

## ***Abstracts of Ph.D. Dissertation***

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Dissertation-1

### **‘Muslim Political Elite and the Revival of the Left in Indonesian Politics, 1996-2001’**

*Ph D thesis done by Ahmad Suhelmi, department of Political Science, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia in the year 2005 under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Abdul Rashid Moten*

#### **Abstract**

This study analyses the responses of Muslim political elite to the revival of Left politics and discourse in post-Soeharto Indonesian politics. Its focus is on the confrontation of the Muslim political elite towards the issue of the reemergence of the Left during the period 1996-2001. Such theoretical approaches on elite as the ones propounded by Mosca, Pareto and C. Wright Mills are examined as a framework for analysis. The explanatory power of the analysis is improved further by identifying the factors that were conducive to Muslim political elite responses such as politics of stigmatisation of the Left by the New Order establishment, Muslim historical traumatic experience with the Communist revolts in the past and the nature of Indonesian political elite. The data for this study were mainly derived from the usual major sources of non-survey data such as press reports, standard biographical submissions for Indonesian Muslim political elite and government sources of aggregate data. The results of semi-structured interviews with several Leftist political activists, elite of Muslim political parties and mass organisations, authors and political observers are widely used in this study. The archival research and written works of Muslim political elite are also used in this study. The study reveals that the alleged reemergence of the Left is indicated by the birth of the People's Democratic Party (partai Rakyat Demokratik, PRD), the ex-President Abdurrahman Wahid's efforts to revoke MPRS Decree No. XXVI 1966 in 2001 and the overflow of Marxist, Leninist and Socialist books as well as the writings by former PIG political prisoners from 1996 to 2001.

An examination of the views of the members of Muslim political elite shows polarised perceptions in responding to the issue of the reemergence of the Left. Those who view that Communists and their ideologies are dangerous and would potentially jeopardise the life of the nation responded that the Left are basically driven by the interweaving of theological, historical and political factors. The other is those who view that there is a common denominator between Islam and Communism at the practical level on such issues as poverty, justice and egalitarianism. The argument of the latter group revolves around the issue of human rights, with emphasis on the commonality between the two and the need for reconciliation. The issue of the Left is a complex matter when dealing with specific issues alleged to be the indicators of the reemergence of the Left. These are exemplified by the cases of the emergence of PRD, alleged to be the reincarnation of the PIG, the efforts of ex-President Wahid to revoke MPRS Decree No. XXVI 1966 in 2001 and the burning of the Leftist books by the Anti-Communist Alliance (AAK). Furthermore, these issues emerged within different socio-political atmospheres, during New Order regime in which political freedom was relatively limited and post New Order era that allowed the freedom of expression to a very great extent.

Dissertation-2

**‘Diversity of Religions: An Assessment of the Christian and Muslim Encounters with the Philosophy of Religious Pluralism’**

*Ph D thesis done by Haslina Ibrahim to the department of Usuluddin and Comparative Religion, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia in the year 2005 under the supervision of Irfan Abdul Hameed Fatah*

**Abstract**

This research seeks to uncover the prevalent pluralistic trend and its dilemmas in the encounter of religions in two different contexts, the Western-Christian and Islam. In so doing, the pluralistic position is underscored in the philosophical and mystical approaches. The philosophy of religious pluralism is highlighted as the emerging option which found its origins in the Western-Christian tradition. The major propagation of religious pluralism is the appreciation of many religions and the plural truth-claims that they exhibit. Putting this propagation into perspective, the transcendentalists, along with their mystical inclination and the claim they made for the transcendent unity of religion, are considered as embarking from a pluralist ground. Within the Muslim sphere, however, the pluralist account is developed without having recourse to religious pluralism in its Western-Christian framework. Nevertheless, certain Muslim Sufis have been accused of taking the transcendentalist position. Given that religious pluralism is developed within the Western-Christian context, the research hypothesises that it is inadequate for providing the necessary principles for the Muslims' encounter of religions. Therefore, it is important to ground the Islamic position towards the pluralist inferences. In so doing, a number of Qur'anic principles are underscored and propagated as the highlight of the Qur'anic pluralistic account of religions. Three principles which are recurrently being dealt with and conclude the research are: the concept of *din al-fi-trah*, the universal common phenomenon, and the consecutive message of prophecy as epitomising the unity of religion, and finally the concept of *al-tasdiq wa al-haymanah* which articulates Islam as the primordial religion and the final revelation.