

# WORKING PAPERS

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## **Islam and Christianity in Southeast Asia 1600-1700**

By Barbara Watson Andaya

**Barbara Watson Andaya**

Professor of Asian Studies, University of Hawaii and

Visiting Senior Fellow at ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute

Email: [bandaya@hawaii.edu](mailto:bandaya@hawaii.edu)

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## Introduction

The population of contemporary Southeast Asia is around 618 million, spread across eleven countries. An estimated 40 percent are Muslim, and 21 percent Christian. Although there are Muslim and Christian minorities in mainland Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam), it is in the island areas (Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei and Timor Loro Sae) where Christianity and Islam are most strongly established. The seventeenth century was decisive in these developments, for it was during this period that Islam consolidated its hold over most of modern Malaysia, Brunei, the southern Philippines and Indonesia (the world's most populous Muslim country). At the same time, Christianity established an impregnable position in the Philippines, where today 93 percent of the population is Christian (notably Roman Catholic), with tiny Timor Loro Sae a distant second.

The arrival of the Protestant Dutch (and to a far lesser extent, the English) in a region where missionizing had been solely a Roman Catholic concern injected new tensions into European dealings with local societies. While a theme of accommodation can certainly be traced, economic rivalries meant that conversion to Catholicism signalled association with Spanish or Portuguese interests, while local Protestants were linked to the Dutch and followers of Islam to some Muslim ruler. Because religious commitment was often used to rally support in conflicts that were actually rooted in commercial competition, the seventeenth century saw a hardening of religious boundaries. By 1700 toleration for religious difference was still a feature of Southeast Asian cultures, but this had been substantially undermined by European efforts to assert political and economic dominance.

## The Background

At the end of the sixteenth century Islam was well established in the coastal areas of the western Malay-Indonesian archipelago, fostered by maritime trading networks that reached to India and the Middle East. In 1511 the Portuguese conquered the renowned entrepôt of Melaka, on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, resulting in the dispersal of Muslim traders to alternative ports in Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and Sulawesi. Given the Portuguese goal of dominating the lucrative spice trade, conflicts with local rulers were almost inevitable, but Christian antagonism towards all ‘Moors’ was intensified by the legacy of hostility in the Iberian Peninsula. Portugal had been able to regain control of Muslim-occupied territory in the mid-thirteenth century, but in Spain the ‘reconquest’ only ended in 1492, when Muslim Granada finally surrendered. Christian reprisals were unrelenting. Spain banned any open Islamic practices and Muslims were persuaded or compelled to adopt Christianity. Those who resisted were enslaved or exiled, although there was continuing suspicion that ‘Moriscos’, converts from Islam, were covertly maintaining their former religious beliefs. Meanwhile, the armies of Ottoman Turkey advanced into Europe, even laying siege to Vienna in 1529. The global repercussions of these conflicts were soon evident in Southeast Asia. Following the Portuguese conquest Melaka had become a centre for Catholic missionary activity, but with Ottoman support the northern Sumatran port of Aceh assumed a leading role in Muslim attacks on this ‘infidel’ enclave.<sup>1</sup>

The perception of religious affiliation as a key to allegiance and the resulting Christian-Muslim competition was particularly marked in eastern Indonesia. Although the rulers of the fabled spice islands, Ternate and Tidore, had adopted Islam, many communities still followed indigenous belief systems. The Portuguese therefore saw Christian evangelism as a way of

strengthening their position against opposition from the increasing number of ‘Moor’ adherents. Despite claims of hundreds of baptisms, however, ‘conversion’ was often directly related to perceived shifts in the local power balance, and knowledge of Christian teachings was extremely limited. By the same token, Muslim determination to recruit ever more followers meant that doctrinal understanding was also shallow. The Dutch minister François Valentijn (1666-1727), who published a long history of Islam’s arrival in Ambon, Java and Makassar, asserted that even Muslim ‘priests’ had little knowledge of the Qur’an and ‘were barely capable of reading a chapter correctly’.<sup>2</sup> Reports of ‘apostasy’ and ‘lapsed Christians’ simply reflected the extent to which Muslim lords or Portuguese governors could enforce or induce allegiance to a new faith.

Despite some high status conversions, opposition to the Portuguese in eastern Indonesia steadily intensified, primarily because of their treatment of Muslim rulers (including imprisonment and even assassination). Islamic teachers called for a holy war and in 1575 the Sultan of Ternate, once regarded as a potential convert, was able to drive out the unbelievers. The Portuguese and many of their allies fled to the island of Ambon, which became a Christian stronghold.<sup>3</sup> A decisive point in the history of Indonesian Islam came in 1605, when the ruler of Makassar in Sulawesi, whose interest in Christianity had encouraged the Portuguese belief that he might convert, adopted Islam. When Makassar’s efforts to persuade its neighbours to suit were unsuccessful, the ruler embarked on what became known as the ‘Islamic wars’, and in less than a decade most of Southwest Sulawesi and neighbouring islands were under Muslim kings.

Elsewhere, however, Christianity was advancing. In 1565 the Spanish had established themselves in the northern Philippines, justifying colonization by the claim that they were

saving pagan souls. Manila, then under Muslim leadership, was captured in 1571 and replaced by a Spanish town dominated by churches and monasteries. By 1600 the religious orders (Jesuits, Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Recollects) had been able to reach the majority of lowland communities, even if highly questionable methods were used to convince or compel 'Indios' to accept baptism. But the Muslim south remained obdurate, and efforts to extend Spanish control here were unsuccessful. In 1578, intent on gaining control of a prosperous trading centre, the Spanish attacked and briefly occupied Muslim Brunei. Their destruction of its famous mosque signalled a Christian victory, but with their forces decimated by disease they were soon forced to abandon their conquest. Campaigns against the powerful sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao were equally fruitless. Nonetheless, the battle lines had been drawn, and the written sources reveal a deep animosity. The Sultan of Sulu, for example, was told that 'the doctrine of Mohammad . . . is evil and false, and that of the Christians alone is good. . . Our object is that he be converted to Christianity.'<sup>4</sup> The local response was hardly surprising, as evident in the Sultan of Brunei's reply to similar Spanish demands. 'So this is the way that your people write to me, who am king, while the Castilians are *kafir* who have no souls, who are consumed by fire when they die, and that, too because they eat pork.'<sup>5</sup> Yet other Muslims could point to a shared heritage, for around the same time a Sufi poet in Sumatra, Hamzah Fansuri, saw Islam, Christianity and Judaism as all 'coming into being' because of 'the mercifulness of the Lord of all worlds'.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Seventeenth Century: European relations with Muslim powers**

The arrival of the first Dutch ships in Java in 1596 and the formation of the United East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, or VOC) in 1602 thus coincided with a critical time in Christian-Muslim relations. By its charter the VOC was permitted to raise its

own army, build forts and make treaties, which transformed a trading company into a formidable maritime power. Because the goal was to dominate Asian waters, VOC enmity was initially directed against its European rivals. The Protestant Dutch had only thrown off Spanish control in 1581, and hatred of Spain and Portugal (united between 1580 and 1640) was inextricably linked to Calvinist abhorrence of ‘papism’. The effects of this hostility were soon evident. The VOC’s seizure of Portuguese-Spanish positions in eastern Indonesia put an end to Iberian ambitions and between 1600 and 1646 the Dutch repeatedly attacked Manila. Muslim rulers in the southern Philippines, courted by the VOC, welcomed these new arrivals as allies, for the periodic Spanish campaigns known as the ‘Moro wars’ (1565-1663) were already well in train. At this point the Spanish had some grounds for optimism: in 1635 a fort and mission were established in Zamboanga (modern Mindanao); in 1637 Maguindanao was attacked and its mosque destroyed; in 1638 Jolo, the Sulu capital, was occupied.

From Manila’s perspective, campaigns against the ‘false beliefs’ promoted by the Muslim south needed no justification. Invoking the patronage of the missionary saint, Francis Xavier, Spanish forces that included Christian Filipinos burned villages and boats, pillaged palaces, destroyed holy tombs and enslaved Muslim prisoners. In retaliation, raids launched from Sulu and Mindanao targeted Christian villages in the central Philippines, with whole communities carried off to be sold in regional slave markets. Stories record the cruelty dealt out by combatants on both sides and the often horrific reprisals that followed. In 1639, for instance, five hundred Moro heads were said to have been strung up on trees by vengeful Christian soldiers.<sup>7</sup> For those involved, this was not just a battle between local rulers and outsiders, but a religious struggle as well. Muslims frequently invoked the idea of a holy war, while friars intent on ensuring new opportunities for conversion accompanied Spanish forces as advisors and helped draft every agreement with a Muslim ruler.

Hoping to gain allies against Dutch threats to Manila, Spanish policy subsequently shifted towards obtaining Muslim support. Their efforts in this regard were supported by the Jesuits, since the penetration of Moro domains would be a great triumph and even the possibility of capture and death held the promise of the martyr's crown. In 1645 a treaty was made with the powerful Sultan Qudarat of Maguindanao (1619-71), permitting the establishment of a Jesuit mission. Following another agreement with Sulu, the Spanish withdrew from their Jolo fort. However, it was difficult to maintain amicable relations after a Jesuit missionary told Sultan Qudarat (a renowned Muslim scholar) that his conversion to Christianity was a primary goal.<sup>8</sup> An enraged Qudarat sent messages to rulers in Sulu, Ternate, Brunei and Makassar, exhorting them to unite against the Spanish, who were bent on eliminating the Islamic faith. Qudarat's implacable opposition to any further expansion led one priest to dub him 'the thunderbolt of Lucifer, the Scourge of Catholicism.' In 1663, when Manila faced a Chinese attack, the Spanish abandoned their post in Zamboanga, leaving behind around six thousand native Christians, around two thirds of whom soon reverted to Islam.<sup>9</sup> The latter part of the seventeenth century thus saw the Muslim sultanates essentially left to their own devices. However, the destruction and human misery during the Moro Wars deepened Muslim-Christian animosity and bequeathed memories that shaped Spanish relations with the southern Philippines until the end of the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile, the Dutch position in the Indonesian archipelago was solidified by several key developments – the establishment of Batavia (modern Jakarta) as the centre of VOC operations, the occupation of Ternate in 1606, the capture of Portuguese Melaka in 1641, the end of hostilities with the Spanish in 1648, the seizure of the major port of Makassar in 1669 and the occupation of Banten (west Java) in 1682. Though the Dutch maintained an entrenched suspicion of Muslims– 'like oil and water, they cannot mix'<sup>10</sup> – the basic VOC

goal was to pursue profitable trade, and Company officials were always willing to make alliances with amenable allies. Throughout the seventeenth century the VOC used a combination of force and inducement to conclude treaties with local rulers that gave the Dutch a privileged trading position and monopolies of export products in return for support and protection. In honour of such a relationship, Sultan Mandar Syah of Ternate (1655-75), even named his two sons 'Amsterdam' and 'Rotterdam'.

Unlike the Spanish and Portuguese, the VOC had relatively little interest in evangelization. However, because its charter included an obligation to maintain support for reformed Calvinism, clergymen and 'visitors of the sick' were recruited, initially to minister to VOC employees and local Christian communities who had been converted by the Portuguese.<sup>11</sup> In time, Dutch missionary efforts were given greater priority because the goal of bringing 'papists' back to the true faith was encouraged by VOC officialdom, who believed not only that Calvinist Protestantism conveyed the true message of Christianity but that converts loyal to the Dutch would provide a bulwark against the Muslim advance. In the competition to increase adherents, Muslim rulers and Christian governors alike were unforgiving at any signs of disloyalty, and whole villages could be destroyed for alleged apostasy.

From the outset some local rulers saw the Dutch presence as a danger, a 'poison', comparing it to a spark that could eventually engulf an entire forest.<sup>12</sup> The poetry of Sultan Agung (r. 1613-46), the powerful ruler of the Javanese kingdom of Mataram, draws a direct relationship between Islamic kingship, piety, and victories in war, but his attacks on Batavia in 1628-9 were unsuccessful. As resentment towards VOC economic pressures increased, opposition was often galvanized by Muslim scholars who argued that the presence of these 'infidels' endangered Islam itself. Prominent among such figures was Syeikh Yusuf of Makassar

(1626-99), who returned from Mecca to join an anti-Dutch rebellion in Banten, then a centre of Islamic learning and practice. Attempts to create a broader resistance, however, faced existing rivalries and cultural differences among Muslim rulers. These differences spelt the failure of the closest approximation to a region-wide Muslim movement, launched in Sumatra in 1685. At its head was an enigmatic figure known as Raja Sakti (the holy king), who claimed he was commissioned by Allah to expel all Dutchmen and called on fellow Muslims to join him.<sup>13</sup> A number of other rebellions inspired by Islam were waged against the Dutch, but any victory was elusive because of VOC military power and internal disunity among Muslims themselves. By the end of the seventeenth century the Dutch were indisputably the foremost European power in Southeast Asia.

### **The Ambiguity of Christian-Muslim Relations**

When we survey the history of Southeast Asia during this period, it is evident that Christian-Muslim relations were charged with ambiguity. Despite ongoing conflicts, there are numerous examples of the hospitality Muslim rulers extended to Christians, regardless of national origin. Nor were Muslim rulers necessarily opposed to the presence of Christian priests as long as there was no attempt to convert their subjects. For example, despite Aceh's reputation as a champion of Islam, Augustinian friars were permitted to hold a mass, which the Sultan and his sons attended. In later years the Franciscans were allowed to construct a church where two friars were stationed.<sup>14</sup> Such accommodation was sometimes aided by the recognition of a shared Judaic heritage, like the mutual veneration for the prophet David (Daud) and the psalms with which he was associated. In 1602 the Sultan of Aceh even asked an envoy from Queen Elizabeth, James Lancaster, if he and his men would sing a psalm of David 'in their own language'.<sup>15</sup> The oldest surviving Qur'an from this region was in fact

presented to the Dutch commander Cornelis Matelieff de Jonge (1569-1632) by the ‘bishop’ of the Malay kingdom of Johor.<sup>16</sup> While the Johor ruler obviously believed that Matelieff would treat the Muslim holy book with respect, there may have been a missionary motive as well, for the story of the Christian convert to Islam, Tamim al-Dari (father of knights) had been disseminated throughout the Islamic world.<sup>17</sup> Muslims also knew of numerous Christians who had agreed (not always under duress) to accept Islam, undergo circumcision, and take a local wife. Accorded high honours, they were frequently deployed as envoys or advisors on military, diplomatic and medical matters. Such men often remained permanently in their new society, since ‘renegades’ were despised by other Christians, and were stigmatized for the rest of their lives even if they renounced their Islamic conversion.

Despite their cultural legacy of animosity to Islam, some Europeans did display a genuine interest in Muslim cultures. An early collection of Malay manuscripts, apparently acquired in Aceh in 1604, includes several religious texts, including the popular ‘History of Joseph’ (*Hikayat Yusup*) painstakingly copied out (with numerous errors) by an ordinary Dutch trader, Peter Floris.<sup>18</sup> The importance of reciprocating hospitality and acknowledging status was also well understood. Muslim rulers and their representatives who came to Batavia or Manila to negotiate a treaty or to solicit support were received with great pomp, with much of the protocol adopted from indigenous customs. In Batavia, for instance, envoys were taken to the Governor-General in European-style carriages but they were offered betel nut in keeping with traditional practice and the letters they brought were wrapped in yellow cloth (symbolic of royalty), conveyed on silver or golden salvers, and shaded by a yellow parasol.<sup>19</sup> Muslim envoys who went to Europe were feted by their hosts in the Netherlands and London, and in 1681 King Charles II even knighted two ambassadors from Banten.<sup>20</sup>

Although medieval ideas of Islam as a farrago of beliefs promulgated by a false prophet were still widely held, to some degree increased interaction did mean greater European understanding of Muslim teachings. Among the Catholic orders the Jesuits were foremost in this regard, for they had long been interested in Islam. Indeed, the initial impetus for the founding of the Society of Jesus in 1534 was Ignatius Loyola's goal of persuading the Turks to accept Christianity, and to intensify Catholic missionizing in order to prevent the expansion of Islam. The seventeenth century thus saw the compilation of numerous books and handbooks of advice for those working to convert Muslims in foreign lands, such as *Manuductio ad Conversionem Mahumethanorum* (Handbook to Convert Muslims), by the Spaniard Tirso González de Santalla (1624-1705), later superior general of the Society of Jesus. Nonetheless, while acknowledging that Muslim piety merited respect, Jesuit writings reflect the general Catholic view that Islam was a heretical distortion of Christian teachings and that its founder Mohammed was immoral. As a religion, Islam should be condemned together with Judaism and the teachings of Luther and Calvin.

Protestant Europe shared similar views of Islam as a 'senseless religion', attracting followers only because of the possibility of having several wives and the promise of a paradise of sensual pleasure. More informed knowledge owes much to academics such as the Leiden scholar Thomas van Erpe (Erpenius, 1585-1624), who knew Malay, collected some Malay manuscripts and published the first Arabic grammar. In England the relatively tolerant Edward Pococke (1604-91), the first professor of Arabic at Oxford, criticised the Qur'an for its impious renderings and beliefs about Paradise, but also noted the inaccuracies about Islam that theologians had perpetuated. Such reminders did not, however, encourage more enlightened attitudes. The respected Dutch scholar Hugo de Groot (Grotius, 1583-1645), could still claim that Islam's expansion was God's punishment for Christian sins in the

distant past, while Mohammad himself ‘lived by robbery and adultery’ and his teachings were filled with fallacies and fables.<sup>21</sup> Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), professor of theology at Utrecht University, was particularly influential because a number of students he trained went out to the Indies as ministers. Certainly, Voetius stressed that it was necessary to understand the culture of ‘primitive and illiterate’ peoples, and that knowledge of the Qur’an and Arabic was essential for those operating in Muslim societies. Like his fellow clerics, he also approved of the Muslim rejection of ‘papist idolatry’, but like them he was severely critical of Islamic beliefs, condemning in particular Muslim denial of the Trinity and the meaning of the resurrection as well as practices such as fasting.<sup>22</sup> Carried out to the Indonesian archipelago, these ideas were transmitted to local Christians by the first generation of VOC ministers (*predikant*), notably Caspar Wiltens (1584-1619) and Sebastian Danckaerts (1593-1624). The most influential VOC *predikant*, however, was undoubtedly François Caron (1634-1706). Born in Hirado to a French father and a Japanese Catholic mother, he was educated at Leiden University and spent many years as a minister in Ambon. His publication of forty sermons in Malay was intended to provide explanations and encouragement to converts and to be read by lay preachers in the absence of a minister.<sup>23</sup>

In both Protestant and Catholic sources the vocabulary employed to explain Christian doctrine in indigenous languages is of special interest. In order to avoid confusion with animist traditions, the Spanish were careful to adopt new terms, such as Dios, Espiritu Santo, and Virgen, while Dutch ministers like Caron drew on a Portuguese lexicon because it was well-established as a lingua franca. Yet despite their hostility towards Islam, they found it necessary to adopt some Arabic loan words, especially in biblical translations, such as ‘Allah’ for God (which has survived today in Indonesia), *alim* (devout), *malakat* (angel), *hukum* (law), *haram* (forbidden). Some of the early vocabulary lists even indicate that Christians

could also use the Muslim term *Assalaamu'alaikum* as a standard form of address, while non-believers could be described as *kafir*.<sup>24</sup>

Regardless of whether they identified as Christian or Muslim, it seems unlikely that local societies would have acquired any deep appreciation of theological concepts. Religious differences were typically measured by life style, particularly in regard to the consumption of pork, which had been a widespread ritual food in pre-Islamic societies and was now identified with a Christian cuisine. While in some places Europeans did comment on faithful mosque attendance and the fervent recitation of prayers, they too saw the rejection of pork as a defining Muslim feature. The physician Jacob de Bondt (Jacobus Bontius, 1592-1631) relates an amusing episode when a Javanese woman only reluctantly sold him a parrot because she believed it would be given food forbidden to Muslims. When Bontius brought the parrot home it immediately broke out in Malay '*orang nasrani kacur makan babi*, which he took to mean 'dog of a Christian, eater of pork'.<sup>25</sup>

Although there are a number of European descriptions of Muslim customs such as weddings and funerals, it is rare that seventeenth-century accounts, whether Protestant or Catholic, reveal any interest in local interpretations of Muslim doctrine. The lack of such accounts is especially regrettable in the Philippines, since there are several references to conversations between representatives of the religious orders and Muslim scholars. One documented example concerns the Jesuit Melchior Hurtado, captured in 1603 by a Maguindanao raiding party, who was frequently summoned to discuss religious matters with the ruler, himself learned in Islamic law.<sup>26</sup> Other rulers versed in Islam and often with knowledge of Arabic and European languages, like Sultan Qudarat of Manguindano, were said to enjoy debates with missionaries, as did Karaeng Pattingalloang of Makassar (1641-54) who often attended mass.

A detailed report of such a debate comes from the pen of the Dutch Protestant Frederick de Houtman (1571-1627) who learnt Malay during two years of imprisonment in Aceh (1599-1601). Interrogated by the Acehnese imams who pressured him to convert, Houtman argued that while Christians acknowledged Moses, David and others as prophets, Christ was older than Mohammad and therefore superior. Christians did not circumcise, he said, for the sign of their faith was baptism.<sup>27</sup>

Muslim comparisons of religious differences are even less common, but a generation later we do have another discussion of Christianity, this time by a Gujarati scholar, al-Raniri, who arrived in Aceh in 1637 and was appointed Syeikh al-Islam. Although Raniri understood why Christians might regard Jesus as the son of God because of the miracles attributed to him, they must still be regarded as infidel (*kafir*) because both Father and Son were conjoined in the concept of the Trinity. Concerned above all with the Unity of God, Raniri explained to his Muslim readers that Jesus was like other prophets; he was able to perform miracles only because he was mediating God's power. Indeed, it was quite possible for Muslim scholars to distinguish between Jesus of the Islamic tradition and Jesus of the Christians, since in another work al-Raniri depicts Jesus as a devout man wearing the green turban of Islam. Defeating his enemies, he rules over the earth peacefully, overseeing the destruction of pigs and idols. He even marries a wife in order to show old style Christians that Jesus is human and not God. A later text from Java dating to 1729, the *Kitab Usulbiyah*, takes this line further, seeing Christians as the enemies of Jesus.<sup>28</sup>

The ambiguity that characterises Christian-Muslim relations in this period is well illustrated in the Southeast Asian ability to differentiate between the culture of Europeans and the Christianity they espoused. It was completely possible to adopt some elements of European

lifestyle while staunchly maintaining an Islamic identity. This distinction is nicely captured by Sultan Amir of Tidore (r. 1728-57), who always put on a Dutch wig when he drank beer, leading VOC officials to believe that ‘he did not hold too strongly to his religion.’<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, it was impossible to ignore the association between European power and Christianity, especially since mosques were officially banned in Batavia, Melaka and Manila, the centres of European authority. The unease generated when a ruler ‘donned Dutch garb’ is evident in a Javanese poem describing Amangkurat II (r. 1677-1703), who ‘looked like the Governor-General of Batavia’ and ‘not at all like a prince of Mataram sitting upon his throne.’<sup>30</sup> Europeans might reach accommodation with Muslim rulers, even call them brother and friend, but in times of conflict stereotypes of ‘Moors’ as deceitful, duplicitous and murderous resurfaced. Muslims responded in kind, and texts such as the *Hikayat Tanah Hitu* (Story of the Land of Hitu) or the *Syair Perang Mengkasar* (Rhymed Chronicle of the Makassar War) speak of the Dutch as liars, as accursed infidels, and of their own resistance as a holy war (*perang sabil*).<sup>31</sup> Infusing this religious invective was a profound realization that Muslims were locked into a struggle not merely to safeguard their economic and political independence but to ensure that their Islamic faith would not be endangered.

## Conclusion

What does the period covered in this essay signify in the development of Christian-Muslim relations in Southeast Asia? In the first place, developments in the seventeenth century hastened the spread of Islam through the Malay-Indonesian archipelago but confirmed the dominance of Roman Catholicism in the Philippines. As a corollary, the economic rivalries between Christian powers explain the Indonesian government’s classification of Catholicism and Protestantism as two separate faiths. Second, and more specifically, the period provides a

necessary background for any understanding of the ambiguous nature of Christian-Muslim interaction in contemporary Southeast Asia. The accommodation that was an underlying theme in dealings between European powers and Muslim rulers persisted, although religious authorities, both Christian and Muslim, were often critical of what they saw as unacceptable toleration. Southeast Asian Muslims also displayed a dexterity that differentiated between any European association and their own religious identity. It is apparent that 'anti-Christian' rebellions mainly occurred when individual leaders were able to invoke a religious justification to challenge unacceptable impositions by Europeans. For their part, Europeans incorporated aspects of indigenous protocol into their official functions, and often registered alliances with Muslim rulers by addressing them as 'brother' or 'son'. Nevertheless, it is equally evident that religious boundaries were hardening as the economic and political weight of the European presence increased. The memories of these seventeenth-century conflicts have cast a long shadow. The Philippines still struggles to bridge the divide between the Muslim minority in the south and the Christian majority; in Malaysia and Indonesia Christianity has not been completely accepted as an indigenous faith. Yet tolerance and receptiveness to the outside world has always been a hallmark of Southeast Asia cultures. It is thus worth recording the vision of the nationalist hero Prince Diponegoro (d. 1855), who imagined a future when his Dutch 'brothers' would settle along Java's north shore, trade and work their rice fields, while those who adopted Islam would be honoured as 'the sword of the religion.'<sup>32</sup>

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