play a more restrained role in society than they did under Suharto. The military must do so if it is to develop the professionalism, discipline, and restraint this fractious country requires. If, somehow, this can be done, Indonesia's moderate majority may yet be able to renew its trek toward civil peace and democracy. As yet, however, it is unclear whether the effort to get the military on board the international campaign against terrorism will help or hinder this transition.

In Malaysia, a theologically conservative but politically unradical Islam linked to the opposition PAS party has long had the support of one-fifth to one-quarter of the population. Support for PAS increased after Mahathir Mohamad's heavy-handed treatment of his popular former deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, in 1998–99. However, in the fall of 2001, PAS seriously misperceived public opinion and called for jihad against the United States. The party then compounded its error by pressing forward with its campaign for the implementation of Islamic law. It simultaneously lashed out against liberal Muslims, such as the feminist Muslim organization Sisters in Islam. Mahathir's ruling United Malays National Organization (UMNO) has benefited from these actions. Over the long term, other moderate opposition groupings like the Justice Party may benefit as well. The most pressing question for Malaysian politics will be whether UMNO can finesse the post-Mahathir transition and reach some kind of reconciliation with the supporters of Anwar Ibrahim. However uncertain Malaysia's democratic transition, the long-term prospects for moderate Islam look good.

One territory in Muslim Asia stands alone in the severity of the threat to itself and the world: Kashmir. This state's majority Muslim population appears alienated from the Indian authorities who nominally control the state. Their disaffection has been compounded by the heavy-handedness of army units in dealing with Muslim civilians. In an all too familiar cycle of violence, however, the patience of the Indian armed forces has worn thin in the face of terrorist attacks. The situation has been further complicated by the role of the Pakistani intelligence services in sponsoring the rebels. The conflict in Kashmir shows a combustible mix of nuclear arms, terrorism, ethno-religious hatred, and international conflict. The United States' increased involvement in South Asia has offered the best hope in years for containing this incendiary conflict, although this is still a distant hope, one that will require enormous skill on the part of regional leaders and the major western powers if the threat of violence is to diminish.

Finally, if there is a general conclusion to be drawn from this survey, it is that U.S. policymakers should not allow the threat posed by Al Qaeda and Muslim terrorism to obscure the diversity and promise of Muslim Asia.

Terrorist violence demands vigorous action. Over the long run, however, the evolution of Muslim politics will depend upon the ability of local leaders and western nations to respond to mainstream Muslims' hopes for economic improvement and political participation. However much the Islamic resurgence of the 1980s and 1990s might look uniform from the outside, it was not. It gave rise to a fierce debate within Muslim society about the proper meanings of Islam and the proper forms for Islamic politics.

Radical Islamists are best able to move from the fringe to the center where there is a crisis of economy and legitimacy on a scale like that provoked by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the conflict in Kashmir, the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, or fighting between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia's Maluku province. In less troubled settings, radical Islamists have difficulty achieving any more than a small following. It is this inability to mobilize followers using conventional methods that tempts many radicals to resort to violence. Moderate Muslims are the most common victims of these attacks, a fact that again should figure in western policymakers' reflections on what can be done to woo the majority.

The recent history of Muslim extremism in Asia illustrates how and why radicals inspire resentment among mainstream Muslims. The radicals are quick to accuse fellow Muslims of apostasy, a charge that carries a clear threat of violence. Most Muslims find the radicals' insistence on the exclusion of women from higher education and public life offensive. They chafe at the radicals' restrictions on popular entertainment. Afghanistan under the Taliban illustrated how ordinary Muslims even in a backward society resent restrictions on women, education, and entertainment. And although control of the state still lies in the hands of hardliners, Iran's recent elections also show how education, the desire for economic improvement, and global communications can work to deepen public support for more moderate Muslim politics.

The keys to stability in the Muslim world, then, are not all that different from those in the early twentieth century West: education, balanced development, participatory governance, and civil peace. The resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict clearly is vital. But we should not allow that conflict to blind us to the broader currents of the Muslim world. We have seen in Afghanistan and Pakistan that, in times of state failure, radical Islamists turn religious schools into platforms for extremism. But these troubled examples must be seen in light of an even more pervasive cultural current. In most countries, the Muslim public's aspiration to economic and educational progress is forcing traditional schools to implement new programs of career training and education for women. Education remains an area where western aid can exercise a powerfully positive influence.

There is indeed a clash of cultures taking place in our world, but it is first of all a struggle among Muslims for the soul of Islam. It is only secondarily a conflict between radical Islamists and the West. The radicals' appeals run contrary to ordinary Muslims' thirst for economic improvement, educational enlightenment, and freedom from religious bullies. The hopes and dreams of the moderate majority are not so different from those of religious people in the West. The majority's desire for betterment, their anger at being labeled bad Muslims, and the utter unrealism of the radicals' plans for government and society, all present policy opportunities for western countries willing and able to support Muslim moderation.

Endnotes

- ¹ See Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil, and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 128–40.
- ² See Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, New York: New York University Press, 2000, pp. 143–60; and Roald Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, eds., *Islam and Central Asia: An Enduring Legacy or an Evolving Threat?* Washington, DC: Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 2000.
- ³ For an informed analysis of these concerns from the perspective of Muslim Southeast Asia, see Barry Desker and Kumar Ramakrishna, “Forging an Indirect Strategy in Southeast Asia,” *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 2 (Spring 2002), pp. 17–45.
- ⁴ On the early diffusion and contemporary diversity of Asian Islam, see Bruce R. Lawrence, “The Eastward Journey of Muslim Kingship: Islam in South and Southeast Asia,” and Dru C. Gladney, “Central Asia and China: Transnationalization, Islamization, and Ethnicization,” in John L. Esposito, ed., *The Oxford History of Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 395–431 and pp. 433–73, respectively.
- ⁵ See Patricia Crone, “The Rise of Islam in the World,” in Francis Robinson, ed., *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 2–31.
- ⁶ On the role of Arab scholars in the Islamic revival in late nineteenth century Southeast Asia, see William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, Second Edition, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1994 (orig., 1967).
- ⁷ M.B. Hooker, “Introduction: The Translation of Islam into Southeast Asia,” in M.B. Hooker, ed., *Islam in South-East Asia*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983, pp. 1–22.
- ⁸ Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, pp. 33–53; see also Asim Roy, *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- ⁹ On Islam in the early modern history of Southeast Asia, see Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1460–1680*, vol. 2, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993, pp. 132–201.
- ¹⁰ Shi’ism was made the state religion of the Persian Safavid empire in 1500; the only Muslim state to have adopted Shi’ism in this way. Although there were

Persian-speaking communities across Central Asia, local rulers did not adopt Shi'ism, and the Safavids' shift to Shi'ism worked to diminish Persian influence in Central Asia while heightening Turkic. Today the only Persian-speaking majority in Central Asia are the Kyrgyz of Kyrgyzstan. Tensions between the Sunni majority and the Shi'i minority in Central Asia have continued to this day, limiting the spread of Iranian political ideas in Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

- ¹¹ For an examination of the reform movement in Southeast Asia, see Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*; for the Indian subcontinent, see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- ¹² This discussion draws on, among other studies, Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996; and Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, translated by Carol Volk, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- ¹³ Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 43–44.
- ¹⁴ For Indonesia, see Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- ¹⁵ After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iranian authorities also provided direct assistance to Muslim organizations, giving the single largest share of their aid to Shi'a groups in Lebanon. In Muslim Asia, where the great majority of Muslims are Sunni, the Iranians found it difficult to work directly with societal groups in Asia, many of whom view Shi'ism as heretical. Rather than risk the ire of local religious leaders, the Iranians opted to channel their assistance through government-to-government ties. However, the burden of the Iran-Iraq war was such that the volume of Iranian aid to Muslim Asia remained small. Iran was more influential as an example to radical Muslim youths, many of whom saw the 1979 revolution as proof that Islam offered a third way between the perceived evils of western capitalism and a now discredited Marxist socialism. On Iranian efforts in post-Soviet Central Asia, see Shireen T. Hunter, "Iran, Central Asia and the Opening of the Islamic Iron Curtain," in Sagdeev and Eisenhower, *Islam and Central Asia*, pp. 171–91.
- ¹⁶ On the balance between the political and non-political in the resurgence in Central Asia, see the studies in Jo-Ann Gross, ed., *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1992. For a comparison from Southeast Asia, see Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvatic, eds., *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997.
- ¹⁷ See Robert W. Hefner, ed., *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002.
- ¹⁸ For a sample of these democratic views, see John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Makers of Contemporary Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; and Charles Kurzman, ed., *Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- ¹⁹ Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Poli-*

- tics, and the Rise of the Taliban*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001, p. 92.
- ²⁰ Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, p. 92.
- ²¹ Rashid, *Taliban*, p. 82.
- ²² David B. Edwards examines the modern history of this inclusive Islam, and the reasons for its demise in *Before Taliban: Genealogies of the Afghan Jihad*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- ²³ Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, p. 97.
- ²⁴ See Paul Blustein, "In Pakistan's Squalor, Cradles of Terrorism," *The Washington Post*, March 14, 2002; and Rashid, *Taliban*, pp. 87–94.
- ²⁵ See Council of Foreign Relations, "Terrorism: Q & A—Harakat ul-Mujahedeen, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad," May 2002, at <www.terrorismanswers.com/groups/harakat.html>.
- ²⁶ An Iranian-style popular revolution is even less likely, since no Asian Muslim country has an Islamist movement even vaguely comparable to that of Iran at the end of the Pahlavi dynasty. Of greater concern is the possibility of a coup followed by a conservative military alliance with the radical Islamist fringe, as occurred in Pakistan under the rule of General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq.
- ²⁷ Kazakhstan's and Kyrgyzstan's populations are 35 and 22 percent Russian, respectively. Kazakhstan also has significant German (five percent) and Ukrainian (five percent) minorities, such that Muslims barely comprise a majority. Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan have seven, six, and two percent Russian minority populations, respectively. With the exception of Kazakhstan, the Russian population in all these states is unstable, as large numbers of Russians have emigrated as a result of ethnic tensions. See Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, p. 136.
- ²⁸ See International Crisis Group, *Recent Violence in Central Asia: Causes and Consequences*; and Rashid, *Jihad*, pp. 57–92.
- ²⁹ Asian Development Bank, *Asian Development Outlook 2002*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 111–25.
- ³⁰ For an overview of Islam and politics in Central Asia, see Rashid, *Jihad*, pp. 57–92. For analysis of more recent events, see International Crisis Group, *Central Asia: Drugs and Conflict*, Asia Report no. 25, Brussels: ICG, November 26, 2001; and International Crisis Group, *The IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir: Implications of the Afghanistan Campaign*, Central Asia Briefing, Brussels: ICG, January 30, 2002.
- ³¹ See International Crisis Group, *The IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir*, Central Asia Briefing, Brussels: ICG, 30 January 2002, pp. 6–10.
- ³² International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan at Ten – Repression and Instability*, Asia Report no. 21, Brussels: ICG, 21 August 2001; and Human Rights Watch, *Press Backgrounder: Human Rights Abuse in Uzbekistan*, World Report 2001, New York: September 26, 2001.
- ³³ Council on Foreign Relations, *Terrorism: Q & A – Uzbekistan*, New York: March 2002.
- ³⁴ See Rashid, *Jihad*, pp. 137–38.
- ³⁵ Rashid, *Jihad*, p. 141.
- ³⁶ ICG, *The IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir*, p. 4–5.

- ³⁷ ICG, *The IMU and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir*, p. 11.
- ³⁸ There was a precedent for this behavior. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, moderate Muslims in Tajikistan worked with the democratic opposition to oppose the neo-communists' grip on government. This did not prevent the country from sliding into a bloody civil war from 1992 to 1997. However, the Taliban capture of Kabul in 1996 prompted parties to the conflict in Tajikistan to put aside their differences, for fear that the Pushtun-dominated Taliban was about to strike at Tajiks in Afghanistan and Tajikistan.
- ³⁹ See Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, no. 149, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- ⁴⁰ See Ron Gluckman, "Uighurs: Strangers in Their Own Land," *Asia Week*, December 7, 2001.
- ⁴¹ John Pomfret, "Muslim Chinese Fear for Rights," *Washington Post*, October 13, 2001.
- ⁴² Erik Eckholm, "Official Praises China for its Cooperation in Rooting out bin Laden's Terror Network," *The New York Times*, December 7, 2001.
- ⁴³ See Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997, pp. 94–95.
- ⁴⁴ See Sean Yom, "Uighur Muslims and Separatism in China: A Looming Dilemma." *International Institute for Asian Studies Newsletter*, no. 27, March 2002, p. 6.
- ⁴⁵ Pomfret, "Muslim Chinese Fear for Rights," *Washington Post*.
- ⁴⁶ On the controversy surrounding the Ayodhya mosque, see van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism*, pp. 2–11. On the violence in Gujarat, in which hundreds died, most of them Muslim, died, see "India Violence Kills Nearly 500," BBC News Online, March 3, 2002.
- ⁴⁷ See Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 220–22.
- ⁴⁸ See "Who are the Kashmir militants?" BBC News online, August 10, 2000.
- ⁴⁹ Barry Bearak, "Kashmir Leader is Killed, Bringing Tensions to Boil," *The New York Times*, May 22, 2002.
- ⁵⁰ Council of Foreign Relations, *Terrorism: Q & A*.
- ⁵¹ See "Profile: Maulana Masood Azhar." BBC News online, December 25, 1999.
- ⁵² See "India weighs Kashmir response," BBC News online, May 16, 2002.
- ⁵³ See "Pakistan rounds up militants," BBC News online, January 4, 2002.
- ⁵⁴ One-half million people died in the subsequent violence. Indonesia's Hindu and Christian minority, it should be emphasized, also participated in the killing. See Robert Cribb, ed., *The Indonesian Killings 1965–66*, Clayton, Australia: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990.
- ⁵⁵ See Omar Farouk, "The Historical and Transnational Dimensions of Malay-Muslim Separatism in Southern Thailand," in Jim Joo Jock and S. Vani, eds., *Armed Separatism in Southeast Asia*, Singapore: ISEAS, 1984, pp. 222–73; and Peter Chalk, "Militant Islamic Separatism in Southern Thailand," in Jason F. Isaacson and Colin Rubenstein, eds., *Islam in Asia: Changing Political Realities*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002, pp. 165–86.
- ⁵⁶ Farouk, "The Historical and Transnational Dimensions," p. 242.

- ⁵⁷ Chalk, "Militant Islamic Separatism," p. 172.
- ⁵⁸ See Peter G. Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899-1920*, Quezon: New Day Publishers.
- ⁵⁹ Peter Chalk, "Militant Islamic Extremism in the Southern Philippines," in Isaacson and Rubenstein, eds., *Islam in Asia*, pp. 187–222.
- ⁶⁰ See Chalk, "Militant Extremism in the South Philippines," p. 198.
- ⁶¹ See Council on Foreign Relations and International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism, "Terrorism: Q and A – Abu Sayyaf Group," March 2002, online at <www.terrorismanswers.com/groups/abusayyaf.html>.
- ⁶² See Council on Foreign Relations and International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism, "Terrorism: Q & A – Philippines," March 2002, online at <www.terrorismanswers.com/havens/philippines.html>.
- ⁶³ On the Suharto and military support for extremist Islam in the late 1990s, see Hefner, *Civil Islam*, pp. 167–213. For an overview of the aftermath of September 11, see International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Violence and Radical Muslims*, Indonesia Briefing, Brussels: 10 October 2001, pp. 12–13.
- ⁶⁴ See United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, "Report on Indonesia," Washington: USCIRF, May 2002; and International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku*, Asia Report No. 31, Brussels: ICG, 8 February 2002.
- ⁶⁵ The Darul Islam was an armed movement that declared an Islamic state and battled the Indonesian army, mostly in West Java, from 1948 to 1960.
- ⁶⁶ Robert W. Hefner, "Indonesian Islam at the Crossroads," *Van Zorge Report on Indonesia*, vol. 4, no. 3 (19 February 2002), pp. 12–20.
- ⁶⁷ See Reyko Huang, "In the Spotlight: Laskar Jihad," Washington, DC: Center for Defense Information, March 2002; and Hefner, "Indonesian Islam at the Crossroads."
- ⁶⁸ Richard C. Paddock, "Singapore's 'Osama' May Have Targeted U.S. Interests," *The Los Angeles Times*, February 5, 2002.
- ⁶⁹ See Hefner, "Indonesian Islam." A report issued by the Brussels-based International Crisis Group on August 8, 2002, shows that the question of Al Qaeda ties to groups in Southeast Asia is still very much alive. Based on an exhaustive field study, the ICG concludes that some individuals linked to the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia do indeed have ties to international terror groups and have been engaged in violent activities. See International Crisis Group, "Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the 'Ngruki Network' in Indonesia," Brussels: ICG Indonesia Briefing, 8 August 2002.
- ⁷⁰ International Crisis Group, "Resuming U.S.-Indonesia Military Ties" Brussels: ICG Indonesia Briefing, 21 May 2002, p. 6.
- ⁷¹ For an overview of Islamic movements in Malaysia, see K. S. Jomo and Ahmad Shabery Cheek, "Malaysia's Islamic Movements," in Joel S. Kahn and Francis Loh Kok Wah, eds., *Fragmented Vision: Culture and Politics in Contemporary Malaysia*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992, pp. 79–106.
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