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**A comparative study on the role of religious interest groups in the  
formulation of educational policies in the Philippines and Malaysia**

**de la Cruz, Rica Melanie Perez, Ph.D.**

**Rice University, 1989**

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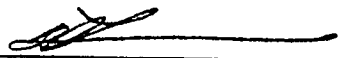
RICE UNIVERSITY  
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ON THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST GROUPS  
IN THE FORMULATION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES  
IN THE PHILIPPINES AND MALAYSIA

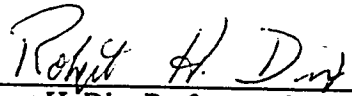
by

RICA MELANIE P. DE LA CRUZ

A THESIS SUBMITTED  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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May, 1989

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY  
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ABSTRACT

Religious interest groups play a significant role in the formulation and/or implementation of educational policies in the Philippines and Malaysia. In the Philippines, the groups are very active in developing ways to affect the kinds of policies being passed in government as they pertain to the educational process. The groups use a variety of mechanisms to influence government, including the publication of newspapers, pamphlets, books, monographs, etc. which clearly state their views on certain issues; extensive lobbying efforts at city hall and governmental agencies or offices; establishment of alliances with other groups of similar and sometimes even dissimilar religious persuasions; and frequent interaction with the members of the academic community. These are intended to make them more aware of the educational issues that they have to be concerned with, as well as their repercussions. The groups' active participation in government may be attributed to a variety of factors, including the separation of church and state as provided for in the constitution, the variety of religious denominations in the country, the importance of religion to the lives of the people and the absence of any restriction on the efforts of the groups to influence policies.

In Malaysia, the groups are more concerned with policies after they have been implemented and react accordingly, with the intention of making government aware

of their perception of the policies at hand. Like the groups in the Philippines, they utilize a variety of tools to achieve their stated objectives, as the formation of alliances, publication of journals, public rallies, among others. They have also developed ingenious ways to encourage their members to be more discerning with regard to governmental action. Thus, they form small discussion groups, which allow them to understand the necessity of Islamic education; hold prayer meetings; and even form Islamic communities where they live according to the tenets of their faith. These activities may be results of the process of Islamization going on in Malaysia, the restrictions imposed on any form of non-Muslim activity, the close relationship between ethnicity and religion and the political supremacy of the Malays in the country.

These findings though preliminary, may lead to increased interest on the role of interest groups in the political process in Southeast Asia and the need to further investigate the increasing influence of religion in the various aspects of life in the countries in the region.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Mrs. Virginia P. de la Cruz, who has always been a source of strength, support and inspiration all through my life. To my brothers and sisters, without whom graduate school would have been an impossibility. Their kindness, support and love have kept me going through these past few years. To my tutor, Mrs. Leuterio whose help I shall always be grateful for. To Dr. Von der Mehden, for convincing me to continue my studies and for patiently reading through my draft over and over again. And to Tony, whose love, support and encouragement, have made graduate school the most memorable experience of my life.

## PREFACE

Religious interest groups have been accorded minimal attention by scholars in their attempt to understand the importance of religion to the political systems prevailing in Southeast Asia. This seeming lack of interest may be attributed to a number of factors, including the relatively small size of the groups (with the exception of whole life groups), lack of pertinent information on their activities and the greater concern given to political parties, which are units of government to which most academicians have been more acquainted with.

This study deviates from this norm and focuses on the greater understanding of the political systems in Southeast Asia, particularly in Malaysia and the Philippines, by giving emphasis to religious interest groups as they attempt to influence the formulation and/or implementation of educational policies. This is a pertinent question to ask, as there is a religious resurgence in the two countries, as well as a re-definition of the many structures which comprise society. In Malaysia, there is a move towards greater Islamization, with the faith considered as the official religion of the country, and with governmental efforts geared towards the fulfillment of an Islamic way of life. In the Philippines, Roman Catholicism has always been a predominant fixture in almost all aspects of life, and has gained even greater prominence in later years, with the country going through difficult political and economic times, and continuing today, under the Aquino government. Besides, these groups have grown in both number and strength to such an extent that they virtually compete with political parties in terms of the amount of influence they have on both the government and the people.

This study will attempt to determine the extent to which religious interest groups, through their stated objectives, projects and other plans of action, have managed to affect the kinds of educational policies implemented in the two countries. Education is one

of the most crucial elements in both societies, because it is considered the means by which people may increase the possibility of social mobility and gain recognition, as in most developing countries.

This will be done through an analysis of the groups' histories, goals, as well as their many activities, which in one way or another are related to the educational system in their country. This way, we will know exactly how they influence policy, the tools they use to achieve them as well as the degree of success and/or failure they may have experienced in the process. This will also aid in gaining a better perspective of the close interaction between the groups and government.

This dissertation will be divided into six chapters, each of which will be divided into two sub-parts, one for the Philippines and the other for Malaysia. Chapter 1 is simply a historical background on the development of education in the two countries. Emphasis will be given to the pre-colonial, colonial as well as post-independence periods, and the various changes which may have transpired in the educational systems.

Chapter 2 focuses on the definition of the terms to be used for this entire paper, the groups to be studied as well as a description of the indices which will explain the success and/or failure of the groups in influencing educational policies.

Chapter 3 gives the religious background of the two countries. This is essential as both Islam in Malaysia and Catholicism in the Philippines have undergone quite a number of changes since they were first introduced, in terms of the meaning of the many tenets of the two religions, government interpretation of the role of religion in the people's lives, as well as the perceptions, understanding and practices of the people of the religion.

Chapter 4 describes the religious interest groups, their objectives and their projects, which are directly related to education. The groups have been selected based on their visibility in society, the extent to which they may have contributed to the formulation and/or implementation of educational policies and their continued attempts at changing the learning process in their country.

Chapter 5 gives a detailed account of the issues which clearly show the role of the interest groups in their formulation and or implementation. Data for this portion have been gathered from books, newspapers, journals and publications of the groups themselves.

Chapter 6 gives the author's assessment of the groups and the extent to which they have influenced educational policies. The conclusions drawn from these findings are preliminary, and should thus be taken not as an end in themselves, but as a beginning to the continued understanding of the political systems in Southeast Asia.

It is this author's objective therefore to come up with a paper that will assist other academicians in their attempt at analyzing the relationship between religion and politics in the region as well as make others aware that developing countries, though different, should be studied and understood as they are rather than what they perceive them to be. This way, the kind of research which shall emerge will be comprehensive, empirical and objective, the way academic research should be.



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Chapter I: History of Education</b>       |             |
| <b>a. The Philippines</b>                    | <b>1</b>    |
| <b>b. Malaysia</b>                           |             |
| <b>Chapter II: Definition of Terms</b>       | <b>29</b>   |
| <b>Chapter III: Religious Background</b>     |             |
| <b>a. The Philippines</b>                    | <b>46</b>   |
| <b>b. Malaysia</b>                           | <b>91</b>   |
| <b>Chapter IV: Religious Interest Groups</b> |             |
| <b>a. The Philippines</b>                    | <b>120</b>  |
| <b>b. Malaysia</b>                           | <b>183</b>  |
| <b>Chapter V: Educational Issues</b>         |             |
| <b>a. The Philippines</b>                    | <b>239</b>  |
| <b>b. Malaysia</b>                           | <b>283</b>  |
| <b>Chapter VI: Conclusion</b>                | <b>311</b>  |

## CHAPTER I

### History of Education

#### A. Education in the Philippines

Formal education as it is known today, was not existent prior to the coming of the Spaniards to the Philippines. This is the reason why old history books, most of which have been written by Spanish historians claim a very low literacy rate in the country during pre-colonial times. What they were actually doing then was using the western-style educational system, i.e. a coherent system with various levels, a comprehensive curriculum and with teachers trained in the sciences, English, and philosophy, as the norm for their study, rather than carefully evaluating what existed in the archipelago when they arrived.

The educational system which existed at that time, aimed for the development of certain traits, as bravery, strength, athletic ability, wisdom and happiness, for the development of the individual and the community as a whole (de Leon, 1986). This was achieved through the teachings of the parents and/or older siblings in the home. Young boys were taught how to read and write, farm, hunt, fish and the basics of self-defense, while young girls were taught household chores and maternal duties in the event that they bear children. In some isolated cases however, both boys and girls went to a schoolhouse, known as "bothoan" which was usually also the teacher's residence, to learn the three R's, imbibe religious instruction and develop physical strength, as was the case in Panay Province (de Leon, 1986).

All these has led to the production of literary pieces in various forms and types. These pieces may be classified into floating or oral literature and written literature. According to Agoncillo (1975), the literature of the Tagalogs consisted of *sabi* (maxim), *sawikain* (saying), *bugtong* (riddle), *suliranin* and *indulanin* (street songs), *talindaw* (boat song), *kumintang* (war song which evolved into a love song), among others. They also had plays which they staged in open spaces, in the houses of the nobles and places of worship or *sambahan*. Maranaw literature, like that of other regions, is largely floating and is recited or sung as the occasion arose. This was deeply inspired by Islam and consisted of *tutul* (folk tale), *tubad-tubad* (short love poems), *pananaro-on* (sayings and proverbs), *sowa-sowa-i* (drama), *antoka* (riddle/puzzle) and *darangan* or epic poetry. The Ilocanos also had many kinds of songs<sup>1</sup> which usually express the vigor and joy of the warriors coming from battle; the *dal-lot*, popular among the peasants, was sung during a baptism, party, wedding or feast; the *badeng* or love song, during a serenade; the *dung-aw* or dirge, similar to the Tagalog *umbay* and other songs sung during planting, harvesting and fishing. The Ifugaos of Northern Luzon also had their own literary pieces, the most famous of which are the *hudhud* and *alim*. The *hudhud* glorifies Ifugao history, the story centering around the hero, *Aliguyon*. The *alim*, deals with gods and resembles the Indian epic *Ramayana*. Most of these works have been written on barks of trees, leaves and bamboo tubes, using their knives, daggers, or pointed sticks as pens and colored saps of trees as ink. The coming of the Spaniards however, meant the destruction of most of them on the grounds that they were considered extremely primitive and/or the work of the devil [Agoncillo, 1975].

It should also be realized that these works were expressed through a system of writing which was very similar to that used in Sanskrit or Arabic. The syllabary had

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<sup>1</sup> There were different forms of literature at that time. Some were recited orally, others were sung, or written down on barks of trees, and leaves, most of which were destroyed when the colonizers came into the country.

17 symbols, of which 3 were vowels, standing for the present 5 vowels and 14 consonants. According to Fr. Pedro Chirino<sup>2</sup> the Filipinos wrote their works vertically from top to bottom and left to right. But, regardless of how these were written, the fact remains that a learning process was going on. It's a pity though that there are just a few remnants from this seemingly rich episode in Philippine history. It should also be realized by the reader that this kind of educational process is very different from the one which the westerners had at this time. It was not structured, regimented, there were no classrooms or textbooks which may be used as learning aids. Nevertheless, it may be concluded that the natives were exposed to a kind of learning process which allowed them to cope with their environment, deal with life's everyday problems and even create works of art and literature which are considered valuable, even today.

The coming of the Spaniards meant the beginning of a very different educational system for the Philippines. In the first place, it signalled the beginning of formal education as it is known today, and in the second place, it was largely controlled by the friars, who were responsible for the establishment of most of the first schools and colleges and later institutions of learning [Agoncillo, 1975]. Among them are the University of Santo Tomas in 1611, the oldest university in the Philippines, under the Dominicans; and the Colegio de San Juan de Letran, which was an exclusive school for orphan boys<sup>3</sup>. The Jesuits founded the College of San Ignacio in 1589 in Manila, College of San Ildefonso in 1895 in Cebu and College of San Jose in 1601 also in Manila. In 1859, they transformed the escuela pia or charity school, which they founded in 1817 with donations from private citizens, into another college for boys, the present Ateneo de Manila. Separate schools were established for the women: Colegio de Santa

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<sup>2</sup> Fr. Chirino, is a famous historian on the Philippines. His stay in the Philippines has enabled him to learn about the people, their language and even their thought mechanisms, thus enabling him to write articles and even books on the country.

<sup>3</sup> The Colegio de San Juan de Letran is no longer a school for orphan boys. It is now a co-educational university, which offers a diversity of courses in the sciences and in the arts.

Potenciana in 1589 and Colegio de Santa Isabel in 1632. In the 19th century, the College of La Concordia (1868) and the Assumption Convent (1892) were established. Several "beaterios", which were charitable institutions created for the care and education of destitute and orphan girls, were also erected.

With the creation of more schools, the Spanish administrators offered primary, secondary and tertiary education, with curricula which included mathematics, the sciences, Spanish, philosophy, among others. Women were allowed to study, and the children were being guaranteed both academic and spiritual education. However, the policies of the government proved to be too narrow and biased towards religion, and this handicapped the entire system. Prior to 1863, primary education consisted mainly of Christian doctrine and reading exercises in the Spanish alphabet and Philippine languages. Secondary and higher education also emphasized religion and Latin grammar, instead of Spanish and hardly dealt with the sciences. To make matters worse, these institutions were only open to children of Spaniards and it was only much later in the 19th century that they reluctantly gave primary instruction to the natives in makeshift classrooms in their stables. There, the children were subjected to physical and mental cruelties, so that shame and fear of corporal punishment forced many to drop out of school. These abuses prompted José Rizal, the country's national hero to express the students' difficult plight in his book, "El Filibusterismo"<sup>4</sup> in the character of Placido Penitente, a poor man who had the rare opportunity to enter the university, on the basis only of merit, but suffered considerably in the hands of his professors, who humiliated him in front of his classmates, called him names and accused him of laziness, all of which led him to quit school and join the rebels. Although this example may seem extreme, it gives an almost accurate description of the educational system under the Spaniards.

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<sup>4</sup> "El Filibusterismo", or the "Reign of Greed" was Rizal's second novel, the sequel to this "Noli Me Tangere", or the Social Cancer.

A few changes were implemented during the latter part of Spanish rule however. In 1863, the Spanish government enacted an educational reform decree which provided for the following: (a) establishment of a primary school in each town; one for boys and another for girls; (b) establishment of a normal school for male teachers under the supervision of the Jesuits; (c) free primary education; (d) compulsory teaching of Spanish. All these were meant to be under the control of the Governor-General and implemented by the municipal administrators of the town. These did not improve the situation any though, since most of the friars were in-charge of implementation who just refused to comply with all the regulations set forth by the colonial government. The quality of instruction therefore, remained poor and the facilities inadequate, not to mention the abuses increasing. And although university education was opened to the natives after 1863, the system was still far from perfect. This led many of the members of the elite, better known as ilustrados, to send their children to Europe to pursue their studies there rather than receive mediocre education at home, while the rest of the populace would rather remain illiterate than suffer from extreme humiliation.

It should also be noted that the teaching of Spanish, though provided for in earlier decrees, was constantly a subject of debates during that time. The friars simply refused to teach the language in any form other than in prayer. This was a means by which the Spaniards would be assured that the natives will never be on the same level as their foreign colonizers and also prevent the possibility of any form of united front against them. The rationale being that if the natives were allowed to learn Spanish, they would have the very same characteristics and capabilities as their colonizers, to be able to understand the laws which they were implementing wrongly, and the many discussions about Philippine political affairs among Spanish officials. To the Spaniards, language was a very important means by which they could maintain a higher social status over the natives, and thus be in full control of the country and the people. Until today, any one

who speaks Spanish fluently in the Philippines, is respected much more than someone who cannot speak nor understand the language, because it is considered the language of the elites.

The coming of the Americans took on a very different light; for not only did they open public schools, they also made them available to everyone and used English as the medium of instruction. According to Constantino [1975], as early as August 1900, while resistance was raging and the American army was still conducting a cruel war of suppression, a military officer, seeking to implement his superiors' concept of education as a colonial weapon, recommended to the military governor, a series of educational measures which would use the American system of education as a model for the entire school system. These changes included<sup>5</sup>

- (a) the establishment of a free public school system which will cater to all classes of people, regardless of their socio-economic status; instructors will be teaching elementary English, and attendance will be made compulsory
- (b) use of English as the medium of instruction in all schools
- (c) establishment of a normal school to prepare Filipino teachers of English
- (d) prohibition of religious instruction in government-supported schools
- (e) establishment of industrial schools

On January 21, 1901, Act #74 was passed which provided for the establishment of a public school system with free public primary education and a normal school in Manila, where Filipino teachers were to be trained to take over the educational duties of American military<sup>6</sup> and civilian teachers. Six hundred Americans were brought in to serve as teachers, principals and supervisors. A high school was established the next year, plus a school for arts and trade, agriculture and a school of commerce. In

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<sup>5</sup> Renato Constantino, "The Philippines: A Past Revisited", 1974, Manila, Philippines.

<sup>6</sup> American military men were the first teachers in the country. They were utilized immediately, so as to hasten the process of educational reform and set-up the groundwork for the pursuit of colonial education.

1903, a "Pensionado" Program was developed which "accelerated the production of Filipino transmission belts of colonial education" [Constantino, 1975] since natives were being encouraged to pursue higher education in the United States as government scholars.

The use of English was the most far reaching aspect of the educational system. It was utilized as the medium of instruction in all levels of school. In 1911, it also became the primary language alongside Spanish which was also considered the official language until January 1, 1920. In 1908, a clash between the Philippine Assembly and Philippine Commission over Bill #148 which sought to amend the Educational Act of 1901 by providing that the language/dialect of each region or province be used as the medium of instruction in public elementary schools. The American-dominated Philippine Commission rejected this since it would cause confusion, waste, inefficiency and delay the spread of English. Even Filipino leaders thought that English would still be the principal medium of instruction with the vernacular confined to the primary schools. Also in 1908, the University of the Philippines was established with Murray Bartlett, as the first President. By 1915, Ignacio Villamor became the first Filipino President of the school.

The whole educational set-up developed by the Americans had both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, it enabled a majority of the population to have something which they have always longed for, that is free public education. It also gave the people the opportunity to attain social mobility, i.e., the ability to move from one social strata to another because of one's education. Third, it enabled the people to learn a language which may prove useful in the process of international interaction and the furtherance of higher education in the west.

However, this very same system also led to the development of the Filipinos' de-Filipinization, i.e., that process whereby the Filipino loses his identity by



acquiring traits, values, and beliefs, which are not typically Filipino<sup>7</sup> This is not to say that western values are not good, but if appreciating them would mean forgetting the very essence of a people's culture and way of life, then, it may be more harmful than it is helpful. Filipinos began to think and act for the furtherance of American interests rather than their own [Constantino, 1975]. They became clones of their American colonizers without them knowing it. And they freely accepted everything that was handed to them believing that they were doing it for their own country. The truth was they were simply reinforcing America's use of the learning process as the "handmaiden" of their colonial policy [Constantino, 1975]. Little did they know that it is the very same "gift" of colonialism that will later on lead to the increasing dependence of the entire nation on its former colonizer, a relationship that exists until this very day.

I am aware of the fact that there were many debates in the U.S. Congress at that time with regard to the colonization of the Philippines. These debates covered many issues, including:

(a) Rationale for Philippine Colonization. Many American legislators thought that colonizing the country may lead to great difficulties because of the expense this endeavour would require on the American government. To top it all, the monetary returns of their initial investments may be null or none at all.

Second, if the country was going to be made a source of raw materials, as rice and sugar for instance, the farmers of America may consider this an infringement on their rights to supply their own country with their own produce.

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<sup>7</sup> Despite the claim of many individuals, including academicians and scholars that there is no such thing as a "typical Filipino", I honestly believe that there is. He is a product of many cultures, including the Malay, Spanish, American, Chinese, etc. just to name a few. Being so does not mean that a "Filipino" has no identity. This situation is similar to that in the U.S. where a "typical American" is not the product of only one, but of many cultures.

Third, there was also the possibility of making the Philippines a market for American goods, instead of a source of raw materials, but the market was not big enough, because the economy was still developing.

Fourth, the Protestants thought that the Americans had to colonize the country because of the need to convert the natives to their faith, considering the abuse and oppression that the Filipinos have suffered under the hands of the Catholic priests. They were quite certain that the people would be more than willing to convert to Protestantism after going through many sacrifices in the name of Catholicism.

Fifth, the Catholics wanted to redeem themselves from the abuses committed by their Spanish representatives in the country. They thought that if the Americans colonized the Philippines, the people would have a renewed faith in the religion, and the priests and missionaries who would come to the country.

(b) The Americans had two ways of colonizing the country: they could use violence, i.e., use American forces to show the people that they were in control. Or use peaceful means so as to gain the Filipinos' trust and friendship, and perhaps even an ally in the future.

Amidst all these debates, the American government, under Pres. McKinley opted to develop the policy of "Benevolent Assimilation", where the main core of American colonization would be to assist the Filipinos establish a government of their own, re-structure their economy, and introduce an educational system, which would be made available to everyone. Conscious or not, the introduction of a public school system in the country, increased the level of dependence of the Filipinos on their American mentors, and developed a sense of loyalty to them, which continues to characterize the kind of relationship which the two countries have until this very day.

In addition, the system also led to the development of the Filipinos' colonial mentality, which though in existence already during the Spanish era, was increased

further by the American educational system; and with lessons dealing with apples and oranges, white Christmases and chestnuts roasting on an open fire, how will Filipinos appreciate the simple papaya, guava and jackfruit which abound in the country, not to mention the absence of snow during Christmas time? Everything that was Filipino became second rate and inadequate, and everything that was American was considered the very best.

All these led to an even worse illness, the loss of nationalism. All of a sudden, all the aspirations of Rizal, Mabini and Bonifacio became meaningless, and the Filipino became nothing more than the "little brown brother"<sup>8</sup>. Take note that this notion is not felt or understood by all Filipinos, most especially those born during the American and Japanese periods of occupation in the country. This is so because the Americans were more generous and considerate colonizers, using minimal violence, compared to their Japanese or Spanish counterparts. Besides, the Americans provided them with most of the things that they have always wanted, as a democratic government, public education, and the freedom of speech, press and assembly. Younger Filipinos however, are more discerning, with a better understanding of the events that took place at that time, and their long-lasting effects on the country and on the people. This may be observed with the increasing number of Filipino nationalists, fighting for reforms in Philippine-American relations, the removal of the bases, the need for a more nationalistic approach to education, etc., issues, which up until now, have not been taken seriously, or even discussed in the country.

Upon the arrival of the Japanese, Military Order #2 was immediately passed [Constantino, 1975]. This provided the following:

- (a) propagation of Filipino culture

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<sup>8</sup> The term "little brown brother" has been given to us by the Americans, since they considered the colonization of the Philippines a product of their policy known as the "white man's burden".

(b) dissemination of the principle of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the unification of all Asian nations under the leadership of the Japanese

(c) spiritual rejuvenation of the Filipino

(d) teaching and propagation of Nippongo

(e) diffusion of vocational and elementary education

(f) promotion of love and labor

All these were formulated to create an atmosphere conducive to the fulfillment of Japanese interests, while at the same time eliminating any form of western influence. Schools were ordered re-opened by the Japanese Commander-in-Chief, while requiring teachers and students to pledge support for the new educational policy.

Elementary schools were opened first, followed by educational and normal schools and those which give courses in agriculture, medicine, fisheries and engineering. Law schools were not re-opened because they were considered useless by the Japanese.

Despite the re-opening of the schools however, Filipinos were not enthusiastic to go back to school because they were suspicious of Japanese occupation in the country. And since times were hard, the children opted to sell merchandise to help their parents augment their meager income. Even when the Japanese-sponsored republic was proclaimed on October 14, 1943, the educational set-up did not change much except for the addition of militant nationalism by President Laurel<sup>9</sup> because of the belief that Filipinos could ward off spiritual debacle only by resorting to nationalism as a way of life. He encouraged the propagation of Tagalog as the national language. Teachers were also required to have licenses and pass rigid exams. Teaching Tagalog, Philippine history and character education was reserved for Filipinos. Finally, he also ordered that members of the governing board of any educational institution should be made up of a majority of Filipinos.

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<sup>9</sup> President Laurel was the leader of the puppet government set-up by the Japanese during the period 1941-1944.

Japanese repression however, was evident in terms of the manner in which the educational policies were implemented. Take the case of the textbooks for instance. A committee of Filipino educators and Japanese experts and advisers was given the task of deleting all improper and unsuitable parts. Among those parts deleted were all references to the U.S.A and the United Kingdom, texts and pictures which were considered anti-Japanese or anti-Asian, selections which portrayed democratic ideals, articles condemning war as an instrument of national policy, church and poems about American heroes, legends, historic events, patriotic songs of these two countries and even mathematical tables using American currency and values; books on American and British history and culture were completely banned; Commonwealth data on Quezon and Osmena were deleted, two of the key Filipino leaders who outrightly expressed dissatisfaction over Japanese rule.

The Japanese saw to it that they had full control and close supervision of the schools. Priority was given to the opening of public schools. Private schools were only allowed to re-open after obtaining permission from the Japanese Commander and this was granted only if the school would abide by all the instructions of the colonial government. Nippongo was compulsory at all levels, while Filipino was taught for the first time in all secondary schools.

An assessment of Japanese educational policy in the Philippines is quite difficult in the sense that like the colonizers before them, the impact of their stay in the country is both positive and negative. It is negative because of the amount of repression utilized just to implement the policies and the destruction of many educational materials and resources. It is positive because it encouraged the development of a sense of nationalism in a people who previously, did not even have a sense of oneness, of being a nation. Up until then, the archipelago was a mere conglomeration of islands, each of which had its own sense of being and identity. The Japanese, because of their policy of

encouraging what was Filipino in both the written and spoken word, was indeed an improvement. Of course, this was just the beginning of making the country a part of the Japanese Empire, but it still made the Filipinos realize the need for unity and national identity. The problem lay in the manner in which they implemented their policies. Japanese oppression could be felt everywhere, so that the natives feared them and thought of them as nothing more than greedy, arrogant, and merciless colonizers. The change was so dramatic since the Americans were so friendly and seemingly sincere in their dealings with the Filipinos<sup>10</sup> .

Upon the return of the Americans, western-style education was re-introduced. In 1946, with independence<sup>11</sup> declared, the Roxas administration (1946-48) worked towards the rehabilitation of the educational system, reconstruction of physical plants, rehabilitation of school facilities, curriculum revision, setting up of a national school administration and establishment of a new institution for agriculture, trade technology, business and teacher education. This process of re-building was extremely necessary for a country that has suffered considerable losses during World War II. In addition, this was also necessary in the pursuance of the belief that education would help build a democratic as well a progressive country.

The post-war educational system in the country may be characterized by the following:

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that although Americans were generally friendly to the Filipinos, some of them were quite abusive and repressive. The likes of Gen. Smith for instance, who preferred to see entire cities burned down and people killed, is an example of such abuse. This will dispel the myth that that all Americans in the country were good and benevolent in their intentions. Besides, President Mckinley's claim of "Benevolent Assimilation" was nothing more than a rhetorical statement, meant to appease the various factions in the American Congress, who were still not convinced of the necessity for American occupation in the country.

<sup>11</sup> There are two dates of Philippine Independence: June 12, 1898 which was the day when the Spaniards left the country, and July 4, 1946, when the Americans granted the country's freedom. To my mind, the latter is our true independence because it signifies the absence of any foreign colonizer in the country, and the total control of the Philippines government by the Filipino people.

(a) Development of Philippine nationalism, was and still is, one of the main concerns of the national educational system. This is proven by the encouragement of Filipino-authored textbooks, to be used in the schools. In addition, Filipino is being taught as a course, in all levels of education and is even a pre-requisite for the attainment of a college degree. At one point during the Marcos years, bilingualism was enforced, with the objective of making the populace more conversant and capable of writing different literary pieces, using either English or Filipino. This has not been as effective as initially envisioned however, and has undergone many changes through the years, but it continues to be implemented as a major policy of education until now. The teaching of Philippine history, current events, and even the inclusion of the course on the life and works of Dr. Jose Rizal are also aimed at developing nationalism among the students.

(b) From the term of President Roxas to Marcos (1965-86), government has always tried to provide massive educational support to rural development with the intention of increasing production, expanding educational opportunities, increasing employment, providing better health, nutrition and housing facilities, and strengthening local means of community self-government and cooperation.

This they tried to achieve by opening up community schools, increasing state support, initiation of foreign loans for the sole purpose of providing more money to the educational system in the country, and working hand-in-hand with private organizations and educational institutions to expand teaching facilities, share faculty members, develop the curricula, among others.

For instance, in 1977, a US \$68.7 million loan was made by the Philippine government to be used to fund 18 major educational projects, with four separate areas of concentration, including the improvement of the University of the Philippines in Los Banos (which is an agricultural school), textbook and communication technology project, rural development, and the establishment of various training centers and laboratories

which shall, with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, formulate programmes, develop creative schemes, which shall be of help to the educational system.

(c) Formulation of long-term projects aimed at improving education in the country. For instance, President Magsaysay, in his very brief term (1954-56), formulated a Five-Year Plan (1954-59) which focused on the functional duties of educational institutions. This stressed the development of manpower skills through intensive labor schemes, provision of applied rather than theoretical education and the need for more youth involvement in community projects all over the country.

In 1969, Marcos established a "Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education" to conduct studies on the strengths and weaknesses of the system. This produced a 10-year National Development Program (1972-82) whose goals were congruent with those of the government, including: [1] a more developmental approach to education; [2] the appropriation of 500 million pesos for development projects; [3] establishment of a Special Education Committee with the Budget Commissioner, Secretary of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, and the Secretary of Finance as members, who shall supervise the implementation of the 10-year plan; [4] amend the Foreign Borrowing Act (Republic Act 6142), which would allow for more extensive financing of educational projects from foreign aid, and external sources in a determined effort to expand a resource base adequate to critical educational needs.

(d) Promotion of Non-Formal Education. The Philippine leaders are aware that public education though in existence, is unable to reach all sectors of society. Lack of good roads, poor communication facilities, and the need for the students to help their parents in the farm lands, have prevented quite a number of people from enjoying the benefits of free education. Thus, non-formal education was aimed at reaching the less fortunate individuals who have been unable to receive any form of education.



Adult education is also included in this development, in the desire to teach adults to either get a high school diploma or provide them with basic skills which would allow them to contribute their full potential to society. Classes have been opened all over the country, through the assistance of private agencies, educational institutions and even volunteers, willing to work in remote areas in the country, or the slum areas in Manila.

Another programme developed in this regard is the "Educating the Street Urchins" project, where the volunteer teachers try to encourage the young street vendors, cleaners, hackers, among other things, basic skills in mathematics, English and Filipino, so that they will be able to learn while doing their job. To make the course interesting, they are formulated, such that they will be directly related to the work they are doing. For instance, instead of teaching the students that  $1 + 1 = 2$ , they are taught  $1 \text{ newspaper} + 1 \text{ newspaper} = 2 \text{ newspapers}$ , since most of the "street urchins" are newspaper vendors. This also allows the youngsters to know if they are being cheated by a customer or by their boss.

(e) Move towards de-centralization. Initially, the educational system was totally dependent upon the work done by the DECS main office in Manila. Under Roxas, and all through the regime of Macapagal, the Bureau of Public Instruction, Bureau of Private Instruction and Bureau of Vocational Education, were the only sub-agencies under the helm of the DECS. All educational matters had to be channelled through one of these agencies, but the ultimate decision rests in the main office. With the "Integrated Reorganization Plan of 1975", the following changes were made:

[1] De-centralization of the DECS, such that decision-making is shared by 12 regional directors, who head their respective regional offices, established all throughout the country. This provides local officials greater autonomy to make education more responsive to local needs and conditions and relieves the pressure from the top

officials, so that they will have more time to focus on general policy-making and other administrative issues.

[2] The national government changed the old set-up, where there was segmentation of educational responsibility, by sectors, public, private and vocational, which usually resulted in a lack of coordination, overlapping of functions and inability to use the educational budget efficiently. The government abolished the Bureau of Public Schools, Bureau of Private Schools, and Bureau of Vocational Schools, and instead established the Bureau of Elementary Education, Bureau of Secondary Education and Bureau of Higher Education, thus providing greater opportunities for the coordination of programs, complementation of functions and pooling of resources.

[3] DECS has direct line supervision over bureaus, agencies and regional offices. They develop and implement programs on educational objectives and policies set by the National Board of Education. The office also coordinates and works closely with the Commission on National Integration in all matters pertaining to education and cultural development of national minorities.

Indeed, the educational system in the Philippines has changed considerably since 1946. There are still many improvements that have to be dealt with, as the need for better qualified teachers especially in the public schools, provision of better facilities, acquisition of more up to date books, among others, but all these may be achieved through time. President Aquino's government has realized these necessities, re-assessed their priorities, and granted the educational system in the country with the biggest share of the national budget (approximately 28% of GNP). If this trend continues, and the money is actually utilized for the improvements mentioned above, and other changes which are also necessary to improve the educational system even more, then the Philippines, may be able to produce more schools which may be on the same competitive level as those in Japan, Singapore and even the U.S.

## B. Education in Malaysia

Like the Philippines, pre-colonial education in Malaysia, was simple and typical of a traditional, agrarian society (Z. Ahmad, 1980). Boys were trained in arts and crafts by attaching themselves to a "Tok Guru", an elderly man who had certain knowledge in reading, writing and self-defense, while girls stayed home with their mothers learning the various skills necessary in preparation for marriage and motherhood. The boys' education was formally organized. Parents sent their sons to live with the "Tok Guru" who gave lessons three times daily. Learning schedules also included the rendering of services to the guru, such as tending their padi field, clearing their gardens or helping them in domestic work. Learning to write the Arabic script and read the Koran formed the core of the curriculum. The boys were also trained to practice good manners and right conduct. The educational system was so exclusive, interrelated with, and supported by, the religious apparatus. The predominant aim of the entire process was to prepare the young to be more efficient in building up the community as a whole than achieve personal advancement.

The coming of the British led to the development of formal education as it is known in contemporary Malaysia. The British system of control may be described as *laissez faire*, i.e. where the colonizers played a political role that was as modest as possible in the affairs of colonial territories<sup>13</sup>. Thus, there was minimal concern given to the establishment of a uniformed system of education. It may even seem like education became the concern only of anyone who seemed interested.

Various types of schools arose during this period, the most prominent of which were the Christian Missions, which attended to the spiritual needs of their own

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<sup>13</sup> Francis Wong Hoy Kee, "Comparative Studies in Southeast Asian Education", Heinemann Educational Books, (Asia) Ltd., Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1973.

members and extended their interest and service to the other sections of the community. The first recorded Roman Catholic Mission School was that established by the Jesuits in 1548 in Malaya. The Methodist Mission opened their first school in Penang in 1819; the Church of England did not begin work in the country until the close of the 19th Century, and although it had not had as extensive an influence as the Roman Catholics, its individual members played a leading role.

It should be noted that these mission schools were not entirely free to do as they wished with the British authorities supporting them when it suited their purpose, and placed restrictions on them when this deemed necessary. For instance, although religious instruction was given in all the English medium schools, no child shall be compelled to be present when such religious instruction is given, nor may any child be refused admission to a grant-in-aid school on grounds of religious belief. All mission schools were also ordered open to all races and creeds, for so long as they provided general education and a better standard of moral life based on the tenets of Christianity.

Other schools such as the vernacular and English-medium schools also arose. The vernacular schools ranged from the Malay, Chinese and Tamil/Indian<sup>14</sup> vernacular, thus ensuring that each significant ethnic group had its own institutionalized system for learning. There was also the government-run school, which provided a westernized system, with lessons completely in English for the mixed urban population. The rationale being the recognition of the utilitarian role of producing intelligent, diligent and honest servants to work for the country. It also encouraged private enterprise on the part of individuals and missionary societies, pointing out that government could not possibly provide the means for educating the whole country.

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<sup>14</sup> For the purpose of this research, the terms "Tamil" and "Indian" will be used interchangeably. "Tamil" actually refers to a certain ethnic group in India; it just so happens that the Indians in Malaysia have Tamil roots, and are thus referred to as such.

Malay vernacular schools were opened in 1855. Upon the advice of the Inspector General of Schools, Mr. A.M. Skinner, the second school developed into a Koran School and was reorganized later. From 1863 onward, more changes were introduced until 1871, when they were established based on Koran schools/classes. Mornings were spent for Malay instruction while afternoons were for Koranic study. Problems arose with regard to Malay girls, whose parents were not as enthusiastic to bring their children in for further instruction.

Chinese schools were founded and maintained wherever there were Chinese children, teaching the classics by rote and developing mechanical accuracy on the abacus. As time went by, the need for vernacular schools became more pronounced, together with the desire to emulate the model of new schools in China. And, through the generosity of individuals, district societies, association of clans, committees of management, whose members gave monthly subscriptions and collected funds for the upkeep of the schools.

Tamil vernacular schools began with the development of coffee, sugar, coconut and rubber plantations. From 1870 onward, schools sprang up, increasing further as time passed, and more Indian migrants settled in the country. Difficulty lay in the small number of Indians in any one center. They were not also interested in taking advantage of English-medium education which was provided for in the towns.

The British administration later deemed it necessary to withdraw support for the Indian and Chinese schools, while increasing aid to the Malay schools which to their minds needed a greater boost considering that it was the Malays' interests that they were supposed to protect.

English schools, also known as free schools, enjoyed the patronage and support of government. They were called free schools not because they did not charge

any tuition, but because they had no restrictions on race, creed or color. This idea had the following bases:

(a) that the school may be open to the reception of all children in the island, of every description, whose parents or friends are willing to submit them to rules of the institution.

(b) that it will be the first objective of the institution to provide for the education of such children as would otherwise be bred up in idleness and consequent vice and without which any means of obtaining instruction in useful learning or manual employment and implant in them the early habits of industry, order and good conduct.

(c) that such parents are as capable of supporting the expense of the education of their children, shall be called upon for payment of such small demands as they may be thought proper to be required.

(d) any part or all of the children may be instructed in reading and writing English and in common rules of Arithmetic.

(e) great care should be taken that the prejudice of parents to the Christian religion should not be violated.

The leaders of the post-war period aimed towards the unification of all the races since the pre-war system divided them. The Barnes committee was subsequently established in this regard. Its members recommended that primary schooling be purposefully used to build up a common nationality and should be re-organized in a new, inter-racial basis and that separate vernacular schools for the several racial communities should be abolished and replaced by a single type of primary school common to all, the National School.

It further provided that the schools should be bilingual (English and Malay), free for children from six years of age and up. These schools should be administered and financed by a local educational authority since it has its roots in the local community.

Another committee, the Fenn Wu made a study which aimed to bridge the gap in the communal system of schools. It looked into building Malaysian citizenship and fostering national consciousness in a way acceptable to the Chinese community.

They thought it necessary for Chinese to be trilingual and encouraged them to do so. It also believed that Malaysians should aim to develop an ultimate Malayan nation. Doing so would necessitate the building of new schools in Malaya, which would help prepare the native for all phases of life, as set against the Malayan background and society. On the whole therefore, its set objectives were:

(a) gradual introduction of bilingualism into Malay vernacular schools and trilingualism into Chinese and Indian schools so that they would progressively assume the features of a national school system

(b) maintenance in the English-medium national type schools of the existing proportion of children in those schools to the total primary school age population

(c) development of vocational secondary education

In 1956, the Razak Committee came up with a report which stated the need to abandon the idea of national schools and instead encourage children to continue to have their primary education in separate vernacular schools. Malay was to be a compulsory language in all schools since it is the national language, and to be sure that it is taught, it is required that a knowledge of Malay be required for admission to all secondary schools, supported wholly or in part from public funds and for entry into government service. English is to be compulsory because of its utilitarian value. Chinese and Tamil would be taught in primary schools where parents of fifteen children request for it, i.e. Malays become bilingual and non-Malays become trilingual.

In secondary schools, the medium of instruction may be English or Chinese, and government would establish more schools where it was Malay. A crucial requirement of educational policy is the introduction of syllabuses common to all schools

in the federation to help satisfy the needs of people and promote their cultural, social and political development as a nation.

Thus, the post-war period saw the growth of nationalism in the area, which eventually resulted in Malaysia and Singapore obtaining self-government status within the Commonwealth. It looked at education as one of the principal means of forming a national consciousness and responsible citizens, both of which were so urgently needed in these territories, if they were to play a leading role in the region. It aimed not only at recovering lost ground, but also considered the changes since the war. It also brought into focus the problems of independence, racial differences, nationalism, Malayization, language and university education, which are all closely inter-related and exercising their efforts as a combined influence.

Independence meant problems for the educational system. Among them: nationalism, Malayization, language and university education. Nationalism required a measure of state control as had never before been exercised in Southeast Asian countries. Malaysian leaders thought they had to deal with the problem of communalism which had been allowed to develop during the British period, and education would help in this regard. They also believed that:

- (a) multi-racial schools were essentially for the education of the future citizens of a united Malayan nation
- (b) that there were two official languages, Malay and English, and both must be taught
- (c) that there must be a single system of education and a common content in the teaching in all schools
- (d) that there must be an end to the separation of vernacular schools for several racial communities and their replacement by a single type of primary school which is common to all



(e) aimed to re-organize the content of education to give it a Malayan bias

(f) wanted national school schools that would cater to all races, instead of one type for the Malays, Chinese and Indians

(g) re-establishment of the pre-war English school, as those of the missions had measured up to this requirement

But, post-war re-construction as outlined in the Razak Report of 1956 had very far reaching effects on the mission schools and the implementation meant that henceforth, they would be part of the governmental system. As after 1956, there would only be two types of primary schools, the independent and government-assisted, both of which are subject to inspection and legislation and under jurisdiction of local educational authorities and managed by the Board of Managers. Two types of secondary schools also arose, the independent and direct grant, the latter being under the direct control and direction by the Minister of Education in consultation with State/Settlement governments and in accordance with current legislation, with the Board of Governors having wide powers. Thus, there was no question of strict state control, but, within the new framework, the mission schools would be able to continue in a more restricted and modified fashion.

Since 1956, the Mission Schools have been greatly affected by education re-construction as there have been moves toward the minimization of the number of foreign missionaries entering the country and establishing schools. Hardly any new mission schools were established since then. They would also be considered as assisted primary schools and direct grant secondary schools. Compulsory teacher registration was also required as per the ordinance of the Registration of Teachers Ordinance 1957<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Conditions for registration include the school area in the federation and the type of school where the teacher would teach; the language/s of instruction to be employed by the teacher; subjects which the teacher might teach and the standards/forms of pupils to whom he would give instruction.

Malayization was being pushed to a considerable degree by the Department of Education immediately after independence. The goal then became the prompt Malayization of the people as the availability of qualified Malaysians permitted. This obviously led to difficulties with the Chinese and Indians who refused to have anything to do with the plan.

The desire to have a national language also increased with nationalism. The Alliance Government developed a national educational system which would bring the different races in Malaysia together.

The demand for higher education also increased with more Chinese receiving university education and seemingly ahead of most other sectors in society.

Thus, in 1957, an ordinance was passed which provided for the establishment of a national system of education with a common syllabus; Malay would be taught in all aided schools; Malay-medium secondary schools would be rapidly established; and all governmental exams would be in Malay and English only [Milne and Mauzy, 1986]. These provisions became very controversial because they meant that Chinese and Tamil students could not take examinations in their own vernacular.

In 1961, a new act stated that after 1967, Malay should be the main medium of secondary education in aided schools, and it empowered the Minister of Education to convert schools to the Malay medium, thus raising Chinese and Tamil anxieties about the long-term future of their schools. Government assistance to Chinese secondary schools was terminated in 1962, so many converted, at least theoretically, to English, to maintain aid.

After the May 1969 riots<sup>16</sup>, the governing elite was determined to make education more fully reflective of the Malay society. By so doing, unity would increase and it would also provide the means for Malays to catch up in educational and economic

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<sup>16</sup> The May 1969 riots involved the racial confrontation between the Malays and the non-Malays, and the former's demands for more rights, as they claim that they are the only "bhumiputras" or "sons of the soil".

pursuits. In July of the same year, the government announced that henceforth, government-aided English-medium schools would be replaced by Malay-medium schools, one year at a time from primary to university, beginning in 1970 [Milne and Mauzy, 1986].

By 1976, all peninsular English primary schools had been converted and the process for secondary schools was completed by 1982. Almost all subjects at the university level were taught in Bahasa Malaysia. More universities were established and through quotas and scholarships, ethnicity was given priority over merit in university enrollment, i.e., more Malays were accepted into the universities than non-Malays, thus increasing their enrollment by 45% from the period 1963-64 to 1975<sup>17</sup>.

During the period 1971-75, the Ministry of Education developed a set of objectives which may be crucial to the educational system. These included:

(a) the development and strengthening of the national educational system in support of the overall planned objective of promoting national unity.

(b) the redress of the imbalances in educational opportunities and materials between rural and urban areas.

(c) the implementation of the national language policy.

(d) the improvement of the educational system in both its quantitative and qualitative aspects at all levels so as to contribute to the country's economical, social, cultural and political development.

There was no mention whatsoever about Chinese or Indian education; an indication that their welfare was not of much importance to the ruling elite. In accordance with these objectives, an ordinance was passed in 1971, which provided that any

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<sup>17</sup> Malay enrollment was 20% during the period 1963-1964 and increased to 65% in 1975 because of the preferential treatment given to them in the various institutions of learning. This was and still is referred to as the "quota" system of enrollment.

university or college must have the approval of the "yang di-pertuan agong"<sup>18</sup> and parliament before it can be established. This virtually eliminated the possibility of any ethnic group other than the Malay, to establish an institution of learning of its own<sup>19</sup>.

The educational system has become increasingly centralized since then. In accordance with the Malaysian Constitution, Islamic religious affairs is now under the jurisdiction of Malay rulers<sup>20</sup>. Two organizations administer Islamic religious education: the Ministry of Education administers Islamic religious education in government-aided secondary schools and the state government which administers Islamic religious education in national primary schools, and national schools to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry also absorbed the services of Islamic religious teachers in these primary schools into the Federal Education Service and with the consent of the state governments concerned, taken over fourteen Islamic religious secondary schools in eight states. These schools are now known as National Secondary Schools. The agency is also in charge of developing syllabuses for Islamic religious instruction in all primary secondary schools and even teacher training colleges.

Education in Malaysia may thus be characterized by one word, "Malayization", i.e., a process of making the Malays and their culture the very core of society and the rationale behind all subsequent governmental efforts. This may be considered admirable if one will dismiss the presence of a strong minority group, the Chinese, who comprise 37% of the population and like the Malays (who comprise 51% of the population), have as much claim to the country and the resources it has. It is also worth mentioning that the Chinese though only migrants to the area, have done their

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<sup>18</sup> The "yang di pertuan agong" is the Malay term for "king", who until this very day retains a symbolic role in the country.

<sup>19</sup> In 1968, a proposal was made to establish the "Merdeka University", a multi-racial, multilingual institution which shall serve to train more professionals and specialists for the nation and help develop the national culture.

<sup>20</sup> This came from the "Report of the Cabinet Committee to Review the Implementation of Educational Policy", Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1985.

share in the development of the country, especially through their business endeavors. Their businesses have helped contribute to economic growth and provided jobs for many Malaysians, including Malays. Besides, numbers alone show that they are not simply a minority ethnic group in the country, but a significant ethnic group. Because of which they are entitled to enjoy the benefits of quality education and academic freedom, two things which the national government have deprived them since independence. There is also another group, the Indians, they comprise about 10% of the population, who though not as many as the Chinese, and as inclined to business, have contributed to the agricultural economy of the country. They too have suffered from the injustices imposed on them by the ruling Malays and the lack of concern shown for their welfare.

Thus it may be speculated that for so long as the national government does not realize the importance of the other ethnic groups in society to the country's development, the process of Malayization may only lead to greater disunity. The Chinese and Indians should be treated as equals because they are Malaysians, despite their ethnic roots, and they contribute a significant amount of their time, effort and resources to making the country more economically stable and secure. And unless government realizes this, and does something about it, the unity which they have been hoping to achieve, at least officially, may forever be unfulfilled. And the Malaysian nation will lose more than they would otherwise have gained, that is, a united, peaceful and progressive nation.

This chapter has presented the many changes that the educational systems in both countries have undergone from pre-colonial times to the present. As may be observed, the changes are quite significant, most specifically as they relate to the curriculum, quality of education provided to the people and the role which religion has played in the process.

## CHAPTER II

### Definition of Terms

As in all other branches of Comparative Politics, the study of Interest Groups is plagued with many problems. Lack of data, inadequate research methods, finding common bases for comparison and defining terms are just a few of them. It is made even more difficult because scholars have different perceptions of what interest groups are and the functions they have in society. Gabriel Almond (1964), who has made extensive studies on Comparative Politics, including Interest Groups, maintains a so-called "liberal-democratic viewpoint" about them. He believes that all societies need the participation of groups, whom he defines as groups of individuals sharing common characteristics in the fulfillment of specified goals, because unless interests are aggregated and articulated, they will not have an impact on the decision-making apparatus. These interests serve as inputs, while the results of the group's efforts at aggregation and articulation are called outputs. For all these to be achieved, there must be structures for the organization and mobilization of groups, institutionalized means for interest articulation and the de-particularization of the bureaucracy. He further assumes that there are four systems which currently exist, namely:

(a) Anglo-American refers to a system where institutions carry out separate functions which are sharply differentiated.

(b) Underdeveloped countries are characterized by poor political communication and a consequent high degree of interest latency, which later on leads to the competition for power within the framework of the traditional elite.

(c) France, Italy, etc. where parties and groups are fully bureaucratized, but are not always autonomous of each other.

(d) Scandinavia and the low countries, where parties tend to be aggregative and party relations are organized on a consensual basis.

Almond goes on further by distinguishing the four different types of interest groups which may exist in any society:

(a) Institutional Groups refer to organizations as legislatures, political executives, armies, bureaucracies and the like. They perform social or political functions and may also articulate their own interests or represent the interests of groups in the society as corporate bodies or through groups within them. Thus, groups of this type are formally organized, with professionally employed officials or employees, which also constitutes a base of operations for a clique or subgroup which does.

(b) Non-Associational Interest Groups include kinship and lineage groups, ethnic, regional, religious, status and class groups which articulate interests informally and intermittently, through individuals, cliques, family and religious heads, and the like. Interests may include the complaint of a tribal chief to a paramount chief about tributes or law enforcement affecting his lineage group; request made by a landowner to a bureaucrat in a social club regarding the tariff on grains; or the complaint of an informal delegation from a linguistic group regarding language instruction in the schools. Non-associational groups articulate their interests in a less formal and intermittent fashion.

(c) Anomic Interest Groups refer to spontaneous breakthroughs into the political system from the society, as riots and demonstrations. They are characterized as having relative structural and functional liability. This refers to the fact that even though

riots and demonstrations may be deliberately organized and controlled, they still have the potential of exceeding limits and norms, and thus disturbing or even changing the political system. They may perform a number of functions ranging from interest articulation to the transfer of power from one group to another, making changes in certain laws, statutes or even the constitution, adverting a certain court order, among others.

(d) Associational Interest Groups are specialized structures as trade unions, organizations of businessmen or industrialists, ethnic associations, associations organized by religious denominations, civic groups and the like. Their particular characteristics are explicit representations of the interests of a particular group, orderly procedures for the formulation of interests and demands, and the transmission of these demands to other political structures as political parties, legislatures and bureaucracies.

Harry Eckstein's (1960) analysis, focuses on the group and its form of activities, intensity and scope and effectiveness.

(a) Form of activities refers to the nature of the governmental structure, activities of government (which branch plays the major part in decision-making) and the ethos of the political system as it is favorable or inimical to pressure group activity as such.

(b) Intensity refers to the fervor with which an objective is pursued and also to the group's persistence, while scope denotes the number of groups engaged in politics.

(c) Effectiveness refers to the determinants of major importance, as physical resources, wealth and membership in relation to potential membership and its expertise.

F. Castles (1967) views interest groups as co-terminus with pressure groups and defines them as the conglomeration of individuals which attempt to bring about political change, whether through government activity or not, and which is not a



political party in the sense of being represented at that particular time in the legislative body. This definition stresses the fact that pressure for political change may, in certain political cultures, particularly in totalitarian regimes and to some extent in less developed societies, not be exerted to change policy, but to change the form of government.

Lucian Pye<sup>21</sup> extends all these general theories on interest groups further by focusing on groups in Southeast Asia. In the "Politics of the Developing Areas" (1960), he mentions that political parties, except where they have been all-embracing social movements have not been the key units in the political processes of the Southeast Asian countries. The only exception he says is the Communist Party, which has a strong organizational structure which none of the political parties have. Thus, for most parts of the region, authoritative institutional interest groups dominate the political scene.

He further claimed that this lack of well-developed associational interest groups in most of the region means that an important source of restraint on such an authoritarian tendency is missing. Social change in Southeast Asia has not yet produced large numbers of functionally specific interest groups. Thus, there are few formally organized groups that are seeking to differentiate and articulate particular interests. More often than not, those westernized organizations, i.e. those whose structure is based on organizations in the west, as the U.S. for instance, as trade unions and peasant associations are the agents of some other group like the nationalist movement, or a certain ethnic group.

It should be added that Southeast Asia has changed considerably since Almond's book was published. Some of the changes that have taken place are:

(a) In the first place, all the countries in the region are independent, with their own government, constitution, and economic structure.

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<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that Lucian Pye's work is almost twenty years old. So many things have changed in the developing countries since then. These changes will be dealt with later in the succeeding chapters.

(b) Interest groups have formed in these countries, which try to influence the formation of policy, its implementation or seek some changes within the policy itself. Labor unions still exist in Southeast Asia, but do not have as much strength, nor political clout, as those in the U.S.

(c) The Communist Party is no longer a viable political organization in most Southeast Asian countries, with the exception of the Philippines. Contrary to Almond's contention, that the party has a strong organizational structure, this is not exactly true in the Philippine situation, with the members of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) involved in the movement, for different reasons, including the alleviation of poverty, desire for social justice, elimination of the traditional oligarchy, among others, rather than the attainment of one particular goal.

In all the Southeast Asian countries, non-associational groups have a significant influence on the political process. Particular participation comes less from specific interest groups and more from ethnic, religious and status groupings which often lack any formal organization and usually represents very diffuse interests. This is very evident in Malaysia and the Philippines, where there are very strong religious and ethnic bonds which link the people together and give them a sense of identity, distinct from their nationality and or sense of being Asian. It is a bond which may even rise above the very essence of being a citizen of the state and a member of society as a whole. Being so, it becomes essential to fight for their interests and desires if they feel threatened or endangered.

Latent characteristics of most special interests and the prevalence of non-association and essentially communal groupings with diffuse interests, contribute to the periodic appearance of anomic movements in some of the Southeast Asian countries. These movements represent attempts to advance raw, unaggregated demands which have not been systematically articulated. They are thus movements without programmes that

are usually produced by the tensions and frustrations that stem directly from the process of social change.

Southeast Asian countries may thus be characterized as possessing not a single and integrating political process but many loosely related political processes. There is, of course, the dominant process at the national level which is based on the city and the administrative organs of the central government and which reflects the attitudes and values of those who belong to the society of the ruling groups. This process usually reflects the needs of those who envisage their loosely organized societies becoming modern nation states. At the local level however, there are other political processes and since the countryside throughout the region is highly fragmented in parochial groupings, it contains many nearly autonomous political processes.

This developed because there has not emerged a distinct sphere of political relations that is clearly separate from the more basic patterns of social and personal relations in Southeast Asia. Questions of social status, ethnic identity and personal associations tend to determine the patterns of political loyalties and behavior. Political processes of Southeast Asia represent mixed systems and reflect the multi-dimensional divisions that run through these societies. Behind the main division segregating the urbanization and peasant-oriented segments, lie other divisions. These include gaps between ethnic and religious communities, between parochial cultures and between those whose visions of a modern world stem from quite different sources.

These theories are not without problems however. It should be noted that most of these works were done during the sixties and early seventies, and a lot of things have changed since then. Southeast Asia's political environment has changed considerably, so much so that there is now quite a number of well-organized associational interest groups, contrary to what Pye has initially observed. These groups

have proven to be very active in the political arena and are forerunners in the fulfillment of citizens rights in society.

Secondly, there is a problem with Almond's definition of anomic interest groups because I do not believe that he is actually describing the groups per se but rather, he is describing the kind of activities they engage in. Thus, any group can actually be anomic depending on the circumstance. This being the case, I will not consider anomic interest groups in my analysis.

Thirdly, I do not believe that categorizing legislatures as interest groups is correct because interest groups by definition are the ones which try to influence the policy-makers, i.e. the legislators, so that, how is it possible that legislatures are also interest groups?

And lastly, the categorization of countries into Anglo-American, Scandinavian, underdeveloped is very loose, and without actual demarcation lines to differentiate one from the other. They also do not leave enough room for change, many of which have taken place in most, if not all of the countries in the world during the last 25 years.

For the purpose of this research, interest groups will be defined as groups of individuals which attempt to influence policy-making in the pursuit of certain goals. These groups are not part of the formal governmental set-up, i.e. the law-making body of the state and thus find it necessary to express their opinions in a different way. This may be done through lobbying in the state or local government building, peaceful rallies, publication of newspapers, magazines or newsletters which fully express their belief systems, be-friending law-makers, among others. Their very existence may serve as a means of keeping the government on its toes and making them fully aware of the possible consequences of their actions. Utmost concern will be given to the other groups, which

are not parts of the governmental machinery as they attempt to influence the policy-making process.

A good example of this would be the Catholic Church in the Philippines, which all throughout the history of the country since independence, has played a crucial role in the maintenance of certain value systems which date as far back as the Spanish period, which they thought were necessary in the development of a moral and just society. This is not to say that the church is totally wrong for doing so; this only means that it believes in a sense of tradition that religion and politics definitely go hand-in-hand, and can therefore not be separated for any reason whatsoever.

Take the case of the Student Catholic Action for instance, which after its establishment in the early 1950's in the University of the Philippines, has caused a lot of controversy as to its rightful place in the university campus. So much so that when the organization, under the leadership of Fr. Delaney agitated for a separate Catholic chapel other than the already existing inter-denominational chapel shared by all religious denominations on campus, many complains were raised. The Board of Regents had to hold an election to decide on the matter and ultimately rejected the proposal. It was only much later, during the presidency of Dr. Vidal Tan was the Catholic Church built. But it had to be such that other denominational churches as that of the Protestants, was also built to avoid any other difficulties. In an analysis made by Lagman (1957), he mentions that:

"The Philippines which is literally a beehive of activity, has immediate sociological implications which are deducible from established principles and methods employed in cultural intervention. Any concentration of participative effort within any group which is sustained, repetitive and prolonged, whatever form that effort may assume, is a

potential source of power for other purposes. It is just one step from dramatics, chess, sports, symposia, charity drives, home visitations, or social work, to the familiar arena of pressure politics. In an academic setting, such cohesive groups could exert an extremely powerful influence in establishing a climate of opinion that could make it difficult, if not impossible for dissenting or non-conforming views to express themselves where the method for choosing officials is elective in character, they have the ready made advantage in collective strength not possessed by other groups that do not operate by these techniques."

It should be noted that when the UP was established in 1908, it was conceived to be an autonomous body whose aim was to develop, among other things, the free man, the independent man, the perpendicular man, i.e., the development of independence and liberal thinking (Lagman, 1957). The establishment of its own University Charter<sup>22</sup> was a testimony to this desire. Not even this however, prevented organizations such as the UPSCA to intervene in its policies and make its presence felt within the campus machinery.

Ever since her independence in 1957, Malaysia has always battled with the problem of consensus. It seems that despite many attempts to unify the people and move towards the pursuit of common goals, problems incessantly arise. The riots of May 1969, signalled the beginning of a very significant era in the history of the country. For it was then that the Malays in full force, showed their strength as proof that they are the

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<sup>22</sup> This University Charter has made the institution a "hot bed" of unrest because the students believe that it is their right to preserve this freedom which they enjoy. Any issue, which they feel would be an infringement on this right may be a cause for rallies and student forums. Other schools are still trying to have their own charter approved by the Dept. of Education. So far, there is no certainty as to its fruition.

only true "bhumiputra" or sons of the soil. The adoption of Islam as the country's official religion, the use of Malay as the national language, the existence of quotas for non-Malays in the universities are all indicative of the tremendous impact they have had on society.

The concern of this research will be religious interest groups and their influence on the formulation of educational policies in Malaysia and the Philippines. Religious interest groups refers to groups of individuals who clearly express their desire to maintain the status quo or seek changes in the religion which they believe in, its hierarchy or clergy (if any) and the policies which these religions abide by. In this case, Catholic groups in the Philippines and Muslim groups in Malaysia shall be the focal point of all discussions herein. Catholic groups have been selected because they represent that religion which is professed by over 85% of the population while Muslim groups have been chosen in the Malaysian case because Islam is the official religion and is professed by the dominant <sup>23</sup> ethnic group, the Malays.

The two countries were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

(a) There is a religious revival in both countries. The religious revival in Malaysia began after the May 1969 riots, and continues to intensify under the Mahathir administration, while that in the Philippines started during the latter part of the Marcos regime and continues to gain support during the current Aquino administration.

(b) Religion is a very important facet of society in both countries. In Malaysia, to be Malay is synonymous to being Muslim and vice-versa. While in the Philippines, Catholicism though not considered the state religion, has managed to make its presence felt, especially in the political arena, ever since the arrival of the Spaniards in 1521.

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<sup>23</sup> The Malays compose slightly over 50% of the entire population. Yet, they possess political power in the country, over the Chinese and the Indians.

(c) The two countries represent religions which has two of the most numerous and ardent followers of any religion in the world. They are also religions which have managed to influence the various aspects of life in the two countries, ever since their inception.

(d) The two countries have had a history which clearly shows a close relationship between religion and the political system. This has been observed in many instances and policies, including the formulation of educational policies. Examples of which will be shown in later chapters.

(e) The countries typify the growing intensity of the increasing religiosity in society despite modernization. Religion continues to affect the lives of the people in a very important way, as will be shown in the discussions later on.

Both associational and non-associational or whole life groups will be dealt with in this paper, as they attempt to intervene in the formulation of educational policies. Almond's definition of an associational group is a conglomeration of individuals with specialized structures, (as religious associations for instance) with specific policies, by-laws or even a constitution, stating their beliefs, values and the goals they intend to achieve as well as the means by which they intend to achieve them.

Non-associational or whole life groups are those whose membership is based on kinship and lineage groups, ethnic, religious, regional, status and class groups which articulate interests informally and intermittently. Its members may not necessarily share all their principles and goals, but rather are united on the basis of ethnic, in this case, religious conviction and affiliation. Institutional groups may also be looked into, depending on their role and significance in the process of educational policy-making.

This distinction has to be made because of the following:

(a) There are many groups in both countries which try to influence policy-making in education. This has led to a wide diversity of goals, plans of action and



perhaps even belief systems. These differences are such that some groups are formally organized while others are not exactly so, and intervene only when they feel there is a need, usually when they are directly affected by the policy at hand.

(b) It is important to note the changes which organizations have undergone through time i.e. from the time of their inception to the present (that is, if they still exist). This will be indicative not only of the organization's strength and stability, but also their success as an influential political actor in society. It may also be helpful to know whether or not groups which have lasted for a long time have a much stronger influence than those which have not.

(c) There are groups which work only for the fulfillment of certain goals as they pertain to education, while there are others which deal not only with education, but other issues as well, including poverty, graft and corruption, drugs, among others. So that, the manner in which they actually intervene is determined by the issue and the extent to which their organization feels strongly about it. It is interesting to know whether education as an issue is only incidental to the organization's programme, or an integral part of it.

In the Malaysian case, the following groups will be studied:

(a) ABIM (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia), an organization made up of mostly young, highly educated urbanites, from schools, universities, professional and the civil service. It attempts to bring religion back into every facet of social existence in keeping with the idea of Islam as a way of life (Nagata, 1986). Islam is seen as an important aspect of political life, the establishment of an Islamic state in justice through the Islamic or Syariah courts, and in all aspects of personal morality and daily behavior. ABIM may be considered an associational religious interest group with its structure, organization, belief system and plans for the country.

(b) Darul Arqam is more scripturally fundamentalist than ABIM and is pre-occupied with literal and rigid interpretations of codes of dress, food and other items of personal behavior, in the relations of man-to-man in society and man-to-God. It aims to create an economic system, independent of non-Malay or non-Muslim control. It has an uncompromising approach to religious discipline, rigid segregation of the sexes, insistence on full Muslim dress, even at the very young stage of an individual's life, i.e. at the pre-school level. It is an other-worldly group, rather aloof from mainstream Malay society, with a morally exclusivist, almost sectarian approach to its membership. It should be noted that the organization has considerably weakened over the years. Like the ABIM, this is also an associational interest group.

(c) Jemaat Tabligh originated and still has its headquarters in India, and is strongly entrenched in the urban life of Malaysia. It has expanded through the years, to as far as the rural countryside, where it was formerly a virtual unknown. It uses aggressive techniques as door-to-door campaigning, militant bombardments of mosque congregations, and gives out warnings and injunctions against the practices of other groups, thus developing a very controversial role in Malaysian society. It requires its members to serve as missionaries, and join regular retreats, thus posing as a very demanding and often, time-consuming organization. It is also an associational religious interest group.

(d) Aliran, is the first major multi-ethnic movement to have emerged in Malaysia. It draws its strength from various religious as well as secular and linguistic groups concerned with the total reform of Malaysian society as an endeavor which will span a few decades (Aliran, 1981). It has no link or connection to any political party, trade union, consumer association or organization or any other institution. It aims at upholding belief in God, which is also the first principle of the Rukunegara. It also believes that Malay is the sole official and national language, that Islam should be the

official religion and that education should be based on sound moral values which are in harmony with the beliefs and ideals of all Malaysians. Like the three mentioned previously, it is also an associational religious interest group.

(e) PERKIM or the Islamic Welfare and Missionary Association seeks to achieve one thing, the conversion of the "heathen" (Von der Mehden, 1987). It is based in the Prime Minister's office, receives some government funds, but basically operates from donations, income from its own investments and foreign aid. It goes deep into conversion by attempting to convert the Chinese and aborigines of East Malaysia. It accepts the continuance of non-Muslim behavior among converts, while not demanding the more intense introspection encouraged by other groups. It works with the Muslims considerably, with its clinics, kindergartens and adult education. This is also an institutional religious interest group.

(f) The Malays, as an ethnic as well as a religious interest group may be considered a whole life or non-associational group. They have managed, as a group to influence policies, initiate governmental changes and even gain political dominance over the entire country.

(g) The Chinese, also comprise another whole life group in Malaysia. They are mainly concerned with the attainment of equal rights and priveleges as the Malays through the formation of their own political party, interest groups and other ethnic-based associations, which may help them achieve their goal.

As for the Philippines, the following organizations have been selected for this study:

(a) The Jesuits, a religious order which is famous by being anti-establishment, and following its own, supposedly progressive and innovative religious beliefs and value systems. They came to the Philippines as missionaries during the colonial era, and has continued to exert influence on the various facets of Philippine life

since then. With its schools and parishes all over the country, it has always fought for freedom and the right to interpret religion in a more open fashion instead of restricting itself to the very narrow image which the Roman Catholic faith seems to have developed in the country. The Ateneo de Manila and its communications facilities have led many boycotts and rallies during the Marcos era, and continues to play the role of "religious watchdog" in the Aquino administration. The organization is very well organized and may be classified as an associational religious interest group.

(b) The UP-SCA or the University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action organization was established in the university's original campus along Padre Faura in Manila. Initially developed to heighten the religious values and morals of the students, it has become a controversial figure in many university issues through the years. As previously mentioned, it intervened in the early 1950's when its leader wanted a separate church for the Catholics, which though initially denied, was later established after receiving extreme pressure from the organization and agreeing to establish other denominational chapels on campus. It continues to exert influence on campus until today with its religious activities, as prayer meetings, rosary rallies, among others. This organization is also an associational interest group.

(c) Social Action Centers are organizations generally supported by different churches, clergymen, nunneries, among others, whose main objectives are economic development and social justice. They engage in activities which include the improvement of agriculture, health, nutrition, sanitation, family planning, the development of health centers, cooperatives and credit unions (Von der Mehden, 1987). They go even further in their attempts to eliminate economic inequities and increasing the ability of people to affect decisions, by establishing centers all over the country and having different programmes developed for specific regional problems and concerns. This is also an associational interest group.

(d) The Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines or CEAP is the conglomeration of all the Catholic educational institutions in the country. It was originally established to see to it that education in these schools fosters not only the intellectual development of its students, but their spiritual development as well. It is very much involved in curriculum development and the encouragement of more religiously-oriented activities on campus. It is made up of various members of the Catholic Church hierarchy, academicians and administrators who believe that true education can only be attained in a Christian environment. This is also an associational interest group.

(e) The La Salle Brothers, an organization of brothers, whose mission statement is solely dedicated to the pursuit of education. It has been in the country for a very long time and continues to maintain one of the best educational institutions. The brothers have had a reputation of being politically active, so much so, that during the Marcos era, they were one of the few groups brave enough to participate in rallies and risk imprisonment. Brother Andrew, the university's president, is a well-known linguist and community leader, while Brother Rolly Dizon, its one time president, and two-term president of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, are some of its most prestigious members. The brothers run several schools in the country including a university along Taft Avenue, an elementary and high school in Alabang, a suburb of Manila, and a few in the provinces. The La Salle Brothers is also an associational interest group, with its solid structure, mission statement and by-laws.

(f) The Catholics, as a group is non-associational or whole life. Their influence in society is ubiquitous and is extremely powerful, as proven during the February 1986 revolution.

Influence shall be understood as the extent to which various groups attempt to intervene in the formulation and/or implementation of national and local policies as it pertains to religion. The role of the groups in either one or both of these functions are the

main foci of this paper. The methods used in exerting influence will also be studied as well as the rate of success and failure of the groups. This will be measured in the following manner:

- (a) The extent to which the group, through its persistence and hard work, has managed to achieve its goals.
- (b) The number of members of the organization.
- (c) The length of time in which the organization has existed or continues to exist in society.
- (d) The extent to which it manages to alter public opinion about certain issues which they may consider important.
- (e) The extent to which it manages to alter the opinions of law-makers and make them see their viewpoint and perhaps even take action on it.

To summarize, this research will analyze religious interest groups be they institutional, associational/whole life as they attempt to influence policy-making in Malaysia and the Philippines. It will cover the post-independence period to the present and an analysis of the extent to which these groups have succeeded or failed in attaining their original objectives. The data utilized for this study were only taken from libraries in the USA, resource persons, and some of the organizations who were willing to correspond with the author. Any gaps in the information presented or in the analysis, are the author's alone and should not be attributed to anyone else.

## CHAPTER III

### RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

#### A. The Coming of Roman Catholicism to the Philippines.

When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines in 1521, they were met by a people who believed in animals, bodies of water, the sky, and other natural resources, as their supreme being. Their spirituality was limited to what they thought were supernatural creatures, capable of controlling their destiny as well as day-to-day occurrences as the weather, for instance. Thus, there were even groups who created statues, otherwise known as "anitos", who to their minds, were their gods or at least represented them, and who once appeased with offerings of food, water and flowers, would grant their wishes.

These gods were venerated and given utmost respect by the natives. On the whole therefore, the scenario which existed upon the arrival of the Spaniards may be characterized by one word, "paganism", hereby defined as a belief system where natural resources and man-made images constitute the spiritual life of particular individuals or groups of people. Each "barangay"<sup>24</sup> or village had its own god or conception of a supreme being, who in certain cases has also been referred to as "bathala"<sup>25</sup> or god.

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<sup>24</sup> A barangay is a village which consists of as little as five or more families in every town. It is headed by a "datu" or supreme leader who henceforth has the power to make laws and enforce them in the manner which he sees fit. The concept of the barangay has been brought back to life by the Marcos administration, for the purpose of increasing community awareness and development. This continues to this very day under the leadership of Pres. Aquino.

<sup>25</sup> "Bathala" is the Filipino term for supreme being. In olden days, it may refer to any supreme being which a group of people may have. Currently, it only refers to the God Almighty, as known by the Christians.

Thus, when the Spaniards first met with the natives, they were greeted with both fear and uncertainty. This was so because the natives were not quite certain of the true intentions of their foreign guests and could not conceive of the possibility of any form of altruistic motives which the Spaniards seem to have upon their arrival. Perhaps, it should also be mentioned that the Spaniards themselves were not quite certain of the reasons behind their coming. For on the one hand, King Philip II of Spain, wanted to gain the friendship of the natives through peaceful means, encourage them to live in communities, defend them against their enemies, teach them a civilized way of life and convert them to the Roman Catholic faith, there were other factions in the Spanish legislature as well as the Church hierarchy who believed that the only way they could colonize the country was through force and the eventual destruction of all forms of paganism. Upon their arrival therefore, they brought along with them two symbols which would properly represent their presence in the islands, the sword and the cross. These symbolize their desire to colonize the country through Catholicism, while maintaining the possibility of using force if met by resistance from the natives<sup>26</sup>.

In order to convince the natives of their noble objectives, the Spaniards made full use of the Catholic missionaries in colonization. According to Tuggy (1971), the Catholic missionaries functions may be summarized into seven points:

(a) The missionaries themselves were the primary agents of the spread of Roman Catholicism in the country. Their main purpose for being in the country was the immediate conversion of the native population to Catholicism.

(b) Whenever possible, indigenous rituals, practices and forms of interaction were used to be one with the people. The continuance of "religious festivities" as the procession for a good harvest for instance, was continued, but with a more Catholic flavor to it, i.e., the festivity would be made in honor of a Catholic saint or

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<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that the use of the term "natives" is not meant to insult the Filipino people, but rather simply refers to the greater populace.



martyr, who shall then be known as the event's patron saint. Working with, than against native culture became a basic feature of much of Roman Catholic missionary work.

(c) The friars used a very direct approach to their preaching. They immediately baptized the natives, who were willing to embrace the faith and make them models to the rest of the community. This was done so rapidly that the number of Catholics increased considerably through the years. According to Tuggy (1971), the following statistics show how quickly baptism took place.

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Number of Baptisms</b> |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1570        | 100                       |
| 1583        | 100,000                   |
| 1586        | 146,700                   |
| 1594        | 286,000                   |
| 1612        | 322,400                   |
| 1629        | 500,000                   |
| 1735        | 837,182                   |
| 1750        | 904,116                   |

In addition, the friars also saw to it that pre-colonial remnants were destroyed. Statues of "anitos" and other paganistic paraphernalia were immediately replaced by those of Jesus, Mother Mary and the saints. These served to convince the people of the existence of a God, who reigns supreme over all other beings and who is responsible for the creation of all living things on earth and beyond.

(d) There was a strong emphasis on instruction. Catechism classes were immediately introduced where basic prayers and bible readings were taught. Both children and adults were in these classes to hasten the process of conversion. According

to Fr. Chirino (Tuggy, 1971), when he moved to Taytay, Rizal, one of the first things he did was to hold catechetical classes for the natives. Doing so would make them fully understand the faith and the rituals and practices that go with it. Pre and post-baptismal classes were also introduced to make the new Christians appreciate their faith more and make it the very core of their existence here on earth.

(e) The friars also saw to it that they learned the language spoken in the area to which they have been assigned<sup>27</sup>. Doing so would hasten interaction and make the natives feel at ease with them.

(f) The available personnel were widely dispersed throughout the islands. The only region which remained untouched was Mindanao<sup>28</sup>, the Muslim area, which even at that time was already completely Islamized and the people, extremely belligerent in fighting for their faith. Thus, it was only in Luzon and the Visayas, the country's two main islands, where the Spaniards became actively involved in missionary work.

(g) The missionary friars worked through the colonial system. They became intimately involved in the major programmes of colonization, namely:

[1] the "encomiendas", which were feudal holdings granted by the King of Spain to the colonizers, often as rewards for faithful service to the crown. These included land, natural resources and the right to labor and tribute from the inhabitants. The friars actively supported this program. They participated in it by taking care of the spiritual well-being of all the natives in the encomienda, holding Sunday mass for them, blessing and praying for their dead, among others; and the

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<sup>27</sup> This was true only in certain areas of the country where the friars really worked hard to be able to co-exist with the natives. In other areas, the friars simply refused to learn the native language/dialect spoken because they thought that doing so would put them on the same level as the natives, one thing which they could not accept nor tolerate.

<sup>28</sup> There are three main islands in the Philippines, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Mindanao, the southernmost island has been greatly influenced by the Muslims because of the barter trade. Since then, the area has become predominantly Muslim, and no foreign colonizer has succeeded in taking control of the area.

[2] "reduccion" or the resettlement of the Filipinos from their traditional homes to areas carefully designated as parish communities. This would allow both the government and church to firmly establish themselves in the community and allow for ease in control. At certain points in time, whenever there was a lack of civilian officials to take care of these communities, priests took over both governmental and religious functions<sup>29</sup>.

The religious conquest of the Philippines by the Spaniards was all but smooth-sailing<sup>30</sup>. Despite the increasing numbers of natives being baptized, many still expressed cynicism over the colonial system in general and the clergy in particular, thus leading to the formation of various forms of resistance against the colonial masters.

According to Agoncillo (1975), the reasons for this cynicism and the increasing fervour of the Filipino people may be attributed to the following factors: opening of the Philippines to international trade, rise of the middle class, impact of European liberalism, racial prejudice, the secularization controversy, liberal regime of Carlos Ma. de la Torre (1869-71), the Cavite Mutiny and the execution of Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora. For the purpose of this paper, I would like to limit my discussion to a few of these factors which I consider significant for analysis.

(a) The Secularization Controversy. Intensification of the secularization<sup>35</sup> question and its transformation into a Filipinization controversy involving Spanish regular<sup>36</sup> and secular priests on the one hand, and the Filipino secular priests on the

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<sup>29</sup> At certain points in Spanish colonization, this became the rule more than the exception. In every area of the country, the Spaniards saw to it that there was at least one Spaniard. More often than not, it was a friar. Thus, the latter becomes entrusted with the performance of many duties, be they civil or religious, social or political. The friar therefore, has become the representative of the Spanish colonial government in many parts of the country.

<sup>30</sup> Despite past claims that the Spanish colonization of the Philippines was done with ease, there are many evidences which prove just the opposite. Small revolts, and other forms of resistance existed even during the early years of Spanish colonization. These simply progressed continuously during the 333 years of Spanish domination of the country.

<sup>35</sup> Secularization refers to the system whereby priests are not affiliated with any organized sect or religious order.

<sup>36</sup> Regular priests are the ones affiliated with an organized sect or religious order.

other, contributed to the development of nationalism. The conflict between Spanish clerics trying to protect their position as the religious representative and the Filipino priests wanting equitable representation in parish administration, gave the Filipinos reason to think that their inability to attain the said prestige and power which the Spanish priests enjoyed were not dependent upon their ability, but rather, their race, which they could not really change nor do anything about.

The conversion of natives to Christianity in the early decades of Spanish rule required, in accordance with the mandatory provision of the Council of Trent (1545 - 1563), that secular priests be appointed to administer the new parishes. Due to the lack of secular priests however, Pope Pius V issued an ordinance in 1567 that would allow regular priests to serve as parish priests without diocesan authorization<sup>37</sup> and exempted them from the bishop's authority and jurisdiction. As such, they remained under the exclusive jurisdiction of the heads or superiors of their respective religious orders.

The appointment of regular priests to Philippine parishes brought them into conflict with bishops and archbishops. The latter maintained that they were responsible for the proper administration of parishes, and as such, they should be given commensurate power and authority over the friar curate or "cura parroco" as the non-secular parish priest was then known. Friar curates believed that the order exempted them from diocesan visitation and said that as members of a religious order, they were subject only to the rules and regulations and the superiors of their respective religious communities. They resisted visitation on the grounds that it would place them under two superiors and that it would erode the religious discipline and monastic orientation of their order.

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<sup>37</sup> In the Roman Catholic faith, every geographical area is divided into several dioceses, each one under a bishop or archbishop, who shall have jurisdiction over that particular area. In this case, the Pope allowed the parish priest not to be under the control of any particular religious authority so as to be sure that there would be enough priests to take care of church affairs in the Philippines.

Archbishops and bishops, realizing that there were not enough secular priests to replace the regulars in the parishes and aware that the government would not want the campaign for Christianization to slacken, could not really enforce their power of visitation upon the friar curates. Friar curates also threatened to abandon the parishes if the prelates insisted on conducting visitation in their respective jurisdictions.

In the eighteenth century, Archbishop Basilio Santa Justa accepted the resignation of the regular priests and appointed secular priests to the vacated parishes. The increase in the number of secular priests forced him to ordain Filipino secular seminarians and appoint them as parish priests.

On November 9, 1774, a royal decree was passed which provided for the secularization of parishes, i.e. turnover of parishes administered by friar curates to seculars, sanctioned Santa Justa's campaign. With secularization increasing, ill-trained and incompetent Filipino seculars, who embraced the ways of their Spanish predecessors completely, i.e., they too were becoming abusive, dominated the church scene. By 1776, secularization was suspended because of the kinds of reports received by the King about the problems with the Catholic Church. Friar curates/non-seculars went back to their parishes but were required to conduct visitation responsibilities and were ordered to prepare the native clergy for the eventual secularization of the country's parishes. Despite this ordinance however, more Spanish priests came to the islands to fill the various parishes. Native priests were not allowed to be parish priests; those who already had such positions were taken off their posts and replaced by Spanish priests. In 1826, a new decree depriving secular priests of holding parishes was passed. This definitely left the native secular priests in the cold, with a longing to change the discriminatory system which exists. Despite protests however, this system continued until the turn of the 19th century, when competitive exams for parishes were conducted and Filipinos were allowed to take them.

Many of those who passed were assigned to parishes in Pampanga, the Tagalog provinces and the Archdiocese of Manila.

Much later in the century, the issues moved from secularization to Filipinization. This occurred because the Filipinos knew that despite the "secular issue", the real root of the problem was more racial than anything else. This led to even greater nationalism as well as the development of a Filipino consciousness among the native clergy and even some Filipinos who knew of their plight. There were a few factors which were against the development of a Filipino priesthood, among them: (Deats, 1967)

[1] Control by foreign religious orders. The various religious orders were servants of the church and indispensable agents of the Crown. The increase in their wealth, their properties, lack of Spanish secular priests and the shortage of Spanish colonial officials outside the main centers of the population all contributed to the lack of a Filipino clergy in the Philippines.

[2] Racial and cultural prejudice. The Spanish priests thought that the Filipinos were unfit, morally and intellectually to the priesthood and thus made it difficult for them to acquire permanent positions in the various parishes in the country.

[3] Spanish fear of losing control. If Filipino priests were allowed to have control over the parishes, the Filipino clergy will be in the same position as them and this may lead to a situation whereby both will have as much power and control over the people and the Spanish may eventually lose their monopoly of power in the country.

(b) Liberal Regime of Carlos Maria de la Torre (1869 - 1871). As mentioned earlier, not all Governors-General were tyrannical and corrupt. Perhaps the most liberal among all of them was de la Torre, who unfortunately had a very short term of office in the country.

When he arrived in the Philippines, he instantly became famous among the people because he dismissed all his bodyguards, mingled with the common folk, and

even invited them to parties in his home. He encouraged freedom of speech, abolished censorship, public flogging and substituted them with imprisonment. He was so benevolent in his ways that upon subduing an agrarian uprising, he simply pardoned the rebels and encouraged them to go back to their families to live more peaceful lives and even promised them jobs.

He went on to initiate reforms in many public services, including education, where in 1870, he passed an Educational Decree which provided for limited secularization of educational and governmental control of certain institutions for learning in the country. He also proposed the fusion of certain sectarial schools run by Jesuits and Dominicans as the Ateneo de Manila, the Colegio de San Juan de Letran and the College of San Jose into the Philippine Institute. This was however turned down by the King and the various religious orders because to them, their institutions were in for competition more than anything else. He also wanted to improve the standard of education by requiring the teaching positions in such schools to be filled by competitive examinations. He also advocated for the conversion of the University of Santo Tomas into the University of the Philippines, making it a government-run school. Unfortunately, the supposed lack of state funds for this purpose, prohibited this from becoming a reality.

All these caught the ire of the Spaniards, most especially the friars who did not waste time reporting all these to the King. They even added that De La Torre encouraged the Cavite Mutiny<sup>38</sup> during one of the banquets in his home. The friars also accused him of disobedience to the orders of the Crown, being extremely tolerant to the whims and desires of the natives and instilling heresy, for making them turn against the friars. Because of all these, he was removed from office and replaced by Gov. Gen. Izquierdo, who was a tyrant, by any definition. He was ruthless and condescending,

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<sup>38</sup> The Cavite Mutiny led to the execution of Frs. Gomez, Burgos and Zamora (GOMBURZA). This will be explained in greater length later.

arrogant and discriminatory. One of the first things he did was to lift all the new rules and regulations made by de la Torre and replaced them with laws which were extremely severe. He brought back censorship, extreme military control, curfew, among others. This led to even greater resentment for the Spanish occupation of the country, and frustration among the natives, and eventually increased their desire for radical change.

(c) Cavite Mutiny and GOMBURZA. On January 20, 1872, a group of artillery men, marines, soldiers and workers in the arsenal of Cavite, led by Sgt. de la Madrid, seized the Fort of San Felipe in Cavite. The rebels held the fort for one night, until troops from Manila<sup>39</sup> came to subdue them. They were shot randomly; the rest were imprisoned and later publicly executed. This incident can hardly be called a rebellion because of the few men involved, their lack of weapons and the fact that it took place in the small town of Cavite without plans of moving on to Manila and the other key cities in the country.

It was seen by officials and the clergy however, as a mutiny with the destruction of the colonial government as its sole objective. They even went further to accuse Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora, three outspoken Filipino friars who worked for reforms in the country, of initiating the violence. They have been causing a lot of aggravation to the Spanish priests whom they have accused of corruption, violating their vows<sup>39</sup> among others and the latter saw this as a perfect opportunity to fight back. The priests were thus tried in court, without the benefit of having their own lawyers to defend them and publicly executed on Feb. 17, 1872. Their execution caused Filipino rebels to move closer to Manila and make plans for the furtherance of the revolution. This incident affected so many natives and is considered a turning point by many historians, in Philippine history, for its extreme unfairness and discrimination against the Filipino

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<sup>39</sup> These troops were composed of Spanish soldiers who were simply ordered to go to the area and try to subdue the attack and Filipino collaborators, who were paid some money to join forces with the Spaniards and put an end to the insurrection.



people, as well as the repression which has been taking place for a very long time. The execution of the three priests has thus been considered as an instigator for further action, and the need for immediate change is made even more pronounced.

(d) Racial Prejudice. Writers like Pablo Feced, Francisco Canamaque and W.E. Retana, and other journalists paid by the friars, to write articles against the Filipinos, took turns in ridiculing the Filipinos, by referring to them as machines that walk, sleep, eat and exist, with a confusion of sentiments, instincts, desires, energies, passions and colors without forming a single, particular whole. Filipinos were supposedly deprived of a good education because of their lack of curiosity and philosophical well-being. Only the Spaniards born in the Philippines were called Filipinos, and it was only much later that some of the natives were also referred to as such.

This situation may have caused extreme damage on the mentality of the Filipinos, who began to regard western culture as completely superior to their own; however, it also proved to be a unifying factor among the geographically separated and linguistically divergent groups of Filipinos. Spanish refusal to allow qualified Filipino priests to share in the management of parishes in the country also led to a painful awareness of the fact that the Filipinos were a separate race, and considered second class citizens in their own country.

The term "Indio" or "man from the Indies", is viewed as very insulting and in fact extremely humiliating for it connotes an inferior being, which is not really the case. It was simply a means by which the Spanish colonizers could have dominance over the conquered people and claim that they are in fact, more superior.

One of the most vigorous groups to have emerged as a resistance movement against the Spaniards was the Propaganda or Reform Movement. It was made up of the middle class, also known as the "Ilustrados". According to Agoncillo (1977), they

initiated the movement because they did not have any other alternative -- the Spanish authorities looked down on them with condescension, if not contempt, because they were not "really, full-blooded Spaniards"; while the natives looked at them with suspicion because they be-friended the Spaniards and were extremely arrogant. This arrogant attitude is the result of three factors:

[1] the fact that they were descendants of a mixed heritage, Spanish-Filipino or Chinese-Filipino, or in some cases a mixture of all three; they had fair skin and tall noses, making them stand out in a country of short, button-nosed people;

[2] they were also financially better off than the natives because they were either landowners or businessmen;

[3] they were also educated in the best schools in the country or in Europe, something which the natives always wanted to have but could not because of the expense which such an undertaking involved. In fact, some of the Ilustrados were so arrogant that they considered themselves Spaniards and looked down upon the natives.

Perhaps the very first indication of the existence of the organization was in Madrid during a reception in honor of the publication of Gregorio Sancianco's book. Sancianco, a Filipino of Chinese origin, was a lawyer who worked towards his doctorate in law in Europe. In 1881, he published his book, "El Progreso de Filipinas" (Schumacher, 1973), the first serious study by a Filipino which focused on the economic policies necessary to stimulate progress in the Philippines. He urged the colonial government to build roads, bridges, railroads and public works to promote agricultural distribution to various parts of the country and thus increasing the profits made by the farmers. Second, he also advocated for a better educational system which would provide a more comprehensive, as well as scientific programme for everyone and not merely focus on religion. Third, he wanted an end to indirect taxation, a system whereby the Filipinos were supposed to pay an unspecified amount of money for the maintenance of

the church and its staff, religious paraphernalia, rituals and festivities, whenever the parish priest of the area wanted them to do so. This could be done almost every month, if not every week, during Sunday service. There was also the tribute or polo, where the tenants would have to give an unspecified percentage of the income earned from their land as well as its produce, to the clergy. A property, industry and commercial tax system, based on one's ability to pay was thus proposed in place of all these unnecessary and undeclared taxes charged to the people. Fourth, the book also espoused the need for a sense of national identity and love of country by making its readers realize and understand the various forms of abuse being done by the Spaniards. It also promotes assimilation or the process whereby the Philippines would be made a province of Spain as a means by which the Filipinos would be on equal footing with their colonizers and thus enjoy the same benefits and privileges which the Spaniards had.

During the banquet, Graciano Lopez-Jaena, a young Visayan medical student in Madrid, delivered an emotional speech where he thanked Spain for introducing the country to the world through trade and for the Filipinos' conversion to Catholicism. He went on to say however, that there was a need to introduce economic and political reforms in the country for it to be more economically stable and politically representative of all of the country's inhabitants. The speech, together with Sancianco's book, aroused the nationalistic desires among all the Filipinos present, so much so that by the year 1882, they founded the "Circulo-Hispano Filipino" or the Spanish-Filipino Circle, under the leadership of Juan Atayde, a retired Spanish army officer born in the Philippines. It began as a social club and evolved into a group of idealistic writers who came up with a bi-weekly newspaper, the "Revista del Circulo-Hispano Filipino" or Spanish-Filipino Circle Review on Oct. 29, 1882. Both the paper and organization did not last long because of the conflict between the younger and older members, about their political and religious beliefs. The latter were more conservative and wanted Spain to continue its

colonization of the country, while the former were seeking reforms. Thus in 1883, with its older members' resignation, the organization disbanded. Attempts were made to revive the organization, but all of them failed. The ideals and nationalistic desires of the Filipinos however, remained, and their need for change became even more persevering.

On Jan. 8, 1883, a newspaper called "Los DosMundos" or the "Two Worlds" was published. It was under the leadership of Jesus Pando y Valle, a Spaniard, who like the Ilustrados wanted to seek reforms in the Philippines. He thought that by publishing a newspaper in Spain about the colonial government, more changes may be fulfilled. In addition, his concern also extended to Cuba and Puerto Rico, two of the other Spanish territories at that time. His articles focused on the need for progress in the three countries, for the simple reason that this would be beneficial not only to the three of them, but to Spain as well because it would add up to her national pride and prestige in the international community.

One of the most famous works published in the paper was by Graciano Lopez-Jaena, where he attributed many of the weaknesses of the Filipinos to the Spaniards. He mentioned that: (Shumacher, 1973)

"...In Singapore, Calcutta and Java, with the colonial regime and the example of the English and the Dutch respectively, the Malay Indios, brothers of our own, abandoned their laziness to give themselves to the energy of activity and of work; in our Archipelago of San Lazaro, with our colonial regime and the example of our colonizers, who though they had been diligent in the Peninsula, on coming among the Indios, rather than opening their eyes to civilization, rather than guiding them along the path of progress, have lived like

them. Therefore, as must necessarily happen, the Indios continued being indolent."

Like its predecessor, the "Los Dos Mundos" was short-lived. Its existence became known to the Spanish authorities, who henceforth, ordered its abolition. They considered it to be too radical and to some extent, heretical. This did not stop the Filipinos from continuously writing against their colonizers however. For they continued their work and attempted to devise ways to come up with a more cohesive and discrete resistance movement in Spain.

Another Filipino newspaper<sup>40</sup> came out in 1887, under the leadership of Eduardo de Lete. This publication once again stressed the need for governmental reforms and dealt very little with clerical abuse. In the same year however, Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" or the "Social Cancer" was published, a novel which dealt with the difficulties and frustrations experienced by the Filipino people in the hands of the Spanish public officials as well as the clergy. Originally in Spanish, it reveals the innermost thoughts of a man by the name of Juan Crisostomo Ibarra, the son of a wealthy Spanish father and Filipino mother, who returns to the Philippines after several years of study in Europe to marry his childhood sweetheart, Maria Clara. He also had intentions of building a modern schoolhouse to educate the young children in a more scientific, less authoritarian environment. He is immediately met with opposition by the clergy, headed by Fr. Damaso, the former parish priest, and Fr. Salvi, his replacement. Because of this, he (Ibarra) is ridiculed by the clergy and by some other townspeople, who do not quite understand what his real intentions were. Because of the extreme hostility of the clergy towards him, they tried all possible ways to get rid of him. The opportunity came when a

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<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that the early forms of resistance organized by the Propagandists were purely in written form. They were believers of the famous saying made by Jose Rizal, the country's national hero, that the "pen is mightier than the sword".

tax payer accidentally dies, and he is accused of murdering him. He is subsequently arrested and excommunicated<sup>41</sup> until his escape, which was facilitated by a man named Elias, an Indio who has been a victim of Spanish abuse all his life. He has experienced nothing but extreme frustration over the fate of his family and loved ones. He has therefore opted to fight the system through violence by establishing ties with people like him who were willing to risk their lives for the eventual independence of the country from Spain and their freedom from bondage. As they were trying to move away from the prison however, they were followed by Spanish authorities, who killed both of them in the process.

The theme of the novel may be summarized in a word, "oppression". This typified the extent to which Filipinos have been abused by the Spaniards, most especially the friars, with whom they had nothing but utmost respect and reverence, but who later turned out to be just as repressive, if not more, as the military officials who colonized the country. The likes of Fathers Damaso and Salvi, who used religion for their own personal gain are indicative of the abuse. They did not fulfill their vows, they collected excessive and unwarranted taxes and changed and/or altered religious laws at their own whim. These made the natives feel that they were worthless entities, who were forever subservient to their foreign masters. For those unwilling to simply accept all the oppression, they formed rebel groups so as to instigate change through violence, instead of peaceful reforms.

The novel was hailed by many of Rizal's friends in Europe, including Ferdinand Blumentritt<sup>42</sup>, one of Rizal's very best friends. Back in the Philippines, the natives who read it appreciated Rizal's efforts, but the difficulty of getting hold of copies

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<sup>41</sup> Excommunication was the worst punishment that may be given by the Catholic clergy to any individual. It would mean public humiliation and eternal damnation.

<sup>42</sup> Ferdinand Blumentritt was one of Rizal's very best friends. He was an Austrian scholar, who corresponded with Rizal on a regular basis about his thoughts and feelings regarding the situation in the Philippines. He was also responsible for helping finance Rizal's second novel, the "El Filibusterismo" or the "Reign of Greed".

of the book due to the absence of freedom of information, became a major obstacle to the process of enlightenment which Rizal hoped would result once the book was released. Besides, since the novel was written in Spanish, very few people actually understood the work and gave it much thought. A three-man committee formed by the Dominican<sup>43</sup> rector of the University of Santo Tomas, made a report on the novel and claimed it to be heretical, impious and scandalous in the religious order, anti-patriotic, subversive of public order, offensive to the government of Spain and to its method of leadership in the islands. Upon Rizal's return to Manila, he was asked to meet with Gov.-Gen. Emilio Terrero, who asked that he be given a copy of the novel because of reports of its subversive nature. He presented one to the Governor a couple of days later, as well as another one to the Archbishop. Nothing was actually done to ban the book, until Rizal left once again for Spain in Feb. 1888.

On June 1888, a legislative meeting in Spain concerning the increasing tension in the Philippines supposedly instigated by the novel was held. Sen. Fernando Vida denounced the anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic propaganda in the Philippines, which had prepared the way for the manifest action.

In the Philippines, Fr. Salvador Font, the acting chairperson of the Board of Censure stood by his ground when he said that the book would continue to be censured because of its attacks on the religion of the state, administration, government employees and courts, civil guard corps and the territorial integrity of Spain. He even published twenty copies of a pamphlet aimed at refuting all of Rizal's allegations and to bring it to the attention of other officials and friars who may cause its suppression. Another pamphlet, also aimed at having the novel suppressed, was written by Fr. Jose Rodriguez,

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<sup>43</sup> The Dominicans and Franciscans were two of the religious orders which Rizal accused of theft, improper moral values and indiscretion. This made the members of the said orders extremely upset over the work, that they prohibited the purchase of the book in their university libraries, and the use of the novel as a subject of discussion in Philippine literature.

who claimed that the novel was full of heresies, blasphemies and errors which were all untrue and extremely foolish.

Rizal then comes up with pamphlets in response to these two critiques with hopes of correcting all forms of misconception which may already have developed in the minds of the Filipino people as well as the Spaniards. Rizal was aided by some more liberal-minded Jesuits, as well as Fr. Vicente Garcia, a doctor in theology and writes devotional works in Tagalog<sup>44</sup>. Despite all these however, the book continues to have a market in the Philippines, with the natives, or at least those who could read and understand Spanish very well. Rizal has been asked not to return to the country until further notice however, to avoid any instability as a result of the book.

In the Philippines, the desire for reforms started as early as 1882, when Marcelo H. del Pilar and his peers, established the first bilingual newspaper in Tagalog and Spanish, called the "Diariong Tagalog" or the "Tagalog Newspaper". Funding for the paper and its circulation was supplied by a group of Del Pilar's relatives and associates, who shared his nationalistic interests. They were able to take advantage of the more liberal policies of some governors-general, like de la Torre, de Rivera, among others.

Despite the fact that the paper did not last very long, Del Pilar continued with his efforts towards the development of nationalism among the Filipinos. He delivered speeches in every public gathering, including the cockpit, with hopes of arousing the nationalistic fervor within the Filipinos as a people. He focused on friar abuse and racial discrimination, hoping to enlighten the natives on the realities of Spanish colonialism. He wrote articles which attacked the political power of the friars in the country, the system of deportation by administrative decree and even presented a defense

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<sup>44</sup> Tagalog is one of the many languages spoken in the country. It is used in Manila, and the rest of the Southern Luzon region. Upon independence, when the country was in search for a national language, it became one of the major bases of the national language, now known as Filipino.



on behalf of Rizal's "Noli..." (Shumacher, 1973). He was also fond of making satirical works like "La Frailocracia Filipina" or the "Frailocracy in the Philippines" which is an essay on the clergy in the country. Another work, "Caiigat Cayo", a parody on Fr. Rodriguez, a repressive Spanish priest and writer. It literally refers to the priest as an eel capable of inflicting harm on anyone in sight. Perhaps, his most poignant work is "Dasalan at Toksohan" or "Prayers and Teasing" which gives a new list of ten commandments, including to worship the friar above all things; not to die without money for a funeral; not to join the friar in stealing, among others. It is truly a satire on all the teachings of the catholic church in the Philippines.

In 1889, the Filipino Propagandists in Spain, because of their extreme disgust with the role of the clergy in the country, affiliated with the masonic lodges in Spain. By its very nature, masonry is actually a form of brotherhood existing between members of an organized religion, usually of the Protestant faith.

The masonic lodges organized by the Filipinos were known as Revolucion or Revolution (1889) and La Solidaridad (1890). The two became the focus of propaganda activities in Spain and were responsible for the maintenance of unity in the ranks. News of these lodges reached the Philippines quickly. Thus, the Filipinos back home thought it was about time to establish some in the country. Pedro Laktaw and Antonio Luna established the first Filipino Masonic Lodge in the country which they called "Nilad" on Jan. 6, 1891.

According to its constitution, the masons would like to initiate reforms in the country through peaceful means, i.e., negotiations with colonial government rather than violence. They wanted a dignified, free and prosperous country, with a just governmental system and educated populace. They dreamed of a democratic regime, with respect for the individual and his rights, his happiness and his development. They aimed for eventual Filipino representation in the Spanish Cortes; a Governor-General

who follows the ordinances of the King of Spain rather than makes up his own; and the eventual assimilation of the Philippines as a province of Spain.

These encouraged more Filipinos to open lodges in various parts of the country. So much so that by 1893, there were already 35, 9 of which were in Manila. Even women, like Rosario Villaruel, Trinidad Rizal (Jose Rizal's sister), Sixta Fajardo, Purificacion Leyva, etc. opened a women's lodge known as "Wala na" or "Nothing More". These lodges only increased the ire of the friars. Despite their claims that the said organizations were heretical and violent, the government did not disband them. They were allowed to exist for so long as they remained peaceful and did not cause trouble of any type, form or nature.

In 1892, Rizal's second novel, the "El Filibusterismo" or the "Reign of Greed" was published. In this novel, Ibarra re-surfaces as Simoun, a selfish, arrogant, yet extremely influential jeweller of unknown origin, whose motives remained a mystery till his death. He donates a big sum of money for the building of a school, while establishing alliances between and among the various factions in society. He is also planning for a revolution which would allow him to get Maria Clara away from the monastery, where she stayed when she heard of his supposed death. Apparently, during the shooting in the lake, only Elias perished. Ibarra/Simoun survived and stayed with a poor family who nursed him back to health. At which time, the eldest son, Basilio had dreams of going to medical school; in the course of the novel, the two of them meet again, and Simoun is easily recognized by Basilio despite his disguise. The two of them together, plan to put a bomb in the residence of the governor during a party, which was supposed to have been attended by society's elite. However, the plan did not push through because prior to the incident, Simoun finds out about Maria Clara's death. His second attempt at a revolution also failed when the bomb is discovered by one of the guests and throws it into the river nearby. Simoun then jumps into the river and seeks

refuge in Fr. Florentino, a Filipino priest, to whom he reveals his real identity and in whose arms he breathes his last.

The novel is a poignant, touching and beautifully written work, which although filled with social and moral issues, is also extremely creative and artistic. The symbolisms were also ever-present, as well as the memorable monologues, which reveal Rizal's deepest thoughts about his country. The first chapter of the novel for instance, deals with a three-tiered boat, in which only the first tier is clean and tidy, for it is the most expensive, and it is where the Spaniards, and other dignitaries stayed. The second rung is slightly dirtier and is for the Filipinos of mixed heritage, the *Ilustrados*. The lowest rung has the *Indios* and the animals, produce and cargo to be delivered at the ports; it is extremely filthy and disgusting, truly unfit for any living thing. This boat represents the social stratification in the Philippines and the quality of life associated with each one. The boat also represents the country as it moves slowly through the river, with its old-fashioned equipment and technology, and its very old captain at the helm. The Philippines like the boat, is hardly progressing, with Spain not providing the necessary technology and developmental projects to ease the problems which the country is experiencing. Thus, the country is on the verge of bankruptcy and financial ruin. And unless Spain initiates reforms, the country may never recover.

As in the "Noli", friar abuse is once again given attention in this novel. Outright immoralities were discussed as in the case of Maria Clara as she is molested while in the monastery by Fr. Salvi; the incessant donations to the church during a fiesta; extreme wealth of the clergy; and the extent to which they have gotten other people's lands to build palatial churches and homes for themselves. In addition, the administration's disregard for education is also stressed with Placido Penitente as the victim of an unjust and worthless educational system.

Like the "Noli", the "Fili" was written originally in Spanish and distributed all over Europe, with a few copies reaching the Philippines. Those which got into the country, were either confiscated or burned by the authorities, who henceforth asked Rizal never to return lest he face persecution. Due to the illness of his mother however, Rizal had to return to the country. Instead of laying low however, he organized the "La Liga Filipina" or the "Filipino League" in Tondo, Manila. The organization aimed to do the following:

- (a) unite the whole archipelago into one compact, vigorous, homogeneous body, characterized by nationalism and a sense of national identity
- (b) mutual protection in every want and necessity
- (c) defense against all violence and injustice
- (d) encouragement of instruction, agriculture and commerce
- (e) study and application of reforms

These objectives were to be carried out on different levels, from the national down to the local level and will be facilitated by the creation of small sub-groups known as councils. Each member had to pay a monthly due of 10 centavos a month to raise funds for members who are temporarily out of work, members who have suffered any form of loss, capital to be loaned to members engaged in business or agriculture, opening of new stores and shops selling cheaper goods to members and the acquisition of new machines and development of new industries, for the benefit of the country.

The organization did not last very long though, for on the 6th of July, Rizal was immediately arrested under the tyrannical rule of Gov.-Gen. Despujol, and exiled to Dapitan, an island just off of Mindanao. His arrest led to the increasing tensions within the La Liga Filipina and the Reformers as a whole. Attempts were made to pursue their initial objectives of reform, but conflicts between the members just made this very difficult. Some members were still hopeful, that indeed, the Spanish government would

give in one way or another, while others, thought otherwise. This led to the failure of the movement and the end to the possibility of non-violent reforms. The failure of the movement to accomplish their goals may be attributed to the following factors:

(a) Despite a semblance of unity, the members of the organization, probably because they were all so intelligent and capable, had petty jealousies which were to some extent irreparable, and brought them further away from each other during times of crisis. The mere fact that organizations were established and disbanded almost immediately, that older and younger members did not get along, and that the incarceration of Rizal led to the movement's downfall, meant that there was something missing in the organization to begin with. In addition, the members themselves were not united in their objectives. Some wanted assimilation, while others didn't; some wanted radical clerical reforms through Filipinization, while others didn't, etc. This lack of unanimity and oneness of purpose made the organization extremely weak and inevitably led to its downfall.

(b) Most of the works written by its members, which supposedly aimed at increasing the nationalist consciousness of the people were in Spanish and/or were not circulated among the greater majority, whose nationalist sentiments had to be aroused if any reformist movement were to succeed. Even Rizal's novels could hardly be considered the impetus behind the formation of a revolutionary movement, because it basically perceived a revolution to be an exercise in futility without the necessary arms and ammunitions and support of people who had the money, connections and intelligence to keep the revolution alive.

(c) The reformists failed to reach the people, the Indios and could not empathize with their needs and desires. The movements which were based in Spain, although they may have been aware of the repression, or may even be slightly victimized by it, were "out-of-touch" with the actual goings on in the Philippines. They were only

reliant upon second hand information about the hardships which the Filipinos were experiencing and thus could not be fully sympathetic with their demands. Those in the Philippines on the otherhand, despite their attempts at writing articles in Filipino and actually reaching out to the people espoused reforms which the natives did not believe in, as assimilation for instance, one thing which majority of the people did not want, because they knew that they would never be treated on equal terms by the Spanish administration.

The masses on the otherhand, reacted differently to Spanish colonization and friar abuse. Perhaps, the most prominent leader of the masses was Andres Bonifacio, a poor, uneducated man who fought for his country's independence through the establishment of the KKK or the Kataastaasang Kagalanggalangang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan or the Supreme Organization of the Sons of the People. The movement was made up of discontented and extremely frustrated individuals, who like Bonifacio, believed that the only way for peace, progress and development to take place in the country was through the expulsion of the Spaniards. They also believed that a restructuring of the school curriculum, whereby good manners, morals, a strong value system, and the abolition of religious fanaticism should be taught in all schools. Self-help, the defense of the poor and oppressed, as well as equality before the law should also be stressed.

The organization was set-up in such a way that there was a main unit in Manila, with various chapters in the outskirts of the city as well as the provinces. Among the first few chapters were: Manila, Bulacan, Batangas, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Laguna, Tarlac and Cavite<sup>45</sup>, the first eight provinces which formed the core of the revolution against Spain. It should also be noted that the revolutionists were not anti-

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<sup>45</sup> There are eight rays in the sun on the flag of the Republic of the Philippines. These eight rays represent the first eight provinces which sought for the country's freedom through violence during the Spanish occupation.

church nor anti-Catholicism, but rather simply anti-friar, as many of them became victims of friar abuse.

A "Kartilla" or Constitution, written by Emilio Jacinto, one of the youngest and most intelligent members of the organization listed thirteen guidelines which every member had to follow to stay in the organization. These guidelines stressed justice, equality, honor and pride as well as belief in a Supreme Being. Bonifacio also came up with his own version of the 10 Commandments, called the "Ang Mga Katungkulang Gagawin ng mga Anak ng Bayan" or "The Duties of The Sons of the People" were also incorporated in the "Kartilla".

The KKK had the following objectives:

- (a) Freedom of the Philippines from Spain through a revolution.
- (b) Return of stolen lands to the rightful owners.
- (c) Radical clerical reforms -- in taxation, religious rituals, powers of the priests, return of friar lands, among others
- (d) Development of a sense of national identity and pride
- (e) Radical educational reforms

Like the propagandists, the revolutionists also came up with a paper, called "Kalayaan" or Freedom. They used funds borrowed from sympathizers and even put Yokohama as the place of printing to mislead Spanish authorities. Articles included Valenzuela's "Catuiran" or "Reason" which described the cruelties of the Spanish priests and civil guards of San Francisco del Monte, now known as Quezon City, in Manila, on a helpless village lieutenant; Jacinto's "Manifiesto" which urged the revolution; Bonifacio's "Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Lupa" or "Love for the Motherland", just to name a few. They obviously had to use pen names so as to prevent the possibility of execution. Unfortunately, only one edition of the paper actually came out. This was due to the fact that one member of the organization told his sister about the organization, who

subsequently told a friar, Fr. Mariano Gil of the underground movement, for fear that she may be committing a mortal sin. Fr. Gil thus reports the existence of the movement to the organization, had the printing press raided and some of the members arrested.

The organization then split up into various factions, upto the hills and the countryside. Various acts of violence still continued all over the country. In fact, when the Americans came to the Philippines in 1898, many of the cities have already been liberated from the Spaniards. This, despite the lack of weapons and manpower to subdue the more technologically advanced Spanish military units.

Although the organization did not last long, and their paper only had one printing, membership in the organization grew rapidly during its existence, from a mere 300 to 30,000 in just a few years. The "Indios" were quite convinced that their affiliation with the organization would relieve them of all the difficulties they have gone through and would lead to the country's freedom. In addition, the common man was made to feel important, and his needs paramount in the organization's list of objectives. It also helped increase the nationalist consciousness of the people in such a way that they developed a better understanding of their rights and privileges as Filipinos and as human beings. Finally, the Spanish administration also began to realize that despite the sophistication of their weapons, the supposed strength of their manpower and the amount of control which they had on the people, once the people worked together for a common good, even they could be subdued. The friars were also caught unaware of just how much strength and perseverance a people could have after almost three hundred years of control.

Considering these two major groups which arose as a reaction to Spanish colonization, and in particular, the Roman Catholic faith, the reaction of the Filipinos cannot be said to be completely negative. Catholicism per se' was accepted by the people and in fact, its tenets and rituals have been integrated with the people's traditional ways to come up with a more Filipinized version of the religion. What was negative was the



people's attitude towards the friars and their power and the extent to which they have managed to plunder the country's land and funds for their own benefit as well as their moral indiscretion.

The Roman Catholic faith has provided the people with something to cling on to during difficult times and strength during trying moments. A case in point would be the 333 years of Spanish control, the 20-year Marcos dictatorship, among others. It has also given the people a sense of being and to some extent, an identity, which others claim the Filipinos do not still have. For despite the other religions which exist in the country, the people are still predominantly Catholic, not only in paper, but in their way of life.

There are other significant religions in the Philippines, among them:

Islam in the Philippines. According to Majul (1973), Islam came to the Philippines sometime in the 13th century (the exact date has not been determined), or even earlier, in the island of Mindanao, at the southernmost tip of the country. It was introduced by Muslim traders who, because of their keen business sense, thought it wise to introduce the natives to their faith, so as to win their confidence and engage in more trade agreements with them. They were quickly accepted by the natives because of their smart, yet gentle ways in dealing with them. They became even closer to the inhabitants of the island, because some of them went to the extent of marrying the natives, most of whom were also members of the ruling elite. Thus, they managed not only to make economic gains, but political power as well. Eventually, they were perceived both as business partners as well as respectable citizens of the island. Indeed a major achievement, considering that no other foreign colonizer has actually succeeded to gain control of the area.

As time went on, Muslim political institutions were set-up in the island. The religion spread to every part of the area, thus increasing the number of converts, as

well as the consciousness of the people. By the sixteenth century, their contacts with the rest of the Muslim world increased considerably, both politically and commercially, making Mindanao, specifically Sulu, an integral part of an expanding religious movement in Asia. By the end of the century, political alliances with Muslim principalities increased to fight against the dangers of western colonialism, Christianity and the entry of foreign missionaries and teachers.

Problems arose however, when the Spaniards came to the Philippines, for not only did they want to convert the entire country to Catholicism, they also wanted to alter the political and social set-up, one thing which the Muslims did not favor. Plans were made for the eventual decrease in the powers of the datu, because they were perceived to be the major obstacle towards the spread of the religion and the firm establishment of Spanish rule in the region. In addition, the Muslims were required to pay a small tribute, pay a fee each time they would travel and possess a "cedula personal" or personal license, in acknowledgement of their vassalage to Spain. None of these plans worked however, for the Muslims were adamant in their fight against Catholicism and the missionaries and priests. Catholicism was understood by many to be a violent and destructive religion, which forced itself upon a people virtually powerless to fight for their rights. Second, Islam became synonymous to nationalism (Majul, 1973); in this case, the natives extreme love for their island became part and parcel of the religion which they believed in. The Muslims felt that they were a community, sharing a common value system and belonging to a bigger and more pervasive Muslim community of believers, thus making the Catholic faith and its priests, the enemies.

The Muslims retaliated to Spanish efforts to control them by going through small towns under colonial rule, kidnapping natives, and putting them up for sale in Borneo and the East Indies. The Moros, as they were referred to by the Spaniards, also

caused raids, which caused many deaths in isolated parts of the country, as well as the destruction of agricultural land and industry.

In the 1860's, the purchase of gunboats and steamboats decreased Muslim piracy and allowed the Spaniards to build fortified stations along the coast of Mindanao, from which they could launch new ventures for the establishment of Spanish sovereignty over the Muslim territory (Agoncillo, 1980).

The Spanish then decided in 1876, to have a treaty with the Sultan of Sulu, such that the Muslims will recognize Spanish sovereignty in return for an annual pension for the Sultan and his heirs. The Muslims however, did not live up to their end of the bargain until the end of colonial rule.

Since then, other colonizers have attempted to colonize the area, but none of them succeeded. Only the Japanese, who came into the island shortly before its conquest of the country, were able to stay in the island, but not as conquerors or masters, but as businessmen. They established businesses there, and in fact, managed to set-up some of the biggest banana and pineapple plantations in the world, as the Dole and Chiquita Banana plantations for instance. They failed however to gain complete control of the region even after Manila, and the rest of the country were controlled by them.

The Americans learned an invaluable lesson from the Spaniards, that is, they will have to deal with the Muslims through peaceful negotiations rather than force. They decided to send John C. Bates to enter into negotiations or possibly even have a treaty with the Muslims. Bates met with the Sultan of Jolo, and the rest of the leaders in the island, and signed a treaty, now known as the "Bates Treaty" on August 20, 1899. The treaty provided for the following:

(a) The United States has sovereignty and control over the entire island, together with all its dependencies.

(b) The rights and duties of the Sultan and all the traditional leaders shall be respected by the Americans at all times.

(c) The US shall not interfere with the practice of the Islamic faith by the natives. No one should be prevented from performing any Islamic ritual, nor can he be persecuted because of his religious affiliation.

(d) The domestic produce of the island, when carried on by the Sultan, or his representative within any part of the Philippines, and if conducted under the name of the United States, shall be free, unlimited and not subject to any form of taxation.

(e) The US government will pay the Sultan and other tribal leaders, monthly salaries, in the form of Mexican dollars, as this is the currency utilized by the natives in their business transactions.

Thus, the Americans succeeded in maintaining peaceful relations with the Muslims all throughout their stay.

The island as well as the Muslims, have gained a bad reputation through the years, as the seat of communism and violence in the country. Rebels, who initially fought the Japanese ("Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon" or The Country's Army against the Japanese") was formed there and had their major operations planned there as well. Upon liberation from the Japanese, the "HUKS" as they were popularly called, turned against any president who may discriminate against anyone, and/or force them to integrate with the rest of Philippine society. Thus, not only did the island gain this negative reputation, the Muslims have been discriminated against, ostracized and even feared by the Filipinos themselves and by the rest of the world. In almost every presidential administration since independence, the Muslim problem is always referred to as a major concern of the country.

President Magsaysay, the famous nationalist leader (1954-1956), whose career was assisted by the CIA was successful enough to speak with some of the HUK

leaders, including Luis Taruc, in an attempt to seek peace and unity within the country. Promises of homes, jobs and even some money to start with, were given to the HUKS once they surrendered. And indeed, quite a few did, including Taruc himself. However, the peace treaty fizzled as fast as did Magsaysay's tragic death in a plane crash, so much so, that instead of actually seeing the end to the movement, it only meant the beginning of increasing communist activity within the region.

During Marcos' regime, one of the major excuses for increasing the military budget every year was the Muslim/Communist problem, which to the government's mind are one and the same thing. When in fact, Communists consist of teachers, intellectuals, businessmen, children, among others, and perhaps some Muslims. Muslims on the otherhand, are simply followers of the Islamic faith and not necessarily violent nor rebellious. Troops were sent there incessantly, to supposedly eliminate rebels; none of the troops have been successful however in totally eliminating them. Some of their action has in fact been rigged by government so as to continue increasing the military budget, and give Marcos an excuse for staying in power. Peace was offered to the Muslims by building a mosque in the Quiapo area in Downtown Manila, with hopes of finally integrating the Muslims with the rest of the country. Some of the Muslims actually went to Manila to build new lives by establishing their own businesses. However, the rest of them remained in the island, worked with the rebels and fought anyone who may come in their way. Thus, the problem continues till this very day, and there seems to be no end in sight. Peace treaties have been offered, approved, then immediately violated. Only time will tell whether the Aquino administration will be more successful than the rest of the other previous presidents in enticing the Muslims to be one with the rest of the Filipino nation.

The Muslims continue to practice their religion and live their lives the way they see fit, regardless of any authority or rule. They have a strong belief in their faith

and a desire to keep the faith forever. They feel that their religion is a part of their identity, much as the Malay in Malaysia considers himself a Muslim and vice-versa. Hopes of integration seem dim, but possible. Perhaps, the Muslims should be made aware that the government has no desire to infringe on their rights and would treat them in the same manner that they do the non-Muslims. They should also be assisted in their economic programmes and developmental projects, as well as their schools. In addition, there should be a distinction made between the communists and the Muslims because although some of the communists are in fact Muslims, the others are not. So, the Muslims should not be made to suffer from the mistakes made by the communists, and vice-versa. There should also be a desire on the part of government, to do away with the stereotypical notion of a Muslim as a violent, war-like individual, because he is a Filipino just like the rest of the inhabitants of the country and is entitled to as many rights, privileges and government-support as the rest of the population.

As for the Muslims, they should accept the fact that they are Filipinos and they should learn to compromise some of their values and beliefs, if they wish to progress as a region and if they would like to have peace and unity in the entire country.

The Philippine Independent Church. As the desire for a "Filipinized" clergy intensified, it was only a matter of time before Filipinos could come up with the idea of establishing a "purely Filipino church", i.e. without any linkage at all with the Vatican or any foreign clergy or church hierarchy. True to form, Gregorio Aglipay established the "Philippine Independent Church" otherwise known as the the "Aglipayan church" (named in his honor) in the early 1900's as a response to this need for a Filipino church. Its establishment was not easy though for it took several years of battling it out with other Filipino nationalists before it finally came into being. And when it was formed in 1902, it proved beyond any doubt, that Spanish control of the country had diminished

considerably and that the Filipino people (or at least some of them) have once again proven their strength and determination as a nation. The establishment of the church was the result of racial prejudice and allegations of incompetence which the Filipinos were frequently accused of. The Spaniards just could not accept the fact that the natives were and still are, very capable of taking care of themselves, establishing their own set of rules and guidelines and even come up with a formal structure, as a manifestation of their efforts and initiatives. So far, they number about 200,000 members in the entire country.

The church has been very active in honoring the country's national heroes whom they venerate as much as the Catholics do their saints. They use nothing but the national language in their prayers and songs, and continue to refuse any form of supervision and control from the Vatican. They have their own ministers, who handle Sunday service as well as the performance of certain duties as marriage and baptism. Through the years, they have become more open-minded in their dealings with other religions, rather than derogatory or self-righteous.

The church is not active in the establishment of schools nor influential in the educational system. Its influence is limited to its followers who gather during Sunday service, the celebration of the birth and death of the country's national heroes, and other festivities, as Christmas and Easter.

Protestantism in the Philippines. When the Americans came to the country, they brought along with them democracy, public education and the Protestant faith. Protestantism was first introduced to the country by American missionaries, who believed that they had a two-fold purpose for being in the archipelago: (a) to convert the Filipinos to their faith and (b) to help the American government in the establishment of a public school system. Protestants thought that their religion was more meaningful because it preached the gospel as it was, did not venerate any idols or saints, and they did

not have an abusive and irresponsible clergy. They were also helpful in the establishment of the public school system, because of their belief that the public school system was "part of the strategy for a Christian America" (Clymer, 1986), and they could do the very same thing for the Philippines. They wanted to create a new Philippine society, free from superstition and outmoded values. They also wanted to propagate democracy as the best ideology for the country, which would help in the development of the country. Besides, with the strong Catholic influence in the country, the missionaries feared that the Filipinos would have already lost their soul and sense of being, and should thus be reminded and forewarned of the need for change. Even the Department of Education, which until the liberation of the country from the United States, was controlled by an American, was usually under the leadership of a Catholic, and therefore had biases of a similar nature.

For instance, from 1901-03 the Department of Education was under the leadership of Fred Atkinson, a Catholic, Protestants were only allowed to express their views within the four walls of the classroom and no place else. Other teachers could entertain anyone, except Protestant missionaries in their homes. In 1904, he was succeeded by a Protestant by the name of David Barrows, but with the establishment of the office of the Dept. of Public Instruction a year later, under the helm of a Catholic, James Smith, Barrows' appointment became meaningless. Protestant missionaries and teachers were asked to remain neutral in religious matters and should not in any way, try to influence the views of their students.

In time, all these changed, such that discrimination against the Protestants was minimized, if not totally eliminated. At which time, they have already opted to establish their own parochial schools where they could have their own curriculum, free from any form of government intervention. In addition, they also tried to make their



presence felt in other arenas where people usually gathered in groups. These included social clubs and halls, dispensaries, among others.

The Protestant missionaries became increasingly adamant in their desire for change in the country because: (Clymer, 1986)

(a) The Catholic church has been unable to present to the people, the terms of salvation in a more concrete and comprehensible manner. People seemed to rely more on the saints who were presented to them in an extremely idolatrous manner, without fully understanding the scope and meaning of religion and salvation.

(b) The mixture of religion and paganism bothered the Protestants considerably. Religion and superstition according to its ministers should not mix at any point in time.

(c) The Catholic priests' tolerance for such vices as gambling, and practices as idolatrous veneration of saints, as well as their immoral and undisciplined lifestyles were to the Protestants' minds, not what religion was all about.

(d) Some Protestant missionaries even believed that God was not introduced by the Catholics but that the perception of a Supreme Being already existed way before the coming of the Spaniards to the Philippines.

Of course, there were some Protestant groups who admired the Spaniards for introducing the vernacular alphabet and the establishment of an educational system in the country. But the weaknesses of the former system simply outweighed its strengths, and thus simply reinforced the Protestants' desire for change.

Protestant churches have proliferated in the country since then, with Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc. sects establishing churches and schools all over the country. Religious freedom has been guaranteed, which has allowed various religious denominations to practice their faith the way they want to, for so long as it is not harmful to any member of its congregation or the rest of society.

Filipino converts to Protestantism compose about 5% of the entire population of the country, and are considered by many, as some of the most pious and devout people in the country. Because of the fact that they are small in number compared to the Catholics, Protestants have many social activities where most if not all churchgoers manage to participate. These activities are offered to all ages, and range from games to parties and prayer sessions. They are tightly knit groups, with extreme loyalty to their faith and the rest of the congregation.

They are not known to be politically active, except under extreme circumstances, as during the height of the Marcos administration, when all religious denominations have virtually spoken against the oppression of the leadership. Education and catechism are the Protestants' major concerns together with social work in the rural and/or poor areas in the country.

**Religion and Education.** Education in the Philippines may be divided into two types: Public Education and Private Education. Public education is state-supported, i.e., children in the primary level are guaranteed free education, as provided for in the constitution, while those in the intermediate level pay minimum fees. Recent constitutional changes have extended these privileges to include secondary education.

Private schools are either owned by a certain sect, thus the term, private sectarian schools, as the Jesuits, La Salle Brothers or St. Paul Sisters, for instance, or by private individuals or corporations, as the Far Eastern University, Jose Rizal College, among others. They offer courses from the pre-school to the university level. Some of them are known as "exclusive" schools, i.e. exclusively for boys, or exclusively for girls. Many of these exclusive schools have opted to be co-educational in the early 1970's because of financial difficulties however. Some like the Ateneo and De La Salle,

although already co-educational, still maintain a 60% male population to maintain their image as an "exclusive" school.

Prior to independence from the U.S., the public schools offered courses which ranged from mathematics, to the natural and social sciences, as well as English (Pilipino was not taught as a subject till much later), and physical and vocational education. All materials, textbooks and even supplies were provided for by the schools. After independence, the goals of the system changed from Americanism to nationalism, with greater emphasis on growth and development. This is not to say however that English was eliminated from the curriculum. On the contrary, it remained as the medium of instruction, and is taught in two ways in every level, grammar and literature. Pilipino, the national language, is treated only as another subject, where grammar and literature are also emphasized. In the same manner, the seven years of grade school have been reduced to six to minimize governmental expenses, ease the burden on the families, most of whom belong to society's lowest classes and ease the process of making the child a more productive, i.e. financially independent member of his/her family. The programme however, continued to have a comprehensive educational system to allow each child to excel in the subject he/she likes best, and help him/her when the decision to choose a college degree is made.

Public education has suffered considerably since the American occupation, most especially because of the lack of funds. Schools such as the Philippine Normal College, and even the University of the Philippines, have buildings which are about to fall apart, classrooms filled to the rafters and a lack of qualified teachers, all because of the lack of state support. This worsened during the Marcos regime, when education became one of the least of his government's priorities. The quality of education suffered tremendously, moreso in the elementary and high school levels. In a recent study made by the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP, 1988), graduates of

public schools fail miserably in the National College Entrance Examinations, while those from private institutions get exceptional grades. Of course, there are exceptions, as the U.P. where despite the lack of adequate equipment and supplies, the school continues to produce qualified graduates. However, the institution has also managed to raise money for itself in order to meet the needs of the faculty, staff and students, all of whom are expressing concern over the fate of their institution. Meanwhile, elementary and high schools which have no other source of income except state support, continue to suffer through the difficult economic problems which the country is currently going through. Changes may soon be on the way however, because education is now the top priority of the Aquino government.

Private education started during the Spanish regime as various religious orders established their own schools, as an extension of the churches they have already built. They began as parochial schools, with a separate one for boys and girls, where all of the teachers are friars. The Philippines boasts of some of the oldest schools in the country, the oldest of which is the University of Santo Tomas (UST), which was established in 1611, making it even older than Harvard University. As will be expected, some of the friars were not even qualified to handle the courses at hand, but just had to muddle their way through the subject matter so as to prevent public humiliation. Tuition fees were phenomenal even during those times, so that, only the children of the Spaniards and/or of Spanish descent could actually afford to receive any form of education. Those who could afford to go to Europe would rather go there where they could get their money's worth.

Spanish colonial education was such that it offered a wide array of courses for its students. However, boys were given more options in the subjects that they applied for, to come up with a comprehensive educational curriculum. Girls on the otherhand, were given more courses on homemaking, handicrafts, and other vocational

activities. Acceptance into a university was rare for an Indio, unless he was so rich that they just could not turn him down (and this was extremely rare), or extremely intelligent.

Private schools have changed since independence, been able to hire well-qualified teachers with expertise in the physical and social sciences. Teachers are encouraged to pursue graduate degrees and do independent research, not only to be better teachers but to make the institution more competitive and reputable. Private schools continue to maintain sixteen years of school, 1 year in pre-school, 7 elementary, 4 high school and 4 in college. Unlike the public schools which have due to financial difficulties, lost their prestige through the years, private schools have generally improved their educational programmes with the hiring of better teachers, expansion of degree programmes and constant updating of the materials used.

It should be mentioned at this point that private schools in the country are characterized by a very wide disparity, between those which are very good learning institutions, and those which are extremely bad, with hardly any in between. Private sectarian schools, are more reputable because they are not mere profit-making institutions, but are learning centers, where because of very high tuition fees, could afford to pay qualified teachers, purchase up to date equipment and build laboratories for the sciences. Many of the schools run by private individuals and corporations however, are becoming nothing but "diploma mills", i.e. schools which just pass anybody for so long as they pay their fees on time; rumors about the sale of diplomas also abound.

Another significant aspect of the educational system is the National College Entrance Examination otherwise known as the NCEE, which was introduced in 1973 as provided for by Presidential Decree # 146, to "promote the highest quality of education in the Philippines by regulating and re-orienting the flow of students from the secondary to the post-secondary institution of learning to promote national development" (Asido, 1988). It is a comprehensive examination which all high school seniors have to take

prior to graduation. Failure to pass the examination would mean that the student will not be allowed to pursue higher education and should instead pursue a one or two-year technical or vocational course, as mechanics, dress-making, among others. Those who pass on the otherhand, may move on to take the individual entrance exams given by the various colleges and universities.

The exam has caused so many problems since its inception because:

(a) most of the students who passed the exam belong to private schools, and more economically advantaged families, while those who did not quite make it come from the public schools, and/or rural areas, thus making some factions feel that the exam is in fact discriminatory and prohibits the mobility of less advantaged students.

(b) the exam is so long, taking about four to six hours to complete, so that even the more intelligent students have a difficult time doing well due to extreme exhaustion.

(c) some say that the exam is against the right of an individual to pursue higher education as provided for in the constitution.

(d) it costs money to take the exams; and the other individual university and college examinations are just as costly if not more, making it difficult for some students, especially those whose parents are barely making it, to even consider the option of going to college.

However, the exams have also allowed only those capable and ready for college to actually attend college. It gives the individual a chance to find out whether or not he is actually prepared to tackle college work. It also encourages people to take vocational and technical courses, something which has never been popular in the country because of the Filipinos' preference for white collar jobs. And finally, it makes college education more competitive, where only those qualified can really pursue a degree.

Debates on the exam continue -- changes will develop soon moreso because education has once again been under extreme scrutiny under the new administration.

Another aspect of Philippine education that's worth mentioning is Bilingualism. As mentioned earlier, English has always been the medium of instruction in the country. During the Marcos era, he ordered the gradual shift to bilingualism in the country so as to increase the people's nationalism. All schools at all levels will begin to use Pilipino in subjects as Social Science, Philippine History, among others, use books which have been written by Filipino authors, and encourage the publication of more books in Pilipino.

The proclamation left the schools out in the cold, without the manpower, skills and materials to handle the change. What resulted was a system where "Taglish" or a combination of Tagalog and English was tolerated in the schools, so that the students could use both languages simultaneously in certain class discussions, without much concern given to grammar or continuity. This made it so difficult for both students and teachers to adjust to the new system and to make the learning process a better one. In addition, the written work of the students also suffered as they could not express themselves very well in either English or Pilipino. This became even more difficult in areas like the Visayas or Northern Luzon, where other dialects are spoken, so much so, that students had to learn their dialect, English, Filipino, and in the case of college students, even Spanish.

The programme is currently undergoing significant revision because of the difficulty of implementation and unfavorable response from the people. Only the use of textbooks in the national language and/or authored by Filipinos has been encouraged.

Vocational education is another significant aspect of education in the country, for despite governmental efforts to encourage people to major in it, very few actually do because to the Filipino, a blue collar job is meaningless, degrading and not

financially rewarding. Whereas, white collar jobs have more prestige, and higher pay. Attempts to change this situation have been introduced in the schools, through the Youth Civic Action Programme, or YCAP, where students in all levels, are supposed to spend some time doing social work, agricultural activities or making handicrafts, so as to make them appreciate manual labor and perhaps entice them to take vocational/technical courses in college. Those who have opted to go to the university, are also required to fulfill certain YCAP requirements to be eligible for graduation. Most of the activities at this level involve social work.

This programme has very good objectives, but once again, problems do exist in implementation:

- (a) teachers are not very conscientious in checking on their students performance, such that, students can actually spend the time allotted for YCAP, chatting or simply digging some soil and dirtying their hands, without actually doing anything substantial.
- (b) students can purchase certificates of completion to be presented to their teachers just to show that they have completed the work even if they have not.
- (c) planting, cleaning the school grounds and doing social work, may prevent the student rather than encourage him to pursue vocational/technical courses in the future; teachers and school administrators do not take the time to explain the principles behind the projects, and neither do the children's parents who may even think that their children are being exploited, rather than trained to appreciate manual labor.

The programme is still ongoing, and like all others is undergoing revision not only in its objectives, but the process of implementation as well.

Religion and Education. Religion and education have always had a close relationship in the Philippines. During pre-colonial times, religion was taught by the village elders



and/or by the parents who explained their common beliefs, values and practices to their children, with hopes of passing on the tradition to the next generation. I am aware of the fact that there is a lack of documentation to prove this point, but the limited records, as well as the accounts of various anthropologists, historians and political scientists have proven this to be quite true. Besides, there are still some minorities who live in the mountains and caves in the country, who continue to practice their age-old ways, as well as their religious rituals.

When the Spaniards came, religion became the very core of the educational system. Schools were erected by various religious orders, as the Franciscans and Dominicans, whose priests also served as teachers. Religion was not treated only as a subject, but as a catalyst for all subjects, and rules made up by the school authorities. Religious holidays were also school holidays, the celebration of which could last as long as a week. Prayers were said before and after class, and everyone, regardless of their religious convictions had to pray along with their teachers. A vivid example of this situation was expressed by Rizal in his novels where a Physics class may go on for hours on end, without one mathematical equation being explained, but where every religious cliché and parable are mentioned.

School administrators are also made up of clergymen whose rules and regulations also indicate a strong religious influence. Girls had to wear uniforms, whose skirts went below the knee as a sign of femininity. They had to be "lady-like" at all times, lest they suffer from severe punishment, as kneeling down on grains of rock salt or confessing to their parish priest as soon as they possibly could. They should also have values which are very similar to that of the Virgin Mary and be submissive to their future husbands and learn the basics of homemaking. Careers were not even considered, for all women had to be housewives and mothers.

Boys on the otherhand, were trained to be money earners and heads of their own families or "padre de familia". Let it not be misunderstood to mean however, that their education was more highly scientific or technical than their female counterparts, because they were not. In fact, if they wanted a real, qualitative education, they had to go to Europe to fulfill their ambitions as did a few of the country's national heroes and martyrs. Rote learning was the name of the game, and most of this involved the memorization of prayers and novenas in Latin. Oftentimes, these were not even explained nor described, making the students nothing but robots mimicking their masters.

Priests had complete control of the educational system, as the Governor-General handled governmental matters. Thus, they were free to make their own rules, any way they wanted to, without being questioned, by anyone. What resulted was an educational system, which was nothing more than a sham, without anything to be proud of, except some of the beautiful school buildings as the University of Santo Tomas (UST), which exists till this very day.

The American period was the complete opposite of the Spanish occupation, for not only was religion not taught, it did not exert as much influence in the educational system, as provided for by the policy known as religious freedom. Although private schools were not forbidden to run as they used to, they were not obligated to teach religion either. They were given enough power to teach the subject they wanted to, but only when they have fulfilled the requirements set forth by the Dept. of Education, which till the end of the American period was controlled by an American.

Public schools were not allowed to cater to any one religion through prayer or lectures. There was a gradual transformation of the Filipino psyche, such that he will not be enslaved to any one religion anymore, but will instead be a true believer of freedom and democracy. It should be worth mentioning however, that there were instances when the religion of the head of the Dept. of Education did in fact affect the

kinds of policies which were enforced, but this was more of an exception rather than the rule.

Rote learning was eliminated, and religious holiday celebrations were kept to a minimum so as not to discriminate against any one religion. Protestants were allowed to open their own schools, and were given the freedom to preach their own brand of religion.

Upon independence, the policy of religious freedom continued. However, although religious teaching was limited to the private church-run schools, public schools usually integrated religion within the curriculum in a more subtle way. This is so because the school teacher is considered the child's second parent, and should thus be taken care of accordingly during the parent's absence. Therefore, the school had to see to it that the "proper" i.e., moral, and disciplined values were inculcated in the student, together with academic development, nationalism and physical development. Seminars and teacher training camps during the summer months, gave the teachers more time to learn more about their vocation and the new techniques in dealing with their students. Thus, it is not a surprise that the "Lord's Prayer" is said immediately after the flag ceremony in some public schools, to re-affirm the existence of a Supreme Being. In addition, Christian values as patience, obedience, tolerance, and honesty were constantly being nurtured, so that students will not forget their spirituality.

In the private church-run schools, priests/nuns sometimes handle the teaching of certain courses, be they religion or philosophy, literature or mathematics. More lay teachers are employed though because of the need for more expertise in certain fields of study. All students have to take religion courses in all levels of study, to be eligible for graduation. Prayers are said at the beginning and end of the class hour in the schools.

In the other private schools, the administration has the option not to include religion in their curriculum. Classes in philosophy, morality and theology serve as substitutes for religion classes.

Christian organizations abound in campuses, be they private or public, as the Student Catholic Action, Campus Crusade for Christ, the Charismatic Movement, among others. They conduct various types of activities, including prayer rallies, retreats and social work. These organizations are open to all religions, giving everyone the opportunity to learn about Christianity. Daily masses are held in the church-run schools, as well as special celebrations during a religious holiday. Every school has a patron saint, whose birthday and/or death anniversary is a school holiday.

Considering all these therefore, it is amazing that religion, specifically Catholicism has managed to influence the educational system in the Philippines till this very day despite all the difficulties it has caused, and all the pain that the Filipinos had to suffer in the hands of the friars. Religion is one of the very few legacies left behind by the Spanish administration, which has managed to seep into almost every aspect of the people's way of life.

Under the new administration, more efforts are geared toward the development of a more Christian education, with values as the very essence of the entire educational structure. Several meetings and workshops have been held in this regard, not to mention continuous research by agencies as the CEAP, De La Salle and the Ateneo, in order to come up with a system of fully integrating values in education in all levels, in all schools in the country.

#### B. Islam in Malaysia.

The first definitive mention of Islam in Southeast Asia occurred in 1281, when Sumatrans with Muslim names were listed as envoys to the Muslim court in China (Gallagher, 1966). Among their very first laws was the conversion of the royalty by these missionaries-cum-businessmen, in Aceh and North Sumatra. Islam easily became the state religion in places such as Trengganu in East Malaya as early as the 14th century. This ease in conversion may be attributed to the following reasons:

(a) Islam did not appear as an "imposed" religion on the natives. Rather, the natives were introduced to its various tenets and belief systems through discussions and frequent interaction, reading materials and even lectures on what the religion was all about. Thus, the people did not feel as though they were being forced into anything they did not want or simply did not believe in.

(b) The Middle Eastern missionaries tolerated the pre-existing beliefs, system of worship and practices of the natives, including the many local spirits, natural resources, among others, which the people may have venerated for centuries. What resulted therefore, was a kind of folk religion<sup>46</sup>, which is actually a mixture of the old and new beliefs of the Malays.

(c) Unlike Hinduism, which stressed that life was suffering, Islam focuses on five tenets, none of which made life appear to be a miserable form of existence. These included the belief in a supreme being, known as Allah; praying five times a day facing Mecca; giving alms to the poor; pilgrimage to Mecca; and fasting during the Ramadan. In addition, Islam also offered an escape from the caste system of the Hindus, which basically stratified people into various social groupings from birth and therefore deprived certain individuals of enjoying specific rights and privileges only because of the caste which they belong to.

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<sup>46</sup> The development of a folk religion is typical of countries such as Malaysia and the Philippines, where there was a pre-existing religion prior to the coming of the new faith.

(d) The members of the royalty, who happen to be the rulers at that time, were the first ones to be converted. Thus, the people were led to believe that if the religion was good enough for the royalty, then it must be good enough for them as well.

With the downfall of the Madjapahit Empire in 1478, Islam spread even more rapidly to Borneo and the Celebes in the 1500's, upto the Sulu Sea and Mindanao in the Philippines. The Portuguese in the 16th century were met with extreme opposition, moreso because at that time, Islam had already developed deeper roots in the country, and thus was a driving force against the oppressive and abusive foreigners.

Islam also served as a bulwark to a society, which although coated with a thin veneer of Hindu Buddhist civilization (Gallagher, 1966) in many ways, was still deeply primitive in spirit. And since Islam was seemingly more organized and non-threatening to the people's existence, it became a more feasible belief system to deal with. It offered a larger worldview to help the people get rid of their insecurities, caused by a culture, which was being threatened by outside influence. It also provided a solid socio-political system, whose existence was greatly dependent upon divine decree, which replaced the previously solid and stable structure.

Thus, Islam as a religion and way of life, may be partially responsible for helping the people during this transition period, cope with the difficulties of rebuilding, while beginning to interact with the people in the international community; it also laid down the religio-political sultanate system which still prevails in Southeast Asia; and it began to introduce Muslim law on top of, but not necessarily in overt conflict with, customary law, which is an ongoing process until today.

Islam also has the element of mysticism, which is mainly responsible for the popularization of the religion at grass roots level in succeeding centuries. Despite the fact that some of them do not fully understand the implications of the religion, it has managed to cut through economic lines and convert a great number of natives. The missionaries,

were very dedicated to awakening this kind of personal commitment by means of a direct, often illuminationist and impressionist approach to divine truth. So much so that from 1300-1500, the Sufi orders with their branches and monasteries spread all across the region, became the only functioning establishment in large areas where normal political authority was in disarray. Malays slowly began to embrace Islam as a way of life, than just another religion or identification mark. And with increasing tension between the Dutch and the Portuguese, Malay desire for their own sense of being and identity emerged.

The Sufi teachers also realized the necessity of constant interaction and intermingling with traditional, devotional beliefs and practices, and even pagan incantations used by Malays. Each one seemed to blend in quite well with the Islamic faith.

As time went by, the role of Islam in traditional Malay society became more pronounced and managed to influence almost all aspects of life. Everything seemed to have developed a religious significance. Social institutions also began performing various overlapping functions. Religion thus contributed to the performance of many functions in society, including (Means, 1969):

(a) Religion helped to symbolize the unity of the state. Islam became one of the reasons for the development of a national identity of the people. Although not yet as entrenched as the influential role of the King, the mere fact that to be Malay meant to be Muslim, is an indication that it has in fact managed to have a strong impact on the people. It became a pre-condition for political and social participation in Malay society, but not the only requirement for the privilege of participation.

(b) In the political system, religion played a role in legitimizing authority. Despite its highly legalistic character however, it did not provide an effective set of rules for everyone to follow. It was thus not particularly effective in stabilizing the political

system against civil strife and the collapse of royal authority. The most important bases for legitimizing a claim to power were not essentially put forth, since all rival claimants to a throne would be Muslim and could put forth about the same claims for religious legitimacy. The royal title, superior lineage, support of major chiefs, control of capital and its royal palace, strength of supporting military forces were more important in claiming legitimacy. Religious sanctification only became important after rivals had been disposed of. Proper ceremonies and religious forms assisted in legitimizing the incumbent's authority against possible ambitious rivals.

(c) Most of the ceremonies and concepts associated with the institution of the Ruler reveal many more Hindu beliefs and practices than Muslim. Islam was a state religion largely in symbolic form.

(d) Religious institutions were local in character. Each "kampong" or village maintained a mosque or a prayer house depending on its size and wealth. There was a mosque committee whose members were selected by elders who maintained the mosques.

(e) Village life centered on the mosque/prayer house, where religious, social and political meetings took place. It also became a venue for religious instruction for the children.

(f) Religion played a central role in providing social integration and cohesion in the primary group relations of life within the Malay village. Common prayers, rituals, rites and festivals helped promote social solidarity. Special ceremonies were held to mark events as planting, harvesting, marriage, birth, death, etc. People were extremely conscientious in performing their religious duties.

(g) Roles of village officials and local social status and ranking system were partly defined by the religious beliefs and attitudes of the village. All community



officials were legitimized in their office by religious rituals and by reference to religious sources of authority.

Thus, Islam, was a vital social force especially at the village level. It contributed to the performance of a number of socially significant functions, frequently in conjunction with other institutions. Before the British arrived, Islam was a vital and expanding force in peninsular and insular Asia. It managed to adapt with the pre-existing institutional beliefs and practices of the people without radically transforming society.

The British decided, upon establishing firm control of the country, not to have anything to do with religion. Religious freedom was granted and the people were allowed to continue with their rituals, daily duties as Muslims and even their fasting. The Sultans became the highest religious authority in their villages, thus maintaining the respect and power they had over the natives.

The British managed to improve communication and transportation facilities for the entire country. This allowed the Malays to increase their contact with various groups in the country and increased their awareness of the parochial character of their religious beliefs and practices despite their common profession of Islamic orthodoxy. For some, they even discovered contradictions between Islam and Malay folk religion. It also made possible the infusion of Arabs and Indian Muslims (Jawi Peranakan) into elite positions in Malay society. The improved communications system also facilitated a gradual transformation of religious elites in society because of increased interaction with the Middle East and India. More people were able to go to Mecca for the pilgrimage, a lifelong dream of any devout Muslim. All these led to changes in the character of Muslim religious elites and thus created tension between the folk religion of the Malay "kampong" and the demands of Islam.

Religious institutions were restructured, where Islamic rituals at Malay courts became more important, and a centralized administrative system for Muslim

Affairs was also established. Islamic religious courts were established in each state to enforce Muslim law. A judge/"kathi" was appointed for each district to administer Muslim affairs, try cases within his jurisdiction and supervise the operation of mosques in his district. At the "Mukim"/sub-district within the jurisdiction of a mosque, the "Kathi" would be helped by an assistant, or "naib-kathi", who, unlike the "kathi" did not receive a government salary, but retained fees and fines for his services. At the top of the judicial system was the chief "kathi" for each state.

Various committees were also created to help relieve the top leaders of their responsibilities. There was a "shariah"/Muslim law committee, in charge of interpreting religious law; the "kathi" committee; Dept. of Religious Affairs, etc. Islam enjoyed state support and was considered the official state religion, at least in paper, for it continued to play a minimal role in the political and economic aspects of the country. Muslim courts had very few powers and limited jurisdiction, and the Muslims had no say whatsoever in the legislative process. The British were careful to pay public deference to Islam however, especially in matters of ceremony and public holidays and in meager and ritualistic financial support for Islamic institutions. Religious freedom was upheld by the colonizers, so that the natives could have their own places of worship, engage in missionary work among non-Malays, establish schools and provide medical services.

After Japan was defeated in 1945, three separate events marked the re-awakening of Islam as a major political force in the country (Ackerman and Lee, 1988).

(a) Increasing tension between the Muslims and Chinese became evident in the latter part of 1945. Guerrillas of the Chinese-dominated Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) emerged from the jungles and began a campaign of terror among the civilians. Many Malay collaborators were randomly arrested, tried and executed by the MPAJA. The Malays, then grief-stricken, sought help from the "penghulu" or village headman and "ulama" or priest for guidance and protection. They

then organized themselves into cults or "kebal" to fight their oppressors. The most famous of which was the "Sabil'ullah" or the Road to God Movement under Panglima Salleh, who was also known as Kiyai Salleh, who successfully defeated the Chinese in many areas, especially in the Batu Pahat Region in Johor.

It is interesting to note that with the many Islamic cults in existence, they also managed to integrate magical practices forbidden by their religion, to win over the Chinese. They used charms or "agimat", incantations or "jampi" and various rituals while preparing for battle. Many Chinese and Malays lost their lives in the process, but the former suffered even more, with a great number of civilians losing everything they had in the skirmishes.

(b) Formation of the "Majlis Agama Tertinggi Se Malaya" also known as the Supreme Religious Council or the MATA in 1947. It was established with the purpose of reforming Islam. It was sponsored by elements of the Malay left who had resumed their activities in such bodies as the Malay Nationalist Party or MNP and the "Pusat Tenaga Rakyat" or the Center of People's Power or PUTERA. It had its first conference in 1948, at which time the first Islamic political party, the "Hizbul Muslimin" was organized. It was a loose alliance of various pre-war radical movements, aimed at opposing the Malay traditional elite and British colonialism. They wanted the immediate establishment of an Islamic state.

The development of the organization ended abruptly in 1948, when many radical organizations were outlawed and its leaders arrested by British authorities. The seeds of Islamic radicalism that germinated in MATA were sown within the ranks of UMNO, resulting in a breakaway group that founded the PAN Malayan Islamic Party or PAS in 1951 (See & Ackerman, 1988).

(c) The Maria Hertog case. Hertog was born of Dutch parents. She was left as a small child in the care of an Indonesian servant when the Japanese invaded

Southeast Asia. After the war, her parents could not find her. They eventually traced her to the east coast of Malaya where she was living as a Malay with her foster mother. She did not want to return to her parents, but a court order was secured to obtain custody. She was only 13 but was already engaged to be married to a Malay, since under Muslim law, this action made her the legal responsibility of her husband. Conflict between Muslim and canon laws were carried through a number of appeals with religious fanatics among Malays interpreting the case as being one of Christianity versus Islam. Maria was eventually given to her parents, but the decision triggered anti-European riots, resulting in the deaths of about eighteen people and injuring 180.

This incident made the Muslims feel that they as a people, were being attacked and discriminated against. The Malay politicians on the otherhand, realized the importance of religion as a tool to gain the support of Malays, especially since they have become more openly involved with religious affairs.

Since then, religion has gained increasing importance in Malayan society. Malays began demanding for the strengthening of Islam at the state level. By 1950, most Malay states had established a Dept. of Religious Affairs to improve Muslim administration and provide new services for the Muslim community. Funds for the construction of mosques increased considerably and the state government also assumed greater responsibility for the enforcement of Muslim criminal and moral codes.

In certain areas, what had been considered a religious obligation became a matter of law, enforced and punished in the courts. Examples would be in terms of Muslim alm taxes, which were initially treated as voluntary, were made a matter of legal obligation with penalties for non-payment of those taxes by Muslims. Other laws penalized Western dating practices, violation of Muslim moral codes, failure to perform religious obligations as fasting requirements, or for males, attendance at Friday prayer at the mosque. States also assumed greater responsibility for defining and interpreting

orthodox Muslim doctrines and protecting the Muslim community from those defined as heretics.

Federal involvement in religious affairs was practically non-existent before Malaya gained her independence. But when Malaysia became a nation-state, the Constitution made Islam the official religion; the Yang di-pertuan agong assumed responsibilities for Islam in Penang and Malacca; increased sums of federal money were allocated to the states for mosque construction, Muslim administration and control.

Federal involvement also came about because the constitution sanctions a system of special rights tied to religion. Malays are given preferential legal privileges in four areas:

- (a) administration of public services
- (b) government scholarships
- (c) allocation of permits and licenses for certain trades and businesses
- (d) large areas of land were set aside as Malay reservations, where only Malays may own land and settle

And, since the constitution defines a Malay as one who professes the Muslim faith, habitually speaks Malay and conforms to Malay customs, then the rights of the other races are simply disregarded.

The federal government institutionalized a number of policies designed to promote Islam:

- (a) all schools are required to provide compulsory Islamic religious instruction for Muslims, if more than 15 Muslims attend a school
- (b) non-Muslims may receive instruction in their faith, but not during school hours or by teachers paid in full or part from government funds, even though they volunteer their services

(c) Islamic religious education is paid for by government, while non-Islamic religious education is subject to restrictive regulations

(d) Board of Film Censors refuses to allow any film or scene that may be contrary to Islam or may offend Muslims. Movies of biblical or Christian religious themes have been proscribed. This also applies to religious broadcasting, with Muslim services being broadcast regularly throughout the year and non-Muslim religious services permitted only when there are major religious holidays.

This trend continues to intensify in Malaysia, where Islam has become the official religion and Malay the official language. An Islamic Bank and International Islamic University have been established; increase in Islamic content on radio and television; suspension of the governmental meal program in multi-ethnic primary schools during the fasting month; ban on smoking in all governmental affairs; introduction of amendments to the penal code and criminal procedure code relating to religion, thereby giving government Draconian powers to curb religious fanaticism. (Mauzy & Milne, 1986)

Politicians continue to use the religion as an excuse for their programmes and as platforms for further action during elections. And it seems that this process shall continue unless something of extreme importance would surface which may be against the religion and/or the people who believe in it or if a revolution instigated by the Chinese and/or the Indians suddenly take place. Until then, Islam is in Malaysia to stay.

Like the Philippines, there are also other religions which exist in Malaysia, among them:

Christianity in Malaysia. In 1511, Alfonso d'Albuquerque, the Portuguese Viceroy, promoted Catholicism after his victory in Melaka. The religion served to oppose and ultimately destroy commercial power in key ports where the colonizers wanted to establish naval bases and trading posts, and thus fully entrench colonial rule.

This caused considerable tension and ultimately, intense conflict between the Portuguese and Muslim merchants, to create antagonism on the part of the latter towards Christianity. Among the states which challenged the Portuguese were Achech, Java and Johor. Portuguese Catholic missionaries only succeeded in converting Eurasians, thus making the religion synonymous with the Eurasian community (Haines, 1962).

Among all the Islamic states, only Melaka developed into a Catholic city. Churches were immediately built, convents established, so that by the end of the sixteenth century, the city became a center for missionary activity in Asia. Missionaries represented the various religious orders, including the Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinians, who spent most of their time indoctrinating the people to their faith all over the Asian region. The spread of Christianity and Catholicism in particular, faced some problems however, with each one of the religious orders wanting control, thus leading to intense rivalry between and among these groups which supposedly represented peace and unity. In addition, the increasing strength of the Dutch and eventual decline of Portuguese colonial power, constrained the spread of Catholicism in the region.

When the Dutch arrived in 1641, they destroyed all vestiges of Catholicism in the region, including the churches, chapels, etc. Missionaries were either exiled or persecuted, Catholic festivities and gatherings were prohibited, missionaries banished and incoming religious representatives were forbidden from even entering the area. No significant missionary work was encouraged, despite the fact that the Dutch East Indies Company, promoted Calvinist Christianity.

Some Eurasians continued to practice the Catholic faith in surrounding jungles. Portuguese priests came to the country illegally into the Melaka countryside where they ministered to the Catholic community. They also formed a coalition with the non-Catholic Eurasian families, thus increasing the number of "underground Catholics".

French missionaries were able to set-up a seminary in 1809, the "College General", where they proceeded to train native priests for countries all throughout Asia. The Society of Paris Foreign Missions, an arm of the Sacred Congregation for the propagation of the Faith, steadily gained influence on the Malay peninsula at the expense of the Portuguese missions, during the 19th century. In 1888, Rome recognized the authority of the Paris Foreign Missions over the entire peninsula, including Singapore. The Portuguese were allowed to maintain control of their churches and parishes in Melaka and Singapore within the organized structure dominated by the Paris Foreign Missions -- assigned the responsibility of bringing the missions firmly under the control of Rome through the Vicars Apostolic and training a native clergy.

Protestant missionaries became active after the eighteenth century. The London Missionary Society or LMS pioneered Protestant evangelism, directed its efforts to the Malay and Chinese communities in the Straits Settlements from 1815-1846. Because very few Malays were being converted, they began to focus their energies on the Chinese.

Education became a major force for Catholic evangelization by the mid-19th century. In 1852, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Sisters of the Holy Infant Jesus, etc. became very active in education. Non-Christians came into contact with the Catholic faith mainly through the new English-medium schools, which were founded in the urban centers.

Christian Missions, mainly Catholic and Protestant hardly expanded their activities beyond the Straits Settlements before the last quarter of the 19th century. Chaotic conditions in the civil war-torn Malay states, discouraged the missionaries from venturing further into the interior. British intervention in Malay states and the subsequent establishment of protectorates over them brought about orderly political conditions and security of person and property conducive to missionary work. While the "British



Forward Movement" on the peninsula broadened the field for missionary enterprise, the nature of the treaties between the British and Malay rulers limited the scope of Christian evangelization to the non-Malay immigrant population. British colonial administration, which had by 1874 committed itself to the policy of upholding the status of Islam in the Malay states, unofficially discouraged any missionary work among Malays. This led to an even greater desire among the Malays to make Islam the very basis of the Malay polity and identity.

Christian missionaries founded churches and schools during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the larger towns that developed in the Western Malay states. The evangelization centered mainly on the urban population, comprising Chinese and Indian immigrant workers brought to the Malay states to fill the demand for labor generated by expanding British colonial interest. The diversity of languages and dialects among immigrant groups compelled the missionaries to structure their work along ethnic and linguistic lines. Catholic and Protestant missionaries allocated separate personnel and facilities to cater to specific needs of various churches. Speakers of Chinese dialects and Tamil, generally attended separate branches of the same church. Only the English speaking sections of churches were multi-ethnic.

The concentration of Christian evangelization through English-medium schools located in the Straits Settlements and large towns on the western Malay states led to the formation of middle class, English speaking sections within the churches. Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists viewed the English schools as an important means for propagating Christianity. Missionaries from these churches contributed considerably to the expansion of English education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The demand for English education, white collar workers in the growing Euro-dominated commercial sector and in the colonial bureaucracy had become pressing. Colonial authorities welcomed the development of English-medium mission schools and assisted

these schools with grants-in-aid and occasional donations of land. The role of mission schools in training English-speaking clerks complemented the colonial economy.

As mission schools education provided access to prestigious white collar jobs, middle class families or those who aspired to attain middle class status, most of whom were non-Malay, eagerly sent their children to these schools. Christian schools offered a strong academic curriculum within which religious indoctrination was secondary. Generally, missionaries sought to introduce students to Christian values indirectly than proselytize aggressively among them. Mission schools slowly gained influence in the community; some degree of familiarity with Christian teachings and values is common throughout the English-educated Malaysian middle class, although only a minority of mission school students actually converted to Christianity. Christian converts recruited others to join the religion, through the mission schools.

The smaller Protestant denominations, as the Lutherans, 7th Day Adventists and Baptists played a limited role in the field of education. They were considerably overshadowed by the Catholics, Presbyterians, Anglicans and Methodists. Throughout the colonial period, Christian missions were essentially foreign in character, although lip service was given to the goal of training indigenous church leadership. The first indigenous priest was not ordained till 1911. So much so that during the period 1920-50, only 36 were ordained. Things were even made more difficult because of the required proficiency in Latin as well as the extremely high moral and intellectual standards set up.

Protestant clergy leaders were also subordinates and rarely involved in policy formulation. Smaller salaries, and housing were provided for them however. When the Japanese incarcerated foreign missionaries, Asians were given a chance to lead for the first time -- this made the foreigners realize the need to indigenize the church.

As of the 1980 census, only 2% of the entire Malaysian population is Christian. At least 12 denominations have been established, each one an independent organization that controls a number of churches throughout the country. Larger denominations (Catholics, Methodists, Anglicans) and those with substantial membership as the Assemblies of God for instance, have decentralized their organizational functions into several administrative units, as dioceses, districts or divisions with headquarters in Kuala Lumpur or Petaling Jaya. Many are Chinese and Indians who received English or vernacular education. Some have organized their churches along ethnic-linguistic lines with sections in English, Chinese and Tamil to meet specific needs. Each denomination maintains an organization separate from others -- the older and more established Protestant churches have formed a joint council based in Petaling Jaya to promote the ideal of ecumenism in Malaysia. On February 1985, the Council, Catholic Church and newer evangelical churches established the Christian Federation of Malaysia. There are also voluntary Christian bodies run by the laity. Many of which are based in Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya and engaged in missionary and evangelical activities or providing counseling and training services to the general public. There are also denominational and inter-denominational associations of foreign missionaries that manage their own programmes throughout the country. But a restrictive governmental policy on foreign missionaries has decreased the activities of these associations.

Christianity therefore, remains to constitute a minority of the Malaysian population, and will continue to be one in the years to come.

Hinduism in Malaysia. Indians make up approximately 8 - 10% of the entire Malaysian population (depending on what statistical information you have). Many of them reside in Selangor and Perak and profess Hinduism. Like most religious devotees, Hindus in Malaysia practice their religion in different ways. Some continue to

worship the deities which they have venerated back in India, in temples which they themselves have built. Another group is devoted to the universal deities of the Hindu pantheon. They have more elegant temples managed by lay committees, and attended to by full-time priests, many of whom serve on a contractual basis, with India as their home base. Most of them are of the "Saivite" tradition, although some Vaisnavite devotees also exist.

An example of the many temples in existence in India is the "Sri Maha Mariyamman" in Kuala Lumpur, considered the most prestigious and affluent of all of them. The last variety of Hindus is made up of newer non-sectarian movements, as the Ramakrishna Mission that are much more reform-oriented and tend to attract mainly middle class urban Indians. They hold religious classes, run orphanages, children's homes and meditation centers. It should be noted however, that they have no centralized system of temple management. The absence of religious centers and traditional monastic orders, implies that there is no religious authority who has full control of all the groups, their rules and practices. This responsibility is left to the "pandaram" and "piyari", ritual specialists without Sanskrit training to perform various religious functions (Ackerman & Lee, 1988).

The religion also lacks textual authority, so that, textual changes are more likely to be found in the laity and non-Sanskritic priests. There is greater pragmatism rather than spiritualism which underlies the religion. Although, the influence of the Sanskrit in the performance of temple rituals, and role of the Brahmin priests from India to consecrate a temple continue.

The caste system has undergone changes as well, with more flexibility in its implementation than it did in the past. Perhaps the major reason for this change is the fact that even in India herself, the caste system is not given as much importance as it used to

have, especially in the urban areas; rural folk are about the only ones left practicing the caste system.

Since independence, the Hindus have turned inward to rediscover their religion and their ethnic identity. Hindus have focused more on understanding the tenets of their faith, their traditions, among others and integrate them more fully with their daily life.

Buddhism in Malaysia. 19% of the population in Malaysia is made up of Buddhists, making them the second largest religious group in the country. Most of them are Mahayana Buddhists, whose roots can be traced in China. The Chinese-Buddhists form large, independent bodies maintained through public donations and run by monks with or without the assistance of a lay committee. They are under the strict control of the laity as the Malaysian Buddhist Society in Kuala Lumpur, where members perform the function of ordained monks. Many are also affiliated with the Malaysian Buddhist Association whose members founded the Kek Lok Si Temple (Pure Land Sect) in Penang in the early 1960's. Leadership is an elected position held by a monk.

Theravada Buddhists also live in Malaysia. The oldest group is the Buddhist Vihara in the Brockfields Section of Kuala Lumpur which has been controlled by a Sinhalese organization, the Susana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society, since the turn of the century. It also houses the Wisma Dhamma, the headquarters of the Buddhist Missionary Society, a lay organization involved in active proselytization among English-speaking non-Malays, moreso in the universities, where in-depth and philosophical discussions on politics and religion frequently take place. The Buddhist Missionary Society was formed in 1963 by a group of middle class, English-educated Sinhalese and Chinese. They are very active in the Selangor Buddhist Association, which controls a Theravada Temple in Kuala Lumpur, served by monks from Kedah and Thailand.

In addition to the previously mentioned groups, non-sectarian Buddhist temples in the urban areas of Malaysia also abound. The oldest among these groups is the Penang Buddhist Association, originally formed in the 1920's by a Theravada monk, to initiate reforms in the religion. Some of these groups include the Young Buddhist Association of Malaysia, which is very active in religious ecumenism. The formation of a joint council to coordinate the activities of Mahayana and Theravada Buddhists have also contributed to this effort. A non-sectarian Buddhist Center was recently established in Petaling Jaya by a Thai-trained monk involved in missionary activity through the Dharmafarer's Movement. The Japan-based "Nichiren Daishonin Buddhist Mission" also has a branch in the country. What is noticeable though is that these organizations do not have a central leadership to speak of which has ultimate control and jurisdiction over the activities of the various groups. This prohibits the development of unity between the various organizations in terms of purpose and performance. However, it also allows each group enough freedom to do as it pleases, without any constraints whatsoever.

Education in Malaysia. Education in Malaysia has changed considerably since pre-colonial times when Koranic education was the only kind of education available, and offered only to young boys, usually of aristocratic descent. The educational system has become formally structured since independence, with six years of Primary School, three years of Lower Secondary Education or Forms 1-3, two years of Upper Secondary Education or Forms 4-5 and two years of Post-Secondary or University Education which is also referred to as Upper and Lower Form 6.

In 1966, the first nine grades have been extended, such that they will now be free for everyone. A system of automatic promotion, was introduced through the full nine years. This increased enrollment almost instantly. Forms 1-3 also improved with a more encompassing curricula, thus the term "comprehensive education". All students

during this period were required to take one of four elective subjects to make them learn a variety of subjects including liberal arts, agriculture, industrial arts, home science and commerce. However, very few schools actually offered this wide array of subject areas because of the lack of qualified teachers as well as the inadequacy of funding and materials to keep the programme in full swing. Most schools offered only one elective for boys, while girls could only take home science or commerce.

After Form 3, the educational system becomes more specialized, as students prepare for their entry into the university. Many continue to be in the science and the arts, with hopes of being accepted into the more specialized schools. As always, students who specialize in the arts usually outnumber the science majors, more so in the Malay medium. Technical or vocational schools which offered courses which were not as intense as the science programmes were also available to everyone. However, more students enrolled in the former than in the latter because it was seen as a better compromise, financially and intellectually and perhaps even socially, to be in such schools. Vocational schools suffered from the stigma of not being prestigious nor good enough as compared to the other schools.

After the Lower Secondary level, a wider variety of schools exist. Technical colleges, which provide quasi-terminal technological education for three years and a Polytechnic Institute offers a two-year course. Teacher-training colleges admit some students after Form 5, who then become qualified to be Primary School teachers after the programme is completed. Those who have completed Form 6 may also enter these schools, where they are prepared to teach lower and upper secondary courses. For higher level teaching, students had to go to universities with a Faculty of Education, so as to be qualified to handle Upper Secondary and Form 6 teaching.

A separate Secondary Technical School, the "Mara Institute of Technology" operates outside the Ministry of Education. It provides work-oriented education for Malays in a variety of courses.

University education has also developed since 1957. The University of Penang, which was established in 1968, has now become an institute for full higher education. The former Agricultural College at Serdang is now a preparatory middle-level agricultural school for technicians, and also provides university education in agriculture and other related specialties. The National University (Unibersiti Kebangsaan) has operated as another institute of higher education where Malay is the only language of instruction and all other courses are geared towards Malay studies. The International Islamic University has also emerged and is becoming more popular as a reputable institution for higher learning. This school even has students coming from all over the world, as they work towards the attainment of higher education.

The administrative structure of education in the country is also highly centralized under the leadership of the Minister of Education, who is also a member of the Cabinet. The Minister of Education has the following functions:

- (a) he is responsible for the effective implementation of educational policy and administration of the entire educational system.
- (b) he has to present an annual report on his office, and has to respond to questions regarding education which may be posed by members of Parliament.
- (c) he initiates legislation on educational matters, and is thus the ultimate authority on education.
- (d) he may issue directions of a general character in relation to all matters which may appear to relate or affect educational policies.
- (e) he must oversee the provision of primary and secondary education in the country.



(f) he is also allowed to make rules with regard to teacher training, administrative control and the establishment of educational institutions in the country.

(g) he may initiate the formulation of guidelines which shall govern the administration of public examinations.

It should be noted however, that the Minister does not have jurisdiction over religious or adult education. The former is to be handled by the state, while the latter, is the jurisdiction of the respective state Religious Affairs Departments, under the Ministry of National and Rural Development.

Examinations are crucial to the educational system. During the colonial period, exams were conducted by the Cambridge Examinations Syndicate which administers Overseas School Certificates, which would allow qualified Malaysians to enter Cambridge University in Great Britain.

Upon independence, Malaysia has developed its own Exams Syndicate with technical advice and cooperation from Cambridge. With the assistance of organizations as the Ford Foundation, for instance, Malaysian administrators have become well versed in the preparation and use of objective testing methods, so that the Lower Certificate of Education or LCE which is administered at the Form 3 level, and gives access to Upper Secondary Education as well as the Malaysian Certificate of Education or the MCE which is administered at Form 5, and allows entry to Form 6, are now fully objective, automatically processed standardized exams. A computer center for processing exams has also been built to ease the process of correcting papers. The Malaysian Exams Syndicate has now become completely independent of Cambridge, and is on its way towards greater change and improvements in both content and methodology.

Another significant aspect of the educational system is vocational education. Limited vocational education has been in existence since the early 20th century for the purpose of training technicians for the Railway and Public Works Departments. Four

trade schools were later opened from 1926-32, offering 3-year training courses at the lower secondary level for mechanics and technicians. Very few Malaysians actually entered the programme however. Those who did, usually sought employment in various governmental offices.

After the war, the schools developed their own curricula, to include mechanics, electrical installation, motor engineering, carpentry, bricklaying and cabinet-making. Upon independence in 1956, they were developed to be technical institutes and fourteen new 2-year schools were also built to provide a vocational alternative for those who could not gain entrance to academic lower secondary education. These new schools were called "Sekolah Lanjutang Kampong" or Rural Trade Schools. Other changes were made to elevate the four original technical institutes to the upper secondary level and extend the Sekolah to three years. After a while however, the Sekolah in different regions were disbanded due to lack of students. Seven secondary schools were created at the upper secondary level, offering a two year course admission supposedly open to everyone, but it actually was a last resort for those who failed to gain access to academic upper secondary schools.

Eventually, the Ministry of Education offered the MCVE or the Malaysian Certificate of Vocational Education after form 5. Though enrollment still is not large enough as the academic university, it has improved quite significantly from a mere 553 in 1965 to 2672 in 1970.

Malayanization of education is another important aspect of education in the country. The stress on national unity through Islam and the Malay way of life has been the core of the educational system. One of the first steps taken in this regard is the replacement of European and American headmasters in the schools, by natives. The table below shows the fast pace by which expatriates were replaced: (Hong, et.al. 1971)

## Retirements of Expatriate Officers (Malaya)

Up to April 1959

| <u>Number of Expatriate Officers on Permanent</u>     | <u>Retirements</u> |             |             |              |
|---|--------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| <u>Establishments as of July 1, 1957 in Education</u> | <u>1957</u>        | <u>1958</u> | <u>1959</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| 94  | 26                 | 16          | 8           | 50           |

Another major step taken in this direction was the elimination of English as a medium of instruction. The educational system is now such that everything is Malay, from the textbooks, to discussions and lectures. This means that education would serve the Malay population, while discriminating against the Chinese and the Indians. Increased quotas for Malays in the schools, thus allowing even less than qualified Malays into the schools, while not admitting well-qualified Chinese and Indians.

This was achieved with the creation of a National Educational System in 1957 to make Malay the national language, in order to preserve and sustain the growth of the languages and cultures of the non-Malay communities as recommended by the Educational Ordinance of 1957, reviewed by the Educational Review Committee of 1960 and formulated in its final form in the Educational Act of 1961.

Malay was also made a compulsory subject in the schools, as well as in the Lower Certificate Examination and Teachers College Examination. The continued publication of books at the Language Institute in Kuala Lumpur and the Language and Literature Agency, also known as the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, to ensure a steady flow of textbooks as well as to do research into the teaching of Malay to non-Malays.

The University of Malaya was also built, as a culmination of all of the Malays efforts to have a university as a testimony to their religion, their culture and their entire way of life.

A common content syllabus has also been developed to have national unity in the country. This will assist in the development of a nationalist consciousness and increase the youth's understanding of the need to be Malay. This is taken care of by a Central Curriculum Committee to be used in all schools, so that regardless of the racial composition of the country, all subjects will be taught in the same way. Timetables are flexible enough however, to allow the students to learn the subjects and become more conversant in Malay.

Teacher-training is also important to the Malaysian educational system. In 1961, upon the recommendations of the Razak committee, each educational level has different teaching requirements:

(a) for the primary schools, all teachers should have completed three years of secondary education, one year of full-time educational training and two years of training in a college or full-time training unit.

(b) for teachers specializing in language in primary schools and lower forms of secondary schools, they should have completed full secondary education and two years of full-time teacher training.

(c) in the trade schools, teachers should have completed a course in a technical institution, and one year of full-time training at the Vocational Teachers' Training Institute plus one year of part-time training.

(d) in the technical schools, teachers should have completed either a full secondary education and adequate industrial training and experience plus one year of teacher training or full secondary education, plus a diploma from the Technical College and enough teaching experience.

All these have to be completed, together with a teachers' examination, for certification. In addition, teachers are also required to attend seminars, workshops and other forms of additional training sessions sponsored by government and/or by their educational institutions, in order to keep them abreast on the various development efforts in education, as well as to oversee the kind of education they are giving to their students.

Since 1967, the trend in teacher training in the country has been characterized by the following: (Kee, 1971)

(a) raising of minimum academic qualification for primary teacher training from Lower School Certificate/Sijil Rendah Pelajaran to School Certificate/Malayan Certificate in Education.

(b) raising of minimum entrance qualifications for admission into primary teacher training courses from the Lower Certificate in Education/Sijil Rendah Pelajaran to the School Certificate or equivalent. Serving untrained teachers would no longer be admitted into the regular courses provided in Day Training Colleges but would be given a three-year Vacation Course at convenient centers.

(c) the principle of parity between the Malayan Teachers College training and Day Training College training. This results to the coordination of syllabuses, such that emphasis will be given to the content of teaching and training programmes.

All these changes have been undertaken since independence in order to develop an educational system which is based on Malay, comprehensive and develop a nationalist consciousness within the Malaysian people.

Religion and Education. The influence of religion on education in Malaysia began during pre-colonial times, as the elders and the "ulama" or Muslim priests, taught the Koran to young boys. Lessons were informal, but nonetheless interesting and enlightening for

devout Muslims. In some areas, "Koranic" schools have been erected for the sole purpose of indoctrination.

Under British rule, missionary schools were established by Christian missions and private bodies, and later by the colonial government. They were the best organized and developed of all schools in the country. Students who attended these schools were almost always guaranteed of white collar jobs which definitely paid more than manual labor. Most of these schools were found in towns so that the Chinese, and to some extent the Indians, who lived in the area, were able to take advantage of the British facilities. The curriculum was basically western in character which therefore made the students quite different from others, most especially the Malays who were not able to avail of the same type of education. Malay parents did not want to send their children to these schools because the curriculum dispensed with lessons on the rudiments of language, arithmetic and ethics in the Malay vernacular. No religious institution was allowed except after hours, upon payment of a fee.

To remedy this situation, the various sultanates formed afternoon religious schools called "sekolah petang" or afternoon schools. Although instruction in the elementary Malay schools was compulsory, children could be and often were excused to attend the "sekolah", which were very popular and virtually replaced the other institutions. In areas like Kelantan, Trengganu and Kedah, where people were more conservative, rural "pondok" or village schools which offered very limited religious instruction by amateur teachers in return for agricultural work by pupils became a feature of education. Malays continued to feel indifferent to official schools, which gave very basic instruction.

They became disillusioned with the system and preferred not to attend school at all. Instruction was left to the confines of their homes, where the subject matter only dealt with their religion, and nothing on the basic skills or the three R's. This placed

them at a disadvantage, compared to the Chinese or Indians who were getting quality education and pursuing lucrative careers.

Thus upon independence, the Malay-dominated government opted to make changes in the educational system to make the Malays more competitive. The formation of the Talib, Razak and other committees formed for the sole purpose of evaluating the educational system (these were discussed in chapter 1), overhauled the system so that the Malays will be given a chance to have a more Malayized education, i.e., with focus on religion (Islam), use of the Malay language and teaching of the Malay way of life. This desire for Malayization increased even more after the 1969 riots. The concept of "education for unity" became the theme of every governmental policy on education. In fact, the 1957 Education Ordinance explicitly stated the need for a national system of education, which was acceptable to all, satisfy their needs, promote their cultural, social, economic and political development as a nation, through the Malay language, religion and culture.

A number of changes have since then been implemented: (a) Malay will be the national language and the medium of instruction; (b) larger quota of Malays in colleges and universities; (c) only Islam could be taught in the schools; (d) the Koran will be learned in the schools.

Islamic religious holidays, as the Ramadan for instance, is both a national and educational holiday. Young Islamic groups, including the ABIM, etc. abound in the schools, with increasing membership every year.

The establishment of an International Islamic University is also an indication of religion's influential role in education. The mere fact that government could actually establish a school dedicated to the study of Islam means that funding is no problem, and that there are enough students interested in the courses offered. Its establishment, and the failure of the Merdeka University (a school dedicated to the needs of all ethnic groups in

Malaysia -- the term merdeka means freedom) to even get started, is indicative of the unwillingness of government give in to any other religion, other than Islam.

Foreign missionaries have also been banned from entering the country in recent years because of government's fear that they may renew their indoctrination practices and be a hindrance to Islamization.

The preponderance of governmental policies have forced quite a few Chinese and Indians to pursue higher education overseas, most especially in the United Kingdom and/or the United States, or in their neighboring countries, so that they would not have to be forced to learn a language, be indoctrinated into a religion and the traditions of a people with whom they do not feel any affinity with, and who have constantly refused them their rights as a people, as Malaysians. This trend may continue for a long time, with fundamentalism increasing in the country and the administrators' attitude toward the minorities, the Chinese and the Indians.

Based on these findings therefore, it may be concluded that religion and education in the two countries have always been closely related. The only difference lies in the extent to which this relationship manifests itself in the kinds of policies passed by government and the subsequent reactions of the populace to them. With the presentation of the religio-educational issues in the subsequent chapters, this observation will be proven and understood.



## CHAPTER IV

### RELIGIOUS INTEREST GROUPS

#### A. Religious Interest Groups in the Philippines

An interest group by definition, refers to any conglomeration of individuals whose main objective is to influence the formulation of policy. A more specific kind of interest group is that which not only tries to influence policy formulation, but whose members also feel the need to intervene in the process itself, because of its implications on its members, the people and/or institutions they represent and the faith they believe in. They are referred to as religious interest groups.

In the case of the Philippines, and for that matter, in Malaysia as well, religious interest groups come in many different forms, and are made up of a variety of individuals representing different sectors, religious denominations, and even educational institutions.

In the Philippines, there are groups such as:

(a) CEAP which is a group made up of various Catholic educational institutions whose main objective is to promote and maintain the existence of a comprehensive Christian education for the Filipino youth. It has permanent structures, with branches all over the country and programmes aimed at achieving its set goals. Using Almond's categorical definition, it is an associational interest group.

(b) De La Salle and Ateneo are two educational institutions which may also be considered associational groups. They have very solid foundations and believe that

the kind of education they offer is in fulfillment of a mission, that of providing an exemplary and well-formulated education for its students.

(c) Catholics and Protestants are two non-associational groups, who despite their seemingly disparate religious doctrines, share the belief in a Supreme Being, whose life, works and teachings should always be embodied in the classroom. Like all large groups, they may suffer from factionalism at certain points in time, yet they remain solid in their desire for the development of a Christian Filipino.

(d) University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action/UPSCA, though only a university organization is a strong, united associational group whose influence stretches outside of the UP campus. Its members are very vocal in their demand for social infrastructure and have initiated programs to begin this process. It involves itself even in campus politics as it believes that doing so is necessary to achieve its objectives.

(e) The Catholic Church hierarchy is also an associational group whose diverse membership and the various difficulties which the country has undergone, have made it a factionalized group of clergy men, who have different impressions of the situation in the country and solutions to society's ills. Despite this however, they all agree that they would like to maintain peace and harmony in the country, and improve the living conditions of the less fortunate.

(f) Social Action Centers are associations involved with the less privileged in the country. Different SAC's, as they are more popularly called, have various programmes established for the sole purpose of alleviating the difficulties which the people are going through. It is also an associational group.

Interest groups in the country have undergone tremendous changes in the manner in which they influence policy-making. The Spanish era saw groups as the Propaganda Movement for instance, as reactionary groups whose main objective was to seek reforms in their policies. They may have wanted to go to the mother country and actually state their case, but the constraints innate in any colonizer-colony relationship

prevented them from doing so, i.e., that the colony is under complete control and authority of the colonizer, which in this case happens to be Spain. They resorted to the use of publications to make the rulers realize their mistakes, meetings in public arenas (as cockpits for instance), and the formation of small subgroups to help their members and engage in activities like education, health and social services in order to provide them with their needs, which the colonizers do not provide.

When the Americans came and democracy was still in its early stages, groups formed like mushrooms. They intervened through outright discussions during congressional committee hearings on bills pending in the senate and/or the house, publication of newsletters and magazines or newspaper editorials, joint partnerships with American counterparts, formation of committees to engage in various activities. In this era therefore, groups became more vocal and active in the actual process of policy-formulation.

Upon independence, the groups were not as active anymore in terms of outright intervention. They resorted to focusing more on their respective group's needs and simply working as pressure groups where they felt that their activities would be sufficient to express their opinions, with minimal congressional participation.

For instance, bills were passed in government with hardly any public consultation, except if the issue was of such great magnitude, as the "Religious Instruction Bill" (this will be discussed in length later), which caused so much public uproar, do groups actually get involved in policy-making. About the only other time that groups, clergymen and educational institutions become very active in politics is during elections. Early on, the support of priests, both financially and politically to certain candidates, may assure a political aspirant victory. This was clearly observed during the proceedings for the "Rizal Bill", where priests from the University of Santo Tomas, who were the main targets of Rizal's novels, vowed never to support Claro M. Recto in any election because of his proposal of the bill, which to their minds was blasphemous and

heretical. Senators Cuenco and Rosales, were staunch oppositionists of the said bill, as<sup>123</sup> they were close relatives of two prominent archbishops in the country, and particularly responsible for their current political status.

In the meantime, the groups worked on their own projects as the building of more schools, publication of books and formation of alliances between and among other organizations or institutions with hopes of strengthening their position in Philippine society. They figured that their efforts, though seemingly small and local, i.e. focused only in their respective institutions, in scope, would eventually cause some significant changes in policy-making. The CEAP for instance, bolstered its publication of Filipino-authored textbooks and encouraged the member schools to engage in more outreach activities. The La Salle and Ateneo developed their respective school curricula so as to become two of the best schools in the country, whose graduates have become very prominent personalities in business and industry, government and the academe.

This trend continued, and even intensified during the Marcos years, where groups were carefully observed by government's watchful eye, because of Marcos' paranoia over communists and so-called subversive activities. No one was spared. Even religious leaders, though not treated as harshly as the lay men, were subjected to inquisition and even extreme humiliation, if necessary, just to make them aware that the government would not let any activity pass by without carefully checking up on them, and that any wrong move may mean incarceration. Some nuns from St. Paul College, St. Scholastica's and even Jesuit priests have been arrested in the past for their supposed involvement in subversive activities, that is, even if they were only caught rallying in the streets, with placards on hand demanding changes in government.

School organizations were carefully supervised by the school administrators, who even required their leaders to register as official "clubs", or "extra-curricular activities" on campus, with an obligation to abide by the rules of the institution. These rules and regulations still hold true today under Pres. Aquino's leadership.

These rules, though different in all institutions, usually include the following:

(a) All groups have to be officially registered in the Office of Student Affairs, or its equivalent, in the school. A complete list of officers and members, together with their planned activities for the year should be included in the papers to be submitted.

(b) All activities are subject to the approval of the school's administration. Though the administration will not censor their written work or any of their activities, they have to be done under the supervision of a faculty adviser, assigned to them. Recommendations of these advisers should be taken seriously and should be strongly considered for implementation.

(c) Groups should not get involved in activities which may endanger the institution or its students, faculty and administration in any way. If the group insists on pursuing such activities, they should negotiate with the administration, and come up with a compromise. If a compromise cannot be reached, or if the organization refuses to enter into such negotiations, the activity should be held outside campus, without the use of the school's name, i.e., that the activity is not sanctioned by the school. Better still, the organization should consider not going through the said activity if it will cause friction with the administration.

This situation has made the students apolitical, for fear that their involvement, may in some way jeopardize their grades, or their school's reputation. They have resorted to very "safe" activities, as fund raising concerts, cultural shows, Christmas carolling and others, so as not to get into trouble with the administration or with government.

Mrs. Aquino's government is barely three years old, but if reports are accurate, she is moving back to the days of more active interest group participation in government. What with legislative committee sessions open to the public, and with

representatives from various groups during discussions of specific bills. Religious interest groups have taken advantage of this opportunity to participate more in governmental activity.

Some of the tools which these religious interest groups use are:

(a) **Publications:** Indeed, the religious interest groups have taken heed to Rizal's famous words that "the pen is mightier than the sword". What with all the interest groups coming up with their own journal/magazine/newsletter on a regular basis. CEAP has its "Perspective" and the newsletter; La Salle has the "La Sallian", and "Abut Tanaw" (alumni paper); Ateneo has its own school paper, the "Budhi" Monograph Series and an active audiovisual center with students making documentaries on social issues; the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines or CBCP has its own pastoral letters which are read in Sunday mass; and the UPSCA has its newsletter. Although not all these journals enjoy massive circulation, they still contain articles which focus on social and political issues and which instigate their members to action, and make the government more aware of the needs of society as analyzed from a different perspective. And since the law makers try to keep in touch with all written materials which may be involved, no matter how remote, with socio-political activity, they will be made more aware of the implications of their policies and the possible reforms suggested by the groups.

(b) **Outreach Programmes:** All the groups mentioned focus on community service in any way, be it in the provision of services, education, the out-of-school youth, agricultural assistance, etc. CEAP has many subgroups which handle all these. The Ateneo and La Salle students extend their services to their schools' less affluent surrounding areas. This may come in the form of education, catechetical classes, health services and donations. The UPSCA, CBCP, Catholic and Protestant groups extend their services during hard economic times, through food drives, free medical services, etc.; as well as during the occurrence of natural disasters, where they distribute relief

goods. They manage to be in the forefront of social welfare services all year long, moreso, during floods, or earthquakes, and other calamities. During less trying times, their missionary work is extensive, making the general populace more aware of the importance of learning, prayer, and family life.

(c) **Alliances:** Linkages between and among similar and dissimilar groups are necessary to maintain and enhance human and even professional relationships in any third world society, like the Philippines. Catholic schools have formed the CEAP, the Protestants have their Union and the UPSCA has their alliances with other Student Catholic Action groups in the different campuses. This will strengthen the stance of the groups as well as maintain an interactive relationship between them. In addition, keeping ties with former members, who now occupy key positions in government and business are necessary to represent the interests of any group who would like to have something done in their behalf.

(d) **Education:** Other than the provision of the 3R's, educational institutions provide the means by which students are taught to analyze facts and understand the various issues in their environment and what they can do about them. This process of indoctrination allows for the development of creative minds and analytical thought processes, which would give the students the ability to question governmental actions and policies. The riots of the 1960's, the fear and apathy of the 70's, and the resurgence of activity against the Marcos dictatorship in the 80's, by students from La Salle, Ateneo, UP, among others, led to an onslaught of activity and Marcos' eventual ouster. Activities such as these are proof of the power of the studentry and the extent to which they may be able to contribute to the country.

(e) **Open discussions, rallies, seminars, etc.:** These are activities which all these groups are also actively involved with. They instigate action, creative thinking and also allow government to make the changes necessary for peace and harmony to remain in the country. Their existence has led to many drastic governmental actions, as the

127  
declaration of martial law, the failure to pass Education Bill of 1980, which provided for the complete subservience of all colleges and universities in the country to the Ministry of Education and Marcos' decline.

As anyone may observe, most if not all of these actions, are quite different from those undertaken by their western counterparts. There is no outright lobbying, or congressional discussions which are open to the public (except during the American occupation and under the new administration). These groups are also not as visible, for they do not promote themselves and make everyone aware that they even exist. They only become visible whenever there is a significant issue where religion is the main issue at hand, and/or if they feel that their involvement may make a difference. Their actions are very discrete, and their religious convictions, moreso whenever they make speeches or do charity work. Thus, there is a need for careful scrutiny of their objectives and actions, to actually understand their true function in society.

Below is a list of interest groups whose activities I have presented for everyone to understand how groups in the Philippines attempt to influence the formulation of educational policies in the country.

#### A. The Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP).

Upon the establishment of the CEAP in 1941, its founders had a vision -- this vision included the desire to advance and promote the evangelization function of the church in education and to lend assistance to member institutions in the attainment of their goals. These goals included the following: (Varela, 1988)

(a) to represent the interest of Catholic schools before the Department of Education and Culture<sup>47</sup>, government and non-government organizations

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<sup>47</sup> The Department of Education and Culture has changed its name many times in the past. It was initially called the Department of Education under the Americans until the pre-martial law days under Marcos. Upon the declaration of martial law in 1972 it was changed to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. When Pres. Aquino assumed control in 1986, it was changed to the Department of Education and Culture.



- (b) foster unity of action among member institutions by sharing resources, especially with the marginalized sector, i.e. the poor
- (c) conduct programs in development education, mainly for member schools
- (d) establish linkages and collaborative relationships with other agencies
- (e) emphasize the primacy of religion and values formation in the schools
- (f) provide educational leadership at the national and regional levels
- (g) participate in the national effort towards the social transformation of the country

As its name implies, the organization is made up of the multitude of private catholic institutions in the entire country, whose main objective has always been the provision of a comprehensive, i.e. includes all the basics of a good academic education with the provision of skills in the 3 R's, the sciences, physical development, and others; yet catholic approach to learning. By doing so, their administrators thought they would be able to produce graduates who were not only academically exceptional, but spiritually enriched as well.

Since then, the group has managed to set-up the National Language Textbook Program, to prepare much needed reading materials<sup>48</sup> for the country's high schools in the early 1940's. This program was later extended to include a project for the elementary natural science courses. A program in literature at the high school level with emphasis on books fostering nationalism also emerged.

Immediately after the liberation, the CEAP worked with the Catholic Welfare Organization to help "rebuild" the schools damaged severely by the war. Equipment, books and monetary assistance were sought from almost every sector, including the USA. A total of forty million pesos was lent by the Americans in this effort, together with other forms of military aid extended to the country after the war.

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<sup>48</sup> When the Americans took control in the country, all the educational materials utilized in the public schools were either written and published in the USA or written by an American and published in the Philippines. The use of Filipino-authored books was not encouraged.

129

In 1946, a CEAP Convention was held which discussed the possibility of having an organization of regional sections and core curricula for college courses and a graded program of religious instruction for all academic levels. This tradition has been carried on till this very day, where even at the collegiate level, students are required to take a number of courses (ranging from four to eight depending on the institution) in religion, its history, application to daily life and the various issues related to it, to be eligible for graduation.

In 1948 and 1952, the organization decided to do extensive research on the technical aspects of education, seeing to it that it is intellectually sound, value-laden as well as competitive; they also wanted to develop a sense of Christian values and traditions among the faculty and students; create a committee to promote legislation on religious instruction in the public schools (this will later become a national issue and will be discussed in length in the next chapter); continued encouragement of Filipino writers and scholars to publish effective and more usable textbooks on the national language. In order to encourage even greater participation from the various clerical orders in education, the CEAP established the Episcopal Commission on Education and Religious Instruction (ECERI), as another branch of the CEAP. A National Catholic Teachers Association and a National Alumni Association were also set-up to have representatives from all sectors of society helping out in the process of policy-formulation.

In the 1956 convention, the role of lay teachers in catholic education was emphasized. This meant that all teachers were to be trained within the framework and objectives of the catholic educational system so as to ascertain the fulfillment of a Christian education for every single student enrolled in the institution. Seminars, training camps both within the school premises as well as outside will be undertaken in the fulfillment of the above-mentioned. This despite its initial approval, only got started in 1982 with the group's "Five-Year Upgrading Programme for Teachers", a conglomeration of various training programmes for all instructors and administrators of

the schools. Thus far, 2744 administrators and teachers have participated in this undertaking. It should be noted that about 111 teacher trainers from both CEAP and non-CEAP member institutions participated in this activity.

Administrators, just like faculty members, have also been given many opportunities for their own professional development. These include activities like the holding of seminars for the purpose of building the business knowhow of these professionals as well as seminars on educational management.

In line with the desire of CEAP to maintain a reputation of academic excellence in its member schools, an Accreditation Committee was set-up to make regular inspections of the institutions. This committee later on became known as the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities, better known as PAASCU. Two other similar groups, the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges (ACSC) and the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU) were also established to aid in the effort of improving the educational system.

In the 1960's, the CEAP established the "Retirement Plan" that became operational in July 1968. This guaranteed CEAP schools' faculty and administrators pension upon retirement, at the age of 65. The commitment to community development became paramount during this period. This included the desire of the organization to assist government in the performance of its social functions, as well as the formulation of policies, which may be crucial to the educational system. Increased visibility in the media, as well as in the rural areas is also stressed to eliminate the image of being an "elitist"<sup>49</sup> organization which catered only to society's upper crust.

Because of this, the organization decided to have a more "community-oriented" approach to its programmes. In the mid-70's, it established its Regional Association to deal with local problems and become more involved in the needs and

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<sup>49</sup> The CEAP together with all its member schools have gained a reputation of being "elitist" because of the very high cost incurred in sending a child to a member school.

interests of their schools in the suburban parts of the country. De-centralization was also pursued, extending powers to the regional branches, in areas of major concern to them.

With the imposition of martial rule, it "willingly cooperated with government in its efforts to normalize", (regain peace and order in the schools) by offering its resources, especially the faculty, in the process of transition. Faculty members were "requested" (during martial law the word "requested" meant "coerced") to indoctrinate peace, obedience and discipline among their students, rather than civil disobedience and indecision, which seemed to characterize the academic community prior to 1972<sup>50</sup>. In fact, this was one of the many factors which prompted the national government to arrest many of the student leaders and faculty who may have participated in some of the rallies or encouraged the undertaking.

All of a sudden, schools became supportive agents of government with logos such as "sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan" ("For the country's development, there is a need for discipline") as a constant moral lesson being taught in the classrooms. Participation in governmental projects as tree and crop planting, street cleaning and even military training for women in their senior year in high school, became pre-requisites for graduation. The schools were left with no other alternative than complete obedience. As martial law progressed, the programmes became more intense and to some extent, over-powering. The 1980's however, ushered in an era of more soul-searching and the extreme desire for change, what with increasing corruption in government and the weakening Marcos leadership. Although most of the governmental educational programs were continued, some like street cleaning and the posting of logos of the so-called New Society<sup>51</sup> were minimized.

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<sup>50</sup> One of the major reasons for the declaration of martial law was the increase in campus violence in the various schools in the MetroManila area. Rallies and demonstrations were held almost everyday in protest of the corruption of the Marcos government and western imperialism. These usually led to violent confrontations with the military and ultimately caused the death of some participants.

<sup>51</sup> "New Society" or "Bagong Lipunan" was the name given to Philippine society under martial law. It was referred to as such because of the supposed radical changes which were to take place during the period. Initially, society seemed more peaceful and orderly and the economy was even growing. However, these

The Educational Corporation or EDCO which represents the economic interests of CEAP was also established during this period, to facilitate the process of balancing the budget by decreasing the expenditures of the schools, through bulk purchases of educational printed materials and facilitating the member schools in their yearly purchases of such items (Varela, 1988).

As a symbol of increasing cooperation between the organization and the clergy, a Project Proposals Development Office or PPDO was established to act as a liaison between bishops and diocesan superintendents and the CEAP, as well as a funding agency, responsible for generating additional funding from a multitude of sources, for the organization.

The 1980's ushered in a new era for the organization, with increasing support from the private and public sectors as well as significant visibility in almost all sectors, including the media, government, and of course, the church. A case in point would be the organization's participation in the 1986 EDSA Revolution which ultimately led to the ouster of Marcos and the beginning of the Aquino administration. It should also be noted that the organization is even stronger now, with education as the primary concern of government, with a 12.96% share of the national budget or 21.9 billion pesos (Galace, 1987), to increase even more in the years to come. More than ever, the CEAP has felt the need to undertake certain changes to improve the educational system further and make the schools more competitive than ever before. Among the programmes that it would like to pursue in the near future are:

(a) To further promote the expansion of non-formal education. The Non-Formal Education Program or NFE was a result of Presidential Decree #1139 (1977), with the intent of promoting education outside the educational institutions, to reach all members of the population who were willing to learn certain skills which may bring

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were short-lived, for society just became as violent and disorderly after 1975. The campus rallies may have been minimized, but crime on the street rose steadily, as did corruption, and lack of discipline.

lucrative jobs and businesses. It includes various programmes as functional literacy,<sup>133</sup> vocational skills training, socio-civic and citizens education, cultural development, sports and physical fitness development, leadership training and mass media education. The courses offered include dressmaking, tailoring, cosmetology, simple food processing, automotives, fashion design and basic electronics. Various teaching techniques as well as new teaching venues have been suggested because of lack of facilities and space to accomodate everyone willing to participate in the sessions. The new teaching techniques include demonstrations, radio broadcasts, tutorial, group discussions, seminars/workshops, among others.

Private school participation was encouraged with the passage of Letter of Instruction #607, which enjoined all schools to assist the Department of Education, Culture and Sports in the programme. A subgroup known as the Private Institutions and Schools National Association for Non-Formal Education (PRISNANFE) was organized in order for private institutions to unite in the assistance of government in the development of a programme for NFE and the development of different projects to be pursued in the future.

The PRISNANFE has also put up a training program to educate the administrators, coordinators and instructors of NFE for a more efficient service, creation of a secretariat with a paid staff and to increase membership and reactivate regional organization. Plans are also on the way for the emergence of an accrediting committee to oversee the program as well as its accomplishments, needs and plans for the future.

The CEAP is moving towards even greater participation in the NFE so that the underprivileged will be given an equal chance as the rest, in the pursuit of good jobs and adequate income, provide educational alternatives for the poor, create employment opportunities for the out-of-school youth, unemployed and underemployed and accelerate the various learning programs/modules.

(b) Continued Promotion of Values Education. The CEAP wants to create an atmosphere of academic excellence as well as spirituality in its member institutions with hopes of serving as role models to the rest of society. The organization has worked hand in hand with the Department of Education in the Promotion of "values education" which is an educational system characterized by scientific wisdom, analytical skills and the development of spirituality, humility and concern for one's fellow man. In this process, all schools are asked to integrate the teaching of values into their curricula in a way which is both subtle, yet clearcut, simple yet long-lasting. A task force within the department has been created to take charge of this project. Five "core" (Laurente, 1987) values are to be given emphasis in this process, among them: life sustenance, which will help contribute to economic progress; human dignity which will satisfy the need to have a sense of self-worth, self-esteem, respect and individual identity; social responsibility, concern for the physical and socio-cultural environment; nationalism through Filipinism; and spirituality which will strengthen belief in a Supreme Being.

Training programs and seminars/workshops have been developed to aid the faculty in this process. The CEAP schools have been very active in this regard, in its encouragement of administration and faculty to participate in the said activities, present position papers on the topics at hand with hopes of sharing their knowledge and skills with their peers.

A good example of such a paper would be that written by Sister Iluminada Coronel, FMM at the 1987 Annual Conference Workshop of the World Council for Curriculum & Instruction, held at the Santa Isabel College in Manila, where she presented ways to integrate values into the teaching of highly scientific subjects, as mathematics for instance. Here, she mentioned that critical thinking, analysis and reasoning (Coronel, 1987) should be the goal of every Mathematics teacher. Lessons should be planned carefully, so that the questions asked would necessitate the understanding of concepts, operations and activities/problems. Christian values as

loyalty, cooperation, team work, helpfulness, among others can be achieved through the encouragement of group activities which would require the students to apply the theories they have learned in class, as well as develop close working relations with their peers. Problems sets which focus on thrift, resourcefulness and honesty should also be encouraged. Groups can also be useful when the instructor asks the students to plot his spending habits on a graph, so that the former can learn more about his students. These and more were recommended by Sister Iluminada to prove that the teaching of science and the development of values may be fused in a manner which is not offensive, but rather, practical, direct and easy to understand.

The CEAP continues to support programmes such as this, in order to make all educators aware of their crucial role in society, and make them fully understand the extent of their influence on the students, of whatever age bracket and year level. This shall still be continued in the years to come.

(c) Continued support of various governmental programs to improve the standard of education in the entire country. Since the formation of the Aquino government in 1986, various programmes have been initiated to uplift the standard of education. For instance, there is the objective of increasing teachers' salaries, reaching a minimum of 4,744 pesos or the equivalent of US \$237.20 by 1991 (truly a big improvement considering that the starting salary of an elementary school teacher used to be approximately 600 pesos or US \$30). There is also the move to lend some assistance to private schools with regard to financial needs. This is necessary because even private schools are suffering from financial difficulties because of a decrease in enrollment. According to Secretary Lourdes Quisumbing of the Dept. of Education (1987), this will come in the form of Service Contracting for Secondary Schools and Accrediation for the tertiary level. The idea of free secondary education will also be studied thoroughly for future implementation.



These will involve four crucial phases: [1] nationalization of teachers' salaries, in all schools without exception; [2] maintenance of local high schools; [3] implementation of a program which will mitigate the probable overflow of students in public schools, to be known as the Educational Service Contract Scheme or ESCS. This will also be supplemented by a "voucher system", in which parents of school age children would be given a voucher which may be used as tuition in any school where they would like their children to be enrolled in. This will help government save millions of pesos since it would not have to build new schools and hire more teachers, while also helping private schools by maximizing their resources and potentials (Ante, 1987).

These projects as well as others like it, have been presented in congress and will be decided upon with the help of representatives from various sectors, including the private schools. The CEAP is more jubilant than ever before, with increasing governmental concern for education in the country.

(d) Continued pursuit of a more nationalistic approach to education. The development of nationalism among Filipino youth is not an easy task. What with vestiges of western culture all over the place, it is simply too difficult for a youngster to fully understand and appreciate his own country, its resources, people and the goods that she may be able to produce. Thus, there is the constant need for a reminder in some form or another that being a Filipino is not being "second rate"<sup>52</sup> but that being a Filipino means to be someone special, with an identity and culture to be proud of.

From its earliest years to the present, the CEAP has tried to inculcate nationalism in its students in every possible way. The holding of cultural events on a regular basis, celebration of historical events and even trips to historical places are just a few of their projects. Perhaps, the most important project it has ever embarked on is its

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<sup>52</sup> Until now, many Filipinos, of any age group, feel inferior when pitted against their foreign counterparts, more so if they are white. English is still thought of as a more "classy" language, with minimal regard for the thorough learning of the Filipino language, its culture and its people.

encouragement of Filipino writers and scholars to engage in advanced research and write books and/or articles which may be utilized by the students in their schools. Not only will they be cheaper than their foreign counterparts, they will also be focused on the Filipino way of life. It will truly help instill in the Filipino that he is a Filipino first and foremost, and that being a poor copy of any westerner is not good enough. This has been extended to all levels from the primary to the university, and continues to move on at a faster pace. Although foreign-made books are still being utilized, they no longer have full control over the educational system, but are to some extent, supplemental to the learning process.

(e) Community Outreach Programmes. This was launched in 1986 and has now benefitted 2,000 pre-schoolers, out-of-school youth, unemployed/underemployed adults and parents from the marginal sector of Philippine society (Ante, 1988). Funding was initially provided for by the British Columbia "Save the Children's Fund" and later on taken over by the Dr. Ip Yee Estate. Unfortunately, this project ceased in March 1988 due to financial constraints. The participation of schools as the Ateneo de Manila High School, La Salle Greenhills, Miriam College Foundation and the La Salle School in Isabela province, continue to contribute to this project though despite the financial difficulties, through their own small community projects, which usually take place in or around the community where their schools are located. The curricula covers various areas of interest including functional literacy, values formation, livelihood skills training, health and nutrition.

(f) Communications and Publications. The CEAP comes up with two regular publications, the "Perspective", a quarterly magazine which gives member institutions and others in the academic community an update on the activities of the organization, as well as the various developments and possible issues in the field of education; the "CEAP Bulletin" is the other publication, which has its own supplement, the CEAP Monitor, a monthly newsletter distributed free to members and affiliates. The

Bulletin merely gives the different organizational news as well as regular reports on the group. <sup>138</sup>

An additional feature for school year 1987-88 was the publication of the CEAP Peace Monograph, "Sharing for Peace" which was intended to initiate and continue ongoing discussions and dialogues among students, faculty and parents regarding societal problems and needs which may obstruct the pursuit of peace and development. This may become a regular publication depending on the demand as well as the availability of finances.

(g) Teacher Upgrading Program. Other than the school-run workshops and seminars for faculty members and administrators, the CEAP since the 1980's has conducted its own training programmes. Focus is given to the sciences and languages. The first phase of the program which lasted from 1982-86 was successfully participated in by 2,647 teachers and 111 teacher trainers in Biology, Physics, Chemistry, General Science, Mathematics, English and even Religious Education. The second phase which began in school year 1987-88, involved a series of intensive seminar workshops under the leadership of phase one teacher trainers. These workshops are extended even to the regional level, where the CEAP main branch in Manila takes care of the funding.

(h) Formation Institute for Religious Education (FIRE). Instituted in 1988 at the Summer Institute at the Ateneo de Manila, this course is a 36-unit degree program geared towards a Masters' degree in Theological Studies, to be completed in four summers. Courses include Scripture, Church Teaching and Practical Training (Practicum), with focus on teaching skills and class presentations. This programme has been fully endorsed by the CEAP which even encourages its personnel to take a few courses for further development.

(i) CEAP Citizens' Education Program. This program was aimed at pursuing an educational campaign on the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. This includes four main activities:

[1] An information campaign has been launched by the CEAP Monitor to make students, administrators and faculty more aware of their rights, duties and responsibilities in a democracy and to make them fully understand the extent to which they may contribute considerably to its enhancement, enrichment and maintenance in the country;

[2] Consultation Fora or training for student leaders and professionals took place from June 26, 1987 through November of the same year, where discussion groups were established which would assess the status of the students' project initiation, planning and implementation in schools and communities in the country's twelve regions;

[3] Values Education Seminar Workshops were also held to develop strategies and materials on values education which may be relevant to the specific needs of various regions. So far, two have already been held and have been fairly successful in terms of the number of participants as well as the enthusiasm they expressed during the sessions;

[4] Leadership training for secondary student leaders was a program aimed at continuously inculcating Christian values and beliefs in the student population, through indoctrination and training in basic Christian principles on humanism and structural analysis in the desire to develop a more solid socio-cultural, economic and political awareness. This is coupled with a Trainors' teaching program which is aimed at the professionals, to make them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively guide and direct their students into completing the entire school term.

(j) Cardinal Cooke Scholarship Program. This is a scholarship fund granted to qualified students from poor families. Adequate funding is provided which covers tuition fees and books. Funding for the programme has risen to 650,000 pesos and continues to rise steadily in the past two years.

(k) Continued assistance to less fortunate member-schools is also an ongoing project in CEAP. Cash donations, training programmes, among others are just a few of the ways by which fellow members aid their peers.

(l) Political participation is one area which the CEAP has been very active in since 1986. Prior to that period, it has relegated itself to the background, limiting its activities to its members and basically doing things on its own. Since then, it has made itself more visible in the political arena, as it actively expresses its feelings about certain bills presented in the congress with regard to education and religion through its publications, as well as through its members who also serve as advisers to many of the government officials. For instance, it has raised serious opposition to the proposed "Magna Carta of Student Rights" (this will also be discussed in greater length in the next chapter), a bill presented to the Philippine legislature in late 1987, which provides the students the right to get involved in all aspects of the educational institution they are currently enrolled in, from the administration, to the formation of the curriculum as well as the activities to be held in campus.

In addition, the CEAP is also helping the Department of Education conduct studies on the National College Entrance Examinations or NCEE, a pre-requisite for high school seniors to be eligible for acceptance in colleges and universities in the country, and its improvement.

The CEAP continues to be a very active religious interest group in Philippine society. It has triumphed over difficulties of war, financial constraints as well as governmental changes through its 48 year existence and attained quite a few achievements in the process. It is still expanding, as evidenced by its increasing membership all over the country and support for other less fortunate schools outside Manila. Its flexibility as an organization as well as the creativity of its leaders and members will make the CEAP an even more visible and vibrant organization in the years to come.

B. De La Salle University. As the Spanish empire crumbled in the Philippines, so did many of its institutions, as the office of the Governor-General, the economic system characterized by the existence of the encomienda, the galleon trade, among others. The Catholic Church, though not totally devastated, suffered quite a bit too, at least for a while. For a moment, it seemed as though the religion as well as its clergy, has lost all of its influence, its wealth and power. With the increase in the number of "other religions"<sup>53</sup> as well as the decrease in the enrollment in the Catholic schools, coupled with the subsequent increase in enrollment in the public schools, the destabilization of the once firmly entrenched stronghold which the Catholic church once had in the country seemed to be faltering. Thus, the church hierarchy had no other alternative but to request for more American Catholic missionaries to come to the country, and bring the "people back to catholicism". Being American, they would not be doubted of their intentions; being Catholic, they would carry on the tradition of the faith so that everything they had gained in terms of support and loyalty would remain intact.

Among the clergymen who came to the country were the likes of Fr. Dennis Daugherty, who went to Ilocos to look into the increasing Aglipayan membership. At one point, he went so far as to convince some of the church's followers to come back to the Catholic faith, because it was the only way to salvation. Another priest of his genre, was Fr. James Harty, the first American Archbishop of Manila, who realized that through all the drastic changes that the country was going through, the upper class of Filipinos were being left out because of their identification with the Spanish schools. His actions were veered not only at rebuilding the Filipinos' faith in Catholicism, but also in training and educating the country's future leaders in schools which would offer

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<sup>53</sup> It should be recalled that the rise of the Philippine Independent Church, the Iglesia ni Kristo, and even Protestantism were partly due to Spanish oppression.

the best of American culture and an academic environment, formulated and developed in<sup>142</sup> the American mold.

He began by encouraging the Brothers of De La Salle in the USA, to open a school in the archipelago. The brothers, despite their initial approval, did not send any representative to the country. This put the church in an even more uncertain position as they began to feel threatened that the "wholesale shift in culture might also mean a wholesale shift in faith" (Joaquin, 1961). Out of desperation, Harty sought the help of Pope Pius X to convince the brothers of their need for their services in the country. The brothers finally agreed and in 1911, sent the first nine Christian brothers<sup>54</sup> to Manila to open the La Salle College.

The first La Salle College was located in an old villa in Paco<sup>55</sup>, Manila very close to the market. The school made no qualms about their objective of establishing an institution catering to the elite, who to their minds, should be properly educated, because they shall later on serve as the very backbone of Philippine society. This is truly ironic because the Christian Brothers have always worked for and in behalf of the poorest sector of society. Perhaps it should be mentioned at this point that the Christian Brothers Mission, as it was initially conceived by St. John Baptist de la Salle, its founder, was a religious order dedicated to the service of the poor in France. St. John Baptist was born in Rhumms, France in 1651. He decided to be a priest at the age of 11, where he became involved in the movement to provide the poor children of France with free schools. A rich man himself, he opted to give up his wealth to support their education by building schools for them. There was much opposition to his efforts as the so-called "pay schools" i.e., those who charged tuition fees opposed them.

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<sup>54</sup> De La Salle is under the control of the "Brothers of De La Salle", otherwise known as the Christian Brothers of De La Salle, or just simply, the Christian Brothers. These terms will be used interchangeably in this paper's entirety.

<sup>55</sup> Paco, is the location of one of the most unsanitized wet markets in Manila. During the olden days, it was not as dirty; it was in fact the location of quite a few large Spanish-inspired homes. As time went on however, with the wet market expanding, and street peddlers increasing, the deterioration of the entire community became inevitable.

143

The very first free school opened in 1679, increasing steadily through the years. He organized his teachers into a religious community, despite the fact that they were not priests, but laymen. They adopted La Salle's usual garb, composed of a mantle, black robe, white neckband and a three-cornered hat, which later on became their "habit" or official uniform. This group of academicians cum religious, later on became known as the Brothers of the Christian Schools. They established the first professional training school for teachers in the country, with hopes of increasing the number of the brothers who would serve the people. Christian schools mushroomed all over the country through the years. These schools were characterized by the following (Oback, 1988):

(a) They did not impose any fees; maintenance of the schools came from generous endowments as well as the continued support of certain altruistic individuals. This was necessary to make the schools accessible to the poor and give them an equal chance at receiving quality education.

(b) The schools must not only reach the poor because they are free, but also because they are psychologically adapted to them. This meant that the schools had to be efficient, with teachers properly trained to serve rather than be served.

(c) The provision of moral education in school meant the inculcation of the Christian spirit, i.e, that the students would learn to live as obedient and faithful Catholics in the service of the Lord, His Church and His Gospel.

Upon his death on April 17, 1719, 26 schools have already been established in France. In 1725, the Christian Brothers finally gained the approval of the Vatican as a religious society. In 1900, St. John Baptist de la Salle was canonized as a saint, and in 1950, became the patron saint of all educators of the youth.

On the very same campus in Paco, where their first school was established, the La Salle Brothers also built a residence for all their members. There they began full operations on June 16, 1911 with 125 students, under Brother Blimond. Enrollment



increased steadily, until the school grounds could no longer accommodate all its students.

The school's immediate environment was also fast becoming unhealthy for young boys.

The land was thus sold and a rustic, empty space was purchased on what is now known as Taft Avenue, which remains as its current main campus<sup>56</sup>. By 1921, La Salle has emerged as a boarding school for boys, encouraging students from out-of-town, i.e. from the suburbs of Manila and the provinces, to attend the school. Its "boarding school" status also helped the brothers as they wanted to have full control of the boys' academic, emotional, physical and spiritual development, 24 hours a day. In fact, the brothers prided themselves by saying that they were not only teaching three but four R's, covering reading, writing, arithmetic and religion.

As previously mentioned, La Salle began as an elementary school; by 1917, it established its own high school, thus catering to a bigger, more diverse group. It later offered a four-year secondary course that was carefully integrated into the last year of the elementary level, i.e. the seventh grade, since it was also considered the first year of the commercial course. A two-year course in bookkeeping and a three-year course in stenography were also offered. In this, the curriculum included Business, Engineering, Commercial Arithmetic, Business Law, Commercial Geography and Typewriting, and of course, Spanish.

Although the school did not offer college education till 1919, it offered courses leading to the degree of Associate in Arts and opened a two-year college course in Commerce by 1920. Also in the 1920's, the school was granted the privilege to offer Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees. This was not pursued by the school however, because its administrators felt the need to be a "prep school" more than a university or college. And since the demand during pre-war times was for a "prep

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<sup>56</sup> The Taft Avenue campus houses De La Salle University, a co-educational school, offering a wide array of degree programmes in the tertiary level. Another campus is located in Alabang which offers primary and secondary education. A third one is in Greenhills offering the same programme as the Alabang campus. There are also a few smaller La Salle schools as in Lipa City, Batangas for instance, which may be found all over the country.

school" anyway, it opted to remain as it was. Its clientele, which was composed of a <sup>145</sup> wide array of rich, as well as ambitious families, felt that its expansion would endanger the exclusive character of the institution and thus jeopardize the excellent quality of the education being offered.

The initial years of De La Salle was characterized by one word: "cosmopolitan", i.e. Castilian. English was hardly ever used inside or even outside the classrooms. The boys studied in Spanish, ate, played and prayed using the language. There were hardly any Filipinos enrolled in the school; the school population was made up mainly of Spaniards. The very few Filipinos who were in the school thus organized an "All Filipino" group to encourage a stronger sense of unity and friendship among them, and so as not to feel too alienated in the campus.

Classes began at 7:30 a.m. and lasted till 3:30 p.m. The school was so regimented that after the morning bell<sup>57</sup>, boys lined up, 2 x 2 and were led by a brother into the classrooms. Seating was according to intelligence, so that boys who were smarter sat in front, while those who were less gifted sat in the back, in a descending order of talent. The students wore uniforms, which consisted of white pants, either long or short, and white shirts with a tie in any color. Prayers were said at the beginning and end of every class session. After the morning prayers, boys had lessons in the Christian doctrine for half an hour. This was followed by Arithmetic, which was so rigorous that La Salle graduates later on gained the reputation of being good mathematicians.

A mid-morning recess of cookies and juice, was given to the students at the classroom hallways. This was followed by reading and spelling lessons and then by Spanish, which later became English, as the government required all schools to have

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<sup>57</sup> The "morning bell" in any school in the Philippines refers to the practice of ringing the bell first thing in the morning, usually between 7:00 - 7:30, so that students can gather to participate in the flag ceremony. This also gives the school principal the chance to make certain announcements which may be crucial to the entire school populace.

English as the medium of instruction. English was the only language allowed spoken on the premises; any one caught talking in any other language would be fined if caught. 146

It should be noted that as the days went by, the La Salle administrators realized that the use of the Spanish system would be an exercise in futility because not only will it drive students away from the school, it would also catch the ire of the government. So, they decided to modify the system in its entirety, using the western system as their model. This process, gave the school the reputation of engaging in "sajonismo" or extreme Americanism because of the extent to which they have imbibed most of the practices of the educational system in the west. Nevertheless, enrollment increased steadily. In fact, schools like the Ateneo and Letran used La Salle as a model in their shift from being a Spanish-based school to an American-based one.

The textbooks used were all written and/or published in the US, making the children more acquainted with the American way of life and long for things which may or may not be available in the country as snow, apples and Hershey's chocolates. At 11:45 a.m., the boys and brothers shared a common table at the refectory. Each class had a table of its own, with a Brother in-charge.

Afternoon classes included geography, drawing and music, as well as sports, as baseball, football, marathon, track and field and basketball. To encourage the students to excel in sports, an annual field day featuring their athletic capabilities was developed under Brother Anthony Kilbourne, the second American to join the school. He stayed for two decades, and taught the boys quite a few subjects, including calligraphy, philosophy and even business, tennis and volleyball.

One of the few lay teachers to have joined the institution at that time was Mr. Juan Medrano, a Filipino, who built himself up as a "father figure" to all the students. He was extremely dedicated to the education as well as the discipline of the students and was well-loved by everyone. He became the school principal where he saw to it that throughout the school year, a series of reports, both monthly and bi-

monthly, on each boys academic progress was made. Monthly reports were based on <sup>147</sup> oral tests and accompanied by certificates: green (pass); red (fail); and white (top honors). Bi-monthly reports were based on more difficult written examinations, where success was rewarded with prizes like holy images, books, rosaries, awarded by no less than the Archbishop of Manila in his home. A final report card was given at the end of the school year, but the boys will not know whether or not they have passed till they returned in June. This system was changed in the 1920's when a big gathering was held to celebrate the graduation of the seventh graders and the report cards of the rest of the student body were also distributed.

The 1930's became witness to a number of changes in De La Salle with more and more students seeking admission. What was interesting was the desire of an ethnic group, the Chinese, who previously had no need for any other type of education other than the one offered by Letran, thought that La Salle's good reputation in Mathematics was a big plus to the educational system. Slowly, the Chinese enrolled in De La Salle. Today, there are so many Chinese in the school, in all levels, that a stranger may get lost in the midst of all of them on campus. A popular anecdote in the La Salle campus, is that whenever you take a step in the La Salle grounds, you are bound to meet at least one Chinese. This is very true, especially in the university level, where they are enrolled in Engineering, Computer Science, Mathematics, and other highly technical courses, where they not only do well, but excel. In addition, the move to have a Filipino Christian Brothers Community was presented. This was not to be achieved till the post-war period after a series of studies and negotiations. It was only in 1970 when the Brothers Community in the Philippines became an independent province of the order, under the leadership of Brother Benildo Feliciano.

The rivalry between La Salle and Ateneo also emerged in 1939, as they played for the Quezon (in honor of former President Quezon, who donated the major prizes) trophy in basketball. La Salle emerged victorious in this first meeting, but things

have been a seesaw battle ever since. The intense rivalry between them has extended to<sup>148</sup> all levels, including the curriculum they offer, the quality of their graduates, the way the students dress up, among others. Thus the terms like "green blooded" (La Sallite<sup>58</sup>) and "blue blooded" (Atenean<sup>59</sup>) came into being.

Perhaps the biggest achievement of the period was the result of the study made by a Columbia University professor after being commissioned by the Commonwealth government on the quality of schools in Manila. The findings were generally dismal, but De La Salle was selected as the only institution which provided quality education, with a progressive faculty and the finest campus in town.

In 1940, seventeen German brothers arrived and settled in Manila. Their arrival increased the number of Brothers considerably from 28 to 1,200. They were initially not allowed to practice either as teachers or clergymen at the start of the Japanese-American hostilities, and were in fact incarcerated. But when the Japanese gained control of the islands in 1941, the Germans were released, and the American priests were the ones brought to the concentration camps. La Salle was one of the few private schools which was allowed to operate during the Japanese occupation.

Under the Germans, La Salle changed its name to the "Christian Brothers Academy" together with a new address, Daita Avenue<sup>60</sup> Only single session classes were held, which lasted from 7:30 a.m. through 1:00 p.m. It was no longer a boarding school, nor did it offer meals. Only the right wing of the campus was allowed to be used. High school boys had to go to the Saint Scholastica's College, a Benedictine-run girls' school located right across the street, due to lack of space. This was considered the only option left open to the school administrators, who did not want to halt the class sessions because of the hostilities.

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58 La Sallite is the name given to any one who attends De La Salle.

59 Atenean is the name given to any one who attends Ateneo.

60 All the street names were changed to Japanese during the three-year period of the occupation.

In late 1944, Manila was being bombed regularly, thus necessitating the closing of all schools. La Salle served as a refuge for many rich families who had to leave their mansions because of fear of Japanese attacks. The school's head, Brother Egbert Xavier was arrested by the Japanese, never to be seen again. A bloody massacre took place immediately thereafter, as Filipinos and Germans were killed by the Japanese along the school hallways and even in the school chapel, where many were hiding. The campus did not suffer from complete destruction, but nevertheless had to undergo major renovation after the war.

On July 9, 1945, the high school department re-opened, with corridors as classrooms. On August 14, 1945, Brother Anthony Ferdinand went to Manila to reorganize the grade school department and resumed classes in tents built at the school grounds. By the end of 1949, the entire school had been completely renovated.

By the 1950's, a gymnasium has been erected for use by all the faculty, staff and students. Expansion also transpired, with schools opening up in Bacolod, Iligan and Greenhills. The early period also saw the arrival of Brother Gabriel Connon, an open-minded, progressive school president, whose main concerns included the development of the curriculum in all academic fields, as well as major improvements in sports, which would make the school an even more viable learning institution in the country and in the world. More buildings were erected, as the St. Joseph Building for instance, which would give more classroom space and thus encourage greater student attendance. More degree programmes were included in the curriculum, including Engineering, Education and the Graduate School of Business.

In 1968, the students held a huge strike because of three issues: [1] the increasing number of rich students on campus; [2] the need for a more nationalistic approach to education, the increase in the number of Filipino administrators, use of more Filipino-authored textbooks, etc.; [3] need for a good academic education with greater social awareness and responsibility instilled in the students. This proved to be a turning

point in the history of the institution, not only because this was the first of its kind on <sup>150</sup> campus, but also because it necessitated major changes in the school. A Catechetical Program was introduced, which allowed the college students to teach less fortunate students in the neighborhood; there is a greater emphasis on social action programs; organization of a Textbook Committee to take charge of the publication of books which focused on Filipino values and culture; establishment of a Development Office to expand financial aid programmes to the less fortunate.

In 1973, after many debates on the issue, La Salle finally became co-educational. A stipulation was noted however, whereby 60% of the school population will continue being male, to maintain its image as an exclusive school. Also in the same year, a School of Industrial Technology was established to produce experts trained in sophisticated machinery. The years following were also significant as the school increased cooperative agreements (consortia) with other schools as the Philippine Christian University (PCU), Saint Paul College of Manila (SPCM), Saint Scholastica's College (St. Scho.), Ateneo de Manila and the University of the Philippines (UP) which would allow students from these schools to cross-enrol in courses which may not be offered by their home school, or during the summer months, when less courses were offered. In addition, these schools also have joint projects together in the publication of academic materials, seminars on education, among others.

One of the major achievements of this consortium, was the establishment of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in Makati, a school offering graduate studies in business. It has gained international repute, as one of the few institutions in the world which focuses primarily on doing business in a particular region, which in this case happens to be Asia. Students from all over the area and the world, have enrolled in this school, where administrators and faculty members come from basically three schools, the Ateneo, De La Salle and UP. In addition, La Salle also has ties with the Waseda University of Tokyo for faculty and student exchanges. This has expanded in recent

151  
years, as the university now offers Japanese studies as a result of a tie-up between the Philippine and Japanese governments. They also offer China Studies, American Studies and a soon to be opened Malay studies department, in their desire to increase the scope of the Political Science as well as the History departments of the university.

On February 15, 1975, the School of Engineering opened the Computer Center to fill the need for greater scientific and technical development in the country. On December 19, 1975, the school became a corporation under a Board of Trustees made up of Brothers and laymen, with a Brother as President at all times. Greater emphasis is given to the development of Filipino-Asian nationalism to drive the Filipinos away from their colonial background, and develop his own identity.

In 1984, the grade school department in Taft, moved to Alabang, thus devoting the entire Taft Avenue campus to the college students. Student population has increased rapidly and has now reached about 6,000 full-time students. La Salle education has continued to pursue the fulfillment of its mission statement, which provides that the "...institution is dedicated to exercise and promote the Ministry of Christian Education. The school is the preferred field of action for the Brothers' Apostolate. The institute is devoted to the poor in a preferential way, but this does not exclude the possibility of educational commitments to other sectors of society".

Based on its charter, the school aims to provide an educational system characterized by:

- (a) Practicability - oriented to achievement without being manipulative
- (b) Pertinent - answers the current imperatives of the clientele that it seeks to have, as the need for justice, development and equality, which are pertinent questions asked by students of third world countries.
- (c) Extended - includes new fields of specialization logically arising from its present competencies. A very good example of this would be the fact that La Salle was the very first university to offer an undergraduate degree in Computer Science.



Today, Computer Science courses are offered to both La Sallites, and other outsiders, who may just be interested in learning the new developments in the field, in classes offered to different age groups during weekends and the summer vacation.

(d) Specialized - seeks depth of knowledge continuously renewed by research as evidenced by their encouragement of post-graduate work among their faculty members, and the continued search for funding for research.

(e) Liberal - refuses to accept tradition unquestioningly; desire to free itself from prejudice, bias and narrow-mindedness, so that classes are held without inhibition, and with freedom on the part of both the professor and the students to engage in healthy discussions and debates.

(f) Professional - develop the ability to do all things well regardless of how trivial they may be, from the academic courses, to the development of physical strength.

(g) Christian in vision and values - professional competence, social awareness, involvement in community affairs and a keen sense of Filipino culture, which are all necessary in the development of a well-educated, yet spiritually enriched Filipino.

In this regard, De La Salle has come a long way from the old villa in Paco. Despite the changes however, the Christian Brothers have continued in their mission of providing the youth with the best kind of education they could possibly offer. Expansion has continued, as well as the re-structuring of the school organization, to give enough room for the less fortunate to enter the school. Political awareness has also increased with students becoming more involved in national issues, as exemplified by their participation in rallies, the quality of articles in their school paper, the "La Sallian" and even in their alumni magazine, the "Abut-Tanaw". One thing that has also remained is the continuity in the fulfillment of the avowed values originally conceived by St. John Baptist De La Salle: Religio, Mores, Cultura (Religion, Mores and Culture), involving man's relationship with God, with others and with his environment.

C. The University of the Philippines' Student Catholic Action (UPSCA).

The University of the Philippines (UP) has always had the reputation of having the most active and politically inclined students as well as organizations and interest groups. This may be due to a number of factors:

(a) In the first place, when the university was established in 1908, it vowed not to be influenced in any way by any particular group, religion or ideology. It has remained for the most part, extremely liberal with a school population so diverse that no one can really characterize the typical "UP student". Because of these, there is an emergence of a wide array of groups catering to the many needs of the students as well as the faculty. There are academic groups, (one for every major program), religious organizations, as well as an extremely active fraternity/sorority and student council.

(b) Since the UP was established during the American occupation, when the separation of church and state has become one of the main policies pursued by the Americans in the country, the UP has become not only the state university, but the institutional symbol of free orientation (Masakayan, et.al., 1957). The very reason for UP's existence was to prove that in fact, quality education should be made available to everyone, and not merely to a select group of individuals who could afford to pay the tuition fees as well as profess the same religious convictions. This tradition has been carried on till this very day.

(c) The university has its own charter, which gives the administration, faculty and students the freedom to conduct their own affairs, including the formulation of its own curriculum. This also gives them the freedom to override any proclamation of the Department of Education and Culture, if they feel that it does not coincide with the principles on which the university has been built. This charter played a significant role

in the early 1980's when the Education Bill was presented to the Philippine legislature<sup>61</sup> which provided that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports will begin to have full control of all schools, colleges and universities, including the curriculum and the formation and development of lesson plans<sup>62</sup>. These were to be supervised and checked, on a regular basis, by government representatives, to see to it that all the lessons taught in the schools would work hand-in-hand with the programmes of the DECS. This bill would have also minimized dissent over any governmental action and policy and make the schools, another rubberstamp of any law passed, just like the legislature. This bill would have also put a damper on increasing student unrest, which seemed to have grown through the years. Fortunately, the bill did not become a law any time during the Marcos dictatorship.

One of the more visible organizations cum religious interest groups in the UP campus is the University of the Philippines Student Catholic Action or UPSCA. The UPSCA was initially formed in the first university campus in Padre Faura<sup>63</sup> under the leadership of Fr. Delaney. Being a scholarly man himself, he began the organization, bearing in mind a socio-anthropological principle which states that "change in any culture may be effected most rapidly only through behavior, activity or organization already existing in some strength" (Masakayan, et.al. 1957).

With the assistance of fraternity and sorority student leaders, who seemed interested in a more spiritual environment on campus, the organization was formed, with

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61 At that time, the legislature was known as the "Batasang Pambansa" (National Legislature). As in any authoritarian government, the legislature was merely a rubberstamp of the Office of the President. The bill was only presented in the legislature for reasons of formality; Marcos really wanted to have complete control over the schools, because of his fear that he may be taken out of power, with increasing campus violence.

62 Unlike in the elementary and high school levels, university professors are no longer required to submit their lesson plans to their respective departmental chairpersons. They are given utmost authority to run their class in the manner they saw fit, for so long as they cover the material agreed upon by the faculty.

63 The very first UP Campus was built in Padre Faura, a couple of blocks away from the De La Salle. As time went on, and the need for a bigger campus became more urgent, a huge campus was built in Diliman, Quezon City, just outside Manila. This campus was, and still is so big, that it is now the main campus of the university. Padre Faura has since then offered just a few major programs including dentistry, and a few undergraduate courses.

no less than the former Dean of the College of Engineering, Dr. Vidal Tan as its first faculty adviser. The organization is highly centralized, with its main office initially in Padre Faura, and then Diliman, when the bigger campus was erected. Every unit, whether it be a college or school of the university, has an UPSCA chapter. There are also an Alumni Chapter, which handles the affairs of member students once they have graduated and keeps an update on their files; and a Commuters' Chapter which recruits members who do not live on campus. There is a Central Council of Leaders from the different chapters, from whom a President is subsequently elected. The structure is so systematized and mobilized that some observers think that it is the most organized and active group in the entire campus.

The group's activities are varied and extensive, including social work in the neighboring areas surrounding the university; dispensary work on the weekends; home visitation and sanitation drives; census taking; catechism work with children; adult education at least three times a week; catechetical work in the UP Integrated School or UPIS, the secondary school of the UP system; annual concert by their choir; semestral presentations of plays by their Radio and Drama Guild; competitive art exhibitions; publication of a tabloid which features all their activities and promotes some of their upcoming functions; symposia on various topics of interest to the student body; holding lectures on topics like love, courtship and marriage; sports activities; chapel maintenance and even odd construction/repair jobs by the engineering chapter; and finally, participation in campus elections as in the Student Council for instance, where it puts its own people to run for positions in the body, with the entire group supporting them and campaigning on their behalf. During the summer, as the students go home to their provinces, or even in their homes within or around Manila, they are advised to participate in citywide activities and render service to their community. Members may participate in any one of the above-mentioned activities, to which they feel their services are most needed.

An annual directory of members is kept, so as to ease communication as well as the transmittal of crucial news or developments within the organization. The said directory also contains the students' class schedules, as well as their free time, so that their participation in the organizational activities will fall during their free time and not during class hours. The expectations of the group are therefore adjusted to the individual's available time. A "poster committee" is also formed to handle the announcement of significant information by making visible posters all over the campus.

A Faculty-Employee faction of the organization, known as the Iota Eta Sigma has also been established. It was formed in 1953 with its own constitution, which clearly states that it is indeed a faction of the UPSCA. The members are free to participate as much as they would like to, to the various activities of the UPSCA. They may do so in any manner they see fit, for so long as they do not try to influence their students in any way, shape or form.

The organization does not hide its Catholic foundations, and to some extent, even prides itself of its belief in Catholic doctrine and practices. According to some, they are united by the fact that they have completely committed themselves to common activities which are undertaken on a regular basis along diverse lines of extra-curricular activities (Masakayan, 1957). Activities which may be thought of as socially and community-oriented will be considered and perhaps even be undertaken in the future.

Their active participation on and off campus has made it one of the best organizations on campus in terms of activity, member participation and continuity. There were even times that the UPSCA had control of both the UP Student Council and the editorial board of the Philippine Collegian (eg. 1956-57 Student Council had an UPSCA majority). And although its influence, like all other social action groups in the country tended to falter quite a bit during the Marcos dictatorship, their strength and significance as a group became felt once again from 1980 onward and continues to do so till today. Once again, the organization has become a viable religio-political group

within the UP campus. The UPSCA has once again gained majority of the seats in the recent student council election. It is also very active in making the university students more aware of the various governmental bills presented to the congress, with hopes of making the average student more involved in national politics, moreso now, when people are more free to express their views without fear of possible incarceration. And if the members of the UPSCA are to be believed, will remain as one in the years to come.

D. The Ateneo de Manila (Jesuits in the Philippines). The Ateneo de Manila in the Philippines, is considered one of the best schools in the country. Under the leadership of the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, the institution has gone through considerable changes since its early years during the Spanish period. It can be traced as far back as 1859, when the Governor-General of Manila, Norzagaray, ordered the Jesuits to take over the state-supported parochial school, the "escuela pia", which was located in Intramuros, the walled city<sup>64</sup>. Upon the resumption of control by the Jesuits, the school's name was changed to "Escuela Municipal" or Municipal School, which received an annual subsidy from the city government. The school underwent a few changes in its structure as well as the courses it offered, so that a five-year program was subsequently added to the curriculum, leading to a degree in Bachelor of Arts. This was later extended to six and later on 7 years, at which time, the school changed its name once again to "Ateneo Municipal de Manila" or the Ateneo Municipal in Manila, where not only Spaniards gained admission, but Filipinos<sup>65</sup> and Chinese Mestizos<sup>66</sup> as well.

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<sup>64</sup> The Spaniards, because of their extreme fear of foreigners and natives, put a wall around the Intramuros, a city within Manila, so as not to be "inflicted" by any disease which the Chinese, who live closeby in the so-called "Parian" may have. This wall, they thought, would protect them from the Chinese, and others like them, who may carry contagious illnesses.

<sup>65</sup> Most of the Filipinos enrolled at the Ateneo during its early years were Ilustrados, or Spanish Filipinos.

<sup>66</sup> Chinese mestizos, though a rarity at that time, were products of inter-racial marriages, specifically Spaniards and Chinese.

The Bachelor of Arts program was very liberal in character, i.e. with a wide diversity of courses offered including theology, philosophy, social sciences, natural sciences, languages, religion, music and even technical courses as surveying for instance. The objective behind an Atenean educational system was governed by the very principles by which the Jesuits also abide by, as the "defense and propagation of the faith and the salvation of souls" (Bonoan, 1988). These were contained in the "Ratio Studiorum" or Plan of Studies, a document which contains the guidelines governing a Jesuit educational system. This was basically a book on educational theory which included a syllabus of studies, series of norms for administrators and a treatise on practical teaching for the secondary school. It also included the summaries of the experiences and observations of many generations of Jesuits. Among them:

(a) Jesuit education is seen as instrumental, where education is perceived to be not an end in itself, but a means toward the achievement of specified goals.

(b) Jesuit education is student-centered, where the main goals are the development of independent and responsible adults.

(c) It is also a system that is structured, yet flexible.

(d) There should also be harmony between the development of the body and the mind.

(e) Thorough development and mastery of the subject matter are extremely necessary.

In addition, the Jesuit administrators are also governed by eleven principles which have been used by the institution for 400 years:

(a) The development of one's intellect and love for God. This is a result of St. Ignatius de Loyola's life as a committed spiritual leader.

(b) It is the main goal of the Atenean educators to master their academic pursuits, whatever they may be.

(c) The leadership capabilities of the Atenean students should be developed and allowed to reach its maximum potential in the school, with hopes of utilizing these very skills in the society in which they are expected to contribute their talents in the future, the Philippines.

(d) The various fields of study offered should provide a comprehensive curriculum which will always remind the student to develop a more Christian perspective on his life and work. Thus, students are required to take a number of liberal arts courses, together with theology and philosophy, regardless of their major.

(e) The teaching of theology should be given primary importance at all times, and in every educational level. This will reinforce the idea that spiritual values are more important than any other material thing.

(f) Every faculty member and academic department should realize the need for a good, comprehensive and religious educational foundation for the students. A more "humane" approach is required and in fact, should be practiced by any one working in any way for the university.

(g) Development of good moral values and attitudes should be instilled in every student.

(h) Professors should be concerned, on an individual basis with every single student in the school.

(i) The Philippine's history should be treasured at all times and be manifested in terms of the amount of research on or about the country; the museums to preserve the culture; and the continued pursuit for an improved understanding of what the country is really all about, i.e. a more Filipino approach to research.

(j) The Jesuit schools should always be progressive, open to change and willing to undergo improvements if necessary, to make the institution more development-oriented.



(k) The schools should also be flexible and increase their adaptability to the changing times.

Fundamental to all these goals and objectives is the perception that education should always consider one's Christianity renewed, enriched and enhanced. His concerns should extend beyond his own and reach out to the community, where his services are needed. Much like St. Ignatius de Loyola, a Spanish nobleman himself, who was also a social activist. Initially though, he was, like other men of royalty, simply enjoying the benefits of wealth, fame and power in sports, parties, and other social activities. He even participated in a battle to defend his country from the French, not so much because he was nationalistic, but rather, because he wanted to be famous. Unfortunately, on May 20, 1521, he was hit by a cannon ball, which shattered a leg and injured the other.

While recuperating, he managed to read books on Jesus Christ, the lives of saints and other holy beings, until he realized that this was in fact, the kind of life he wanted to lead, i.e., to render service to God and his fellow man. Upon recovery, he opted to go on a journey which would inevitably bring him to Jerusalem. His first stop was Montserrat, Spain, where he vowed to dedicate his life to the cause of the church. He went on to Manresa, Spain where he lived as a pilgrim, begging for food and supplies. He finally reached Jerusalem in 1523 where he found himself still unclear as to what he really wanted to do for the rest of his life.

He proceeded to Barcelona, where at 30 years of age, he went to school to get a university degree. During his free time, he preached about the life of the Lord and His ways, getting into trouble sometimes with the school administration because he was not "qualified", i.e., he was neither a priest or a nun, to lead such types of activities.

From there, he went to Salamanca, then France, where he enrolled at the University of Paris in 1528. There he gained quite a following, mostly friends and acquaintances who listened and believed in his word. By 1534, there were seven men

by his side, all of whom committed their lives to the church. As a group, they decided<sup>161</sup> to establish their own religious order, and dedicate their skills to the fulfillment of a mission. The mission was education. They slowly opened their schools in Spain and Sicily, reaching up to 40 by 1556. Since then, the number of Jesuit schools increased exponentially (approximately 2,000 all over the world), but they continue to maintain the very essence of a humane, liberal, religious and intellectual academic environment which their founder initially envisioned an educational system should be.

Jesuit education is also characterized by a "family atmosphere", where teachers are not only in the schools to instruct the students, but to serve as second parents as well. And since teachers are saddled with the objective of developing academic scholars and religious students, their responsibilities are increased even further. Character formation, leadership training, social participation, community awareness, among others, are just some of the values that they should develop in their students, alongside their academic development.

Schools under Jesuit control are also extremely selective, with an acceptance rate of only 17% in 1984 (O'Donnell, 1988). This characteristic will enable the system to develop to its fullest potential by training capable students in their respective fields of study.

When the Americans came in 1898, the Spanish-run and financed Ateneo had to make changes. In the first place, the school lost its subsidy due to the new policy of the separation of church and state. In addition, the medium of instruction was changed from Spanish to English, thus necessitating new books and increasing the need for teachers who were good in the language. Also, with the establishment of the public school system, the paramount position which Ateneo had in the academic community changed, for its supremacy was now being overshadowed by the availability of education to every single individual in society.

The necessary changes were made, but they were very painful adjustments indeed. The administrators were even so stubborn, refusing to make English the "lingua franca", and only teaching it an hour a day. Students suffered in this regard, because although they passed the governmental exams in all subject areas, they failed in English, because they were neither exposed nor trained properly in this subject. Enrollment was also kept at a standstill, with the populace preferring the good quality, clergy-free and no tuition public schools established by the American colonizers.

The administration of the school decided to bring in American Jesuits from Maryland in 1921, while re-assigning the Spanish Jesuits to India, with hopes that the former can initiate changes to improve the dismal situation. What followed was a radical transformation, consisting of the making of English as the medium of instruction, philosophy, natural sciences, drama and theatre, sports, athletics and even military training were included in the curriculum. Summer camps to Baguio, the country's summer capital in northern Luzon began a new era in the educational process, with more extra-curricular activities included in the curriculum and syllabi, based on the western model.

Enrollment increased steadily, but the need for teachers also became apparent. Lay teachers had to be taken in, who had to be paid as much or even more than their public school counterparts. Efforts were made to raise funds for this purpose, as the imposition of stiff tuition fees, donations from the private sector and even financial support from the congregation itself. In 1936, the College of Commerce opened, a two-year programme leading to an Associate in Commercial Science degree. A four-year course to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Commerce was also offered as an alternative. Later, a College of Industrial Chemistry, College of Law, and others were opened.

Since then, the school has expanded steadily offering primary, secondary and collegiate level courses, with a College of Law whose reputation is slowly

overshadowing that of the UP<sup>67</sup>. Atenean campuses have also been built all over the country, including the main campus in Quezon City (the Padre Faura campus was later sold to a hotel contractor), the Makati Law School, Cagayan, Cebu, Davao, Naga and Zamboanga. Like the De La Salle, it has also has expanded its enrollment to include women, while maintaining a 60% male population. In addition, the school is very much involved in community service as exemplified by the development of the Jesuit Volunteers program, an office which takes in student applicants who wish to teach or do social work in a provincial school for a year or two. The Placement Office of the College of Arts and Sciences also helps graduates have jobs in social development, teaching, community development, government service, among others.

Ateneo students, alumni and even their clergy, have also made themselves fairly visible in the political arena, staging rallies during the pre-martial law days, and even during the martial law period, as they protested ~~against~~ corruption and imperialism. The Jesuits were also very much involved in the February 1986 revolution when Pres. Marcos was ousted from office.

Their printing press has also been very active in coming up with textbooks which are authored by Filipinos for use in the schools, and monographs, position papers, among others, for the public to be made more aware of certain issues which may be relevant to their lives.

Steps have also been taken to revive the old Ratio Studiorum and make it more suitable to the times. This will help the Ateneans gain an academic experience which will help them make wiser decisions in their professional life and provide them the skills of expression to fulfill their goals in society.

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<sup>67</sup> Previously, the UP was the most reputable law school in the country. When the Ateneo Law School in Makati, Manila opened however, the results of the bar exams changed. The bar topnotcher was almost always an Atenean, and most of the top ten as well. This makes some people like me wonder whether the UP Law School has deteriorated considerably, or if the Ateneo is just so good that it is beginning to occupy the top spot in the field of law. Given a few more years, a more conclusive evidence may be made in this regard.

The modified Ratio Studiorum consists of the following tenets:

(a) *Eloquentia* (Eloquence): Bilingualism, the proficiency in Filipino and English is a pre-requisite for all students. Classes are to be taught only in one language - in a Filipino class, it should be completely Filipino; and in an English class, it should be completely English. Language and literature should be studied to develop analytical minds and communication skills and to learn to appreciate the arts as the very essence of human experience. The skills that are to be mastered in this regard are reading, writing, listening and speaking; clear thinking, analysis and influence; intuition, creativity and synthesis.

(b) *Scientia* (Science): The scientific method of research, consisting of empiricism in the formulation of hypotheses, gathering data and analyzing them in order to make rational conclusions will be encouraged at all times. Research shall be an integral part of the educational process in all levels, so that students will appreciate its value and the extent to which it may be helpful in the fulfillment of the twin goals of development and modernization. New technical equipment will also be purchased for use by everyone, not only to make the students more acquainted with them, but also to make the country more competitive in the world.

(c) *Sapientia* (Wisdom): Philosophy and theology shall be crucial to Atenean education. Philosophy, which is the critical analysis of life and man as expressed by many great men in years past, is important for all to truly understand life and one's self, as well as others. Theology is also important because it is only by knowing and understanding the life of Christ and His works, will the students feel one with their religion and their own spirituality. In addition, all these should be reflected in the way an individual lives his life now and in the future. Commitment to society, its politics, religious environment and social setting should also be on top of the students' list of priorities.

Teachers and classroom experience are very important for all these to be fulfilled because they will facilitate the learning process and help increase the pupils' awareness of what learning is, and what education is really all about. Teachers are supposed to be highly skilled in their field of study, continue pursuing research, utilize an array of teaching techniques and continue to dedicate their lives to the educational system.

On the whole therefore, the Ateneo has truly emerged as a university, in every sense of the word, offering a wide array of courses, which cater to diverse needs. They continue in their effort to help the country in the best way they know how, although education, which they try to make available to as many people as they could, shall remain as their priority. Unfortunately, financial constraints have made the initial goal of free education very difficult. And the current system of charging extremely high tuition fees has made it even more difficult to entice the lower classes to even consider an Atenean education. Except for a few scholarships, the majority of its students are still from the middle class upward. The only consolation though is that with the existence of quite a few Ateneans in different professions, as medicine, law, engineering, business, among others in the country, Ateneo can continue its legacy of helping the public and fulfilling their mission in the best way they know how. As an interest group, it maintains its concern for justice and equality, truth and Christianity, and will continue to fight for them through its various programmes both within the university and in the community.

E. Catholics in the Philippines. Catholics in the Philippines have always been at the forefront of political, economic and social activities in the country. If only by sheer number, (approximately 48 million out of a total of 55 million Filipinos), they have managed to dominate all arenas since the period of Spanish colonization and have

become one of the most potent political forces as well. They have, through the years, shown many changes not only in the manner by which they profess their faith, but also in the extent to which they have involved themselves in politics.

During the Spanish regime, most Catholics were totally subservient to their conquerors, not only because they had full control of the country, but also because they introduced a doctrine which espoused both total obedience and subservience to both the tenets of the faith as well as its clergy. Questioning the friars or nuns was a "no-no" as well as considered socially unacceptable<sup>68</sup>. Even towns and cities are built such that the church lies at their very center.

This led to abuse and corruption on the part of the clergy, who to some extent, were more powerful than the civil and military officials. After all, they were in control of the people's minds, bodies and souls. This stigma, if you will, of the natives toward the clergy, has produced a populace who is submissive, not inquisitive and sometimes even totally irrational to whatever was told to them by the priest. Parents encouraged their children to enter the priesthood or the monastery because it would ease the way for the family's salvation; girls remained prudent at all times because it was sinful to be anything but shy, unassuming and modest; boys helped in Sunday masses in any capacity, whether or not they liked it, to be in good graces with the parish priests as well as the Lord. Donations to the church should be given every Sunday, and during every religious holiday or feast. The purchase of novenas, scapulars, religious medals, statues of the Holy Family and Saints meant being a good, practicing Catholic. A visit to any Filipino home, be it in the urban or rural area would make any guest surprised as to the number of religious items in the entire house. Religious holidays in the form of the town "fiesta", which is in honor of the town's patron saint, also increased in number

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<sup>68</sup> By their very nature, Filipinos are very polite. Every authority figure is addressed by his/her title, and not his real name at all times. Thus, priests are called Father, nuns, sister, etc. Even younger siblings call their older siblings by certain titles, like "ate", "ditse", "diko", among others. Doing otherwise is considered disrespectful, and socially unacceptable. Of course, modern times have changed this slightly, but the general rule of politeness and respect for the elders is still basically followed.

as well as pageantry. The poorest families would sell everything they had just to have a celebration in their homes; this would according to many, bring ample graces and blessings to the family which would last an entire year, or until the next "fiesta".

The natives were indeed very receptive to the faith and to the practices which were introduced. So much so that upon looking at the movements against the Spaniards, the focus of all their anger and frustration was not in the religion itself, but in the clergy and their oppressive ways. Of course, there were people like Aglipay, who really felt that Catholicism was not for him, and thus decided to have his own religious order, but this was and still is, an exception rather than the rule.

The political activities of the Filipinos at this time were extremely limited. It was only when the Propaganda Movement, and later on the KKK and other revolutionary groups did the Catholics actually raise their arms to overcome Spanish control.

During the American period, the Catholics in the country had less concern for their faith and more concern for the enjoyment of the various "gifts" that democracy had to offer. Filipinos became increasingly interested in political participation and representation, the public school system and elections, so much so that religion took a back seat. This only lasted for a while though, because as the democratic institutions were slowly entrenched into the system, religion came into the fore once again, when the "religious teaching bill"<sup>69</sup> and others like it, were presented to the legislature.

The Catholics also became involved with issues as the friar lands question, the role of the Catholic schools in the community and changing role of the parish priest in society, with the separation of church and state. But although the general populace became more active in the debates, they did not seem to find any contradiction between their religion and democracy, and instead practiced both of them simultaneously. It

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<sup>69</sup> This will be discussed in greater length in the next chapter.



seemed at least on the surface, that democracy was the best-suited ideology to the Filipino people, and provided the answer to all their needs. Of course, problems emerged much later in the country's history with the democratic system unable to solve all societal problems, but it was not a case of conflict between Catholicism and democracy, but an interplay of factors, which caused democracy to fail.

When the Japanese came, many Catholics sought refuge in the church, and the catholic schools whenever they were fearful of a Japanese attack on their village or town. Catholics remained faithful, and did not waiver in their religious convictions. However, their activities were limited to Sunday service, religious festivities, with minimal pageantry and hardly any political involvement, except, in support of some of the underground movements against the Japanese.

Liberation meant the full enforcement of the concept of the separation of church and state. This meant that Catholics, as well as their archbishops and priests had to limit their activities to the church and the schools they ran. The Catholics as a group became apolitical to a certain degree, with very minimal governmental intervention. They intervened only when their interests were at stake or if there were laws which directly affected the manner in which they ran their schools and/or church.

Their interest was only renewed during periods of crisis, as during the Marcos era, where innocent people were either incarcerated or executed, poor people were flooding the streets and food prices increased exorbitantly. At that time, the Catholics not only became politically aware, but politically active as well, leading peaceful demonstrations in the cities and prayer rallies for peace. The pulpit became the center once again of political dissent as the priest gave sermons on honesty and the need for justice. The Cardinal usually comes up with a newsletter about certain crucial issues plaguing the country to enlighten the people, be more inquisitive, and to re-assess all the facts before coming up with a decision. A good example would be that published prior to a national election in the 1980's where Marcos said that anyone who did not vote

would be committing a mortal sin. This was supported by the ever-fearful Catholic Womens' League in an article published in all the major papers. The Cardinal then made his own newsletter which was distributed to the various dioceses during Sunday service, at which time his message was that voting was a personal right and should be practiced, if and only if his conscience believes that it is the right thing for him to do. Hardly any one voted during the election that year.

Other issues as abortion, prostitution, drugs, graft and corruption, child abuse, among others are other examples in which the church waged its own battle to help government "rebuild" the country's social environment.

The climax of their involvement in governmental affairs came after the death of Ninoy Aquino in 1983, which many claim was a result of a conspiracy within the Marcos government. Though it remains unproven till this day, the incident triggered a lot of uncertainty and doubt among many Catholics, and has led to the increasing loss of viability of the administration and the need for a major change in the political system. All of a sudden, people were more persevering in their desire for change, and more adamant in their demands. Rallies were held everywhere, including the business district, Makati. Even doctors, who were initially extremely apolitical, seemed to have risen from the grave and participated in the activities. Students, most of whom have not known any other president but Marcos, went out to the streets together with their teachers and administrators, clergymen and nuns, to voice out their opinions.

These rallies unlike those in the 1960's and early 70's were peaceful and in fact, exhilarating for the participants. Maximum tolerance was the government's answer to these assemblies as the number of participants increased daily. Actually, Marcos had no choice; incarcerating all of them was an impossibility because of the obvious lack of prison space and manpower to have full control over them. Besides, it would only create greater unrest, and cause his credibility to decrease even more.

In fact, in 1979 Ben Muego, a respected Southeast Asia specialist, wrote an article for Southeast Asia Affairs, entitled, "The Philippines: From Martial Law to Crisis Government". In this article, he mentioned that the Catholic Church is perhaps the only organization, other than the Armed Forces of the Philippines, which has the capability of overthrowing the martial law regime of Marcos. This, according to him, may be accomplished through the unique kind of relationship which the church and government have, that of "critical collaboration" (Muego, 1979). This meant that the church hierarchy is supportive of the laws which may be favorable to the majority of the population, while against the oppression and corruption of the current regime. Being so, it is willing to cooperate with government, while being extremely careful not to be closely affiliated with any particular national leader lest it be accused of being co-opted into the national government. In addition, utmost tolerance is to be the rule of the game at all times, with confrontation being the last resort. Violence should also be avoided because it will only be more detrimental to the plight of the Filipino people.

What is worth noting however, is the degree of factionalism which exists in the church hierarchy on the relationship between religion and government, and the extent to which the former tries to influence the latter on how to run things in the country.

Ever since the Spaniards introduced Catholicism to the country, the church hierarchy has always been divided. Under the Spaniards, there were the more conservative Dominicans and Franciscans and the more progressive and liberal Jesuits. The Conservatives wanted the natives to be completely subservient to them and the rules they have imposed, while the liberals wanted the Filipinos to learn to think for themselves and engage in more activities outside the church, as the academe, for instance. When the Americans came, a state of confusion emerged as the Spanish priests battled it out with their American replacements. Until the Spaniards were willing to give up their power and turn it over to the American clergy, peace was nowhere in sight. Upon independence, the church had to re-group, to find its place in the democracy which was slowly emerging.

According to de la Costa (1965), the church and the onset of democracy were initially strange bedfellows. It took a while for them to realize that they could in fact have an interactive relationship despite the separation of church and state. The church was and still is, an association aimed at satisfying the religious needs of its members, or what these members consider to be their religious needs. It is a society established by no less than the Son of God, with the purpose of taking care of man's life on earth and beyond. Democracy on the otherhand, is a political organization, in which authority resides in an inherent and permanent fashion in the people, i.e. in the greater majority.

The relationship between democracy and the church should be characterized by mutual respect and cordial cooperation. Mutual respect refers to the church's recognition in civil society of an independent authority in the temporal order which belongs to it by nature, and is derived from God, the author of nature. A democratic society should recognize this inalienable right of its members to engage in freedom of worship, and moreso, in the freedom to participate in religious organizations which do not constitute a danger to the common good. Cordial cooperation refers to the need for the church to cooperate with civilian authorities to bring about the development of peace and justice. There should be a sense of moral obligation, rooted in religious belief, in order for peace and justice to remain.

As in any relationship, conflicts between them are bound to arise. In the case of the Philippines, this usually arises when the church feels that its interests are endangered or if their spirituality is being compromised. The government on the otherhand, would rise up in opposition against any clerical outcry for increased power or control.

Incidents such as these have given rise to the factions within the church hierarchy, as represented by groups as:

172

(a) Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP), made up of Catholic priests and nuns, numbering about 2500 priests and 7000 nuns in 1978, and have since then almost doubled those figures.

(b) Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) made of bishops, both foreigners and Filipinos.

Prior to 1980, this group was also factionalized into three sub-groups: [a] Cardinal Rosales and his followers, who were all supportive of governmental policies; [b] the Moderates under Cardinal Sin (he eventually took over Cardinal Rosales' position as the Archbishop of Manila, upon the latter's death), whose policy of critical collaboration has raised a few eyebrows among the Catholics and non-Catholics alike; [c] Francisco Claver and his group of 13-24 bishops, all of whom were of the liberal persuasion, and whose opposition to martial law, Marcos and his cronies were known by everyone. This group was made up of younger clergy men, in the smaller dioceses and whose commitment to social action goals was beyond question, i.e. they were willing to raise arms and even die for the cause if necessary.

Since then, Cardinal Sin has become the leader of the CBCP, expressing a more vigorous stance against the Marcos dictatorship and a more supportive alliance with the Aquino government. Sin has been very active in social reform programs, specifically those pertaining to abortion, prostitution, drugs and child abuse. Education, although as important as any other social issues, has not been given quite as much importance by any of the groups. This scenario may be due to the fact that the church does not really have to intervene actively in the learning process, because it is already taken care of by the school. What concerns the church more are the issues which may jeopardize the educational system as a whole, and whose consequences may be beyond repair.

Church-run schools are asked to conduct their classes in such a manner that proper values are inculcated in the students, so that they will not get involved in any misdemeanor, or develop bad habits. Special seminars are also conducted, where

experts, as doctors, drug rehabilitation center administrators, give lectures on the dangers of drugs. Movies on these issues, made by groups such as the Asian Social Institute in Manila (a group dedicated to the production, publication and research of the problems plaguing the country, with recommendations for change which may be presented to government and other agencies for consideration) for instance, as well as written material published by the Jesuits, etc. are distributed regularly to make them increasingly aware of the difficulties they may encounter once they start using these dangerous substances, or develop bad sexual habits.

Public and privately-owned schools on the otherhand, do much of the same, except that they do them with utmost care and without any religious bias. Church support can still be felt in these institutions however, as they are agencies in which the clergy distribute their position papers, and conduct their seminars.

Today, the church is very active once again, not only in social issues, but even in government. On November 26, 1987, the CBCP issued a pastoral letter urging for the ratification of the new constitution. In addition, Bishop Antonio Fortich of Bacolod was selected as the Chairman of the National Ceasefire Committee in the negotiations with the communists. Mrs. Aquino is always in need of the advice and support of her counselors, made up mostly of clergy men. Even the cabinet meetings now begin with one of the officials leading a prayer. Proof of the fact that the church continues to maintain a powerful position in Philippine society.

F. The Protestants and Other Religious Groups. The Protestants are considered the second largest religious group in the Philippines. They comprise about five percent of the total population, and pride themselves in being a coherent, active and devout ministry. As the American Protestant missionaries arrived in 1901, each sect agreed to have its own geographical area of control. Thus, the emergence of the term "spiritual

geography" (Gowing, 1967), which basically referred to the various regions in the country, and the sect which controls them. This is not to say however, that the said regions have been taken over from the Catholics, for this is not the case. In most of these areas, the Protestants were and still are the minority.

The Methodists took over the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan, all in the country's largest island, Luzon. The Presbyterians settled in the Southern Luzon area, including Batangas, Bicol, Quezon, among others and agreed to work with the Baptists in the Visayas. The United Brethren took the helm in the Ilocos Provinces and La Union. The City of Manila was basically free for anyone to establish their own church.

Some changes have occurred since then, with other denominations coming in an out of various areas. In January 1902, the Methodists decided to move to the provinces of Bontoc, Lepanto and Abra and try to convert people to their faith. The Congregationalists meanwhile, went to Mindanao, together with other religious groups. This process of "spiritual geography" is made possible with the establishment of the Evangelical Union, a conglomeration of most of the Protestant groups, who settled in the Philippines. The Union had two main objectives: (Gowing, 1967)

(a) The development of a "comity arrangement" which would divide the country among the various sects to avoid competition, repetition and overlapping of work or mission objectives.

(b) The use of the title, "The Evangelical Church" to refer to all the Protestant sects which are members of the Union. This union has hastened the spread of the Protestant faith in the islands in terms of its efficiency, scope and ecumenical planning. It managed to allow the groups to work on their own and fulfill their objectives, while keeping them together in the service of the Lord. Fellowship was maintained, as each group tried to find its own niche in society and indulge in activities which would make the faith more palatable to the Filipino Catholics' taste.

This meant a lot of hard work and sacrifice on their part because the populace was not as receptive as they thought, to their cause. Although some frustrated groups were easily enjoined to the fold, the rest were stubborn and indifferent. Perhaps, the 333 years of Spanish rule was long enough to make them feel comfortable with Catholicism and its tenets and rituals. In addition, with the onset of Filipino-American hostilities, many natives became suspicious of the honesty of American intentions in the country. A few violent incidents against Protestant missionaries have been reported. Harassment by petty officials, disruption of Sunday services, boycotts, bureaucratic nitpicking on basic things as burial permits for the Protestants, were some proofs of an initially negative attitude towards the Protestants. But as the hostilities ceased and the Filipinos realized the injustices they were still experiencing from some Spanish friars who were still in the country, they chose to make their move. Conversion seemed to be the obvious step and Protestantism was there to take them in.

Some Protestant groups refused to join the union however. A good example is the Protestant Episcopal Church, which in 1901 established the Missionary District of the Philippines under Charles Brent. The Church had close ties with the Catholics and refused to take on the process of conversion simply because of the mistakes committed by the Catholic clergy on the natives. Thus, they opted to take their mission to the Mountain Province, Muslims in the South and the foreign expatriates, Americans, British and Chinese in Manila. Despite their refusal to participate in the Union however, they maintained friendly relationships with its members.

The activities of the Protestant missionaries were and still are, multi-faceted. This includes health, education, literacy and literature, agricultural development and other types of social service. One of the very first missionaries who arrived in the islands to extend medical services to the people was Dr. J. Andrew Hall and his wife. He built a hospital in Iloilo and the very first school for nurses in the country. In 1901, Rev. and Mrs. David S. Hibbard built a school in Dumaguete in Negros Oriental from a \$10,000



176  
donation from Col. Horace B. Silliman of Cahoes, New York. This school which was later to be known as Silliman University, began as a small elementary school of fifteen barefoot Filipino children. In 1905, a Baptist couple, Rev. and Mrs. W.O. Valentine, opened the Jaro (Iloilo) Industrial School for Panayan boys (boys from Panay province, previously known as Capiz) later to be known as the Central Philippine University. In 1907, the Presbyterians and Methodists joined hands to open the Union Theological Seminary of Manila to train religious ministers in the country. Later on, the Union Seminary was also supported by other groups as the United Brethren, Disciples of Christ and Congregationalists. All of a sudden, Protestant schools and hospitals, dormitories and student centers increased all over the country.

As the number of Protestants increased, so did the variety in religious denominations, and the friction between and among the members. One of the most significant conflicts was that initiated by Rev. Nicholas Zamora, a Minister at the Methodist Episcopal Church, who felt that Filipinos were not treated fairly in the church because they were given responsible positions at a very slow pace, as compared to their American counterparts. Paternalism in the church hierarchy was so strong that the Philippine Mission was made an integral part of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, without establishing an all-Filipino church. Thus, he together with other Filipino Methodists, opened their own lay society in Tondo, Manila, called the "Anak ng Katuwiran" (Children of Reason), with hopes of establishing their own Filipino Methodist Church in the future. In February 1909, Zamora and his peers, organized the Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas (IEMELIF) or the Evangelical Methodist Church in the Philippines, which was a church free from foreign control or dominance. This incident, and those like it, reiterated the objective of Protestant missionaries in the country to establish and maintain a Filipino church.

The years after the Second World War only saw an increase in the number of Protestants in the country. In addition, the churches have become more Filipinized,

i.e., with more Filipinos in the hierarchy. Even Protestant institutions as Silliman University, Mary Johnston Hospital, the Philippine Bible Society and the Union Theological Seminary have also moved in this direction. Foreigners, have now become technical advisers and/or members of the Board of Trustees, with the bulk of the decision-making left to the Filipinos.

However, it should be noted that many of the churches still depend on foreign financial support and assistance, specifically from their mother church. As far as policies in the Filipino churches are concerned however, they are made by the Filipinos themselves.

Silliman University, Central Philippine University, Kalinga and Ifugao Academies in the Mountain Province and the Farmers' Institute in Mindanao have worked hard to upgrade their facilities, improve their faculty as well as the quality of their students. Other schools as the Philippine Christian Colleges in Manila, Dansalan Junior College, Southern Christian College and the Pilgrim Institute in Mindanao, among others, were also established. These schools have expanded to the point of having even non-Protestants, enrol in their schools, regardless of the institution's religious convictions. It should be noted however, that except for Silliman, these schools are not in the same competitive league as the Ateneo, La Salle or the UP.

The churches have also continued to support programmes and organizations to reach college and high school students. Dormitories and Christian student centers have been opened in all major cities and towns.

The theological schools have also increased and expanded with the Union Theological Seminary in Cavite, Divinity School in Silliman, College of Theology at the Central Philippines University and a seminary for the Convent of Philippine Baptist Churches, as some of the very best in the country. All are also affiliated with the Association of Theological Schools in Southeast Asia. These schools also offer graduate level degrees in Divinity. Undergraduate programmes include courses in becoming

deacons, bible teachers, church musicians, etc. and a Bachelor of Arts in Theological Education. 178

Participation in political activity is not new to the Protestants. During the early post-war period, they made their opinions known to the public as they expressed disdain for the legal use of opium among the Chinese in the country. Their outright objection to this practice, ultimately led to the lifting of this rule and the total ban on the use of opium or any other harmful substance in the country.

In addition, the United Church of Christ used to publish a bi-monthly magazine known as the "Church and Community" which enjoyed circulation among the various parishes of different religions, with articles which dealt with social issues and problems as seen with a Christian outlook on life.

A Family Relations Center has also been established by some Protestant dioceses which promote various programmes as birth control and family planning, maintenance and promotion of a good Christian family, need for a personal vocation, etc. They also have a National Council of Churches with a Commission on Social Welfare and Education, aimed at helping the member churches come up with and implement a viable social strategy considering the various constraints that they have had to deal with in the past. The Protestant Churches also distribute bibles, in the many languages and dialects spoken in the entire country.

The Protestants are not the only ones active in conversion. Others like the members of Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, and the very powerful Iglesia ni Kristo or the Church of Christ under Rev. Manalo, the Philippine Independent Church, also known as the Aglipayan church because it was established by Rev. Aglipay, and the cults in honor of Dr. Jose Rizal, most of which are in Laguna, Rizal's home town are also very active in this process. Their influence however is limited to their followers within the area surrounding the church, who consequently have a strong belief in the faith because it caters to their needs, and/or their nationalistic sentiments. Except for the

Iglesia ni Kristo, which during the Marcos era had strong ties with no less than the first family, their presence and more so their influence in society in general, and policy-making in particular, is minimal. 179

G. Social Action Centers/SAC's. Social Action Centers or SAC's for short, are groups of individuals both lay and clergy, who dedicate their time and efforts to the formation of the "total man". This simply means that they have been formed to assist the national government in projects which may help uplift the living standards of the people, most specifically the urban and rural poor, and provide them with the opportunity to pursue more economically fulfilling tasks, while maintaining a certain degree of spiritual development. These may range from agricultural, industrial, socio-economic and even educational and health projects in areas, which are not as capable of taking care of their basic needs, either because of their remote geographical location, lack of governmental support, the large number of people in need, or the inadequacy of funds or people to help them out.

What is worth noting is that despite their common objective, lay SAC's in different parts of the country undertake their tasks in a wide variety of ways. (Asian Social Institute, 1975).

In Luzon, economic development is the major emphasis of the groups. Activities include agricultural development, increased productivity, cooperative development and cottage industries. Other projects which are also carried out with vigor are irrigation projects, feed mills and demonstration farms, vegetable culture, fishing development, etc. which are all aimed at assisting the families augment their income. Some centers aim for health development through nutrition, sanitation and medical services. While others focus on family and family planning, moral and spiritual work, relief and rehabilitation, infrastructure and the promotion of the need for social justice.

In the Visayas, SAC's take charge of economic programmes, which during the Marcos era were extremely necessary, because of the decline in the price of sugar, a product which is the source of much of the economic strength of the region. Their projects include the promotion of self-sufficiency in food, cooperative development and even the fight for proper wages for daily wage laborers in the local government. Some take care of more philosophical activities, as the conscientization of the poor on the need for equality in society, regardless of social status, race or religion. Family life as well as teaching proper sanitary habits are also given importance.

In Mindanao, conscientization, the formation of people's organizations and the need for social justice are the major concerns of all the SAC's. Their representatives have made radical statements in the past in this regard, thus making observers wonder whether or not they have any communist involvement. Their doubts have remained as mere speculations however, as adequate evidence has not yet surfaced. Nevertheless, the more radical statements as the "promotion of the little man", "development, justice and peace for everyone", "to enable the weak and poor to gain strength and better provide for themselves", among others, continue to proliferate as SAC's work in the region.

In order to achieve their goals, they have begun cooperatives and credit unions in almost every parish. Other than simply assisting the people in their financial needs, they also help them develop their sense of social awareness, cooperation and community responsibility. The promotion of the family as the basic social unit is also constantly stressed as well as the need for communal harmony and peace. Health services, land reform, refugee placement are other activities of the SAC's. In this regard, they utilize the development of socio-economic institutions for the community, relief and rehabilitation centers, clinics, small schools, housing and resettlement projects. In most of these, "education" is the key as it is the most obvious technique necessary to make the people know their reason for being there to begin with and the sincerity of their desire to

help them, in every possible way. In Mindanao, it is more crucial, as they try to make <sup>181</sup> people understand the need for equality.

In addition, SAC's also coordinate their activities with various governmental agencies and the Department of Social Welfare for instance, and other civic organizations. They also assist in mobilizing the youth and encourage them to participate in leadership training programmes.

SAC's run by religious communities focus on socio-economic and socio-educational projects, socio-religious, family life, nutrition, relief and rehabilitation, justice and peace, health, social activities, etc. All their activities are sponsored by various groups including the Loreto College, Department of Social Welfare, the Chiongbian family, one of the wealthiest Chinese-Filipino families in the country and the Scarbore Fathers, etc. They are also assisted by international groups as the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, a Canadian International Development Agency, Carmelite Brothers, among others.

Their socio-economic activities are basically focused on training the youth for employment, extend services to communities and assist in establishing self-sufficient communities. Socio-educational projects include nursery and adult education classes, art clubs, choirs, scholarship orgrams, camps, dramatic guilds and conscientization work. These activities have faced quite a number of obstacles as the need for more funding and people's lack of support for their work.

Women also have their own SAC's scattered all over the country, with socio-economic, family life, nutrition, religious and educational projects on the top of their list. They are supported by foreign agencies, private enterprises, local community groups, religious congregations and governmental agencies. The Catholic Womens' League or the CWL is an adjunct of these womens' groups.

Catholic schools also have their own centers with socio-economic goals as the focus of those in the Luzon and the Visayas and family life in Mindanao. They are supported by the schools themselves, students, and various private organizations.

Seminaries focus on socio-religious, socio-economic, socio-educational, relief and rehabilitation, justice and peace. They are supported by their respective seminaries, diocesan affiliations, private donations and international groups. Their main objective is to increase people's awareness and sense of spirituality, and assist in making the communities more peaceful and safe for the people who live in them.

As to be expected, some of them are under the leadership of very conservative bishops or priests, who would like to limit their involvement to church matters, as conversion, education and of course, catechism. These SAC's may be found all over the country. I was quite fortunate to interview a former member of such a group who worked with some Jesuit seminarians and priests and nuns from St. Paul College in a slum area close to downtown Manila. It was an old school building which burned to the ground and was never rebuilt. Poor families have since then cleaned the area, and built their homes, which were on the average, approximately 4 x 4 square meters. In some homes, a person who is approximately 5'2" may not get the chance to stand up because of the very low ceiling.

This individual claimed that their concern at that time was not so much the alleviation of poverty, or the desire for social justice, but the development of "self-reliance" which they wanted all the residents to have. They began holding Christmas pageants, which are mini-concerts to be performed during Sunday mass or daily services, where the Christmas story is told. This activity involves the singing of Christmas songs, as well as dancing. This entire show usually lasts about twenty-five minutes, which is about half the time allotted for the entire mass. All collections made during the Offertory were given to the residents for their performance. The money then goes to a community

fund, which would help them in their projects, as the planting of vegetables, setting up cooperatives and even maintaining the cleanliness of their community. <sup>183</sup>

During the rest of the year, activities are focused on the holding of Sunday mass, Catechetical classes as well as the teaching of certain vocational and technical skills which may help the people earn a decent income. This will prevent them from committing crimes and from complacency. Materials used for these projects usually come from donations from the private sector and previous earnings.

These groups are very important to Third World countries like the Philippines, because they assist government and its agencies fill people's needs. However, in order for them to last and continue functioning as viable supportive agencies, they need adequate funding, popular and governmental support, and of course, enough people to carry out their projects. In addition, they should also remember that although they cannot completely take care of society's ills, they can help a great deal in alleviating the difficulties which the country is going through. They should insist on educating the people, and making them fully understand the reason for their presence in the area, with hopes of awakening their minds and hearts as well as those of the people around them. Only in doing so, will they be able to make them realize that they are not simply providing "stop gap measures" to their difficulties, but are more like supportive mechanisms, who are there to facilitate the development of man, which in this case may mean a self-sufficient, educated, spiritual and highly motivated human being.

#### B. Religious Interest Groups in Malaysia

Religious interest groups in Malaysia, unlike those in the Philippines, are very visible in the political scene. They openly discuss issues, stage rallies if necessary,



and seek help from various governmental agencies, as well as the private sector, to get<sup>184</sup> what they want from the national government.

Religious interest groups in the country start out being small, coherent, pressure groups, and move on to gain recognition and membership. For instance, ABIM began as a small student group at the University of Malaya, with the objective of raising the social consciousness of the Malays and the need for further Islamization in the country. The Suara Islam was initially established in Great Britain and moved on to become a more vibrant and vigorous youth movement, as its members returned to Malaysia. Jemaat Tabligh was organized by the Indian immigrants when they were finally settled in the country, to continue their traditions and live in the faith that they have believed in all their lives.

The groups that have been studied for this research are as follows:

(a) Dakwah Organizations. The dakwah is an interest group whose followers have a diverse set of beliefs for participating in the Islamic revival, as well as different perceptions of what an Islamic resurgence really is. Some of the most famous groups are:

[1] Aliran, an associational interest group, is a multi-ethnic group with very strong beliefs in the existence of a Supreme Being, which is in fact the very core of all of Aliran's principles. It has firm beliefs in the viability of a parliamentary democracy, as well as the need for cooperation and inter-racial interaction in the country, for Malaysia to become progressive and gain prominence in the world system. Aliran is unique compared to the other dakwah groups because (Nagata, 1984) it is not all-Malay, nor is it all-Muslim; it has explicit aims and activities which extend beyond the strictly religious; and it is anti-fundamentalist, closer to the reform tradition by self-apellation. In fact, it avoids the term "dakwah", and prefers to be referred to as a group with an ideology known as "progressive Islam".

It also continues to promote Islam as a great faith in its own right and as one of the few possible sources of unity in a multi-ethnic society. With members from multi-ethnic ranks of university lecturers, civil servants, doctors, lawyers, trade union leaders and some workers with leanings toward trade union activities. It continues to be a small organization however, with less than a hundred or so members from Penang and Kuala Lumpur.

[2] ABIM represents the students in their desire for greater Islamization in the country. It is an associational interest group with the primary purpose of educating the Malay youth, into becoming the best Muslims that they could be and raising their consciousness to a level that will make them feel the need for Islam to take center stage in their lives.

[3] Darul Arqam is a community of Muslims who believe that the best way for the country to turn more Islamic is to live as true and pious followers of the Prophet Mohammad, in an area where Islam is the main concern of all the residents who live there. It may also be considered an associational interest group because it has the religion as its constitution, the life of Mohammad as their role model and their residential community as a testimony to their faith.

[4] Jemaat Tabligh, a conglomeration of Mowlana Mohammed Alias' followers who have lived in Malaysia since the 1950's. Conservatism, male supremacy and female subservience, all in the name of Islam are the group's main tenets. It is also an associational interest group, because of its strong Islamic convictions, as well as its non-waivering belief in the faith they have adhered to since they lived in India. It is also a strong brotherhood of men whose entire lives are patterned after that of the Supreme Being.

[5] PERKIM, is an associational interest group whose main objectives include the pursuit of the programmes of government as they relate to Islam and the

conversion of non-Muslims to the faith. It has governmental policies as its guidelines<sup>186</sup> and the full support of the Prime Minister on its side.

(b) Whole Life Groups include two main ethnic communities:

[1] Muslims: There are many different kinds of Muslims in the country, with just as varied perceptions about Islam and the establishment of an Islamic state. Despite these differences however, they are united in their belief in Islam and Allah, and the Koran, as the very basis of their values and lifestyle.

[2] Chinese: Although they believe that they deserve the same rights that the Malays are enjoying because they are also citizens of the country, they remain disunited in their methods of fighting for equal rights, with the Malayan Chinese Association/MCA, the Chinese political party being more compromising than the rest of the Chinese populace in the country.

(c) Student Organizations. There are many student groups in the country, most of which are based in the University of Malaya. There are the Suara Islam, IRC, and even ABIM and PAS affiliates. These groups may be considered associational, because they all have clear objectives, a definite perspective on the way things should be conducted in Malaysian society, and with members determined to achieve their goals the best way they know how.

(d) Ulama or Religious Teachers. The ulama or religious teachers were responsible for the very first educational system established in Malaysia prior to colonization. Their system, though informal, included a variety of courses, all of which revolved around Islam and its various tenets. The students learned the Koran, reciting its scriptures from start to finish (mentelaah), Islamic law (fiqh) and the doctrine of God (tauhid). As time went on and instruction became more formal, the rural ulama were the source of spiritual instruction and training. With religious instruction now within the domain of government, the ulama's powers have weakened. Some opted to establish their own businesses, establish ties with other ulama or affiliate with the UMNO or PAS

187  
for their political strength. The ulama may be considered an associational interest group whose main objective is to continue the propagation of Islam in the country.

(e) Political Parties. Although political parties are not the main concern of this research, it is worth noting that they are powerful political mechanisms in the country. The two strongest political parties are the UMNO and its main rival PAS; the Chinese also have their own political organization, called the MCA while the Indians have the MIC. All these parties are associational, as they have specified goals, focused on their ethnic groups rights, the possibility of establishing a united Malaysian nation and the pursuit of development and growth in the country.

These groups utilize a variety of mechanisms to achieve their objectives:

(a) Establishment of "usrah" groups or small discussion groups seems to be a common practice among students and even among members of the older groups. They are meant to be utilized to discuss the Koran, Mohammed's life, as well as plans for the organization and even personal problems of members. These groups have gained popularity especially in school campuses where they may be quite a huge organizational membership from various colleges, and/or major programs.

(b) Holding public discussion groups, lectures, seminars and even inviting speakers, etc. are helpful to the groups as they make themselves more visible in the region in which they are located, and also in the realm of national politics. It will also help groups maintain links with prominent followers and leaders of Islam.

(c) Boycotts and demonstrations are popular everywhere, and have proven beyond doubt, to be helpful to the Malaysian Islamic cause. School organizations are very active in these activities, as well as political parties and other interest groups as ABIM, the students, Aliran, among others, have used these to their advantage at almost every point in their history.

(d) Alliances with current public officials and prominent party leaders are also important to any interest group if it expects to get adequate representation in the

government. PAS leaders maintain ties with certain groups, as the students for instance. This makes it easier for the students and others like them, who do not have representatives in the government.

(e) Publications are also helpful to the groups, as they come up with their own magazines and/or newsletters featuring articles which have a strong Islamic interest and which would explain the stand of the group on the matter at hand. Aliran has one of the more popular magazines in town which deals with almost anything dealing with Islam, as well as the activities of the organization, and the goings on in the international Islamic community.

(f) Darul Arqam is unique in the sense that it has opted to establish its own community, with schools of their own, and marketing their own products to serve as the perfect example of what an Islamic community should be. Their extremist lifestyle and living conditions may not have been successful enough to encourage more people to join them in the cause, but they were convinced, and in fact some still are, that their communities would serve as good examples to the Malaysian lawmakers, that an Islamic state could actually survive quite well on its own, with minimal interference, if any, from the rest of the international community. And with the Iranian Revolution as one of their inspirations for establishing their isolated communities, they thought that they had the perfect system for the rest of the country to emulate.

Below are a some of the groups selected for this study. They have been chosen on the basis of their activities as religious interest groups, and their role in educational policy-making in the country.

A. Dakwah Movement. Since the May 1969 riots, an Islamic resurgence has been taking place in Malaysia, which has managed to penetrate through the various facets of Malay life. This resurgence, has intensified to even greater heights since then, and has given rise to the "dakwah movement". The term "dakwah" literally means

resurgence, and thus refers to all groups that have arisen since then, as well as the diversity of activities which they are engaged in. Their main reason for being is the re-establishment of Islamic values, practices, institutions and laws in the lives of Muslims everywhere (Muzaffar, 1987).

Also according to Muzaffar (1987)<sup>74</sup>, the existence of the movement may be attributable to a number of factors:

(a) Islamic resurgence is partly due to the developmental process and the type of studies which are being created in the name of modernization and progress. With rapid modernization and accelerated social mobility for some groups, this has led to a kind of capitalistic development which is quite uneven, with large segments of society without adequate access to those tangible and intangible goods and services which make life meaningful and make those already with wealth and power even more wealthy and powerful. Because of this situation, a portion of the Malay poor have reacted to capitalist inequities through Islam, because the religion is also associated with the quest for justice. The religion has been used to legitimize Malay rule and served as an effective channel of protest.

For instance, in the rural areas of Kedah and Kelantan, there is a proliferation of a small but significant group of agrarian elites, who are almost always linked to UMNO. This situation also tends to widen the cleavages within the local community, creates resentment, especially when the poor and powerless, do not seem to be benefitting from the development process. Some of this resentment is passed through the Islamic groups, particularly PAS.

In certain parts of Trengganu, the entry of capital and advanced technology from outside the state during the oil boom has produced a whole new group of economic elites. A handful of them have access to wealth and power, while the majority remain

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<sup>74</sup> The selection of Muzaffar as the source person for this part of the paper, is his comprehensive study on the dakwah, as well as his clear explanation on various issues surrounding the movement.

weak and voiceless. This situation also causes severe hardship to the local community. And because of the effective demand of the new elites, the prices of land and houses shoot up together with other goods and services, including the essentials, which become more expensive. Thus, the poor are left out in the cold and inevitably edged out of the market.

Because of incidents such as these, PAS has managed to re-establish its influence to some extent in these two areas. The problem arises once again, as the people directly affected by the situation, do not quite understand why the situation stands the way it does, without actually analyzing the structures which oppress and exploit them, so that groups like PAS, et.al., can actually take advantage of their lack of understanding and re-orient them into believing that Islam is in fact the way to justice and equality.

(b) The resurgence may also be a reaction to the growth of a materialistic culture which has arisen since independence. This is so because capitalism glorifies things and values which are opposed to those being propagated by almost any religion, including Islam. Religion usually propagates values as giving, sharing, sacrificing, while capitalism stresses individualism, power and greed. Values, which according to many, are simply irreconcilable.

(c) With the rise of the new elites, there is also the rise of new lifestyles. And these people spare no bones on putting their influence on display through their new cars, clothes, social practices, with almost total disregard for religion and the tenets required in the proper practice of the faith.

(d) Opposition to western thought and culture also find expression through religion in the less developed countries, like Malaysia, where Islam is the official religion.

(e) Extreme ethnic dichotomization has also contributed to the resurgence, because with it comes the need for identity. Thus, the demand for a Malay-language

university became more intense and came into fruition as the National University of <sup>191</sup> Malaysia was established in 1970. The need for a national language, official religion, among others, are also manifestations of the need for an identity<sup>75</sup>.

(f) Vested interests also have a role in the resurgence. Students in colleges in Malaysia as well as those educated abroad feel that it is in their interest to push for the resurgence because it will not only put them in the forefront of religion and politics, it will also win them fame, power and perhaps even money, making them the new elites in Malay society. It should be noted that many of the returning students are no longer rich, nor urban-based as in the 1950's or 1960's, but are less wealthy and from the rural areas, more fluent in Malay than in any other language and less analytical in their beliefs and attitudes about what the Malay-Muslim world should be.

Academicians in local universities and colleges also belong to this category, since they are of the belief that their participation in dakwah activities, would make them more prominent in the campuses and perhaps even gain them a promotion in the process.

Political leaders and activists, are no exception, for they are aware of the benefits which Islam and its propagation may bring to their careers and votes they will gain come election time. Their manipulation of Islamic symbols and rituals may help them in their political careers and guarantee their position as elites in society. Because of them, stiffer laws have been imposed to the detriment of other ethnic groups.

Religious elites have pushed government to pursue policies all in the name of Islam and the eternal salvation of the Muslims. Doing so would not only make the country more Islamic, it will also put them in a better social strata.

(g) The ideal of establishing an Islamic state as manifested with complete disillusionment with the west and with economic, political and social conditions in

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<sup>75</sup> The search for an "identity" is a problem in any ethnically heterogeneous country. The problem becomes more intense in Malaysia, because the roots of the respective ethnic groups are extremely different, with no ethnic relation whatsoever. The Malays, Chinese and Indians come from different racial stocks, and therefore have very different cultures, belief systems, rituals, among others.



Malaysia itself have strengthened the Malay case even more. This is so because an ideal is presented to the public without adequate explanation nor enough room for creative thought.

(h) The success of the Iranian revolution has made the Islamic world more aware of the fact that it is not impossible for a state based on Islam to succeed nor is it doomed to be at the mercy of the west. Besides, it is also proof that an Islamic state has its own identity and need not be dependent on any one country or super power, except itself.

(i) Initial discrimination against resurgent groups only heightened their desire to change the situation and seek changes in the manner in which things are run in the country. Groups such as PAS who previously suffered from lack of government aid, social services, unfair treatment of their children, among others, only made their movement stronger and their desire for an improved Malay/Muslim condition more intense.

(j) In 1985, the Memali tragedy took place, where 14 men from the basically PAS village in Memali in the town of Baling, Kedah were killed in a confrontation with the police. Incidents such as this, has made the Muslims feel suppressed in their own country and increased their desire for change.

(k) Pressure to conform on the part of some Muslims who are still quite uncertain about their own religio-political convictions has strengthened the resurgence, because they are put in a position where they are left with no other alternative but to conform and just help out in the move for Islamic prominence.

Dakwah's activities ranged from a broad spectrum of peaceful and reformist-type endeavors to more crucial, system-oriented activities. All these are dependent upon the kind of group at hand and the extent to which they intend to pursue a visible role in society. Nagata (1984) mentions the kinds of religious leaders in the movement, as those who support government; those who perpetuate scholarly tradition

by the transmission from guru to disciple; and those who arise spontaneously, without any traditional bases of authority. Most groups fall under this category with members who share similar backgrounds and want to achieve similar goals. These goals include the commitment of Muslims to their faith, desire to follow the scriptures, anti-socialistic and anti-Zionist, a rejection of the western way of life, development of a true Muslim identity and the continued practice of Islamic rituals and traditions in the ultimate desire to establish an Islamic state. Most of the dakwah members are highly educated and urban-based, so that they not only have the respect of many, but they could also serve as spiritual leaders of the people.

The movement has gained enough strength to be considered an influential part of the Malay politic. They have managed to have quite a following, as well as the strength to convince the civil government of the necessity for change. They have succeeded in making government more aware of the plight of the Malay Muslims, so much so that government has opted to have its own group, the PERKIM or the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia or the Islamic Welfare and Missionary League<sup>76</sup> which is considered the Federal Government's strongest ammunition as far as the resurgence is concerned.

Dakwah as a movement and as an activity, is bound to continue and perhaps even intensify in the future. Government is making no attempts at altering the current process of Islamization because it believes in it, and is receiving support from the ethnic majority, the Malays, who obviously enjoy the benefits which dakwah has given to them.

[1] ALIRAN. As mentioned earlier, ALIRAN is the first major multi-ethnic reform movement to have emerged in Malaysia. Its members come from various

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<sup>76</sup> PERKIM and its activities will be discussed later.

194

religious, secular and linguistic groups, whose major concern is the total reformation of society, into one based on Islam. It is an independent movement, i.e. without any link to any political party, trade union, consumer association, community organization or any other institution. It intends to utilize all means available to present its views and beliefs to the nation. It also wants to help in strengthening the democratic process itself, since it will lead to a more active, alert and participatory public. Research is also included in their plans, into the different social problems plaguing the country, as well as the planning of public campaigns on certain issues as civil rights, role of dissent in the Third World, social responsibilities, role of the press, cooperatives, significance of private enterprise, effects of corruption, inclusion of values in the Islamic values in education, among others, which its members believe are crucial to the country. Despite the disparity in membership, they are bound by a common consciousness, idealism and dedication to reform.

The basic beliefs of the organization are summarized as follows: (Aliran, 1981)

(a) **Belief in God:** Utmost belief in a Supreme Being is the main foundation of all of Aliran's beliefs. This, according to its members, establishes that the very core of man's existence and society in general is spiritual in nature. This also means that the organization shall subscribe to the establishment of a society, characterized by the supremacy of spiritual and moral values, as justice, freedom, unity, integrity, tolerance and compassion. These values shall be the priorities of its members, and should not be compromised for any reason whatsoever. The fulfillment of these values shall lead to the equality and unity of all people, a basic principle which governs the true and sincere belief in God.

(b) **Democracy:** Aliran believes that "parliamentary democracy is the best system for Malaysia as well as for all societies which intend to put man's dignity over and above anything else. A democratic system is perceived to be the best system in the

fulfillment of this goal because: [1] in a democracy, free elections are held regularly; [2] <sup>195</sup> individuals in a democracy also have the right to disagree with and criticize the policies and programmes of the people in power; [3] the "rakyat" or supreme leader is consulted directly on important national policies before any decision is made -- national citizens' groups are also consulted on certain issues; [4] there is an adequate flow of information in society with the freedom of speech, press and assembly; [5] "rakyat" maintains ties with his constituencies by meeting and communicating with their leaders as often as they possibly could; [6] citizens are free to organize and fight for what they believe may be good for society; and [7] all laws are aimed at providing just and equal protection to their citizens.

Aliran also believes that in order for democracy to work, it should fulfill certain obligations, as the need for the "rakyat" to defend democracy if it is threatened in any way; fight those who use democracy for the propagation of their own personal biases and/or the fulfillment of their vested interests; defend democracy from any possible ideological enemy including psychological feudalism; government should not allow democracy to be abused by the rich, powerful, greedy and corrupt; and government, politicians, political parties, and other governmental representatives should always be honest and truthful in their relationship with the people.

Regarding the need for a national language, Malay is believed to be the only national language of the country by Aliran. This is so because it is the language which is most closely linked to the cultural environment in Asia, i.e. where most Asians can actually trace their roots, as the Filipinos, Indonesians, among others. Since most of the people in the region are of Malay descent, it is only logical to have Malay as the national language. Its use and study should proceed continuously until that time comes when the populace is not only fluent in the use of the language, but also capable of appreciating its use in the development of the arts.

Aliran is also very much aware of the ongoing religious turmoil in the country. This, according to them is a result of the following factors:

(a) rise of an ethnic structure during the colonial period, with the British at the apex and the communities most useful to them occupying the places below them.

(b) deliberate attempt by colonial administrators to discredit Islam in the Eyes of Muslims and non-Muslims posed an even more serious challenge. The British had a vested interest in keeping Islam; it provided an ideological resistance to the religion, which they could not get rid of.

(c) negative portrayal of the Muslims by media everywhere.

(d) very few intellectuals in the non-Muslim world understand Islam and are prepared to interpret it in a just and honest manner to their community.

(e) some Muslims peddle chauvinism while claiming to be an Islamic party. This concept necessitates change on Muslim thinking regarding the very essence of Islam and how it is perceived by the non-Muslims within the country as well as in the international community. This process may be facilitated by the intellectuals who should present the sense of justice and compassion which underlie the religion, as well as the rationale behind certain religious rituals and traditions. Non-Muslims on the otherhand, should try their very best to understand their faith and interpret its tenets, rights, and obligations through their actions.

In 1979, the Aliran Executive Committee recommended some steps to have peace and harmony among the many religions in the country.

The first step towards peace involves the total re-structuring of the educational system so that there will be more emphasis given to fundamental and universal values in the religion, than on form and ritual.

The second refers to the use of the mass media to develop a progressive, dynamic, reformist conception of Islam to combat the conservative, static, revivalist type of Islam which is gaining increasing popularity among the Muslim youth.

The final step encourages inter-religious dialogue through the Malaysian Inter-Religious Organization (MIRO). This will be done through forums and discussions to be held throughout the country with the aim of highlighting common values and ideals in the different religions.

On December of the same year, Aliran's Inter-Religious Council for Harmony resolved to transform the MIRO<sup>70</sup> into a Malaysian inter-religious council under the direct authority of the Prime Minister. It was done to establish guidelines at both the national and local levels of government on issues as the building of places of worship, holding of religious processions, observance of religious ceremonies, which may involve the sensitivities of other communities and offer advice on all matters pertaining to the interaction between and among religions practiced in Malaysia.

All of these plans may succeed if and only if the intellectuals within each religious community are prepared to emphasize their own underlying philosophy and values, than be pre-occupied with superficial rituals and symbols; the very same intellectuals should also be willing to master modern knowledge in the natural and social sciences so that they will be able to determine the significance of religion to the society and the rest of the world.

Education is very important to Aliran. Its members believe that the system should be based on the development of good moral values, which are congruent with the beliefs and ideals of all Malaysians. Thus, it should include lessons on the commitment to social justice, honesty, integrity, respect for freedom, equality and a sense of appreciation of the need for tolerance and compassion. These will inevitably lead to the development of critical and creative individuals, who are very capable of being trained in the labor force and thus are able to contribute to the country's development. The

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<sup>70</sup> Southeast Asians have a tendency to use abbreviations to describe organizations, schools, places, among others which have otherwise long names. The same is true for people's names, where a nickname is always given to a person, aside from his real name.

medium of instruction should be Malay, with English as the second language. The educational system as a whole needs to be altered because of a case of "intellectual malaise" in the country. This situation is due to the following: (Airan, 1981)

(a) Historically, the Malay peninsula did not have a long-established, settled population. Frequent population shifts with refugees, immigrants and fugitives moving from one locality to another.

(b) Lack of intellectual activities in the country.

(c) British colonialism thwarted attempts by various groups which had come into contact with intellectual movements elsewhere to raise their social consciousness.

(d) After colonialism, the "feudal psychology" of unquestioning loyalty to the political leadership in return for the protection of the Malay community, has acted against the evaluation of the social order, which is an essential aspect of the development of intellectual consciousness. The issue is the attempt by the political leadership to ensure obedience to its rule through the manipulation of a traditional trait.

(e) "Immigrant psychology" with its emphasis on security and mobility, is still prevalent among segments of the recently domiciled non-Muslim population, also militates against the growth of thought. They were more concerned with establishing themselves than participating in intellectual activities.

(f) Delicate multi-ethnic mix of Malays and non-Malays has also served to dampen enthusiasm for intellectual analysis for fear that ethnic tensions may develop if there is too much probing even into issues that have nothing to do with ethnicity. The ruling elites have not hesitated to exploit such apprehensions.

(g) The comfort which economic prosperity has brought to the middle class, where most intellectuals usually come from, has lulled the majority of its members into complacency. Since their own well-being is assured, they are no longer interested in the pursuit and development of certain issues and ideas. Besides, many are

experiencing the benefits for the first time in their lives, the benefits of a better life that is, with the more liberal governmental policies in favor of the Malays. The fulfillment of more nationalistic objectives therefore becomes secondary to individual needs.

(h) Political control and repression which seem to characterize governmental reaction after sensing the incidence of any form of resentment or dissatisfaction over national policies, has led to fear and apathy from some would-be intellectuals. This situation is worsened by a system that does not encourage thinking, a family system that does not allow the young to ask any question, and a religious environment that does not permit challenge to orthodoxy. The educational system is also such that the inculcation of serious reflection and understanding of true Islamic values is not encouraged. Thus the educational system should be changed in such a way that critical thinking is encouraged.

The public must be given an opportunity to discuss and debate the aims and content of both Islamic studies which is to be made compulsory for Muslim pupils, and moral studies which will be made available to non-Muslims. They also believe that in the Primary School level, Muslim and non-Muslims should be exposed to a common moral studies syllabus and given the opportunity to imbibe the same ethical values. There is a need for a more progressive approach that relates religion to knowledge, rationality and the fundamental values of justice, freedom and unity. Non-Muslims on the otherhand, should be given a chance to review and to some extent, even develop their own religion. Moral education is of no use if the total environment does not help sustain the moral values learned at school.

The economic system in Malaysia should be just, i.e., where poverty and exploitation have been abolished and social greed and parasitism are to be eliminated. Social opportunities for progress and achievement must be equalized as far as possible. This means that the provision of social services should not in any way, be dependent upon one's social status, race or linguistic group, but on humanitarian considerations



instead. An economy which is not geared towards excessive materialism, nor an austere, regimented lifestyle which controls consumption, is preferred. Man's spiritual being should be nurtured at all times. The organization abhors capitalism and communism, because neither one of them offers the best prescription for the development of man, his country and his spirit. Everything should be in moderation, with cooperation in all activities and the absence of affluence and luxury, with values inherited from the great religious and cultural traditions where everyone has to work interactively towards the fulfillment of a truly Islamic state. The economy should be as decentralized as possible, without the need for a bureaucracy. The government should work with people's cooperatives and companies to exercise dominant ownership and control over the various sectors of the economy.

The domestic economy should be strengthened as it is and in relation with her neighbors, in order to create a new international economic order which meets the just and legitimate aspirations of the developing countries. Greater economic independence is perceived to be the path leading to political independence. There is a desperate need to filter western influences so that the people will be more discerning of the influences they accept and the extent to which they intend to pursue them.

Strong governmental leadership should be existent at all times for all these goals to come into fruition and for Malaysia to gain international recognition.

All these taken into account, the ALIRAN is indeed one of the more organized and all-encompassing religious interest groups in the entire country. It perceives that the very core of society is Islam and that every aspect of life is a crucial part of the religion. The organization takes great effort in making studies and observations of Malay society, its strengths as well as its weaknesses, the needs for development and the necessary prescriptions for change.

[2] ABIM. The Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or the Islamic Youth

Movement of Malaysia, or ABIM was formed in August 1971 with a membership whose main concern was to seek changes in governmental policy to allow for a completely Islamic way of life (al-din). This process would take place in an evolutionary manner, a gradual transformation of man and society, so that the rights of both Muslims and non-Muslims will be protected. They appeared, at least at that time, to be the champions of the poor, with reforms which aimed at the creation of an equitable society<sup>71</sup>. Branches of the organization were opened in almost every region of the country, with schools and cooperatives as media for interaction and control. The organization is also responsible for the publication of a magazine to make the public increasingly aware of their activities. Linkages between the country and the Arab nations were maintained, if not enhanced, to continue a sense of oneness and develop a true Muslim identity. Its original members were western-educated, middle class, urban Malay youth, under a charismater leader, Encik<sup>72</sup> Anwar Ibrahim, who led the movement till late March 1982, and has since then, been co-opted into government as the Minister of Education, and if some political analysts will be believed, may even be in contention to become the next Prime Minister.

The primary aim of ABIM is the transmission of a proper understanding of Islam to the Muslim youth, and to the rest of the populace. This will be pursued in the true spirit of "dakwah", which is through education. Talks, discussions, seminars and conferences on a massive scale are to be held, with programmes which aim at increasing the visibility of the organization and increasing their involvement in community affairs. Its schools aim at developing the people's Islamic consciousness and provide the necessary foundations at building more analytical and creative minds.

Education is of primary importance to the organization, for the development of a true Muslim, for spiritual rehabilitation and to convince the Malays that there are

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71 Equitable, i.e., a society which caters to all races regardless of their ethnicity and/or religion.

72 Encik is a title like "Mister" in English. It is used to address people in authority.

better alternatives to the western approach to development. Their schools are scattered all over the country, with greater popularity in the urban than the rural areas because of the various developmental projects under western leadership in the latter, and a greater understanding of the situation in the former.

The schools combine religious and secular education patterns. They cover all the required academic subjects (60% of the curriculum), and religious law, jurisprudence, ethics and Arabic are also compulsory. An "Islamic touch" is maintained in all subject areas, to prevent the emergence of a secular-style education.

For instance, geography stresses man's neglect and wrong utilization of God's world. History stresses the emergence of a divine plan, development of Islam, etc. In addition, an Islamic way of life is encouraged, including the use of the traditional Muslim garb, the "purdah", seating according to sex, minimal emphasis on sports with greater stress on the study of the faith. Constant interaction between and among Muslims also makes the process of indoctrination much easier.

The ABIM has built quite a few schools, including the "Yayasan Anda" or Your Institution in Kuala Lumpur, and others in Bukit Martajam, Ipoh, Kuala Trengganu and Kota Bharu. The organization criticizes secularism and western ideologies because they are believed to be antithetical to the development of a country based on Islam. It restricts people's understanding of existence as nothing more than the here and now, without recognizing the existence of a God, and the inevitable occurrence of an afterlife. The onslaught of secularism has led to increasing materialism, selfishness and permissiveness, all of which are antithetical to the goal of an Islamic state.

The group's concern for economic issues is also evident as the members believe that the country is becoming too dependent on the world economy, under the leadership of western, imperialist powers. It attributes the disparities in the international economy as well as the perpetuation of poverty to this malignant system and the

domestic excesses of the natives, including the lavish celebration of religious festivities,<sup>203</sup> gambling, lotteries and even corruption within the government. To make matters worse, government has failed to correct the system and initiate the necessary changes which would prohibit all these negative attributes to develop as well as its inability to prevent the entry of western pop culture.

ABIM also believes in the need for freedom, moreso in political expression. In 1984, it vehemently opposed the "Printing Press and Publications Act" which places severe limits on the right to express one's self as well as the "Internal Security Act" or ISA which infringes on one's privacy, and thus violates human rights.

Communalism and racism are also opposed to by the ABIM. It believes that tolerance instead of secularism, morality and justice instead of unquestioning loyalty should be at the fore of all governmental reforms. From 1977-1982, the group was at the center of the resurgence, expressing all the desires and aspirations of the Muslims. According to its leaders, God created mankind in such a manner that there will be many races, which form into nations, while still living in harmony because then, they will be aware that the world is not homogeneous and that this should not lead to disharmony, greed and racism of any kind.

The organization also contends that Islamic law provides the freedom for any Muslim to practice the religion in the best possible way, and should not be prevented from performing them at any time, for so long as they do not harm any one or serve as an obstacle to their daily lives.

Women, should focus on their primary role to be wife and/or mother, in the best possible way. Although the pursuit of a career is not prohibited by any organizational law, it should not be misunderstood to mean that is encouraged. Professions should not be a hindrance to or compromise the strength of the family unit.

ABIM is very careful in even mentioning the possible establishment of an "Islamic State". Its definition and manner of achievement have not been mentioned

because of fear that the group will be identified as being discriminatory or worse still,<sup>204</sup> racist. Besides, since the concept is nothing more than an idea, still to be achieved, it refuses to be tagged as another group which has all the ideas without the plans to fulfill them. It contends however, that the church and state should always be one because it is only in doing so that the moral fabric of society is preserved.

The political stance of ABIM is quite uncertain, with many questions looming as to many of its actions, including its relationship with PAS. First of all, it should be realized that the members of the two groups come from opposing backgrounds; PAS from the rural, older, more conservative communities, while ABIM is more urban-based, with more youthful, overseas-oriented, non-traditional values as members. Some PAS members are uneasy with the growing closeness of the two groups, while others think that it is a beneficial arrangement for the groups concerned. It has not helped ABIM's success in elections however, nor have they led to greater governmental support. For not only has the group failed miserably in the polls, government has also increased its restrictions in their campus tours, lectures and the publication of their magazines.

Since its establishment, the movement has gained some respectability within the country, and for a while, even seemed to lead the resurgence. However, the group seems to have lost its luster over the years, making itself a less significant factor in the realm of Malaysian politics. There may be a few factors to which this decline may be attributed, among them:

(a) The ABIM despite its noble intentions did not have a clear idea of how things may be changed or how their goals may be achieved. Goals without plans of action are meaningless and will not win votes and popular support. Thus, the organization has been reduced to just another one of the many dakwah organizations in existence in the country.

(b) The resignation of Ibrahim made the members lose faith in the group because its leader has chosen to be part of government, that very institution which the group wanted to change. Members dropped out or joined other groups like PAS, among others, where they feel that there is a greater commitment to Islam.

(c) Since government itself has opted to pursue a programme of Islamization, some ABIM members did not feel the need to be a pressure group anymore, and instead opted to work with government in the pursuit of their goals.

(d) Leaders of ABIM have grown older and more accommodating in their demands, tolerant of governmental action or the lack of it, and more compromising in the changes they have been advocating for.

(e) People have lost some of their faith in the organization because they were more dependent on rhetoric, with very little corresponding action. Thus, the people began to wonder about the sincerity behind their speeches, and wanted to know if any corresponding action would follow suit. Unfortunately, the actions were minimal and the rhetoric too overwhelming to be believed in. The loss of support thus seemed to be an inevitable result.

ABIM has since 1972, lost some of its glitter, but continues to be an active religious interest group in the country. Its projects in various school campuses and communities in Malaysia continue to gain recognition and helps maintain the strength and influence of the Islamic revivalist movement in society.

[3] Darul Arqam. In 1973, Ustaz Ashaari Muhammed organized the Darul Arqam, an interest group which is characterized by extreme scriptural fundamentalism, in its desire to improve the state of Muslim society in Malaysia as well as the individual relationships of man to his fellow man and to God. Ashaari, was a government religious teacher who lost his faith in the system which he served because of its seeming lack of concern for the moral values which were being inculcated into the minds of the

youth. As a reaction therefore, he has opted to establish the movement, whose name has been derived from one of the companions of the Prophet Mohammad (Arqam) and the Arabic term for country or land (Darul). Its headquarters is located in Sungai, Pencala, a town just outside Kuala Lumpur, with branches in many parts of the country.

The group is structured like a commune, where its members live together, have their homes, mosque, schools, clinics and even vegetable gardens all in one place. Its beliefs are highly fundamentalist, i.e. scriptural, with religion as the very core of their existence as individuals and as communities.

Darul Arqam stresses the enrichment of personal morality as well as the development of one's Muslim identity in every possible way. They believe that salvation could only be achieved if a person is pious, morally upright, just and fair. Compromises cannot be made in this regard, so that each and every Muslim is required to wear the traditional Muslim attire, even at the tender age of four or five. The organization then became known as the movement which stressed "Fardhu Ain" or religious duties at the individual level, as against "Fardhu Kifayah" or religious duties at the college level (Muzaffar, 1987). Theological education is stressed at all times, as it is based on the Koran, Sunnah and the writings of the famous Muslim "ulama". Through the years, the curriculum has remained highly traditional, with a few additions, including lessons on business ethics, management and administration which would adequately prepare their people to handle community affairs. This will also aid in the gradual shift in conception of what the organization is all about and what it stands for, i.e., not merely a religious group but one with a sense of purpose and well-being, with the sincere desire to initiate change.

Its creation of Islamic communities will also serve as an example to all, that the establishment, maintenance and ultimate emergence of a state based on Islam is in fact possible and very real, not a mere figment of the resurgents' imagination. In addition, this will also prove that a "Muslim Identity" may emerge, given the chance and

will surface as a strong, viable alternative to the dependent economy and immoral populace which typifies the country.

The organization also stresses strict conservatism in both the mode of dressing as well as the consumption of "halal" or clean food. Also, the performance of Islamic rituals and practices are considered part of the group, and should not be ignored, nor taken for granted. These make the organization different from other Muslim groups, who seem to be more compromising and flexible in both their beliefs and practices.

As in most of the resurgent groups, Darul Arqam's members are highly educated, and mostly urbanites who have carefully analyzed the conditions in the country and have subsequently made or at least thought of changes necessary for improvement. Thus, it is not surprising to see academicians and scholars from the National University who actively participate in organizational activities. There are also some individuals, who though unattached to any one particular group, render their services to the group, in the spirit of community service and concern.

Unlike the other organizations, Darul Arqam tries to shun government or any form of involvement whatsoever, in the proper governance of the country. They continue to pursue a policy of total obedience to Islamic principles and utmost belief in total independence from non-Muslim control. These attitudes are results of the group's disbelief in the National Economic Policy or NEP as a workable economic framework, because although it propagates Malay supremacy, it also continues to promote the country's dependence on the west, which according to most Muslim fundamentalists, is the source of all evil. Second, its members feel a sense of superiority and authority over all Muslims, including government, and thus considers itself to be the moral standard which all Islamic states should abide by. Finally, with quite a few scholars in the group, who continue to analyze the politico-economic situation in the country with care and a strong desire for improved conditions in the country, they believe that they are doing their obligation as good Muslims. Besides, the group believes that its communes are



sufficient to serve as a good example for any one with the desire to have an Islamic way of life. 208

Therefore, Darul Arqam is a group which believes that leadership by example is the best way. It has opted to isolate itself from mainstream Malay society, with hopes of encouraging other Muslims to follow the path they have set for them. It should be noted that their influence is minimal, and their role in policy-making even more trivial.

It has lost most of its power and influence as its members have failed to get their message across to the people, i.e., that of the need to establish an Islamic state and the inability of the group to maintain its membership, many of whom have decided to leave the group and go back to their families. Their attempt at living an Islamic way of life is however admirable, yet impractical in an interdependent world system, which we have.

In addition, the Darul Arqam has caught the ire of some parents whose children either lived in the communes or visited there often to attend retreats and assist the other members in the cooperatives they have established. Many of the parents who visited their children were asked to leave, because they were distracting them from doing their work, which consisted mainly of carpentry, making "chili" sauce and fetching water, rather than spiritual activities. Some participants even stole their mothers' recipes so that they could teach them to their fellow Arqam members and perhaps even market them in the future.

There have also been some rifts between younger members and leaders as the former have expressed their desire to initiate some changes in the communes. They are concerned with the profits they could earn from their cooperatives, and with reforming the methods of production and distribution, which are not in agreement with the methods originally developed by the group's leaders. Some members also think that

209  
cooperating with governmental agencies may be a good idea, something which the older leaders could not even conceive of doing.

Thus, the Darul Arqam continues to suffer from internal discord, making its influence and significance to Malay society, even more trivial than it was before.

[4] Jemaat Tabligh. Jemaat Tabligh was begun by followers of Mowlana Mohammed Alias from India in the early 1950's. The terms Jemaat Tabligh literally means "to spare time", i.e., for the service of God (Nagata, 1984) through the constant propagation of the religious message of Islam. This includes the re-strengthening of the Islamic spirit in every facet of life as well as in every area in the country. Males are encouraged to join the movement, with complete disregard for women, in the holding of prayer and discussion meetings in the homes of fellow members. Thus, membership is inevitably increased, with the constant movement from one area to another and the constant process of indoctrination through the preaching of the word. Women were thought of as completely subservient to their spouses, moreso, if they are in the process of fulfilling the group's objectives. This has created an alternative male youth fraternity of a different kind because of its extreme exclusivity and concern for the maintenance of the status quo.

The group believes in aggressive campaigning and recruitment, with the members unceasingly moving from home to home with hopes of getting more members into the fold. Indoctrination and recruitment take place in homes, schools and even mosques, virutally in every abode where people conglomerate all the time.

Its members therefore come from diverse walks of life, but the ones who are most attracted to the group are those from universities and the white collar workers, who spend a significant amount of their time participating in the group's many activities.

Members are required to attend the various functions of the group, including retreats, held on a regular basis, in the mosques. A visit to the headquarters in New Delhi, India, is almost as important and significant to them as the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Its members are not united in many of their interpretations about their faith. For instance, some believe in traditional Islamic punishments for crimes committed (eg. cutting the hands of thieves) while others do not. Some believe that missionary work should be undertaken by every member, while others think that such activities should only be done part-time so that they can have full-time jobs. Others believe in total obedience and conformity to the religion and the group, whereas others believe that each individual has the right to make his own choice, which may or may not necessarily be the same as the group's. They all agree however, that miracles may happen and that God will always be there for them, because they are faithful followers and servants of their religion.

The movement always stresses egalitarianism, promotion of private virtues, devotionism and evangelism than political or economic activism. It intends to help in the development of a truly Muslim society, more than the institution of a secular society, and proceeds by personal evangelism in the mosques.

The group is one of the most loosely structured of all the dakwah groups, maintaining its communications system only through networking. Missionary-members move constantly even to as far as Indonesia and India to spread the word and perhaps even increase membership. This system has made the group famous in both the urban and rural areas, maintaining their presence through the years, more than some groups, including ABIM.

One thing noticeable with Jemaat Tabligh is that it does not take the effort to make itself known through publication, so that no one can actually document the extent of their activities and depth of their belief systems through its thirty-year existence.

Nevertheless, the group has remained an active religious interest group in Malay society<sup>73</sup>.

[5] PERKIM/Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia. PERKIM, or the Islamic Welfare and Missionary League is the government-supported religious interest group in Malaysia. It is the original, national level, religious and missionary institution operating out of the Prime Minister's Office, unconnected with any state religious council (Nagata, 1984). Originally founded by Malaysia's first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman in 1960, it has formulated a number of programmes in support of governmental policy in the propagation of the policy of Islamization. Its aims include:

- (a) The promotion of the material welfare of the Muslims and to those who may need financial assistance and support.
- (b) The education of the people on the tenets of Islam
- (c) The propagation of the faith and conversion of non-Muslims
- (d) Joint activities with various Islamic associations
- (e) Increase the unity and loyalty of the country's citizens through Islam

The group engages in many welfare and educational activities as the establishment of kindergarten schools and medical clinics which cater to everyone regardless of their religion. They also sponsor adult education, special classes for new converts and even agricultural and construction projects which aims at raising funds to continue the said programmes.

They are very receptive to the needs of the non-Muslims, especially the Chinese, whom they have been trying to get into the fold with the help of missionaries, who speak their many languages and dialects, including Mandarin, Hokkien, etc. They

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<sup>73</sup> Information on Jemaat Tabligh is very limited. A visit to the country would have been extremely helpful, but under the circumstances, there is no other alternative. Future research could perhaps extend this work to include more information on the organization.

even assist new converts find jobs, homes and even lend them money, if necessary, to start anew.

The organization publishes several journals and information booklets in many languages. They have the "Nur Islam", "Suara Perkim" and "Islamic Herald". They also sponsor talks, seminars, and dialogues, sometimes in conjunction with other groups, like ABIM for instance just to make them more visible in the community and increase the people's awareness of Islam.

Funding from the government, donations from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, etc. and even private donations have made all their programmes possible. They have expanded their linkages with the Far East, including Korea, Taiwan and Japan. They now have about 50 branches in West Malaysia, most of which are located in state capitals and large urban areas. In East Malaysia, it has offices in Sabah, Sarawak, among others. Each office tries to adapt their projects to the area to which they have been assigned, and establish relationships with local officials to make their lives much easier. Coordination is however required among the various branches, a task that is very difficult to achieve considering their many offices, and poor bookkeeping capabilities.

PERKIM has tried very hard to convert as many people as they could. In fact, they even came up with a 5-year plan (1976-81) aimed at having 250,000 converts by the end of the 5th year. However, the lack of coordination between PERKIM and other religious councils, poor record keeping and increasing recidivism among new converts, has made this task quite difficult. In fact, as of 1978, they have only succeeded in converting 11,370 people to Islam. A listing below, based on the records of the local offices of PERKIM proves this point: (Nagata, 1984)

| <u>YEAR</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1967        | 541          |

|      |      |
|------|------|
| 1968 | 539  |
| 1969 | 677  |
| 1970 | 773  |
| 1971 | 884  |
| 1972 | 1563 |
| 1973 | 944  |
| 1974 | 1844 |
| 1975 | 1977 |
| 1976 | 809  |
| 1977 | 411  |
| 1978 | 408  |

GRAND TOTAL: 11,370

They are very active in the rural, aboriginally populated areas in East and West Malaysia, as provided for in the grant from Kuwait, converting about 800 in a few years.

Their techniques at conversion uses a "soft shell" approach, so that people will not be repulsed with them or with what they have to say. They are very tolerant of things western, capitalism and democracy. They also do not impose the use of Muslim traditional garb, or even circumcision, because they believe deeply in the internalization of the religion, more than its symbolic manifestations. They even allow the consumption of "non-halal" food by the aborigines because they do not consider it dangerous to their conversion to the new faith.

They are quite generous to their new members, whom they provide with some money to start off their new lives if necessary. They are on the way to having a 170-acre settlement in Selangor, to provide housing for Muslims, of all races. In

Penang, a job training complex has been erected for new Muslims to learn book keeping, stenography, accounting, mechanics, etc. In Kuala Lumpur, they are planning to establish shopping complexes to accomodate Muslims of all ethnic origins.

PERKIM strongly believes in the universalism of Islam and the need to remove and destroy all barriers towards national and religious unity. This is very much in tune with the government's official stand on Islam which is actually quite moderate in approach as compared to other groups.

It should be realized however, that an organization like PERKIM will not succeed in unifying the country on its own. It needs the cooperation of government and the people themselves in finding a compromise to the current system of Islamization and Malayaness in the country.

B. The Muslims. Coming from a country where religion though extremely important, has not actually led to disunity or disharmony among the people, it is quite fascinating to know that a country such as Malaysia will have to battle with the religion question for a long time. After studying the country for about two years, I begin to realize the disparities which exist within the country, which no one can just eliminate or totally disregard. The most important factor to consider is that the religious issue is not purely religious but an ethnic problem as well, making it a more deeply rooted and sensitive aspect of society as a whole.

The Malays/Muslims have always been a "disadvantaged" people, in the sense that they have little or no education, nor do they have wealth or possess political strength<sup>77</sup> This condition is a result of many factors including colonialism, which has made them the inferior race and whereby they were not given the opportunity to improve

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<sup>77</sup> It was only after the May 1969 riots did the Malay-Muslims actually receive the benefits of education, some wealth, political power, among others. Prior to that, they were some of the poorest people in the country. Although quite a number of them continue to be impoverished, things can only get better for them, as the government enforces Islamization.

themselves in any way, most specifically through learning. In addition, their desire to live and work only within their own communities, with minimal interaction with the rest of the country has made them quite isolationist, so that their growth and development was slowed down considerably. And with the coming of the migrants, the Chinese and Indians, who proved to be hardworking and entrepreneurial as well, they were pushed even further down in the social strata.

At the onset of the riots in 1969, the Muslims gained the strength to make government more responsive to their needs as a religious and political group. The Muslims demanded the following:

(a) **Political Power:** Since they believe that they are the ethnic majority, they should have the most seats in government, and have complete control over the federal government. The Chinese and Indians, can only have minimal representation.

(b) **Religious Dominance:** Islam is and should always be the official state religion and should be practiced by everyone. All non-Muslims should slowly be indoctrinated into the faith with hopes of eventually having a completely Islamic population. Religious practices as the Ramadan, pilgrimage to Mecca, among others should be encouraged and celebrated by the entire country. All the laws made should be in congruence with these beliefs and not against any of them.

(c) **Economic Priority:** The plight of the Muslims should be government's main economic concern. Loans should be made available to them, without any interest; financial institutions should be supportive and be cooperative in this regard. Financial assistance to the indigent should be pursued and continued till they are capable of taking care of themselves. Companies owned by the Chinese should gradually be put in the hands of Malays, who shall hold the top positions, so that the working conditions of the Malays will be given priority.

(d) **Social Concerns.** The rise of an Islamic identity, the desire for justice and equality, elimination of graft and corruption should be taken cared of by the



government. All institutions, as well as the private sector should cooperate in this regard <sup>216</sup> so that there will be peace and harmony in the country.

Their riots in 1969 led to increasing Islamization in the country and the formulation of the New Economic Policy or NEP, which is the very framework of development of the country. Their lives have improved tremendously because of these changes. Slowly, Malaysia is becoming more Islamic, with Muslim groups forming everywhere. Of course, conflicts have arisen because of their different perspectives on how change should be carried out. In fact, if one were to scrutinize the various groups which have emerged, there are those which are extremely fundamental, a mixture of the two extremes and those which are more liberal. Most of the groups which have arisen are more compromising and willing to be more flexible in their demands; none of them however, has completely succeeded in fulfilling the goals which they have initially set forth for themselves. Nevertheless, they continue to exert their influence in every possible way, in every aspect of society. Malay/Muslim concerns are at the top in the list of governmental priorities. In fact, some Chinese and Indians have opted to convert to the Muslim faith only to gain the very same benefits that they do. This is no guarantee however, for although they may be Muslim, their ethnicity is still Chinese, and I am quite uncertain if the Malays will be willing to extend the very same privileges and benefits that they are enjoying to them.

Despite government's claims that it is in fact democratic and caters to all the ethnic groups in the country, their actions say otherwise. And with Islamization intensifying every single day, the Muslim dream of having an Islamic state may just become a reality in the near future.

C. The Chinese. The Chinese came to Malaysia as migrant workers employed by the British government to work in the fields and in public works. Through

hard work and perseverance, they have attained good education and enough wealth to be considered perhaps the most successful ethnic group in Malaysian society. <sup>217</sup>

With the onset of Malayization, the National Economic Policy, quota system in education, declaration of Malay as the country's national language, etc., it was inevitable that they would feel neglected and ineligible for Malay constitutional privileges, so much so, that they are being increasingly thrown back on to their own resources for economic survival (Nagata, 1984).

Thus, the Chinese are forced to find other ways to pursue their goals of higher education through the establishment of its own private schools or move elsewhere to receive higher education. It is not surprising to see therefore, quite a number of Chinese Malaysians in Great Britain, USA and even the University of Singapore, where at least 10% of all available university slots are allotted for them. Those who opt to stay home mostly receive their education in Chinese schools, moreso in the primary level, where the government still allows the use of the vernacular as Chinese, Malay and Tamil.

In addition, there is a current realization among some members of the Chinese community to learn more about their language, culture and ancestral heritage so that they will never lose touch of their roots and will always try to maintain their identity and culture as a whole. Besides, since they will eventually have to learn the Malay language as well as their traditions, knowing their very own culture first will prevent them from forgetting it. It will also allow the Chinese to eventually establish business or professional relationships with other Chinese, where interaction using their own language is a necessity. They have actually given up on the possibility that their concerns will be taken cared of by the government or that a significant turnaround in policy in their favor will happen.

As for secular education, Chinese medium schools do not exist any more, and English has been gradually phased out for over thirteen years now. Parents may

either send their children to national language schools, or the private Chinese schools.<sup>218</sup>

As far as the national language schools are concerned, some of them were once Chinese schools which were just converted with the passage of the new law. Parents try to bring their children to these schools, so that many of their teachers and classmates will still be Chinese, who will give them the chance to use their own language in class discussions and various types of interaction. Chinese private schools on the otherhand, are totally Chinese-owned (usually by businessmen or associations) who go to the extent of holding fund raisers for this purpose. The problems of lack of funds, poor coordination of curriculum, i.e., it does not follow the government requirements, decreasing competitiveness vis-a-vis the government institutions have made the educational system imperfect, with increasing failure and drop out rates.

Regarding religion, many Chinese have still maintained their very own religious traditions, be it Buddhist, Catholic, Taoist, etc. However in the late 1960's and early 70's, some have opted to convert to Islam, through the efforts and influence of PERKIM. They may have been encouraged to do so because:

(a) They thought that if they became Muslims, they will be able to enjoy the special privileges accorded to Malay-Muslims and thus be on equal footing with them. Little did they know that being converts to the faith is not synonymous to being "born Muslims", thus putting them in a different class altogether. They are not even encouraged to wear traditional Muslim clothes, assume Muslim names or engage in the rituals.

(b) Some Chinese may have also converted so as not to be suspected of being involved in subversive, communist activities. Others have even stated political and social rehabilitation, possible government contributions and atonement for their sins (eg. as did the converts in Johor) as a reason for conversion.

(c) Some are actually committed to the faith and to the Islamic way of life. They have gone as far as to work in PERKIM centers to assist the organization in its

work. Some even claim that they have been of other religious persuasions before, but <sup>219</sup> have not felt as fulfilled as when they converted to Islam. Most of them are young (under 30), middle level educational and professional status as clerks, mechanics, teachers, etc., who speak Malay and English. They may also have good Malay friends, who may have influenced them to convert. They undergo intensive course work, serve as missionaries, or assistants in the various sub-agencies of PERKIM (eg. in 1979, there were 33 missionaries in the Kuala Lumpur branch of PERKIM; 16 were Chinese).

(d) Economics is definitely a possible reason for conversion. Being Muslim would definitely ease the way for businessmen to continue with their transactions and avoid any form of doubt as to their loyalties and genuine desire to be of assistance to the general populace.

(e) Inter-marriage between a Muslim and non-Muslim is not allowed by Koranic law. Thus, for practical reasons, the latter has to convert to the faith if he hopes to marry any Muslim. The usual trend is for non-Muslim men to marry Muslim women, as the latter will lose her lineage in marriage anyway, so the nuptials will not pose as a threat or inconvenience to the parties concerned.

Chinese converts however are treated and even called differently by their Malay counterparts. They are referred to as "saudara baru" or new associates, without any linkage to their ancestral heritage, or their new faith. Their family considers them "traitors" who have sold their souls to the Malays, while Malays consider them opportunists who will do anything to get their way.

Some converts opt to pass themselves out as Muslims, with Islamic names, and the use of traditional clothing, practice of Islamic rituals, but many of them would rather maintain both their ancestral and newly acquired traditional practices. They may attend the Chinese festivities, but remain anonymous, or simply refuse to drink any alcoholic beverage or consume pork. On the whole therefore, they themselves do not

quite know how to react or deal with their newly acquired faith and cope with the pressures of their family and "old" traditions.

It might be safe to conclude that the Chinese are not one in their perception, understanding and manner of coping with the process of Islamization. They have opted to either integrate completely, or isolate themselves, or perhaps even a little of both, without succeeding in any one of them. Their hopes for more privileges and the provision of more rights by government remains a remote possibility and may continue to be one in the years to come.

D. The Students in Malaysia. According to Zainah Anwar (1987), the Islamic revivalist movement is heavily influenced by the role of the students, with the English-educated and urban-based Malay students deeply involved with its activities. These students no longer advocate pure reformism, but a combination of many desired changes by the various groups. In addition, the very core of their complains is no longer nationalistic in perspective, but a religious one instead, with the development of a good Muslim as their major concern. He further adds that because of the more lenient governmental policies in favor of the Malays, many of the revivalists have moved from the rural to the urban areas, to engage more actively in the revivalist activities. The groups are composed of individuals ranging from 18 years of age to 35, many of whom serve as the very backbone of the movement itself, with an Islamic programme for socio-political change in the country.

The students of Malaysia became very active in politics, specifically in the area of Islamic reform after the May 13, 1969 riots. Students took part in the event, focusing on issues as poverty, corruption, the provision of social services, among others. All these under the leadership of Anwar Ibrahim, in the University of Malaya. They began forming small study groups where they discussed the teachings of Islamic

221  
leaders on revivalism and a total religious way of life. Books by Sayyid Qutb, Hasan al-Banna, Abul A'la Al-Maududi, etc., all very famous Muslim writers, were among the more popular reading materials. Their initial objective was to take control of the Student's Union, otherwise known as the Persatuan Mahasiswa Universiti Malaya or PMUM, which was then under the leadership of the Socialist Club, an organization aimed at fighting for the rights of the poor and oppressed.

Morality was also a frequent topic of discussion, with the first year students in the university as their main target of concern. Their behavior in the school, dormitories, balls and parties, drinking, dancing and even singing and listening to music were being questioned in terms of their value and role in the development of an Islamic way of life. They became so convinced that all these were going to come in the way of becoming good Muslims, that they decided to seek the support of the university administration in their efforts. In 1972, all balls and parties on campus were banned. By 1974, freshmen orientation included religious activities like prayers, religious lectures, wearing headscarves and conservative clothing. This was the time when the term "dakwah" was concocted to refer to that process of making Muslims better Muslims.

The GKK or the Gerakan Kempen Kesedaran or Consciousness Raising Campaign under Anwar's leadership was organized to have a close relationship between students and society. Students who participated in this programme spent twelve days to two months during university vacations to go to rural villages and live with poor Malays to learn more about their socio-economic problems and assist them in their desire to build better lives in the future. This programme became successful in increasing Malay awareness and as a means for the revivalist movement to gain ground in all areas in the country. The participants tried to make the people more aware of their need to establish peace, justice, honesty, truth and understanding and guarantee them that their entire lives shall be linked to Islam.

By 1973, the PKPIM or the Persatuan Kebangsaan Pelajar Peajar Islam Malaysia or the National Association of Muslim Students Malaysia in the university was gradually focusing its projects toward Islam. This included a variety of activities including the establishment of a student body, which was aware and conscious of its responsibilities as an Islamic organization; organization of the Muslim students and formation of a regimented structure with capable leadership; encouragement of the need to participate actively in the struggle for Islam; increasing student awareness and understanding of domestic and international students; strengthening the Islamic groups through the organization and unification of measures; increasing the students knowledge and understanding of Islam; arousing the spirit of "jihad"; and calling for the need to live a moral life and stay away from leading immoral lives.

The ABIM was also very active during this period, and in fact led most of the student groups during this initial phase of the revivalist movement (refer to a more detailed discussion on ABIM in the previous chapters).

The students were so adamant in their demand for change that they even established links with Indonesian Islamic leaders (considered some of the most conservative, yet active in the move towards Islamization in their country), and their works with hopes for the same amount of religious vigor to arise in Malaysia. Groups as the HMI or the Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam or the Muslim Students Association of Indonesia established links with their Islamic counterparts and made them more aware of their activities and plans for change in the country. They felt that Islam is a way of life which should be practiced at all levels, from the government down to the local level, so that an Islamic state may eventually come into being. The HMI also taught the Malaysian groups to carry out activities like training camps and social services to increase Islamic awareness and develop a sense of commitment to the cause of Islam.

The students respected the Indonesian revivalist leaders so much that they even sought for the support of Abdul Rahim, an Indonesian Professor at the Institute of

Technology in Bandung, which is considered the seat of religio-political Islamic activities in Indonesia and a Professor at the University of Technology-Malaysia (UTM) in Kuala Lumpur. Rahim stressed the need for Islam to embody the people's total way of life and the need to study the Koran to help revive the role of Islam in the people's lives, which he thought were going astray, i.e. assuming worldly values and western habits. His extremist views were just irreconcilable with the more reformist stance which the students have taken on. They eventually severed ties with the groups and Rahim himself because of the ideological conflicts. They opted to formulate their own ideological precepts, their own programmes and projects which would best represent their belief systems.

One major development prevented the students from engaging in politics actively, and that was the passage of the "Universities and University Colleges Act" (1971) which imposed severe restrictions on student activities. Students were not allowed to link themselves with other individuals and/or groups which were opposed to any political party or trade union already in existence. If caught, they would be fined one thousand Malaysian dollars or six months' imprisonment or both. University administrators may also suspend or dissolve any student organization which behaves in a manner which may be consequential to the university.

Because of this, the students sought refuge in Islam as a means to air their grievances, and thus fulfill a need from all the pressures imposed on them by the university. In 1974 however, students boycotted against the social ills plaguing Malay society, including poverty, hunger and injustice. Many were arrested, including government scholars, who were ordered to sever their ties with the student groups or face the risk of losing their scholarships.

In 1975, the Universities and University Colleges Act was amended to include only the prohibition of collecting any funds for any group's cause. Only the university authorities were allowed to handle funds. All activities, university



lectures/fora and symposia of any form had to be authorized by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. Students were not allowed to assemble into groups of 5 or more or publish any documents without seeking the permission of the university authorities.

Another development since 1969, was the return of Malay scholars from Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, with more traditional views of the role of Islam in Malaysian society. This development, was a result of being transplanted to an area totally different from what they have been used to and facing new experiences which they found very difficult to deal with, as discrimination, alienation and homesickness, which forced them to look for something familiar which they could all cling to for refuge. This they found in Islam, which provided them with the sense of identity and stability that they wanted.

They established groups such as the Malaysian Islamic Study Group or MISG, which was based in London and affiliated with the Federation of Student Islamic Societies or FOSIS. In addition, they listened to or read works written by Middle Eastern and Pakistani ideologues belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood and Jemaat-i-Islami Movement. The views and precepts that they learned however, were general in nature, without an actual emphasis on the Malaysian situation.

Other more specifically "dakwah" groups also arose, as the "Suara Islam" or the Voice of Islam and the Islamic Representative Council or IRC, which were formed in Brighton where Sussex University and the Brighton Technical College were situated, and where many Malaysian students were seeking higher education. Both the Suara Islam and IRC were more radical in their beliefs, referring even to the works of Mao Tse Tung and Lenin in their speeches. Membership increased steadily as students shied away from the MISG and the FOSIS. They all believed in the need to re-structure Malaysian society, through an Islamic struggle, which would pave the way towards ultimate Islamic control of the country. They believed that all their objectives would

only be achieved with increasing Islamic control, through the formation of an Islamic political party. The moderate attitude of groups as ABIM was set aside in favor of more radical change, especially by the Suara Islam. The IRC did not agree with all the changes proposed by the Suara Islam because it did not believe in confrontation. They believed instead in establishing "secret cells" as the best means of spreading their message. They also believed that by "infiltrating" existing groups and initiating change from within, they would be able to accomplish their goals. They also stressed education (tarbiyah), i.e., spreading the Islamic alternative as the only way to a completely spiritual way of life.

Both groups however, considered the government as unIslamic. Suara Islam's newsletter, the "Suara al-Islam" explored the possibility of imposing Islamic solutions to Malaysia's ills, denounced government as one which was against the Muslims and UMNO as a secular, Malay nationalist party and ABIM as nothing more than a reformist group with the characteristics of a revolutionary movement. IRC despite its more radical stance, was able to propel their membership to a level higher than any other group.

Both groups' members have returned to Malaysia as academicians, administrators or even religious leaders, while still maintaining their objective of changing Malaysian society towards a more Islamic path.

Today, the "dakwah" movement is as divisive as ever, with groups espousing various ideologies, methods and programmes for change. There is the Islamic Republic, which is made up of students who believe in political reconstruction as the current government is an infidel, with a man-made, capitalist-based constitution. It is a highly politicized group which sees Iran as an example of a successful Islamic revolution which gets its support and guidance from PAS, academicians and students from the universities.

Members of the Islamic Republic oppose any kind of mixed social activities, including sports because they forbid men and women to mingle as participants or observers. They also get involved in controversial activities including the boycott of a food and fun fair held on graduation day; cancellation of a pop concert and the entry of PAS/Pan Islamic Party speakers into the universities, without seeking permission from the administration; showing movies on government oppression including the killing of a PAS member in a showdown with the UMNO during a by-election Padang Terap in Kedah.

The Darul Arqam also has an affiliate with the universities. It runs various educational, social and economic projects all with an Islamic theme, with 30 kindergartens, 14 religious schools, where it trains their teachers and missionaries, 2 academic schools and 1 public health care center.

They are largely apolitical in the university, with greater interest in increasing their religiosity and building up support at the grassroots level. Students who are members of Darul Arqam live in different homes, depending on their sex.

Another organization is affiliated with the Jemaat Tabligh which like its parent organization believes in the renewal of the spirit of Islam through personal contact and the example set by its missionaries. It is a more closed organization, which stresses rituals and requires all its followers to undertake missionary activity at least a few days each month. It is an all-male organization, and has the least influence on campus.

And of course, there is the ABIM, that has branches in almost every school campus in the country. It continues in its struggle to correct society's ills through Islam and believes that the salvation of society may only be achieved with the religion.

All these groups use the "usrah", small discussion groups of ten students or less, who meet regularly in a discussion of Islam. It also serves as a support group for students, where everything from personal problems to the possibility of establishing an Islamic state, is discussed. Each group is made up of only one sex, with meetings once

a week, usually held in places out of campus so as not to catch the ire of the administration. These meetings may last all night long as participants join together in prayer, meditation and reflection.

The "usrah" is supplemented by courses offered to students as a one week training program on the Foundations of Islam and an Islamic Leadership Training Programme for qualified upper classmen.

In addition, hostels may also aid in religious development by selling books and pamphlets on Islam, and the manufacturing of certain "halal" products which are pure and fit for any Muslim to consume.

University administrators, such as those in the University of Malaya have expressed concern over the narrow-mindedness which seems to characterize the student revivalist groups. In 1984, the administration spent almost a year countering the organizations' activities with the alteration of the election procedure, so that students could only cast one vote for all the positions listed, whereas they used to vote for every single position written down on the ballot sheet. In addition, 6 sub-committees were created, which emphasized cultural and recreational activities; an increase in the school budget, with no interest for student loans to encourage them to be more loyal to government. Activities such as cultural presentations, moonlight jogathons, walkathons and even aerobics classes were also introduced for a more developmental approach to education. Hostel residents were also carefully selected upon entry, stressing academics as well as extra-curricular activities. Dorms were even re-designed with more glass windows and better carpeting to make the students more aware of the nobility of their intentions.

Nevertheless, the student groups have remained vibrant and vigorous in the revivalist movement. They have felt a sense of identity, belongingness and strength in Islam itself, which no other ideology or religion has ever given them, thus providing them with the strength to move on. However, the diversity which also characterizes the

movement and the absence of a leader who can actually bring all of them together under the same banner may inevitably lead to further diversification of the groups and the gradual loss of influence and power in society. There is a need for them to pull their resources together to make a permanent impression on the Malaysian government, society, and possibly the rest of the Islamic world.

#### E. Political Parties.

[1] UMNO/United Malay Nationalist Organization. In May 1946, at the height of the move towards the establishment of a Malayan Union, UMNO or the United Malays Nationalist Organization was formed. It was under the leadership of Dato Onn bin Jafar, who led his followers organize mass demonstrations against the move and to refuse to cooperate and participate in any activity which may have led to its fruition. Their main reason for doing so was because they were aware of the possible repercussions that such a union may bring, considering the lack of wealth and power of the Malays who comprise the major ethnic group in the country, and the strength and wealth which the non-Malays specifically the Chinese, had. In turn, they offered to establish a federation with powers highly centralized in the government and with ample rights and privileges awarded to the Malays.

Their strength as a group and the fear of rebellion made the British renege on their initial plans and instead formed the Federation of Malaya in February 1947, which formally came into effect the following year. The constitution was made upon consultation with UMNO, the traditional leaders and the British themselves, who did not even bother to consult the non-Malays. The constitution therefore contained tight censorship laws, awarding "special rights" to the Malays, and the recognition of the fact that the Malays, as a group should be given certain priorities because of their indigenous character.

UMNO was also part of the Alliance, an inter-racial group of Malays and Chinese who bargained for the country's independence in 1957. Since then, every Prime Minister has come from the ranks of UMNO with a large number of legislators also under the UMNO banner. Needless to say, UMNO's major concern is the welfare of the Malay-Muslims. Its prominent role in the making of the constitution, its governmental policies after the May 1969 riots are all indicative of that fact.

However, like any political actor who believes in an interactive world system, it does not push for complete Islamization and the formation of an Islamic state, but is more compromising and willing to cooperate with the other actors in the international system, while maintaining cordial relations with the domestic political forces. It understands that a more tolerant attitude toward a group which is financially strong and still politically powerful is necessary if Malaysia would like to reach the status of a developed nation. In addition, it would like to maintain an image of neutrality, so as not to appear discriminatory in favor of certain ethnic groups, which in this case happens to be Malay. Hence, educational issues are handled by committees which make recommendations to the legislature, and whose members vote on the issues at hand. It has also opted not to call Malaysia an Islamic state, but instead a state whose official religion is Islam. It has, in certain points of its history, created alliances with other groups, as the MCA and MIC/Malayan Indian Congress for keeping up an image of being neutral and consensual.

As far as the revivalist movement goes however, and government's claims of neutral and unbiased, its actions prove otherwise. The government has, with UMNO's assistance, created the new "Religious Council of the Federal District" or the "Majlis Ugama Islam" in 1974 to assist the "National Council for Religious Affairs" or the "Majlis Kebangsaan Bagi Hal Ehwal Ugama Islam Malaysia". Both organizations have been utilized in the propagation of the Islamic faith and the implementation of government programmes through their own projects. For instance, the National Council

230  
for Religious Affairs has developed information and educational services in all forms of media, including national religious broadcasts, dissemination of texts for Friday sermons, books and pamphlets, supervision of religious curricula in national schools and the collection of materials to expose the "false teachings" of Islam in the country. It has gone so far as to work with groups from Singapore and Indonesia to establish a uniform, standard calendar to re-arrange the dates, so that they will highlight the month allotted for fasting and the celebration of religious holidays.

There has also been since 1969, an Islamic Educational Center. This organization aims to introduce its own religious projects and services, before any other religious group can introduce their own. This way, they can claim originality and supremacy of their own projects and plans of action. It will also assist government in centralizing religious instruction in the country, and assist the Ministry of Education in its Islamization programmes.

Government is also responsible for the creation of the "Institut Dakwah dan Latehan Islam" and "Yayasan Dakwah" to promote Islam and implement their plans. The "Institut Dakwah dan Latehan Islam aims for a progressive and dynamic society, with comprehensive training and retreats in its own hostel in Kuala Lumpur, and with lectures going on all around the country talking about the need for unity, and progress in the country. "Yayasan Dakwah" on the otherhand publishes a Malay language journal, "Dakwah" which covers a wide range of religious perspectives with a very ABIM and even Darul Arqam bias. Favorable reports are made on governmental policies, activities of sultans, and others, especially as they pertain to religion. All government offices and sections also have prayer rooms, where meetings are regularly held except at noon on Fridays where prayer sessions are held. They also sponsor religious classes, lectures, seminars, etc. which assist in the promotion of government work, loyalty to Allah and even to UMNO.

In addition to the Universities Act and overseeing student activities abroad, they have moved two dakwah-sympathizing lecturers from the National University to move to remote campuses in Sabah, East Malaysia. They are also responsible for the creation of a separate campus of the University of Malaya in Nilam Puri in Kelantan, so as to have a closer watch on religious dakwah activities and supervise them regularly.

[2] PMIP-PAS/Pan Malayan Islamic Party. The "Persatuan Islam Se-Tanah Melayu" or the Pan Malayan Islamic Party or Partai Islam Se Malaysia, or PMIP-PAS, is a result of a long history of nationalistic movements in Malaysia. Prior to independence in 1957, Malaysian nationalist leaders discussed the possibility of establishing a unified, federal country under a single government and religion which would strengthen the entire nation-state in its pursuit of development. Several groups arose in this effort, including UMNO (which was discussed earlier) and PMIP-PAS under the leadership of Haji Ahmad Fuad Bin Hassan.

Initially, PMIP/PAS was committed to the development of a form of Malay communalism with Islam as the very core of that society. It wanted the establishment of education taught purely in Malay, that all government positions would be allotted to the members of the Malay race and the disdain for any form of cooperation with the other ethnic groups in society. These beliefs have allowed them to gain supremacy in the Malay-dominated states of Kelantan Trengganu and to some extent even Kedah, where the need for more Malay rights and the supremacy of Islam in governmental institutions have been constantly stressed.

PMIP-PAS has also worked for the need for religious education, building of prayer houses and mosques with the full recognition accorded them. They further claim that UMNO is a materialistic and worldly organization whose schemes are motivated by nothing more than selfish motives of profit and greed.



With the onset of revivalism however, PMIP-PAS' platform seems to be more undefined than it was previously. For on the one hand it claims to be an Islamic organization, yet on the otherhand, it is more hesitant when it comes to identifying Islam with Malay nationalism, to the point of accusing UMNO of racism. The language which they currently use is more often "Islam-non-Islam" or "Islam-bukan-Islam" (Nagata, 1984) with Datuk Asri, its president, stressing the more universalistic and religious dimensions of the group, with statements as the supremacy and strength of the religion which will ultimately take full control of the country.

The group does not make clear what its stand on the members of the royal family is, as it is a very delicate issue, and one that no one would really like to discuss in the open. It continues to abhor excessive materialism, gambling and even drinking, which are all obstacles to the fulfillment of a truly Islamic way of life.

It is worth noting that many "ulama" or priests, have chosen to be part of PAS in a membership or leadership capacity. Their alliance with the group has allowed them to assist the group financially, so that they could train young Malays to eventually become good leaders. Perhaps one of the branches of PAS in the country, which has had the most "ulama" members is that in Kedah, with the likes of Haji Othman Yurus of Madrasah Al-Nada, Bukit Besar; Jai Abu Bakar Palestain of Pondok Ayer Itam; and Tok Haji Hussein, of the Sekolah Menengah Ugama Raudzatul, Ulum Langgar, etc. They are not only famous religious leaders, but political ideologues as well, whose pupils have become parts of the academe or the business or political world.

Other members are Malay by birth, who have received their education from small "pondok" schools with very few from English-medium, government or secular schools.

Despite its abhorrence for supposed UMNO-greed, PAS may tolerate the acquisition of property, trade and commerce and even inequalities in wealth. All these are all right for so long as the people who have acquired them did so without violating

their Islamic principles, as exploitation and oppression in the western capitalistic fashion, where management profits greatly from the exploitation of the manpower force.

PAS also believes in establishing close ties with other Islamic groups. At present, it is linked with ABIM whose objectives, as the promotion of the Islamic cause, improvement in the Malay way of life and opposition to UMNO are all in congruence with those of PAS. PAS, through relationships such as this would be able to establish a stronger political base and gain legitimacy in the rural areas. Lately, PAS leaders have also been serving as guest speakers or lecturers in the universities under the auspices of IRC and other student groups. This despite the prohibition of such activities by the national government.

PAS is quite open in its public endorsement of the Iranian regime of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and even considers his strong control over his constituents admirable, for he has proven without a doubt, the strength and unity of the Muslims and the Islamic faith.

PAS has emerged through time as the main opposition party to UMNO. It has survived the turmoils of war, independence and even Islamization and may continue to survive for so long as Islamization remains as the main priority of the Malaysian government.

F. Ulama or Religious Teachers. As mentioned earlier, the ulama or religious teachers are the very first educational instructors in Malaysia. Eager students, met at the home of the ulama/teacher, who has been selected by their parents to teach the Koran and its tenets. ~~The children were then required to memorize and recite the~~ scriptures from beginning to end. The children who successfully memorized the entire scripture were referred to as "hafiz". Some teachers went so far as to give lessons in Islamic law, stressing the necessity of believing in a Supreme Being.

The teachers were committed to the task assigned them to the extent that their wife/wives even assisted them in overseeing the children, their behavior and inculcating discipline. Children were not spared from punishment, if necessary, to instill the proper Islamic values in them. Upon completion of the course, a graduation ceremony which features the Koranic reading skills of the pupils follows, as well as the presentation of gifts to the guru, whose popularity subsequently increases as more students complete the training programme.

As the educational system became more structured in the late nineteenth century, two basic styles of Islamic instruction arose (Nagata, 1984):

[1] Umumi or General Education. The most common form of learning, which emphasized memorization, recitation (*mentelaah*) and the learning of Islamic rituals. Each teacher had a different style, but resulted in basically the same thing, i.e., students who were not ready for the real world, because they were not capable of analyzing issues, creative thinking and rational decision-making.

It was a rare occurrence to have a teacher stress history or jurisprudence, which was taught through homilies, endless lecture and examples, all in a Malay peasant context. Topics usually dealt with marriage, and proper Islamic female behavior, need for unity in the Muslim community as well as the greater importance which should be accorded to the life hereafter, rather than the here and now.

Sometimes, the Koran was also supplemented by the *Kitab Jaw*, or religious books written in literary Malay, but in Arabic script. Most of these books have been written by authors from all over the Southeast Asian region. Their topics ranged from the basic explanation of the creation of heaven and earth, commentaries on the Koran, Islamic law, among others.

While the teachers prophesized on the Koran, the students simply sat on the floor, without a blackboard, repeating everything in chorus after their lecturer. Good students were sometimes hired as assistants to the teacher, who may even consider the

student a future in-law, by pairing him off with his child, and/or recommending him for<sup>235</sup> a scholarship in an institution in Malaysia, or the Middle East to pursue further studies on Islam. Teaching style was characterized by authoritarianism, with physical chastisement as possible punishment in extreme cases or service in the master's land or business.

Students lived in the home of the ulama, which is surrounded by a fence, so that no one may be allowed to go out or even receive guests without prior notification. The few female students were under close supervision by the wife/wives of the ulama. Older students sometimes joined the sessions to share their experiences and ideas and/or simply rekindle their ties with the ulama, and get re-acquainted with the Islamic teachings.

It's a pity though that despite all the strict supervision, graduates from pondok schools receive minimal training and academic knowledge.

[2] Nazami Style. So-called in honor of Nizam Al-Muluk, the man responsible for its formulation in Baghdad. In this system, instruction was in Arabic and focused on Koranic training, full academic curriculum of Islamic law, jurisprudence, astronomy, mathematics, ethnics, history, geography, Malay language, among others. These enable the students to be adequately prepared for possible acceptance into a Middle Eastern university. Traditional Koranic instruction only lasts half a day, while academic subjects are studied the rest of the day.

Wealthier students lived in dormitories, where meals were either catered by an establishment or prepared by the female members, or by some semi-autonomous enterprise or the guru himself for a fee.

Between the turn of the century and the late 1950's, the Golden Age for both styles of education emerged, as students were willing to move from one region to another to have more knowledge. Schools were filled with students as the Malays availed of the only form of education they could receive. And even when the British and

others offered them alternative education, they hardly took advantage of the opportunity, for fear that they may acquire habits or values which were unIslamic. They also became more popular as they accepted the students who failed in the other schools or simply dropped out of school.

As time went on however, the popularity of the schools decreased as even the children of the ulama themselves left the cloistered environment to take advantage of the other opportunities outside their parents' homes. More secular jobs became available and financially enticing to the natives, thus putting spiritual development in the back seat. Besides, graduates also realized the poor quality of education they were receiving in the pondok schools, thus putting them in a disadvantaged position, when pitted against graduates of secular schools. Increasing centralization of the State Religious Council also led to its decline with the said office taking care of many religious functions, including the collection of the tithes, issuing licenses to all the ulama, and the establishment of a network of people's religious schools with a full series of secular, national promotional examinations of the lower, middle and higher school certificates.

The Ministry of Education also increased pressure for accommodation to the national curriculum and examinations system, especially at the secondary level. It also imposed its own controls, including the screening of teachers. Compliance would mean increased funding for new buildings, laboratories, equipment and teacher's salaries.

It also took over the construction of hostels and dorms to replace the old pondok schools. Some ulama who wanted to keep their school going chose to either establish their own business (eg. selling their produce) or enter into cooperative agreements with other schools to prevent closure. Others however, just closed their schools because of lack of students.

In terms of political influence, the ulama have different perceptions about the establishment of an Islamic state, as well as the methods necessary to achieve it. Some believe that full support of the status quo is necessary, including the maintenance

of religious councils, sultans or other political elites. Others wield tremendous power<sup>237</sup> through their own schools and kampungs, through their control over key stages of socialization of the youth. Many are involved in party politics, whether UMNO or PAS, with a preference to the latter, as it contributes to many religious schools and encourages the training of future religious teachers. In fact, at the national level, the founders of PAS were once religious teachers themselves. The Kedah branch of PAS is known for its high ulama membership, especially in positions of party leadership, with some names in the ulama Islamic tradition, as Haji Abbas Nasution, of the now defunct Sekolah Arab Al-Sakhiniyah in Pulau Pisang for instance. There are also others, who came from English-medium or government schools.

In the State Religious Council, the situation is more complex, as some ulama are political appointees of the UMNO State Executive Committee, and thus cater to the party's interests. Due to the brief period of alliance between UMNO and PAS (1972-78), there remain a number of ulama from that party too, so that the religious council cannot be characterized as unequivocally supportive of the status quo. PAS Council members can thus play the opposition role from the inside and lobby against certain proposed UMNO appointments or projects as well as lend a moderating voice in favour of their PAS ulama colleagues outside, when they are threatened with the withdrawal of their licenses to teach and preach.

Council appointees are sent out to distant rural areas as mosque officials or as head masters of the other schools, especially those of the UMNO persuasion, which at the local level, carries with it the potential for considerable animosity with the established local ulama and their loyal PAS constituents. There is no doubt that some ulama do not discourage such sentiments.

Political compromise between ulama in favor of the PAS, and those in favor of UMNO has been very difficult to achieve, as each group strongly believes in their own political and religious convictions. The members of each group even try to falsify

the beliefs of the other, by telling their constituencies that their leaders teachings are <sup>238</sup> wrong or doubtful. For instance, PAS ulama even try to convince villagers that meat slaughtered by UMNO members is unclean and should not be consumed. Refusal to eat with members of the opposing camp, attending funerals of its members or praying in their mosques are also considered unappealing.

Thus, the ulama has continued to wield its own power till today. Although they do not have as much power and control as they used to, their membership in the political parties, and active participation in religious activities, makes them as visible in society as they were before.

In conclusion, religious interest groups in both countries are still very active in the formulation and/or implementation of educational policies. They utilize a variety of tools to achieve their goals, and although not always successful, have been helpful in making them more visible in society, increasing their strength with more people becoming aware of their existence and even participating in their many activities, and finally, making government constantly reminded of the possible repercussions of their policies.

## CHAPTER V

### EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

This section of the dissertation is a collection of educational issues, which have been, in one way or another, influenced by the religious interest groups selected in this study. The selection of said issues was based on the following criteria: [a] the role of the religious interest group in the formulation and/or implementation of the educational issue; [b] significance of the issue to the academic community and/or to the area in which said issue/policy has been implemented; [c] willingness of the group or individual concerned to provide adequate information necessary for discussion; [d] availability of information necessary to understand all the incidents pertinent to the discussion of the educational issues at hand. The difficulty of finding the issues and getting primary data to fully understand the details behind them, are not easy, considering that the author is constrained by the fact, that she has not been able to go to Malaysia and the Philippines to gather data, and conduct interviews of individuals who may have, in one way or another gotten involved in any one of the issues discussed here. Nevertheless, all possible sources have been utilized to make this study worthwhile and as comprehensive as possible.

The policies are crucial to the educational system in both countries, since they have an effect on the basic foundations of the system, on the curriculum, administrative policies of the schools, and the role of the students in the institution. In addition, they are issues which clearly show the role of the religious interest groups in the formation, implementation or revision of the educational policy. A few points have to be mentioned however about the issues in the Philippines and Malaysia:



(a) Educational issues in the Philippines have changed through time.

Initially, they were focused on the more basic aspects of the curricula, as religious instruction for instance, because the educational system in the country was still developing at that time. Through the years however, the concerns of groups have been focused on the role of the students in the institutions, student eligibility and quality of the educational system as a whole. Perhaps, this shift may be considered as an indication that education in the country has grown to such an extent that the basic requirements have already been taken cared of, and there is now a greater need to polish whatever policies have been implemented before to further improve the current system.

As for Malaysia, the educational system has also changed, moving towards greater Islamization and Malayness. Although the full impact of these changes have not yet been felt in the country, it is already noticeable that there are indeed problems arising from these ideological and religious commitments which government has made as the very basis of its policies in the country.

(b) In the Philippines, religious policies are products of debates by the various sectors in the country, including the religious interest groups, politicians, and even the mass media. The government works as a mediator between these groups in the attempt to formulate laws which may be beneficial to the majority.

In Malaysia, religious issues may only be discussed by Muslim groups. All other ethnic groups are not allowed, by law, to discuss, debate or argue against any religious issue. They have resorted to the discussion of ethnic issues, to avoid any form of antagonism which may result from their intervention in the political system. It is inevitable however, that these same ethnic issues, may also give rise to religious undertones, as in the case of the Merdeka University for instance, since ethnicity and religion in the country are closely inter-related.

#### A. Educational Issues in the Philippines

## 1. Religious Instruction in the Public Schools

On April 6, 1938, the "Religious Instruction Bill" was passed by the Committee on Public Instruction in the legislature . This bill provided that religious instruction was to be given during regular school hours, 1/2 an hour each day, three times a week, throughout the academic year, for the development of character, good manners and right conduct. This bill, turned law, had the following provisions (Religious Instruction Bill, 1938):

(a) Section 1: There shall be included in the curriculum of all public schools of the Philippines, from the lowest grade to the highest year of the high school, or vocational school, inclusive a course in character building and good manners and right conduct. This course shall be a required subject, scheduled during regular hours, and instruction therein, shall be given for one half hour, three times a week throughout the academic year. However, failure to obtain a passing mark in said course shall not affect the grades obtained in the other subjects, provided the pupil has been regularly attending the classes therein.

(b) Section 2: Where any religious organization or organizations is in a position to offer religious instruction, with their own instructors, and at no cost to the government, parents or guardians of minor children under parental authority in public schools shall, upon request, filed with the principal teacher of the school, have the right to have their

children excused from the instructions in character building and good manners and right conduct as provided in Section 1 thereof, and on the condition that the said children attend the religious organization chosen by their parents, all in accordance with the law.

(c) Section 3: The religious instruction referred to in Section 2 thereof, shall be given in the public schools in lieu of the course in character building and good manners and right conduct and under the same conditions provided in Section 1 of this act, except as to the requirement that the children referred to be regularly attending the classes of religion.

(d) Section 4: The school programme shall be so arranged as to permit no school activities, such as athletics, military exercise, literature and musical programmes and rehearsals, society meetings, recesses and recreations, cleaning by the children of the classrooms and grounds, and the like, to take place at the same time, nor shall athletics and military exercises be held immediately before classes in character building and good manners and right conduct or in religion, as the case may be.

(e) Section 5: The parents/guardians shall not be required more than once to file petitions for their children's religious instruction.

(f) Section 6: No public school teacher, or any person connected with the Bureau of Education, shall influence or attempt to influence any public school pupils in favor of or against any religion or religious denomination; nor shall he or she exert any influence directly or indirectly to encourage public school pupils or discourage them in the attendance of a class in religion or in character building and by presenting one or the other subject as more worthy of preference or rejection; nor shall he or she directly or indirectly obstruct or discourage compliance with the provisions of the law.

(g) Section 7: Any public school teacher, or any person connected with the Bureau of Education who shall, after due hearing and investigation conducted by the corresponding division superintendent of schools be found guilty by the director of education of a violation of any of the provisions of the preceding sections, with the approval of the Secretary of Public Instruction shall forfeit to the government, one month's salary; and if the violation is repeated, shall be dismissed from the service.

(h) Section 8: It shall be unlawful for any person who teaches religion as provided in this act, on the occasion of such religious instruction, to ridicule the doctrines, cult and practices of any other church or religious denomination, or to discourage the attendance of pupils at the public schools

or create disturbance of public order, or arouse disloyalty to the government. Any such person, who shall, after due hearing and investigation conducted by the corresponding Division Superintendent of Schools, be found guilty of a violation of this section, shall with the approval of the Secretary of Public Instruction, be either suspended for a period not exceeding three months, or disqualified from teaching religion as provided in this act.

(i) Section 9: All acts or parts of acts and all rules or regulations, inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

(j) Section 10: This act shall take effect from the opening of the academic year following its approval.

The bill was passed immediately, since members voted unanimously in favor of its passage. However, it was passed in the absence of many of the key leaders of the legislature, including Speaker Gil Montilla and Assemblyman Jose Ozamis, the Acting Floor Leader, Assemblyman Guillermo Villanueva, Chairman of the Committee and Assemblyman Eugenio Perez, Vice-Chairman.

Legislators met at the Plaza Hotel, one Sunday morning, where they urged the US Government and Congress to grant immediate independence to the Philippines, and suggested that the Religious Instruction Bill be revoked. One of the Councilors in the said meeting (Councilor de la Fuente) even mentioned that history has shown that government and religion should be dissociated, because any close relationship between them may mean chaos for the entire country, as it did in the past.

245

Even the Masons drafted their own statement against the bill and passed it on to President Quezon for approval. The very first Assembly meeting regarding the bill took place on April 18, 1938. In this session, assemblymen accused the clergy of manipulating the minds of the Filipinos as well as their leaders into doing what they wanted them to do. Several amendments to the original bill were introduced in this session:

(a) That the title of the bill should instead be, "An Act Providing for a Course in Character Building and Good Manners and Right Conduct in the Public Schools" or an "Optional Course in Religion".

(b) Section 3 of the original bill should be amended to state: that religious instruction shall be given in the public schools during regular school hours under the supervision of the religious organization concerned. In lieu of the course in character building and good manners and right conduct it shall last for 1/2 hour, three times a week throughout the academic year and a standard set of textbooks for every grade or year for each respective religion or religious organization shall be used subject to the authority of the Department of Public Instruction to eliminate them from matters which are against public policy. Failure to obtain a passing mark in religious instruction shall not have any effect on the students' grades in the other subjects in any way. However, habitual failure to attend the class in religion shall require compulsory attendance in the class in character building and good manners and right conduct.

The following day, various religious groups including the Seventh Day Adventists, Protestants, Iglesia ni Kristo, among others condemned the bill as being unconstitutional and undemocratic. Copies of the bill were even sent to the White House, and the Department of War to get the US government's view on the matter. The contents of the bill as well as reviews made by various groups were also sent to the USA. The bill was charged with religious bias, the desire to disunite the people, revival of the unification of church and state, etc.

Various religious interest groups also met, as the CEAP for instance, one of the few groups in existence at that time regarding the passage of the bill. The views of the members were mixed, ranging from complete support for its passage to complete disapproval. Those who supported the bill believed that this would help the students develop good values and morals, with a strong belief in God. It should be noted that most of the members who were in support of the bill were members of the clergy. Those against the bill, most of whom were faculty members and school administrators did not believe that the bill would be helpful to the students, but instead cause more problems, among them:

[a] Who is going to determine the kind of religious instruction that is going to be taught in the public schools?

[b] What kind of teaching materials are going to be used in these classes? Are they going to be made by members of the clergy, teachers of catholic schools, protestant schools, or Iglesia ni Kristo ministers, etc?

[c] Isn't it possible that the teacher's own biases may be reflected in the kind of religious instruction that the children will be receiving?

[d] Why should grades be given to the students in this course? If religion is indeed a way of life, then it should not be graded at all.

[e] Are the parents willing to cooperate with the schools by allowing their children to attend such classes?

The members of the interest groups wrote petitions, many of which were against the passage of the bill. They did not want the bill passed because it was against religious freedom, and might totally isolate the other religious groups in the country. In addition, the bill might bring back the days when the church had a crucial role in policy-making and they felt that if the bill was passed, it would only trigger the beginning of increased political power on the members of the clergy. Pamphlets were distributed all over the country, as individuals and groups tried to catch the people's attention on the

matter, and perhaps, assist them in their efforts to stop the bill from becoming a law.<sup>247</sup>

Rallies were held in the Manila City Hall along Downtown, during congressional sessions, in an attempt to make the legislators know that not everyone was completely satisfied with this new development.

Even newspaper editorials were filled with commentaries on the bill. According to Mauro Baradi, a famous newspaper columnist at that time, the bill would not only lead to acute sectarianism once it is approved but to the return of religious domination. In addition, since Catholicism was the religion of the majority in the country, then the various sects would proceed on teaching their own brand of religion rather than actually explaining the values that every student should try to develop, regardless of his religious convictions. Also, this bill if passed, would only promote further sectarianism, one thing which the country can definitely do without. Filipinism would be a better value to teach than sectarianism.

In another article, this time by columnist Eliseo Taroy, it was noted that the teaching of religion was all right, for so long as it was not made compulsory, since there were other agencies in the country, which may take care of this kind of instruction, as the church, the private sectarian schools, and even the home. Public schools should instead focus on preparing the youth for active, intelligent and useful citizenship. If any parent would like to see that his child will receive religious education, it would be a better idea to send him or her to a sectarian school instead. If they cannot afford it, adequate religious education in the home should be undertaken for the benefit of the child.

The National Assembly finally met on April 22, 1938. This time around, attendance was complete, with all the key members giving speeches on the pending bill. Assemblyman Zulueta, one of the more outspoken members of the legislature, made a powerful speech on the issue. In this speech, he made the following points:

(a) The state, in providing by legislation, the compulsory teaching of religion as an integral part of the citizen's culture, does nothing more than comply with



248

the dictates of natural law. The fundamental religion should not be confused with the profession of sectarian doctrines because religion as a belief in God does not specify any church, but is the basis of faith for all churches. Teaching religion without preference to any other kind does elevate religion above all human conveniences -- it does not violate any elemental principle of democratic institutions which establish the separation of church and state and upholds the freedom of worship.

(b) The separation of church and state only refers to external worship and the material relations of the state with religion. Since it is possible to completely separate the soul of man from the human body, it is logically impossible to separate the church from the state.

(c) Governments should be concerned with men's bodies and souls. Thus, it is also responsible to take care of people's spirituality. If not, chaos and revolution may result.

(d) There is need to fortify the body and spirit of people in material development and moral culture, which constitute the most powerful resources of the nation.

(e) Religiosity of the people should be maintained to protect herself as a nation and to protect the region.

(f) There is no provision in the constitution which prohibits the teaching of religion in the schools.

(g) There is need to make the youth aware of the existence of a Supreme Being without reference to any one religion or sect.

(h) There is need to develop a people with strong morals and values; this avoids the possibility of a revolution and even anarchy.

He also made a few recommendations to make the bill more agreeable to its critics. He proposed that religious instruction should be made optional in the public schools as a fundamental provision without preference to any one sex or creed. There is

also a need to prepare the youth, and make them morally sound and vigorous which <sup>249</sup> can save them from possible degradation into which the fundamental element, excessively modernized, is falling little by little, due to the unsound lectures, dishonest spectacle and abandonment of the children by their parents, and to that unfounded puritanism with which government pretends to interpret the alleged freedom of worship and much talked of separation of church and state.

The debates went on continuously in the legislature, where the following comments have been summarized as follows:

(a) The bill was conceived as an improper act because it was passed in the absence of many of the key members of the legislature. It was done in bad faith and should not even be re-considered for passage.

(b) The bill would mean a long step backward in the Philippines' history and civilization, because it would bring back the days of the union of church and state.

(c) It was a repudiation of Rizal's works and cause for which he gladly suffered and died. (Rizal was a strong supporter of non-interference on the part of the church with regard to national/local policy issues)

(d) It was violative of the highest tenets of education because good education is objective, scientific, comprehensive and unbiased.

(e) It was destructive of the unity of the people.

(f) It was apt to be the seed of discord since people are not totally convinced about the effects of the bill's passage and the extent to which religion will play a crucial part in it.

(g) It was inimical to public policy because the people who initiated the bill to begin with, refuse to accept the separation of church and state as the framework of the country's government and constitution.

(h) It was subversive of the principles of the democratic government because it is essentially monarchical, while government is democratic. Religious

progress is diametrically opposed to political progress; that is why they cannot mix and should never do for that matter. <sup>250</sup>

(i) The bill was both unFilipino and unAmerican, because it violated the provisions in the Constitution.

(j) It was also against the very principle of the separation of church and state.

(k) It was repulsive to the thought of religious freedom and is thus completely contrary to the constitution.

On April 29, 1938, the assemblymen for or against the bill gave speeches of about an hour each, so as to finally come up with a conclusion on the proposal. One of the few assemblymen in favor of its passage, Miguel Cuenco urged for the bill's approval on the following grounds:

(a) It will help mold the character of the youth.

(b) Religious instruction is provided for in the constitution.

(c) Its statutes do not prohibit the teaching of religion, during or within hours reasonable and appropriate for classes.

(d) A Constitutional Convention could not sanction the manner in which religion is to be taught.

(e) To refute the bill would be to refute or totally disregard parental authority.

(f) Teaching religion educates the conscience, involves the operations of the mind and checks the commission of improper acts.

By May 4, 1938, the Religion Instruction Bill, in its revised form was passed into law, and provided for the following:

(a) Section 1 states that it shall be the duty of the Division Superintendent of Schools to fix an appropriate and reasonable hour for the students, which shall neither be too

early nor too late; neither shall it be an hour which may coincide with other school activities as athletics, military training, singing, literary and musical programmes and rehearsals, society meetings, recesses, recreations, cleaning by the children of the school grounds, nor shall athletics and military training take place immediately before the classes in religion. It shall be unlawful for any teacher or persons connection with the Bureau of Education or persons under their supervision to permit any act or activity which directly or indirectly obstructs the learning process.

(b) Section 2 states that the parents or guardians shall not be required more than once to file petitions for their children's religious instruction.

(c) Section 3 states that any public school teacher, or any person connected with the Bureau of Education who violates any of the provisions of the providing section, shall be subject to administrative discipline under the provisions of the constitution.

(d) Section 4 states that the law shall take effect from the opening of the academic year following its approval.

On May 5, 1938, the final form of the bill was passed on its third reading. It continued to be filled with controversy however, more so when in June 5, 1938, the bill was vetoed by President Quezon himself, who opposed the teaching of any form of religious instruction in the public schools. He also opposed the title of the bill because it did not express its real object, and that is that it would essentially change the policy of the

separation of church and state as provided for in the constitution. Besides, he also felt<sup>252</sup> that its passage was an encroachment on the powers of the Chief Executive.

The issue re-surfaced again in 1955, then entitled, "Optional Religious Instruction Bill", i.e., that religious instruction may be taught during the school session, in such a way as to enable the teacher in religion to teach in the public school building for no more than thirty minutes per day, three times a week, to different groups of pupils in the schools. Religious instruction marks should be submitted to the school principal which may be taken in assessing the child's conduct.

This amended version also faced opposition because of the fact that marks/grades were to be given to the course, and religious instruction would become nothing more than just another subject to be taken in the school. In addition, it would take up the time allotted to extra-curricular activities for the students. Also, it would mean that clergymen will have a direct linkage to the educational system, and this may eventually lead to the revival of ecclesiastical domination of all schools.

The bill was passed any way, with very loose provisions on its manner of implementation. Public schools may or may not teach religious education at all, but instead develop a program aimed at moral education, which deals with values which may cater to any religion. For so long as the required courses are provided to the students by the faculty, any spare time may be used for extra-curricular activities or religious education.

This bill is a very significant issue in education because it is indicative of the strong sense of religiosity and commitment to Christianity which Filipinos have. It was believed to be very important to the populace to receive religious education, in any form because of their strong belief in the development of good morals and right conduct. And as will be seen later on, the role of the schools in the country is not simply limited to a learning institution, but as a second home, where teachers are the second parents, who

shall assist in the development not only of one's mind, but one's soul as well. Since <sup>253</sup> then, the issue of religious education has never been discussed again.

Second, it is also important because it clearly showed the role of the various interest groups in the development of policy. Catholics although disunited on their views regarding religious instruction, reacted almost immediately to the bill's initial passage. They published position papers, which were circulated in the schools, churches and homes to make their stand known to the people. The hierarchy was in support of the bill, but was explicit in stating that utmost care has to be observed in the implementation because of the different kinds of religions already in existence. They were worried that the kind of values that the children may develop will not be taught properly because the teachers have not received adequate training in this regard, and thus make the children develop poor values.

The Protestants, and other minorities, as the 7th Day Adventists, Iglesia, among others, expressed their discontent over the bill's passage. They disapproved the bill and wanted it revoked as soon as possible. They were aware of the need for the development of a sense of spirituality in the people, but they also knew that the teaching of one particular religion in the public school is not the way to do it. They were strongly convinced that once passed, the Catholic Church hierarchy, would utilize all possible means of controlling minor religious groups like them, and all their efforts toward nationalization of the church and the clergy may be for naught. A more objective, non-denominational system had to be developed by a group of people representing different religious denominations in order to promote a sense of well-being among the students.

The varied reactions to the bill were crucial to its revision and eventual passage. Although no one actually talks about religious instruction any more, it is essential to know that these groups were significant to the kind of public school system which the Philippines currently has, which is non-denominational, yet with adequate provisions for spiritual and moral development. In many schools, the "Lord's Prayer" is

254

said at the beginning of every school session, indicating the public schools' commitment to spirituality, even without advocating any one particular religion, although it is still within the Christian tradition. And even if some teachers actually tend to be biased in favor of certain religious denominations, there has been no evidence which may show that parents have actually voiced their resentment towards the teacher or school for doing so.

## 2. Religious Freedom and the UPSCA.

As mentioned earlier, the University of the Philippines is the most controversial school in the country, in so far as it is the seat of almost every political ideology or religious philosophy. Its students are also considered some of the most active, vibrant and outspoken individuals among all the university students in the country.

In 1949, as the new campus in Diliman, Quezon City was being built, the issue of constructing a church emerged. The school administration under the leadership of President Bienvenido M. Gonzales, saw the need to build an interdenominational chapel which would cater to the needs of every religious group represented in the university, as the Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, among others. Funding for the project would come from the national government. He saw this as the best compromise as it will fulfill the needs of the school population without posing as a very big burden on the school budget. It should be noted at this point that funding for the university is dependent on the money allotted by the national government, and tuition fees, so the entire allocation may not be enough to build more than one church on campus.

This decision was opposed by Fr. Delaney, then the head of UPSCA who felt that an interdenominational chapel was not enough. He wanted a separate church for the Catholics because of the many activities the group has been planning to have with the church as the very center of their activities. He presented his case to the UP administration,

who took their time in coming up with a decision. Meanwhile, Delaney opted to establish a <sup>255</sup> bigger UPSCA network on campus, so as to gain support in his mission.

The entire bargaining process took quite some time, as Gonzales was engaged in a conflict with then president Elpidio Quirino, forcing him and all the members of the Board of Regents to file their resignation. Quirino asked Dr. Vidal Tan, the former Dean of the UP College of Engineering, and now served as the President of the Far Eastern University, to return to UP as University President. It should be noted that Tan was also the first Faculty Adviser of the UPSCA, so that, his biases will definitely be in their favor.

Dr. Tan's administration (1951-1956) was a very turbulent one, filled with intrigue and uncertainty. No one can seem to pin down the events and actually explain them, because of the lack of information to substantiate all the allegations about the decisions he made as president. Nevertheless, what was very clear then was that Tan was caught between two opposing camps, the UPSCA, a staunch conservative and the liberalist tradition of the university, which was slowly emerging at that time.

Tan identified himself with UPSCA, thinking that by doing so, he would be able to control all the academic and extra curricular affairs in the university. His affiliation with the UPSCA made the rest of the student body feel alienated because of the strong bias which he showed. Catholic groups came out in support of the move to build a Catholic church on campus, as they argued that majority of the students, and in fact most of the populace, belonged to the faith anyway. They also argued that other churches may be built in time, but since the budget only had enough money for one, then, the Catholics should receive priority. A non-denominational group may only cause conflict, as each group would try to avail of its facilities, and schedule their activities which may all fall at the same time, since most religious holidays and celebrations fall within the same time period.

Protestant groups were among the most upset, as they argued that if the UP was supposed to be a state university, catering to every ethnic and religious group in the country, so it should not allow or finance the building of a denominational church on



campus. It is against the very essence of freedom of religion and equality, which the university, prides itself as having. They made letters to the national government, the UP administration, and all the members of the school's academic community, to make them fully aware of these developments, and lobby for another church, in order to provide a spiritual haven for their own members. 256

These unforeseen events, caused the UP administration, as well as the national government, who has been made aware of all the developments, to re-assess their plans. They decided to build a Catholic church first, and then, build other denominational chapels, to appease the other groups. This way, students who were members of other religions, may continue to practice their faith, while they were members of the UP community, as students, faculty members, administrators, etc. This move was seen as a minor victory on the part of Protestants, and others, who felt that their privileges as a group were being trampled upon by the Catholics, UPSCA, the administration and the national government, because they will eventually have a chapel of their own. However, the victory was only considered minor, because although they will have a church, they will only have one after the Catholic chapel has been built, thus proving their point, that preferential treatment is given to the Catholics.

Meanwhile, UPSCA activities became more widespread on campus and with increased popularity, vigor and administrative support, with the erection of their new church. Sunday masses were held in the church, together with special religious holiday celebrations, all of which were open to the public.

Peace was not in sight in the rest of the campus however, as a former Jesuit seminarian was appointed Dean of Men and the Coordinator of Student Personnel Services, simply because of his religious affiliation. This caught the ire of the students because the new dean proved to be extremely conservative and inconsiderate of the needs of the majority. This did not change Dr. Tan's mind however, as he retained the new dean, regardless of all the campus gossip which resulted because of it. However, these problems

continued to increase, as the more liberal factions in the UP campus, showed their lack of<sup>257</sup> support for the president. They initiated rallies, held talks and symposia, all of which dealt with academic and religious freedom, and the ouster of the president. The students gained so much strength, that they eventually got faculty support to cause even more instability in the university. All these forced Dr. Tan to resign in 1956, to prevent further humiliation and moral degradation.

This incident shows the strength of religious interest groups in the UP campus, as well as in the community. They were so strong, that they were able to convince the UP administration as well as the national government, to re-consider their plan of action, and to listen to their demands. This also shows that even in a non-denominational school like the UP, religion continues to play a crucial part in it, as well as in the lives of the people who belong to the academic community.

### 3. The Rizal Bill

In 1956, Senator Claro M. Recto, one of the Philippines' leading nationalists proposed a bill entitled, the "Rizal Bill" in honor of Dr. Jose Rizal, the country's national hero. This bill provided for the compulsory teaching of the "Noli Me Tangere" and the "El Filibusterismo" in all universities and colleges. It was, according to Recto, a necessary addition to the curriculum as it would contribute to the efforts of increasing nationalism among the students and also make them appreciate Philippine literature, which is best typified by these two works.

This bill was opposed by the Catholic Church hierarchy, under the leadership of Senators Decoroso Rosales, Mariano Cuenco and Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo. Perhaps it should be noted at this point that Senator Rosales, is the brother of former Cardinal Rosales, Cuenco is the brother of Archbishop Cuenco and Rodrigo, a leader and/or member of various Catholic organizations in the country. Their main argument

258

against the bill was that it would violate the freedom of conscience and religion prevalent in the country. The Catholic Church hierarchy supported the move of these three senators and issued a pastoral letter seeking the support of the people in rejecting this bill. Priests and nuns came forth in Congressional hearings, to state their opposition and disdain for the bill and for Recto himself. Even foreign priests who already lived in the country sought the help of senators to convince them to oppose the passage of the bill.

Symposia were held all over the country, as vigorous religious groups, clergy men and even lay men expressed their views on the issue. Even parents had their representatives in the sessions just to make it clear that their views on the matter are negative and that teaching the books would be detrimental to their children's spiritual well-being. During one of the said sessions, Fr. Jesus Cavanna, a self-proclaimed expert on Rizal and his works, said that the novels need not be studied because they no longer had any relevance to the lives of the Filipinos. They belonged to the past and should remain in the national archives forever. Reading them would only be harmful because they presented a false picture of the conditions in the country under Spanish rule.

Further, he said that the *Noli Me Tangere*, was nothing more than an "attack on the clergy" because of its vivid descriptions of the abuses supposedly committed by the priests against the natives. These descriptions he said, were nothing more than allegations, and were not enough to substantiate the supposed oppression experienced by the Filipinos at that time, and should thus be taken lightly. In addition, he also said that the work was far from patriotic because out of its 333 pages, only 25 actually had patriotic passages, while 120 was full of anti-Catholic statements. Similar figures could be observed in the *El Filibusterismo*, which he thought was a form of heresy against the Catholic Church.

Radio commentator, Jesus Paredes also spoke in this meeting, and said that since parts of the novel were declared objectionable reading material for the students, Catholics, should have the right not to read the books so as not to endanger their salvation.

The after life he mentioned, had greater importance, and should therefore be the people's<sup>259</sup> main concern.

Another radio commentator, Narciso Pimentel, Jr., said that the only motivation behind Recto's presentation of the bill was revenge against the Catholic voters who did not support him in his senatorial bid against Ramon Magsaysay in 1955, where he lost miserably.

Sen. Soc Rodrigo, today one of the the country's foremost politicians and nationalists, said that he read the novels when he was 20, and was mature enough to understand its contents and implications and only after receiving special dispensation from the Catholic Church. He also had a strong background in philosophy and religion, so that his religious convictions were strong enough not to be affected by any blasphemous work. But, despite the fact that he has read the novels, he would not allow his son aged 18, to read the books because he might lose his faith. The accusations against the church were simply so severe that any young, impressionistic individual may misunderstand the role of the Catholic Church and the clergy on the Filipinos. He advised that only the older and more mature individuals read the book, preferably the footnoted editions, which explained most of the phrases and allegations.

Recto answered all these accusations as nothing more than allegations and obstacles to the development of Philippine nationalism. Regarding the threat that Catholic schools would close if the bill was passed, Recto answered that this was far from possible because the institutions were making so much money from charging very high tuition fees and closing down would only make the priests and nuns who run them, lose their profits.

Bishop Manuel Yap, went so far as to announce a report on the news that all legislators who voted for the bill would be punished in the next election by not receiving any support from the Church. Recto responded to this threat by stating that the Church and state are now separate entities, and that the latter should not intervene, in any way, in state affairs (take note that Recto actually lost the succeeding election).

Senator Laurel, reacting to all these debates concerning the bill, revised it,<sup>260</sup> based on the recommendations made by Senators Roseller Lim and Emmanuel Pelaez, that the two novels be taught in their unedited versions, provided that students, who because of their religious convictions, or that of their parents, did not feel right about reading them, had the option not to read the books at all.

The Church was not completely satisfied with the results of the debates, but felt that they have scored a minor victory because their actions worked to prevent the passage of the bill's original version. Some schools as the University of Santo Tomas (UST) for instance, totally did away with the inclusion of the novels in any of their curricula, because their priests and the education that catholic schools provided at that time, had been the main targets of the novels. It was only upon the passage of the "Rizal Law" in 1970, requiring all college students to take up a course on the life and works of the national hero, did all the schools actually include them in their curriculum.

There is no evidence which shows that Filipinos who have read the two novels, actually changed their religious views because of the various accusations made by Rizal on the friars, the religious rituals and the Catholic church in general. Although there may be some so-called Rizalist sects, i.e., sects established in honor of the national hero, in the country, there are very few of them, and their members can only be found in the suburbs of Luzon. They are too small to even pose as a threat to the Catholic community, and their existence so insignificant, that most Filipinos do not even know that they exist. Besides, they established the church not because of their disillusionment with Catholicism per se' but rather, because they believed in Rizal, his works and in a religion, developed by and for the Filipino people (refer to the book by Foronda on the Rizalist Cults in the Philippines). Also, the establishment of other religions, as the Bible Church, the Seventh Day Adventists, among others, has not been proven to be a direct result of Rizal's works, but a product of a mixture of factors, including the intensive missionary efforts of the various religious orders, disappointment and/or frustration over the Catholic faith, or

personal conviction. If anything, after reading the books, the Filipinos may have learned <sup>261</sup> more about Spanish colonization in the country, and admired their national hero's genius and literary prowess, making them more respectful of the man who has given up his life for his country.

This bill showed once again, that the Catholic Church hierarchy, has been a very potent force in Philippine society. Through its lobbying efforts, it managed to convince the members of the legislature, to revise the bill, so as to give the school administrators the choice of teaching Rizal's life and works in the manner they see fit, and the parents the option not to let their children take the course if they so desired. In addition, church support for the candidates in elections, was very important to politicians at that time. Although this researcher does not have the records to show that the clergy actually financed some of the electoral campaigns, history books have mentioned that through the use of the pulpit, the priests were able to convince the voters to choose the candidates that they (the priests) wanted for them, even if the people did not believe in the candidate or the platform they have developed. The church supported certain candidates at that time, because they felt that was one of the ways to protect their interests in the country. This practice has since then lost much of its influence on the people. Even the Aquino victory though considerably aided by the Catholic church, was not a product of clerical intervention, but rather by disillusionment with the previous administration.

#### 4. Nationalization of the School Administration.

According to Deats (1967), "nationalism is the self-conscious assertion by a people of its own individuality in relation to other people. The ways by which nations assert their own individuality however, differ widely from country to country. Thus, many different types of nationalism have evolved in the modern era, varying all the way from peaceful and international varieties, to aggressive and chauvinistic types".

Nationalism has always been an issue in the Philippines, especially as it<sup>262</sup> relates to church matters. This is evidenced by the fact that Filipino Catholics have in the past, protested against the slow promotion of Filipino priests in the church hierarchy and by the refusal of most of the sects to take Filipino clergy into their church. These have caused anxiety and frustration within the ranks of the Filipino priests and have even led to the formation of a few violent movements against their foreign leadership (refer to the discussion on the secularization controversy).

The twentieth century has ushered in a new era in the Catholic church and in the entire country for that matter, as far as the role of the church is concerned. For it no longer occupies the supreme position it had previously, but rather, has faced some serious challenges, as the Filipinos observed some weaknesses in the religious doctrine, rituals and the administration of the church as a religious institution in the country.

One of the serious challenges faced by the church was the bill presented to the Philippine legislature by Senator Roseller Lim in 1958 on the "nationalization of schools". Senator Lim wanted all private sectarian schools, i.e. Catholic schools, in the country to be administered by natural born Filipino citizens. He presented this bill because of the fact that many, if not most of the said schools in the country were foreign-controlled, i.e., under the leadership of foreign priests and/or nuns. He further added that this bill was not meant to eliminate the role of foreign clergy in the educational system. They might remain as teachers, consultants and parts of administration; but the president of the school should be a natural born Filipino citizen, who in turn, should also be awarded maximum control over the decision-making process in the entire institution.

He also assured his co-legislators, that he did not wish the Catholic church in the Philippines to sever ties with the Vatican; he just wanted the administration of private sectarian schools to be under the control of Filipinos, because they know what the Filipinos need, want and expect from their own educational system. It was not a move towards

nationalization, a la "Iglesia ni Kristo", but one where the people would be re-asserting <sup>263</sup> themselves, and their independence, in an administrative capacity.

The Catholic Church hierarchy published a long pastoral letter which stated the dangers of excessive nationalism and stressed the crucial role which foreign missionaries and laymen have played in building a strong and viable educational system in the country.

In this statement, they made mention of the following crucial points:

(a) The church is responsible for the establishment of many of the best schools in the country, including the Ateneo, De La Salle, St. Scholastica's College, among others. Being so, the foreigners who were responsible for their establishment, as well as the provision of excellent education to the Filipinos should take care of the administration, maintenance and control of the said institutions.

(b) This action, and others like it, are only reactionary attitudes resulting from the negative attitude which the Filipinos have toward foreigners. This discriminatory attitude developed as a result of the strong feeling of nationalism which the Filipinos had, as well as the anger which they developed through time, blaming the foreigners for all their difficulties, whatever they may be.

(c) Nationalism, or in this case Filipinism, is good only as it pertains to the genuine love for Filipino culture, appreciation of the country's history, as well as obedience to the laws. If carried to an extreme, so that the sentiment becomes nothing more than a "perversion of Filipinism" (Deats, 1967), it becomes a violation of the rights of God, man, the family or of other nations. This is so because foreign school administrators are not there to destroy the country, they are there to build and help the people in its road to progress and development. The destruction of the country, its educational system and culture as a whole, are the goals of the church; but if the Filipino legislators will insist on the passage of bills such as this, it may be an inevitability.



(d) In addition, religion, which refers to the primary relationship between God and man, and the Catholic Church whose origins are divine in its means, purpose and authority, and universal in its mission, are beyond the scope of nationalism. For although Church doctrine may be considered as the incentives for the development of true patriotism, any interference in the work of the Church and its representatives is far from nationalism. It is in fact, a violation of the freedom granted to the Church by God Himself, to spread His word all over the world. Besides, the priests and nuns have nothing but the good of the country at heart and should thus not be doubted or questioned in terms of their sincerity and goodwill. In fact, they continue to teach Church doctrine, assist in the development of Christian values and even build seminaries and nunneries to encourage more natives to be part of the Church community as ministers of the word.

The statement did not make mention however, of the long history of clerical oppression and abuse in the Philippines, nor was there a sign of penitence on the part of the clergy. It was more of an affirmation and assurance that the clergy will never have anything but goodness and truth in their hearts, as they continue their Christian mission in the country.

This statement also caused a degree of uncertainty to emerge among the Filipino legislators, and even the masses, most of whom were Roman Catholic and thus could not envision the Church as being selfish or power hungry, in their desire to have full control of their schools. The 333 years of Spanish colonization and oppression seemed to have been easily forgotten by a great majority of the people. Thus, the bill was not passed in any form or fashion in Congress. However, the bill was strong enough to cause many schools to overhaul their organizational structure and vote for Filipinos to occupy the most powerful positions in the schools. Foreigners were not totally eliminated, as they remained as teachers and/or administrators in the schools.

Also, the relationship between nationalism and the Catholic faith continues to be clouded with uncertainty and doubt. It seems at least on the surface, that their goals

are diametrically opposed and their methods, even more so. Thus, a bill such as that presented by Senator Lim, caused a lot of confusion and turmoil within the Church, its followers and even groups as the Knights of Columbus, who went on to expel the senator for even considering the thought of removing the foreign clerical heads of the schools.

This incident displays the influential role played by religious interest groups in the Philippines, as shown by the following points:

(a) The pastoral letter published and circulated by the Catholic church hierarchy was taken seriously by the academic community, the parents of the children who attend these schools, and the Catholic community in general, who re-assessed the value of having Filipino administrators in the educational institutions. In addition, some parents made their own letters demanding the retention of foreign priests/nuns, for fear that their ouster may affect the quality of education offered by the schools, as well as cause a degree of disequilibrium in the schools' organizational structure.

(b) The reaction of the Knights of Columbus was one to reckon with. Although it is a private religious organization (it is very similar to the Masons), its clout was particularly strong at that time. Membership in organizations such as these, may add to a man's credentials, as a respected member of the community, and expulsion may be extremely humiliating and degrading. The group came out against the bill and asked its members to lobby on behalf of the groups and vote against its passage, if it is subjected to a referendum.

(c) It should also be noted that Catholicism is firmly entrenched in the country, that priests are treated with utmost respect, so much so that letters as the pastoral statement passed out by the church, are almost synonymous to law. And even if Senator Lim's intentions could actually arouse their nationalistic sentiments, they opted to pay close attention to what the clergy had to say. In addition, the Catholic church hierarchy is a very powerful religious interest group, then and now, with a powerful tool in their hand, the religion which most of the people adhere to.

## 5. Values Education in the Aquino Government

Drastic changes have taken place since President Aquino took over the Philippine government on February 25, 1986, not the least of which is the re-orientation of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) toward the pursuit of "values education". Actually, this concept is not totally new to the educational system in the country; it has always been a part of the very essence of the learning process, except that it has never been given as much attention as it does today.

According to Dr. Antonio Ulgado (1987), the Program Chairman of the Family Life of the Graduate School of Maryknoll College Foundation Incorporated (formerly, Maryknoll under the Maryknoll Sisters in the USA) and Director of the Values Education Programme of the DECS, values education is an educational system characterized by a learning process which is firmly anchored on the supreme and inviolable value of the Filipino, that his personhood is nurtured within the family which is surrounded by love and the peaceful community around it, and with a very strong faith in God. These should be the main themes of the learning process in all levels of education and should be pursued conscientiously by the country's leaders.

In this regard, the Secretary of the DECS, Dr. Lourdes R. Quisumbing, organized a week-long workshop, composed of school administrators and educators to introduce this new concept and the ways in which it is to be implemented in the current educational system. In this seminar, she came up with a list of 8 guidelines which shall form the very core of the programme. They were later referred to as the Secretary's Gem Thoughts, and may be summarized as follows:

(a) The gap between knowledge and behavior may be filled in by the promotion and development of values in the educational system.

(b) Values education is not a new development. It is in fact an old idea, one which has failed to take off because it has been handled only as another subject, rather than the very philosophy of the educational system itself.

(c) Values education involves both the mind and the heart, i.e., the intellectual development of the mind, and spiritual enrichment of the heart.

(d) The teacher who handles this should be equipped with the very basic personal and interpersonal skills so that he or she can transmit the very same traits and values to the students.

(e) The teacher is the best model that the student can have in the learning process, and should thus be conscious that whatever he or she may do, may affect the student immensely.

(f) There is a need to develop less cognitive techniques to test the extent to which the students have learned the values and traits that the teacher may be trying to transmit.

(g) Classes in values education should stress the various dimensions of the learning process, i.e., the cognitive and emotional, personal and interpersonal, intellectual and spiritual.

(h) There is a need to develop instructional materials to be used in the development of values education. These materials should not be very conceptual/cognitive as the traditional instructional materials have been, but should be more personal and easily understandable, person-oriented and family-life oriented (Quisumbing, 1987).

There are four approaches which may be used to achieve these goals, among them: (Laurent, 1987)

(a) Moral Development. Students must be trained to develop a more complex reasoning pattern based on a well-developed set of values. These should be helpful as the student faces the difficulty of making choices in his adult life. He should be able to make the choice which he thinks is best-suited to him, his life, and his sense of

being. He should be just as willing to take on the consequences of his choices and face them like an adult, learning from them at all times and realizing their possible permanent effects on his life.

(b) **Analysis.** In line with moral development, is the development of rational thought and logical thinking at all times. This should be utilized in the school, at home and in the community where he hopes to contribute his talents and abilities.

(c) **Clarification.** Students should also be able to determine the values that are best for them, as they get to know more about themselves, their feelings and behavior patterns. Through activities such as role-playing games, simulation activities, out-of-class activities, small group discussions, among others, these feelings may be sorted out, developed and perhaps even gotten rid off in the future.

(d) **Action Learning.** Students must be made aware that they are not merely learning values; they should also use them in their daily lives, now and hopefully in the future as well.

The values that should be developed include five main characteristics: (a) life-sustenance, or the ability to take care of one's self which will help contribute to economic progress; (b) human dignity, which will satisfy the needs to have a sense of self worth, self-esteem, respect and individual identity; (c) social responsibility, concern for the physical and socio-cultural environment; (d) nationalism through Filipinism; and (e) spirituality, which will strengthen belief in a Supreme Being.

Reaction to the Values Education Program has been positive so far. The CEAP, La Salle, Ateneo, and other public and private schools have been very active in the promotion and development of values education in the different learning and governmental institutions. In 1988 for instance, Sister Maria Luz Mijarez, presented a paper which was published in the "Perspective", the CEAP magazine entitled, "Education Forum's Values Education Program". In this she mentioned four programmes which may assist in the development of values education in the schools.

(a) **Teacher Re-Orientation Programme.** This process involves the Teacher Assistance Program/TAP and the School for the Advancement of Nationalist Education/SANE. TAP is actually a fortnightly publication which serves as supplementary reading material for use in the classroom by the teachers and students. It shall contain tips on the conscientization of educators whose responsibility it is to assist in the process of values formation and in the development of social awareness and responsibility.

SANE on the other hand, includes a series of fora and symposia including a summer study programme, in the different courses for teachers (Summer Institute for Faculty Development); Social Orientation Seminar (SOS), which is a seminar on the analysis of Philippine history and current events in the context of national and international events, i.e., make all academicians aware of the role of the Philippines in the world system as an interactive actor, in the process of development; lectures are also administered to anyone involved in the schools, discussing various topics of interest; symposia on current affairs; training workshops; Inter-School Disciplinary Workshops (ISDW's), which are study groups involving representatives from the various institutions; Study Circle for Leading Administrators, a regular discussion group to keep school administrators constantly abreast of the latest developments in Philippine education and society. And finally, there are Exposure-Immersion Seminars for school personnel, upon request. These are to be done by bringing the participants to the poorest rural and urban areas, to make the educators more aware of the country's needs and assist the residents in the formulation of educational programmes, specifically suited to their condition.

(b) **Curriculum and Materials Development Programme.** This programme, as the name implies aims to assist educators develop relevant instructional materials to be used in the schools, in all levels. This is done as a joint project of the DECS, schools, teachers, CEAP, among others.

(c) **Research, Development and Evaluation Programme.** This is aimed at the creation of an information and materials source base in support of the efforts of

educators in re-orienting Philippine education to the development of values education.

They have four main goals, including the establishment of a data bank with all the necessary information on the content, methods and techniques of values education; produce audio-visual materials that can be used by teachers, etc; publication of a monthly newsletter on the latest developments and issues in education; and public studies and research outputs on education.

(d) Administrators Training Programme. Seminars are given upon request as they pertain to the supervision, management and leadership training, philosophy of education, and development of instructional material.

Various religious denominations, as the Protestants for instance, have expressed their desire to participate, in any way they can to promote values education, because they believe in the concept, and the long-term effects it may have on the youth. They also agree however, that there is a need for further research, and more publications have to be made, which shall cater to all Filipinos, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Books have also been written for the benefit of the students and teachers in all levels of education. For instance, Phoenix Publishing House in Manila has already published a volume of books on values education to be used in different levels. Book 1, covers the topics, self to self, self to others, self to community; and self to God to be used by High School Freshmen. Book 2, focuses on the value of human relationships and social interaction for youngsters, with topics as others to self, others to others, others to community, and others to God to be used by High School Sophomores. Book 3, deals with the community as the embodiment of all forms of human relationships covering topics as community to self, community to others, community to community, community to God to be used by High School Juniors. Finally, Book 4 focuses on God as the beginning and end of the universe, with topics as the moral personality, interpersonal encounters and moral development, society and moral development, and the human being and his ultimate end to be used by High School Seniors.

All these efforts are geared toward the fulfillment of values education in all <sup>271</sup> schools and at all educational levels. It is the result of cooperative effort from most schools in the country as the Philippines moves toward the formation of a more comprehensive educational system.

The promotion of values education in the Philippines is unique in a number of ways. In the first place, it was not a bill presented to the legislature in the same manner as the Rizal Bill was. It is simply an educational ideology, formulated in the past, and undergoing massive re-definition, and re-construction for the current educational system. Secondly, it has not received any opposition whatsoever, from any group or individual, since its introduction. On the contrary, it has received nothing but support and encouragement as may be observed by the number of books written on the topic, the seminars which have been held to further understand its very essence, and implementation, as well as the active participation of academicians and administrators in the promotion and implementation of values education in the schools.

The Values Education Programme in the Philippines, is also one of the proofs of the strength of religious interest groups in the country. Groups as the CEAP, Ateneo, De La Salle, etc. are responsible for the enforcement of the programme and its promotion in their schools and the community in which their schools are located, and where they may be extending various forms of social services. In addition, the Catholics, and Protestants, two of the biggest religious groups in the country, have voiced their support for this development, and have even helped in its promotion as priests and nuns and even ministers, continuously encourage their members to understand the necessity for the development of values, in their lectures, homilies and seminars.

## 6. The National College Entrance Examinations/NCEE



On March 9, 1973, the first National College Entrance Examinations or NCEE was administered to the high school seniors all over the country. Otherwise known as Presidential Decree #146, it aimed to promote the best education in the country by administering an examination to incoming college freshmen which would test their knowledge of science, mathematics, english, logical thinking, literature, and even social studies and philosophy, and assess their suitability to enter the university. Failure to pass the exam makes the student ineligible to pursue higher education, in which case, a vocational or technical degree is recommended. Students who pass the exam may enter the university or college of their choice, provided they pass the entrance exams required by the school they have selected. Take note that the NCEE is not aimed at doing away with the individual schools' entrance requirements; it will only make the student eligible to fulfill the said requirement if he is interested in the institution.

On July 18, 1987, Cayetano Poderanga, Jr. a famous Filipino academician, wrote an article for the country's dailies, and stated that the NCEE poses an obstacle to the country's biggest chance for social mobility. It forces some people to remain in the lower economic strata because they would have to take vocational or technical courses, which do not pay well. In addition, he said that exams such as the NCEE, are just additional burdens to the students. His conclusions were based on studies made by groups such as the CEAP, which claim that most of those who fail are poor and come from the rural areas. In fact, according to the CEAP study, private sectarian schools had the highest scores in the NCEE's 13-year existence. Also, the lowest scores are made by graduates of barangay high schools, most of which are located in the rural areas.

According to Director Mona D. Valisno of the National Educational Testing Research Center, the agency which takes care of the administration of the NCEE, the abolition of the exam is not the answer to the problem. The exam should be perceived as a supportive educational mechanism to fulfill the people's desire for quality education. The NCEE also minimizes the loss of human resources as it puts people in careers or

professions, which they are very capable of excelling in, rather than being totally unprepared for the rigors of college life. It also becomes a systematic method of streamlining high school seniors such that a balance is maintained in the professional and technical fields, which is necessary for economic development.

Poderanga counters this argument by saying that the rigidity introduced by the exams leads to large amounts of economic waste, because of which, people become misplaced, late blooming workers, without any hope of upward mobility. These retard the possibility of long run economic and social growth.

Valisno says that the NCEE decreases the failure rate of college students as only the well-qualified actually gain admission to the universities and colleges. The retention rate of upper classmen has increased by 5.28%, partly because of the NCEE, according to her.

In this regard, an Educator's Congress was held in Baguio in May 1987 where the following issues were discussed:

- (a) Schools which consistently get low grades should be given a moratorium to recover, and find the reasons for their students' poor performance rates.
- (b) According to Dr. Milagros Ibe of the UP College of Education, poor performance is related to income, so that those with higher family income consistently fared better than those from lower income families.
- (c) The educational attainment of the parents also affects the examinee's performance, such that, those whose parents finished with a college degree had a greater chance of performing better than those with minimal education or without any formal education at all.
- (d) What was worth noting was that in the Mindanao region, those who failed did not go to the vocational or technical schools, but instead, opted to join the secessionist movement, i.e., the communists.

Based on these observations, four basic conclusions were drawn:

(a) The NCEE is a valid and reliable instrument. The problem lies in the quality of education offered in the schools themselves. With an improved curricula, better qualified teachers and the availability of proper learning equipment, students from all the schools will get good scores.

(b) There is a direct relationship between performance in the NCEE and the socio-economic status of the family of the examinee. Schools should therefore make an extra effort to assist their students in every possible way, so that even those from lower income families, will be on the same competitive class as their counterparts who are more economically well-off.

(c) Students from schools in MetroManila score better than those outside the area. There is a need therefore to assist schools in the said areas, to increase the scores of the students who take the exam. Government should increase state support to these schools, and perhaps, private donations should be encouraged so that their students will have a better chance of competing with the students from the different parts of the country.

(d) Students from barangay and community high schools consistently get low scores. They should therefore, seek increased community and government funding; have tutorial classes for students preparing for the examinations; hire better qualified teachers who shall assist the school administration in improving the school curriculum, to make the students better prepared for the exams.

(e) There is also a need to continue research on the NCEE to identify the critical factors which cause major differences between the performances of the students in the country. This is to be pursued by both the public and private sector, i.e., governmental agencies as well as independent schools and organizations. Their findings are to be shared with each other, so that recommendations may be made to the national government, with hopes of improving the current system.

(f) Low performing schools should be given priority for qualified improvement and upgrading. This includes increased state funding, hiring better faculty members and purchasing more learning materials and equipment for the students.

The CEAP member schools have been very supportive of the exams and continues to conduct studies which may be helpful to further upgrade the quality of the test, and possibly improve the performance of the students from the less privileged schools. It maintains however, that major changes have to be done not only in the exam itself, but in the kind of education being offered by less prominent schools. Their curriculum, qualifications of teachers, adequacy of school facilities should be developed and consistently monitored, if they hope to be in the same competitive level as the students of private sectarian schools. Currently, the CEAP and its member schools are conducting their own studies on the programme, the results of which will be presented to the DECS for consideration.

The reason for the inclusion of the NCEE in this section is the active participation of catholic schools in the development, improvement and research on the examination. They are the ones continuously pushing for its development because of their awareness that in order for the educational system to improve, and for the quality of the graduates to develop at the same rate, changes have to be made in the current system. These changes include improvements in the preparatory level of education, acquisition of better facilities, hiring of more qualified teachers, among others. Secondly, private sectarian schools are also concerned that only middle class, urban graduates attend their institutions, because they are the ones better prepared to cope with college. Those from the rural, public schools have to settle for second or third rate schools, with very poor academic training and with teachers who may not be adequately trained to handle the courses offered. Thus, they would like to encourage all institutions, be they private or public, sectarian or non-sectarian, to continue in their efforts to improve their learning programmes, assist in the development of the NCEE, so that their students will be on the

same competitive level as their counterparts in the better schools. Third, they believe that<sup>276</sup> education is a privilege which everyone should enjoy regardless of their social status. Being so, it should allow more students to partake of the benefits of a good educational system, rather than put them on an immediate disadvantage just because they come from less privileged backgrounds.

The CEAP member schools have once again entered the fore of research by asking member schools to conduct separate studies on the NCEE. These studies, as those mentioned above for instance, will definitely assist the national government in its desire to improve the entire examination process. It will also help re-define the needs of the educational system in the country, and make the exam a better way of determining the various capabilities of the high school senior, as well as measure his ability to cope with college life.

#### 7. Magna Carta for Students Rights Bill

In 1987, the newly elected Senator from Manila, Joey Lina proposed Senate Bill #184, entitled, "An Act Providing for a Magna Carta of Students Rights". His rationale for presenting the bill was to expose the country's youth to the principles behind a democratic system of government, by allowing them to actively participate in the various facets of educational administration and management in their respective schools.

It covered all schools, public and private and students from the secondary to the post-graduate level. It also provided for an independent student government, student representation in policy-making bodies in the school, freedom of expression, academic freedom, among others.

This bill has caused uneasiness among the various sectors of the academic community. As to be expected, students and student groups are in almost complete agreement with the bill.

(a) La Sallites have expressed full support for the Magna Carta because the basic problems faced by the students of today, have been addressed by the bill, as representation in the Board of Trustees, right to form any organization they want, independent student councils, right to determine the use of school funds and to be consulted in tuition fee increases. Student leaders from all over the country have formed alliances to strengthen their lobbying effort for the eventual passage of the bill. They also hold symposia in various campuses, to make the rest of the students know more about the bill, and understand its implications on their lives while in school.

(b) Ateneans have expressed support for the bill except that they fear that the school administration may just find a way to get around the Magna Carta even if it has already been approved. For instance, the Ateneo already has an existing magna carta for students. Whenever they invite speakers on campus however, the administration has the option not to lend out its facilities for the talk if they believe that such an activity may not be good for the school. Thus, the freedom guaranteed by the magna carta means nothing since the school administration can simply override it. They have opted therefore to hold meetings on the discussion of the bill in order to increase the probability of having the bill approved by the legislators, and making it clear to everyone, students, faculty and administrators, that this bill should be thoroughly reviewed, and if passed, followed by the entire academic community.

(c) Even St. Scholastica's College, one of the only two schools (the other is the UP) which has a student member in the Board of Trustees, says that a Magna Carta would be good for the students as their rights are protected, and they are given more room to handle their own affairs. Its current student council leader, expresses full support for the Magna Carta, and has come up with papers supporting their stand. These position papers are distributed all over campus as well as in other campuses, for all students to know more about the bill, and hopefully, help the rest of the student leaders in their lobbying effort. They also go to the extent of inviting Joey Lina himself to hold

discussion groups in the school, so that he may be able to answer the questions of the students regarding the bill. <sup>278</sup>

As was to be expected, school administrators and organizations like the CEAP for instance, did not agree with all the provisions of the bill. The principle behind the bill may be good and innovative, but the provisions for implementation leave much to be desired, as far as they are concerned. They raised the following points regarding the bill:

(a) **Mission Statement:** All Catholic Schools have a Mission Statement, which is essentially a set of clear, Christian objectives in their educational institution. This becomes the very essence of the learning process, and is thus given paramount importance by the school's faculty and administrative personnel.

With the passage of the Magna Carta, the mission statement will be totally set aside, since the students will be given almost full authority to run the school. Administrative support and assistance, according to them, are necessary in the fulfillment of the mission statement and to see that the students are in fact on the right track.

According to Divina Edralin, Dean of Student Affairs of DLSU, the mission statement is very important because not only does it state the objectives of the school, but the duties and responsibilities of students as well. The Magna Carta does not have anything on duties and responsibilities but focuses only on student rights. Rights, without responsibilities are useless, and may lead to delinquent behavior. These views were reiterated by Pete Mendoza, Dean of Student Affairs of the Don Bosco Technical Institute (a private sectarian school for boys), as he fears that giving the students extraordinary rights may lead to chaos in the schools, and even delinquent behavior, as disrespect for school authority for instance, because it gives the students very many rights, and hardly any responsibilities.

(b) The Magna Carta provides that the schools should collect all fees and disburse them to the organization, depending on their need. The school will have no say

whatsoever on the way it is to be spent. This according to Edralin, makes the school<sup>279</sup> nothing more than a collection agency and may lead to misuse of limited funds. If the students were given the responsibility to get involved in monetary matters regarding the school, the distribution of said funds may only be allotted for their activities, with total disconcert for the commitments of the school itself. Other catholic schools are in support of Ms. Edralin's contention on this matter since the mission statement is considered the philosophy behind the entire school system.

(c) As for the freedom of the press, school authorities think that all school papers should be approved for circulation by the administration. This does not imply that they will dictate the contents of the paper; rather, they will just see to it that everything that is published are within the bounds of decency, and the fulfillment of school's objectives. Besides, Catholic schools should also protect the Christian values and morals of their students and without overseeing the publications, this may not be guaranteed. The same goes for the provision on the freedom of speech.

(d) As for the school government's right to supervise and coordinate all student organizations as well as their activities, administrators think that coordination is not any easy task, and cannot be handled by the students alone. This is not to say however, that they are incapable of doing so. But, their academic and extra-curricular activities are enough to take up most of their time, and supervising and coordinating school programmes and policies, will mean even more time spent in and out of school, one thing which they do not have, and which may not be approved by their parents. Besides, a close link between the administration, faculty and student body should always be maintained so as to keep the interactive process of education and development in the school.

(e) Regarding tuition fee increases, flexibility should be the rule, and ample time allotted for consultation with the academic community. Students alone cannot



determine how the money is to be used by the school. Coordination is necessary, as well <sup>280</sup> as discussion and debates, if needed, before a final decision is reached.

(f) Students should not be represented on the Board of Trustees. Their concerns should be limited to the kind of education they are receiving, their academic performance and their extra-curricular activities. Getting involved in the Board will only take more time away from their studies, and may cause more harm than good, because they are not yet mature enough to deal with these matters. Besides, they are already involved in many of the other committees in school, and that is enough to keep them busy.

So far, two Senate Committees have conducted public hearings on the bill. These have resulted into a few revisions, as:

(a) Students should exercise rights responsibly.

(b) Students should abide by the rules of the school on academic excellence, peace and order.

(c) Students should refrain from defacing the school campus or destroying any school property or facilities used by the entire student body. They should also refrain from using said facilities for immoral or illegal activities.

These revisions had to be made as legislators felt that they had to accommodate the demands of the administration as the fulfillment of the mission statement, campus organizations, student government, public representation and policy-making.

The CEAP is not in favor of the bill, because the members believe that schools are the students second home, and their teachers their second parents, in fulfillment of the doctrine of "in loco parentis". The group's representatives have written position papers in this regard stressing the school's delicate role in molding young people's minds and hearts. They argue that the bill has flaws which needs to be corrected including the minimal role given to school administrators in the student government. The administration becomes nothing more than a spectator and this cannot be tolerated.

Besides, the fulfillment of the mission statement, should be the school's primary importance.

Other sectors within the academe have also said that if the students are represented in the Board of Trustees, other groups within the academic community, may seek the same rights, as the maintenance workers for instance. Besides, the Magna Carta, focuses on individualism, which violates the trust given by parents to the schools, may be a divisive agent, intervenes in the practice of private enterprise, and questions the integrity of the school.

In this light, the debates and hearings continue and may continue for a very long time. I personally believe that the Magna Carta is an admirable motion, so that students may be more involved in the kind of education they are receiving. However, considering the culture of the people, where school authorities and faculty are second parents, and that the school is perceived as an extension of the home, I do not think that the bill will be passed without major revisions and amendments. In addition, groups like the CEAP are so strong and influential that they will not allow themselves to be overpowered by a bill presented by a young, idealistic senator. Thirdly, supervision no matter how minimal is necessary for any system to work, and the school is no exception.

This issue and the uproar it has caused, within the academic community, has shown that religious interest groups and their beliefs are important to society, and the quality of education being received by the country's youth. This has been proven by the various activities which religious interest groups have been engaged in since this bill was introduced in the legislature.

For instance, student governments of De La Salle, Ateneo, St. Scholastica's, among others, have held many meetings with their school mates on the various provisions of the bill, and its implications on the rights, duties and responsibilities of the student body. They have held many discussions and even elections

on the subject at hand, most of which have resulted in very favorable reactions to the said <sup>282</sup> bill.

School administrators on the other hand, are quite concerned that the bill gives the students too many rights and very few responsibilities to go with them. This situation may result into anarchy within the schools and result into the development of immature, irresponsible and disrespectful students. They have thus issued statements, circulated within their respective campuses as well as distributed to the various organizations of which they are members of, to make it known that although they are in favor of the bill, they would like some major changes in it, so that students will not only have more priveleges but more responsibilities as well.

Also, the schools are re-emphasizing the significance of their mission statements, and their role in the whole learning process. They would like the students, faculty and the rest of the academic community to be aware of their sincerity in fulfilling their mission as Christian, educational institutions.

They have also established alliances with schools in their area, so as to strengthen their stand in the various congressional committee meetings discussing these very issues. They also see to it that they have representation in the meetings initiated by Joey Lina himself, as he goes around the country explaining the various provisions of the bill he proposed.

Although there is still much to be done on this bill, and more discussions and debates to be held prior to the development of its final form, it has gained significant popularity in the academic community and all around the country as well, as the masses are made more aware of the bill's various aspects. The parents are concerned that approval of the bill may give their children duties which they may not be capable of fulfilling because of the demands of their academic work. In addition, they feel that if the very existence of the school is to educate the people, then students should take their

studies more seriously and leave the school to the administrators, whose main task is to<sup>283</sup> handle academic and administrative affairs any way.

This bill clearly shows that the schools in the Philippines play a different role, and the teachers are perceived differently by members of society; the schools are considered the children's second home and the teachers are well-respected and their authority beyond question. These are some elements in the system which makes it very different from their western counterparts.

#### B. Educational Issues in Malaysia

As observed in the previous chapters, religion, ethnicity and education in Malaysia are closely inter-related. Their relationship is such that it is difficult to actually assess the impact of one particular factor on an issue, without referring to the other factors as well. For instance, in the development of a national language for Malaysia upon independence, it is very difficult to pin down the one factor which actually led to the emergence of Malay as the official language, for it was in fact, ethnically as well as religiously motivated.

According to Bellah (1965), religion can perform the function of a cybernetic control mechanism for a society and personality of those who constitute it. It provides a stable set of definitions of the world, of the people and of the ideology which prevails in society. It also gives meaning to a group's culture as well as an identity, to a people who may be made up of a variety of ethnic, linguistic or religious backgrounds.

Traditional Islam in Malay society is a mixture of Islamic beliefs as well as Malay rituals and practices. All these managed to affect all aspects of Malay life, until all activities in the country, seemed to have gained religious significance. In time,

institutions performed a wide array of overlapping functions, with Islam as the thread<sup>284</sup> which links them all together.

For instance, religion helped to symbolize the unity of the state. The Malays exhibited strong parochial identity with their state, as symbolized by their respect for their sultan and religion. To be Malay became synonymous to being Muslim, with Islam as the acknowledged pre-condition of political and social participation in Malay society, but not the only requirement for the privileges of participation.

During pre-colonial times, religion played a role in legitimizing authority. Despite its highly legalistic character however, Islam did not provide an effective set of rules of the game for political contests. It was thus not particularly effective in stabilizing the political system against civil strife and the collapse of royal authority. The most important bases of legitimizing a claim to power were not essentially religious, since all rival claimants to a throne would be Muslim and could put forth about the same claims of religious legitimacy. Royal title, superior lineage, support of major chiefs, control of capital and its royal palace and strength of supporting military forces were more important in claiming legitimacy. Religious sanctification became more important after rivals had been disposed of. Proper ceremonies and religious traditions assisted in legitimizing the incumbent's authority against any possible rivals.

Religious institutions were also local in character in pre-colonial Malaya. Each kampong or village, maintained either a mosque (masjut) or a prayer house (surau) depending on its size and wealth. Each mosque had a committee, who took care of maintaining them. Village life centered on these places of worship, as religious, social and even political meetings were held there, as well as religious instruction for the children.

Religion also played a role in providing social integration and cohesion in the primary group relations of life within the Malay village. Common prayers, rituals, rites and festivals helped promote social solidarity. Special rights and priveleges were

celebrated to mark events as planting, harvesting, marriage, puberty, death, among others, with everyone conscientiously performing their duties. The roles of village functionaries and the local social status and ranking system were partly defined by the religious beliefs and attitudes of the village. All community officials were legitimized in their office by religious rituals and with reference to Islamic sources of authority.

Thus, Islam in its form as a traditional religion, became a vital social force, especially at the village level. It performed a number of socially significant functions, frequently in conjunction with other institutions.

When the British came, they granted the Malays religious freedom and tried to cooperate with them. This assured the Malays that their traditional way of life was not being threatened and that they had no intention of taking over their culture. At the same time, support of traditional Islam was a threat to the Adat and other non-Islamic traditions. This made the Malays secure that the country was still theirs, despite the Chinese and Indians.

The British however, re-structured the Islamic religious institutions. They followed a policy of passive protection of Islam and non-interference in Islamic affairs. As religious rituals at Malay courts became more important, the rulers and their state councils also began to create a centralized administrative structure and legal system for Muslim affairs.

Islamic religious courts were established in each state to enforce Muslim law. A "kathi" was appointed for each district to administer Muslim affairs, try cases within his jurisdiction and supervise the operation of mosques in his district. At the "mukim" level (sub-district within the jurisdiction of the mosque), the "kathi" would be assisted by a "naih-kathi" who, unlike the former, did not receive a government salary but instead got a fixed fee for his services. At the top of this "judicial system" was the chief "kathi" for each state. Although Muslim affairs were legally the responsibility of the ruler through the years, a confusing variety of committees and offices were created by

various rulers to assist them or relieve them of these duties. Some examples are the <sup>286</sup> Council of Theologians (Majlis Ugama), Shariah Committee (to interpret Muslim law) and the Kathi Committee to be found in many of the Malay states, and the Department of Religious Affairs, under the Council of Religion and Malay Customs or the Majlis Ugama Islam Dan Adat Melayu to administer religious affairs.

Even if Islam enjoyed state support in the Malay states and was recognized as the official state religion, it remained a minor concern of government during the colonial period. Muslim courts were given very few powers and narrow jurisdiction. The British however, continued to pay public deference to the religion, in matters of ceremony and public holidays and in giving some form of financial support to the Islamic institutions. The religion did not acquire any new vigor or dynamism, since those charged with responsibility for the administration and leadership of religious affairs, were either the traditional political elites of Malay society or rural conservative religious elites who were products of village schools or Malay vernacular primary schools.

If there is one major result of British occupation, that may be the massive improvements in communications system and transportation facilities in the country. These meant increased interaction between and among the many villages in Malaysia and changes in Malay religious institutions, beliefs and practices. Improved contacts made some aware of the parochial character of their religious beliefs and practices despite their common profession of Islamic orthodoxy. For the more enlightened, the contradictions between Islam and the Malay folk religion became all too apparent. Improved communications also made possible an infusion of Arabs and Indian Muslims (Jawi Peranakan) into elite positions in the community. Improved communications with the Middle East and India facilitated a gradual transformation of religious elites in Malay society. Through the years, the number who travelled to Mecca as haj pilgrims increased substantially. All these gradually brought about changes in the character of Muslim

religious elites and thus created tensions between the folk religion of the Malay kampong and the demands of Orthodox Islam.

In addition, the elites sometimes became isolated from the rest of society and became divided on their views about the religion. An open factional split between the Kaum Muda (Young Faction) and the Kaum Tua (Old Faction) shortly after the turn of the century resulted from these differences. The Kaum Muda were modernist-reformist and bearers of religio-political ideas emanating from universities in Cairo, and had Arabic education at Islamic institutions overseas. Though it never became a mass movement, by the 1930's, it became actively politicized and began to challenge the leadership of the traditional elites in Malay society. It helped generate nationalist and anti-colonialist sentiments, and promoted the idea of the union of all Muslims in Southeast Asia into a single state of Indonesia Raya or Greater Indonesia.

Opposition came from the Kaum Tua, who were the traditional rural "ulama", and were usually the products of the village Muslim pondok schools. This led to a dynamic tension between certain religious elites and the folk society of the peasant Malays, thus creating a strong impulse for change and reform. However, the modernism of Islamic reform was fundamentalist and dogmatic. Its ideology had seeds of nationalism, stressing the political mobilization of the Malay community, based on a re-affirmation of Islamic faith and re-discovery of its great tradition.

Upon independence, the role of Islam became more significant. Since the Malays view Islam as the core of their culture and society, they exhibit very strong attachments to their faith. Initially, demands by the Muslims for strengthening Islam were made at the state level. By 1950, most Malay states had established a Department of Religious Affairs, to improve Muslim administration and provide new services for the Muslim community. Increased funds were made available for mosque re-construction. State governments assumed greater responsibility for the enforcement of Muslim criminal and moral codes. In many areas, what had been considered to be a religious obligation



was made a matter of law, enforced and punished in the courts. For instance, Muslim <sup>288</sup> alms taxes, which were initially considered voluntary, were made a matter of obligation with penalties for non-payment of these taxes by Muslims. Other laws penalized Western dating practices, violation of Muslim moral codes, failure to perform religious obligations as fasting requirements, or attendance at Friday prayers at the mosque. State governments also assumed greater responsibility for defining and interpreting Muslim doctrine and protecting the Muslim community from those considered as heretics.

Federal involvement in religious affairs was practically non-existent before Malaysia gained her independence. The constitution then provided for Islam as the official religion, and the Yang di Pertuan Agong assumed responsibilities for Islam in Penang and Malacca and increased sums of federal money were allocated to the states for mosque construction, Muslim administration and welfare.

Federal involvement also came about because the constitution sanctioned a system of special rights tied to religion, as university quotas, administration and public service, allocation of permits for certain trades and businesses, Malay as the national language, among others. And since the constitution defines a Malay as one who professes the Muslim religion, habitually speaks Malay and conforms to religious qualifications, then it automatically shuts all other ethnic groups out of Malay/Muslim society.

According to Enloe (1970), one of the areas most affected by the entire process of Islamization is education. Prior to the demand for more equitable educational privileges in the country after independence, the ethnic groups were not very active in the political scene. Education seemed to be that arena where they felt strongly unified.

This area, which was very conducive for ethnic intervention, tended to be an emotional and sentimental issue for discussion. It made the people less amenable to any compromise, or any political discussion. And since the entire process touched on deep mutual concerns of both ethnic groups and governments, as socialization, creation

of a truly Malaysian culture and identity, communication, social mobility and skills for livelihood, then it was inevitable that it would lead to considerable debate. Education represented an issue where government had an immediate interest of its own, and thus did not allow it to play a brokerage role with such ease. This became more obvious as efforts at integration increased through time. <sup>289</sup>

The British colonial government expressed interest in certain sectors of education in the country, but only focused on the welfare of the Malays, virtually leaving the Chinese and Indians to develop their own system of learning. In the same manner, these groups did not pressure government with regards to education (refer to chapter 1), as they could very well afford to establish and maintain their own schools. Ethnic interaction was limited to other areas, as labor, internal security and immigration. Government and the major ethnic communities in Malaysia began to converge upon education at the time that independence became foreseeable. A realization in early post-war years was such that the transition from colonial status to sovereignty would carry with it new demands for unity and self-sufficiency. Both would evoke increased demands for the training of the nation's youth. A new consciousness emerged among the members of the various groups, as to the kind of educational system best suited to the needs of the country. A change in education arose, from the use of schools for subversion to greater concentration on the integrative role of language in the educational process.

The three most significant developments at that time were the Barnes Report of 1951, Razak Report of 1956 and the Talib Report of 1960 (refer to chapter 1). All these reports showed a strong desire and commitment on the part of the national government to initiate major reforms in the educational system. These reports were also indicative of the changing times, as well as the increasing need for political and ethnic integration. The policy of nationalization became the theme of the educational system,

and the Malays once again, gained federal support in their desire for preferential treatment.

Government at that time had to achieve three things: train future elites, foster cultural unity, and avoid ethnic conflict. To achieve this, a policy characterized by gradualism and de-politicization emerged. In 1952, the initial steps toward the creation of a national school system was undertaken with the Education Ordinance of 1952 as the product of all debates and discussions held on the subject. This aimed at designing a new type of school for Malay, one which will eventually be the standard school for the nation, the government-sponsored national school.

In 1957, the so-called national streams in vernacular schools developed, which as would be expected was met by considerable resistance from all ethnic groups, especially the Chinese. They created Malay-medium secondary schools, which up until then, were not even set-up yet, since secular schools were limited to those run by missions and government-sponsored English-medium and Chinese-sponsored/Chinese-medium schools. Teachers were carefully supervised by the Federal government with the creation of a Unified Teaching Service, separate from the older teaching service, which was part of the National Civil Service.

By 1960 and 1961, with the Talib Report's recommendations submitted to government, the move for nationalization of schools increased even more, with the abolition of Chinese-medium secular schools, limited financial aid to schools other than Malay, and revisions in the examinations system, which up until then was British-controlled.

As time went by, more privileges were granted to Malays, as increased quotas in the schools, provision of more scholarships, Malay as the medium of instruction, and even the use of Malay in governmental exams. This has continued until today, with the weakening of other schools in the country.

It may be concluded therefore, that education has become one of the major arenas of conflict in the country, with minimal hope for reform in favor of the other ethnic groups. This according to Enloe (1970) may be attributed to the following:

(a) There is a considerable amount of open/latent hostility that exists among the Malays and the other ethnic groups, such that government is forced to devote its energies to preventing the possible outbreak of violence by coming up with a means of uniting the people and developing a national identity. This, the Malaysian government has done with the declaration of a national language, official religion, and preferential treatment to the Malays.

(b) Since most of the officials are Malay-Muslims, their policies will definitely be in favor of the group of which they are a part.

(c) Since the supposed intention of the policy-makers are national unity and development, then they are less apt to tolerate ethnic divisions within the nation and are more likely to urge the use of governmental resources to eliminate these obstacles to their specified goals.

Considering all these therefore, the Malaysian situation is unique in the sense that ethnicity is tied to a variety of factors, including religion, language and education. The close inter-relationship between these factors makes it difficult for researchers to actually understand the extent to which one factor influences policy, because all the above-mentioned factors actually affect almost any policy or issue which emerges in the country. The thin line dividing them is very small, but the effect is crucial to the kinds of policies passed by the national government.

It should also be mentioned that based on extensive research done on the issues mentioned below, this researcher has observed that religious interest groups in the country act more like reactionary groups than pressure groups. This may be explained by the fact that government shares the very same foundations of Islamization and increased Malayness, with the groups, and thus the policies are reflective of these two goals.

Besides, with the members of parliament primarily Malay, they will definitely be protective of their own interests. Secondly, it is quite clear that once a new law is passed, or a new policy implemented, religious interest groups immediately hold discussion groups, symposia or even rallies when they feel that the law/policy is unjust or does not exactly cater to their needs. Of course, there are exceptions as the Merdeka University for instance, but this is an extraordinary situation.

The issues that will be discussed henceforth, will illustrate the earlier contentions that ethnicity, religion and education are closely inter-related, and that religious interest groups in the country have a tendency to react more to the activity, and hope for change, rather than actually assisting in its formulation.

#### 1. A National System of Education in West Malaysia

If there is one word that best describes Malaysia, it is pluralism. This is the main impetus behind the desire of government to come up with a means of strengthening national unity among the various ethnic groups in the country. This they thought, would be done through education. They wanted a national system of education, which was uniformed and geared towards the goal of national integration (Ahmad, 1980).

Government officials also wanted to expand formal education, at the primary and secondary levels, so that more people will be able to avail of good, quality education, which they have been deprived of for a very long time. They also wanted it to be more efficient, so as to enhance values as nationalism, development of national identity and coherence.

Four basic features have been stressed in the educational system in West Malaysia from 1956-1976:

(a) Language of Instruction. In order to ease communication and interaction between and among students and faculty, the educational system adopted the

use of Malay, the national language, as the only medium of instruction to be used in the schools. <sup>293</sup>

(b) Centralization of Organization and Control of Education. This was considered essential for the educational system to develop. Thus, government had control of the curriculum, the courses to be studied, methods of instruction and examination and evaluation methods.

(c) Curriculum and Instruction. The creation of a uniformed set of teaching methods and course content which shall affect the various aspects of life of the students. Values as loyalty, respect for authority, modesty and of course, the necessity of being a good Muslim at all times. These are relayed through class lectures, which are not only regular discussions, but more like indoctrination seminars.

(d) Financial Structure. The control of the financial structure of the educational system was seen as a good way to use positive incentives, allocating to separate ethnic schools only if they could cooperate with the national system or to use denial of resources as a negative response to their needs.

Thus as mentioned in Chapter 1, several committees were formed to look into the needs of the educational system, changes that have to be made to fill those needs and the manner in which these changes are to be implemented. These committees, the Talib, Razak, Barnes and Fenn-Wu all tried to come up with an educational system which was amenable to all the ethnic groups and religious denominations. However, the increasing sense of Malayness as well as the process of Islamization made their task a very difficult one. They have managed however, to come up with policies which although not agreeable to everyone, were in congruence with the demands of the majority of the population, the Malays, as well as those of the national government, among them:

(a) Centralization of education on two levels: national and local.

On the national level, an Educational Planning and Research Division has been set-up which was involved in formulating and assessing the school curriculum. It

was also assigned the task of cooperating with the Central Curriculum Committee and <sup>294</sup> various branches of the said office in the different regions in the formulation of syllabuses for the schools. Their task was not easy. They had to gather significant statistical data, carry out different functional research projects, and establish school guidance programmes to assist the schools in their implementation. Universities, while retaining a certain degree of internal autonomy, are subject to the scrutiny of the Ministry of Education for approval.

A Federal Inspectorate Office was established to take charge of inspecting the schools for the proper maintenance of certain standards and advise them in the dissemination of new ideas and methods. A Teacher-Training Division has also been established to take charge of all teacher-training institutions and decide on the recruitment policy from year to year. Teachers are paid at a national level according to their qualifications and years of service. Schools must seek the approval of the State Chief Executive Office before a teacher is appointed.

Educational policy thus became a national issue, with its curricula, syllabi, texts, fees approved by the Ministry. Texts are usually written by individual teachers and other educators and approved by the Textbook Bureau. Schools are prevented by law from making many frequent changes in books used to minimize the expenses of the parents.

On the local level, a Chief Executive Office in each state is established which shall see to it that requirements of governmental legislation pertaining to education are met within that state and that adequate school facilities exist for the school population in the area.

School organizers visit schools to ensure that the national educational policy is carried out by a Board of Managers and Governors, who are also responsible for the administration of school finance and appointment of teachers, except those directed by the Ministry to the school. Most schools founded by religious bodies, have accepted

financial aid from government, and like schools set-up by the state, are termed fully assisted schools. Private schools do not receive aid of any kind, but conform to the ministry's regulations on facilities and curriculum standards. Very little deviation is allowed from the prescribed syllabus.

(b) Use of Malay as the medium of instruction in the schools. The development of a national language for the schools in Malaysia began in 1957, upon independence, as one of the clauses in the constitution. This would have increased Malay nationalism, make Malay the popular medium of communication in the country and assist in the development of a national identity. The move was led by the "Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka", which was established in 1957 and re-constituted later, with the purpose of:

[1] developing and enriching the national language

[2] print, publish and assist the printing or publication of books, magazines and pamphlets and other forms of literature in the national language and other languages

[3] promote literary talent especially in the national language

[4] standardize the spelling and pronunciation and come up with appropriate terminologies in the national language

[5] compile and publish a national language dictionary

In 1958, the "Maktab Bahasa" was established upon the recommendation of the Razak Committee which called for a National Language Institute to perform two main functions: [1] train teachers on the Malay language; [2] do research into the language spoken in Malaysia and its teaching. Unfortunately, its role as a research group has faded and is now simply a teacher training institution.

Although the University of Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan and Universiti Sains Malaysia, are not instruments of implementation of the national language policy in the strict sense of the term, they do exert considerable influence on linguistic matters, especially in the field of research. University graduates usually find themselves controlling the governmental agencies and/or private sector. In October 1971, the



decision for the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka formed close relationships with the universities for the purpose of standardizing the "istilah" or terminology for use in the various institutions of learning. On November 1970, the University of Malaya authorities announced the recognition of Bahasa Malaysia as the sole official language of the university from the primary to the tertiary level.

From 1972 onward, even classes in Physical Education, Civics, Music, Arts and Crafts started to be taught in Malay. In 1973, students entering the Form 1 level received instruction on the national language for all subjects except Mathematics, Science and Engineering. In 1977, a Malay-language National Certificate Examination was made available to everyone. And by 1983, all forms of instruction from the primary to the university level began to be taught in Malay.

(c) Economic assistance to Malay students especially in the post-primary schools increased tremendously. Malays accepted in Form 6, are almost automatically granted scholarships regardless of their family income and may even receive monthly stipends. Quotas for Malays have increased in the universities to give way to the majority, who have not been able to enjoy the benefits of quality education in the past because they could not afford it. This has increased the Malay student population tremendously in all schools, at all levels.

(d) Koranic instruction shall be included in the curricula at all educational levels for Muslims. Students are required to behave properly, with boys and girls preferably dressed in the traditional garb (variations may exist, depending on the school). All religious rituals are celebrated, with the fulfillment of the good Muslim way of life as their main objective.

The role of the religious interest groups in the formulation of this policy is obvious. The groups, as the Malay-Muslims, the ulama, among others were adamant in their desire for educational reform upon independence. They felt that the time had come for the Malays to be uplifted from the status that they currently had to that which was

more competitive with other groups, specifically the Chinese. This strong demand for<sup>297</sup> change was voiced out through extensive lobbying efforts in government, public discussions and meetings between government representatives and Malay leaders to know more about the needs of the majority. Government, in its desire to be "objective", then established the various committees, whose responsibility it was, among others, to come up with policies favorable to most of the people in the country. Thus, not only was government absolved from any possible blame, it also transferred the responsibility of policy-formulation to the people, specifically experts, who supposedly knew what they were doing and have studied the effects of their policies on the country.

Public response to these changes and developments have obviously been mixed. For the Malays, UMNO and the various Islamic organizations, they reacted favorably to them. Their positive reaction may be understood in various levels: in the first place, they believe that they are the only "true bhumiputra" and deserve these new benefits; second, since many of them come from the rural areas and/or belong to a lower social strata, they believe that they may earn more money and perhaps be on equal footing with other ethnic groups; third, for the nationalists, they believe that these innovations will definitely lead to the development of a true Malayan identity and enhance unity; fourth, since the Malays have always been disturbed by the arrogant culture of the Chinese secret societies and communities as well as the ideologies espoused in the Chinese schools, they felt that this new system would put an end to their activities and to the spread of their misplaced beliefs; finally, for many Malays, it was a moral victory, whose time had finally come.

Chinese and Indians considered this move as a blatant form of discrimination against their culture. The use of Malay as the only medium of instruction, conducting exams in the national language, preferential quota system in favor of Malays, and loss of financial support to their schools made them very upset with these changes. For those who can afford it, higher education meant going to the USA, the

Commonwealth countries, United Kingdom. For those who could not, it simply meant <sup>298</sup> studying in the country which they feel refuses to recognize their rights as citizens.

In addition, the Chinese also tried to establish their own university, the Merdeka University (which will be discussed later), but even this failed to take-off. It did not even receive full support from the community because it may jeopardize their standing in society, it could lead to more restrictions on Chinese student activity, and to some, it was impossible for the project to actually succeed because of the very strict rules imposed by the national government.

The Chinese therefore resorted to extensive lobbying, convincing government officials, local representatives as well as the guilds and associations, to make changes, and ease the rules for the other ethnic groups in the country. This was met with resentment by the government and disdain for the Chinese to even consider the thought.

Alliances were formed among various Chinese groups, both big and small, so as to be able to strengthen their position when making their demands to the government. Others risk incarceration, with the publication of articles in newspapers, flyers, etc. just to express their disdain for government. This led to severe restrictions on the media, including academic research which may in any way, jeopardize the legitimacy of government and Islam. Some even resorted to the formation of prayer groups, (eg. Christians) to ease the burden that they are experiencing in the country, and have closer ties with God, who may in the long run, heed to their request for equality in the country.

These developments in West Malaysia, the seat of government and Islam have been carried out in the entire country. They are all results of the move toward greater Islamization and the preferential treatment given to the Malays in virtually all aspects of Malaysian society and politics.

## 2. Inter-Racial Equity and Access to Upper Secondary Education

One of the strongest demands made by the Malays after 1969, was the need for equality in educational opportunities. This, they thought was necessary to redress the existing imbalances in the socio-economic well-being between Malays and non-Malays. This conclusion was reached after making three basic assumptions:

(a) The number of Malays and non-Malays admitted to the schools and the proportion of candidates admitted from each group involved equity questions and was politically sensitive.

(b) The relative quality of educational services in each medium also raised equity issues.

(c) The effects of education on lifetime opportunities for students were assumed to be positive (although research in other countries raised questions about this assumption).

Given these assumptions, the relative efficiency with which the two educational media accomplished their academic ends, i.e., improving performance on exams, became important from an equity standpoint. Adequate planning, research and economic analysis were thus necessary to provide information in all these areas.

The educational system had tried to provide compensation for socio-economic differences for some time. The Malay-language medium served mainly the Malay population, while English-medium enrollment consisted mainly of Chinese and Indian students. Passing scores were also lowered for students from the Malay-medium schools in order to increase their chances of getting into schools offering secondary education. This was done because of the following reasons:

(a) Quality of lower level preparation in the predominantly rural Malay-medium schools was inferior to lower level preparation in the English-medium. Thus, to require the same levels of achievement and competence in the two media would discriminate against the Malays.

(b) Wastage rates at lower levels in the Malay medium were higher than in the English medium, even with automatic promotions. Studies show that enrollment ratios for Malays are consistently lower than for Chinese and Indians. There is an important political dimension to the relationship between the differential pass rates and the overall access question. Such compensation raises political reactions among those groups that the compensatory policy works against. The accessibility question is made even narrower, with the more salient compensation policies. Thus, the political pressures against the policy becomes more intense. In short, it is easier to admit Malays to upper secondary schools on a compensatory basis in the context of a liberal policy of access. Also, a policy of more access simply permits more Malays to advance to upper secondary schools on an absolute as well as relative basis.

Arguments against more liberal access were based on a perceived overproduction of Form 5 graduates. In the light of employment opportunities instituted after the racial disturbances of 1969, these arguments did not apply as strongly, if at all to Malay medium graduates. New government policies called for greater employment of Malays in the public and private sectors and created an anomalous situation, in which there are more positions open (especially at the middle level and upward) than there were Malays with educational qualifications to fill them. Findings of aggregate manpower studies were thus overtaken by events. Arguments regarding equity and access were extraordinarily complex and the discussion must necessarily pass over many importantly related questions. In general, equity considerations introduced another perspective on the access question and generally favored more liberal access.

There are relationships between who enters a level as upper secondary and what happens to them once they get there. While upper secondary school inputs could have significant effects on the student's educational achievement, earlier experiences gained both in and out of school, had a greater effect. It does not mean however, that schooling is fruitless, for school inputs did have an effect. Besides, opening access

varies widely at this and higher levels, and is unlikely to have much impact on the academic performance of marginal and submarginal students.

Thus, a policy of completely open access is not likely to improve the lot of disadvantaged students in academic terms. On the otherhand, if simply passing through the system and obtaining education credentials improve employability and income for the disadvantaged, this would be an argument for open access. At least, until employers realize that credentials are not enough. Policies aimed at achieving equal education for the Malays should concentrate first on improving the quality of lower levels of schooling.

Despite these findings however, greater access to education was granted to the Malays. This, because of pressure from groups as UMNO, ABIM, among others, who all contend that the necessity for preferential treatment to Malays to give them the opportunity to have good education and be on the same competitive level as Chinese and Indians, should be one of government's top priorities. They did not foresee the possibility however, that the economy would not be able to accomodate all the graduates because it still has not had enough resources to do so. In addition, this may have a negative effect on an otherwise good educational system, which the country has because less than capable Malays are accepted into the universities to simply fill the quota. Finally, since most of them are preparing for "white collar" jobs, the vocational and technical industries may suffer in the long term, as there will be a lack of manpower to help sustain them.

UMNO representatives, as well as religious leaders from all over the country, lobbied extensively in government for equity in the educational system. They gave dramatic speeches in parliament, stressing the effects of inequality on the lives of the Malays, most of whom did not receive adequate education, and thus belong to the lowest classes in society. They said that the main reasons for the difficulties being experienced by the Malays is education; thus, the possible enforcement of more equitable access to educational institutions in the country will definitely help in the group's social mobility.

Besides, they also claimed to be the only true sons of the soil, and thus deserving of <sup>302</sup> more benefits and rights from the government.

On the whole therefore, open access to the schools may not be the perfect solution to Malaysia's problem of inequality in education. For despite their claims to the contrary, the Malays are not yet ready for such a change, and neither is the national government. Further research on the policy and the repercussions of its implementation should be undertaken to prevent the possible deterioration of the educational system.

### 3. Merdeka University (Freedom University)

The role of the Chinese, as a significant minority in Malaysia has always been underplayed, i.e., their views though listened to, are not considered as significant or important as that of the Malays, when it comes to law-making. Although they may have the resources to establish businesses, and actually provide enough job opportunities for the general populace, their interests have never been quite as protected as the Malays' interests have been for a very long time. The Chinese have always been thought of as the privileged class, but as migrants, not as Malaysians. They have continued however, to make their presence felt through the organizations such as the Malayan Chinese Association or MCA and other organs of the National Front, organizations and guilds which help protect their interests in society.

Chinese efforts to participate in the formulation of educational policy reached its peak in 1968, when the Chinese community leaders proposed the idea of a non-sectarian, non-racial university, to be known as the "Merdeka University" or Freedom University, which was going to be set up as a private company, and would cater to the students from Chinese-medium schools. It aimed to complement the government-run university, in extending higher education to qualified students who are unable to obtain admission into the country's schools, for various reasons. From its very

inception, the idea received opposition from UMNO leadership. But public discussion<sup>303</sup> increased when the then Minister of Education, Datuk Musa Hitam, on the last day of the UMNO General Assembly in 1978, announced the government's rejection of the petition from the Merdeka University to establish the school as a private company. And of course, UMNO, especially its youth wing, expressed great satisfaction with the decision; they saw the establishment of a Chinese-medium university as an attempt to subvert the Malay character of the National Educational Policy. Even Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, Aliran's leader pointed out that the Merdeka University was unjustified from the point of national history, unity and language.

On April 4, 1968, the project was formally announced and passed at a nation-wide meeting of Chinese guilds and associations. All opposition groups with a Chinese base, supported the idea. Initially, the MCA vacillated and instead proposed the expansion of the Department of Chinese Studies at the University of Malaya, and setting up their own Tunku Abdul Rahman College. But, with the grassroots extremely supportive, the organization supported the cause. Massive fund raising campaigns got underway, with the help of all Chinese guilds and associations in the country. The movement was short lived because of the May 13, 1969 riots. Besides, the "Sedition Act" prohibited the discussion of the Merdeka University because it was considered a sensitive issue.

In 1977, the proposal was revived, with an appeal to the Yang di-Pertuan-Agong for an incorporation order, which would allow the instigators of the movement to re-initiate their demands. They also began a signature campaign among the public in support of the petition.

In 1978, the issue re-surfaced in the general elections under Jiao Zong and Dong Zong, two prominent Chinese political leaders, and Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry among others. The issue gained more intensity as non-Malays virtually demanded to get into the universities as officially enrolled students. The MCA,



together with 4234 guilds and associations signed a memo seeking royal assent to set-up the school.

The objective behind the school was to establish a private local university, built by the people, mainly to meet the demands of those students who have no opportunity to pursue higher education in local universities, cultivate useful and able citizens and help government shoulder responsibility in education. Chinese would be the medium of instruction, although Bahasa Malaysia and English would still be stressed. Academic qualifications will be the only criterion for admission.

Government had three objections to the establishment of the university:

- (a) It is contrary to the National Educational Policy since the medium is Chinese, and the official language of the country is Bahasa Malaysia.
- (b) It would be set-up as a private organization.
- (c) It would only be admitting students from Chinese independent schools.

The only compromise that both parties agreed to was the expansion of local universities and an improvement on the number of non-bhumiputra students in the schools.

On August 11, 1978, Mr. Loot Ting Yee, Assistant Secretary of the Merdeka University Board was injured when he was assaulted by hoodlums. This was condemned by many sectors of the Chinese community and considered a racial attack on one of the more vigorous supporters of the Merdeka.

On September 19, 1978, the Merdeka University Council reiterated its determination to establish a university and called for a meeting on October 22 of all Chinese associations and groups to discuss the steps to take in this regard. Members of the Chinese community continued to appeal to government to re-consider its decision. The government threatened the Merdeka University Board from holding meetings about its possible formation because it may threaten the stability of the country. Also on the

305  
same day, the Internal Security Act was passed, which prohibited the Merdeka University Council from holding any meetings.

On November 15, 1978, the Merdeka University Council decided to resort to legal channels to present its case before the courts. They launched a "One Man, One Dollar" campaign in the effort to raise enough funds to continue their fight. On November 16, 1978, Datuk Lee San Choon, then President of the MCA, openly announced that the party did not support the establishment of the university. On December 1978, opposition leader Lim Kit Siang, made a last minute statement which provided for the withdrawal of his Merdeka University motion, to lessen the complexity of the already confusing situation.

The Merdeka University had no other alternative but to seek legal action by questioning the constitutionality of the government's action on the matter. The case was heard in the Kuala Lumpur High Court in late September 1981, where the school board sought a declaration from the court that the government's rejection of its petition to set up the institution was null and void, as it contravened the country's constitution. The board also wanted the court to declare that the government's rejection of its petition was an unreasonable exercise of discretion conferred by the University and University Colleges Act of 1971. The High Court dismissed the company's civil action with cost after a nine day hearing. An appeal was made, but nothing positive has resulted till today. The establishment of the school remains an uncertainty which may never see its realization in the future.

Any analysis of the Merdeka University incident is difficult to formulate because of the thin line dividing it between being an ethnic issue and a religious issue. On the one hand, it was motivated by the Chinese Malaysians' desire to have their own school. While on the other, almost any ethnic issue is also a religious one. It has been included in this study therefore, because of the fact that the Chinese were not only fighting the

Malays, but the whole process of Islamization as well; and the Malays were fighting back<sup>306</sup> in the name of their ethnicity and their faith.

#### 4. University Colleges Act of 1971

When the government realized the intensity of student activity in the many campuses in Malaysia, it issued the University Colleges Act of 1971 to curb the possible formation of more religious student groups and minimize their activity. This law provided for the following:

(a) It prohibited university students or any of their organizations from affiliating themselves or expressing support, sympathy or opposition to any political party or trade union. Violation of this law may mean a maximum fine of \$1000.00 or six months imprisonment or both.

(b) It also gave university councils the power to suspend or dissolve any student organization which acts in a manner considered detrimental or prejudicial to the well-being of a university.

Because of these, Islam became the only means by which the students could air their grievances, express their opinions, fulfill the need to serve their country, and find some solace in the rigors of university life. This led government to come up with a revised version of the law in 1975, wherein it stated that all scholarship holders had to sign an additional agreement pledging never to get involved in political activities. In addition, it also prohibited students from maintaining or collecting any funds for organizational purposes. All funds were to be disbursed university authorities alone. All activities, as symposia, conferences, among others, and any expenses to be incurred in the process, had to be authorized in advance, in writing, by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. Assemblies of more than five persons and the publication of any documents without prior permission were also prohibited.

All these rules were supposed to prevent the students from actively participating in religio-political matters, but instead of doing so, it only intensified their desire to be even more active. They established "usrah" groups in the many campuses in the country, to have a sense of bonding between themselves, in the process of learning more about their faith and the way of life which should be developed in accordance with that religion. In addition, they established ties with other groups, like ABIM for instance, so as to learn more about their religion, and assist them in any projects which they may have in the future. They even went to the extent of inviting speakers from various groups and share some moments of meditation, Koranic reading and other spiritual activities with them. Many students also used the traditional Muslim garb, to express their sincerity in living according to the prophecies of Mohammad, despite the strong influence of western countries in Malaysia.

This issue is very significant in the sense that it clearly shows that there is a strong tendency for Muslim interest groups to influence the implementation of the policy, rather than its formulation. The University Colleges Act was conceived by government because of its fear of increased student activity, and the students reacted to it by simply disregarding its very existence and moving on from there. It has not led to the minimization of student activity, but has to some extent, contributed to the vigor and intensity of student activity in the country.

##### 5. Christian Missions in Malaysia

As mentioned earlier, Christian missions began coming into Malaysia as early as 1511 when the first Portuguese Catholic missionaries began to arrive on the peninsula. When the Dutch arrived, they tried to destroy all vestiges of Catholicism by tearing down all their chapels, throwing priests out of the country and introducing a new faith, Protestantism. Despite the fact the Dutch had taken over, some Catholics were

determined to practice their faith in the best way they knew how, even if this meant, <sup>308</sup>  
going underground so as not to catch the ire of the new colonizers. The English took  
over the Dutch, which inevitably led to an increase in Anglican and Methodist missions.  
Catholic missions were more tolerated at this time, and all of them were allowed to open  
their own schools, establish their own churches and celebrate their own festivities.

Education seemed to be their major focus though, as English-language,  
Christian run schools were built all throughout the country. In these schools academic  
excellence was stressed, with religious indoctrination playing a secondary role. Their  
method of conversion was indirect and subtle, stressing the need for good, moral values,  
than simply memorizing lines from the Bible. Although conversion was not rampant,  
new Christians were considered as the "new elites" in society, for not only were they  
academically prepared, they were also believed to be righteous, hardworking and of good  
moral fiber.

Most of those who have converted were Chinese and Indians, who have  
organized their churches along ethno-linguistic lines with sections in English, Chinese  
and Tamil to meet their specific needs. Each denomination tried to maintain an  
organization separate from others, with the older and more established Protestant  
churches forming their own Joint Council in Petaling Jaya to promote the ideal of  
ecumenism in Malaysia. On February 1985, the Christian Federation of Malaysia was  
established in conjunction with the Council, the Catholic Church and newer evangelical  
churches in the country. There also exists several voluntary Christian bodies which are  
run by the laity. Many of whom are in Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya, and engaged in  
missionary and evangelical activities, providing counseling and training services to the  
general public. There are also denominational and inter-denominational associations of  
foreign missionaries that manage their own programs throughout Malaysia.

Despite these, the total Christian population in the entire country is only 2%,  
according to the 1980 census. Government has not helped at all in this regard, as they

have established restrictive governmental policies on foreign missionaries, thus decreasing their entry into the country and the propagation of their activities. Foreign missionaries are restricted to a 10-year residence limitation in the country. Non-Muslims may not propagate their religion among Muslims in Malaya, and while that restriction is not applicable to Sabah and Sarawak, the federal authorities have issued warnings against such endeavors in these two states.

In addition, all groups other than Muslim associations, are forbidden by law, to lobby or discuss any religious issue in the country. Conversion thus becomes more difficult and risky. In fact, in October 1987, many Christian evangelicals were arrested for supposed participation in subversive activities, and were subsequently arrested, and treated harshly in prison. Finally, it should also be noted that even if the Christians tried to convert to the Islamic faith, they have been forbidden by law, to do so.

PERKIM on its part, has pursued this governmental policy, as one of its own, in its wide-ranging campaigns aimed at converting non-Muslims to the Islamic faith and offering them financial and emotional enticements just to do so. They have also attempted to coerce the aborigines who have resisted attempts to convert to Islam because the Muslims were their traditional oppressors, and conversion has been interpreted by them to be a form of subjugation to Malay authorities. Besides, Islamic dietary laws also prohibit them from consuming pork, reptiles, monkeys and other animals, which are all parts of their diet.

Although foreign Christian missions have been prohibited from working among these aborigines since 1940, about 2000 of them have adopted Christianity, partly because it provides them with the strength against the pressure for integration into the Malay-Muslim community.

Today, as in the Philippines, there is a Christian revival in the country, with more Chinese Malaysians who comprise 49.5% of all Malaysian Christians, seeking refuge in the religion which they think may grant them greater freedom, more privileges

and spiritual strength. This may be observed among members of the Pentecostal faith,<sup>310</sup> Seventh Day Adventists and even the Catholic Church.

Like the members of the Charismatic Movement in the Philippines, they engage in activities such as holding prayer sessions, discussions of the life of the Lord, speaking in tongues, making public testimonies and affirmations of their faith. They also have ceremonies as physical and spiritual healing through prayer, and the integration of some Chinese rituals as evidenced in their exorcism rites. They hold their meetings in one of the members' homes with discussions which may range from the political situation in the country to their shopping sprees overseas. After which, discussions, singing, healing, etc. sessions begin and spiritual enrichment becomes the main concern. These they believe are the means by which they can express not only their own spirituality, but also their frustrations over a system which they believe may have minimal hope for change.

The intensity and scope of this movement is still uncertain. But considering the small number of Christians in the country and the even smaller number involved in these movements, they may not have any impact on society, at least politically. They shall probably always remain as a small, insignificant sector of Malaysian society.

CONCLUSION

This segment of the dissertation aims to determine the following: [a] the success or failure of each interest group in influencing educational policies in Malaysia and the Philippines; [b] explain the relationship between religion and education in the two countries; and finally [c] explain the necessity of conducting research on interest groups in Southeast Asia.

Rate of Success of the Groups:

As mentioned in chapter 2, each group's rate of success will be determined by the following indices:

- (a) membership
- (b) number of years that the group has existed or continues to exist
- (c) the extent to which the group manages to alter public opinion about certain issues which they may consider important
- (d) the extent to which the group manages to alter the opinions of the legislators on issues which they may consider important
- (e) the extent to which the group has achieved its goals

A. Religious Interest Groups in the Philippines:

a. The Jesuits. The Jesuits have, since they first came to the Philippines during the Spanish occupation, managed to gain distinction as educators and a religious interest group. As educators, they have been able to achieve the following:



[1] The Jesuits were able to establish a number of schools in the country, which have the reputation of providing excellent education to the country's youth. Their primary and secondary schools, are among the best in the nation, reaching a standard which gives their graduates a big edge over those from other private schools, as they seek admission in the various colleges and universities in the country and even abroad. Their university and law school, have produced graduates who have excelled in their respective fields, as former Senator Diokno in politics, NVM Gonzales in literature and Ricardo Puno in the Ministry of Justice (now known as the Dept. of Justice).

[2] Their faculty members have gained fame as academicians and researchers with many books, monographs and papers circulating all over the country and even in the States, Asia, and Europe.

[3] Their graduates have shared top billing with graduates of De La Salle and the UP in leading the country's biggest corporations, as San Miguel Corporation; Sycip, Gorres and Velayo, among others.

However, they need to develop a greater sense of nationalism in their students, by including courses which will allow them to develop a deep love for their country, and contribute their talents and capabilities to it. This is essential for a number of reasons:

[1] In the first place, the Filipinos still do not have a strong sense of national identity, so much so that when a Cebuano (a person who was born and/or raised in the 2nd largest island in the country called the Visayas) is asked where he is from, he would not say the Philippines, but rather the Cebu. This has led to a certain degree of disunity within the archipelago and developed a sense of uncertainty within most Filipinos and even within most observers, as to who the Filipino really is, his beliefs and his convictions.

[2] Nationalism is also important so that colonial mentality, which seems to plague many Filipinos will slowly be eradicated. It seems that the Filipinos have learned

313

to love anything foreign almost instantly, with minimal appreciation for the culture, the produce and the crafts, as well as the achievements which the country and its people have accomplished through the years.

[3] Nationalism may also help foster unity and develop a sense of "oneness" which does not seem to exist, except during times of crises. This is necessary so that the Filipinos can work together toward the fulfillment of national goals, specifically growth and development.

So far, it seems that the concern for intellectual development and spiritual growth have brushed the need for a sense of Filipino identity and patriotism to the sidelines. In fact, Fr. de la Costa himself has mentioned this necessity in his many works, as he constantly stresses the need for Filipinos to think as Filipinos and not as western clones.

In addition, students must be more actively involved in community service and social welfare activities. This is necessary since most of the students enrolled in the school come from the middle class upward, and do not have a clear understanding of the necessity for economic reform and social justice. And with increasing poverty in the country, everyone should be made aware of the necessity of sharing one's time, effort and resources to the poor. Working in the slum areas, holding food drives for the less privileged, and sharing their time in educating the poor, may minimize the wide gap which currently exists between the fortunate and the less fortunate in the country. Intellectuals in the country should not confine themselves to the pursuit of their own research or the fulfillment of business endeavours, but should also focus their energies on the continued assistance of others, most specifically those who comprise the majority of the urban as well as the rural population, the slum dwellers, street vendors, sick, among others.

As a religious interest group, the Jesuits are also successful, as their members have increased considerably through the years. Their priests have also been

encouraged to pursue higher education in the Philippines or even overseas, to be more <sup>314</sup> competent academicians and contribute more to the country upon their return. Their students, have also become increasingly involved in community and social welfare activities all over the country.

The words and works of the Jesuits also assist in altering public opinion as they exert great influence in the country. They present more progressive ideas, initiate demands for changes in government and industry, provide thought-provoking works which make the people gain a better understanding of Catholicism as a religion and the manner in which they could integrate their religion into their daily lives. For instance, the Jesuits were among the first to voice their opposition against the Marcos dictatorship, and through their weekly homilies, radio broadcasts at Radio Veritas (the church-supported radio station), etc. asked the people to think about the situation in the country and do something about it. They became very much involved in this effort, that they initiated rallies, with their students as well as students from other schools to encourage the people to let go of their fears, and fight for change. They have also asked Catholics all over the country to read the bible with open minds and hearts, and to think as progressive Catholics, than extreme fundamentalists. Religion to them goes beyond the church and the pulpit and extends to the pursuit of social justice, equality and peace in the country.

Efforts at improving the NCEE, promoting religious instruction, as well as values education, also make the Jesuit community more visible in society, and help make national leaders aware that the clergy, educators, and the students are not only concerned with their activities within their schools, but with the development of the whole country.

b. CEAP. The CEAP is one of the most successful religious interest groups in the country. It has managed to initiate and/or participate actively in virtually every educational project, making it one of the most visible, and most influential groups in the nation. The CEAP has led the way for the inclusion of religious instruction in the

public school curriculum, development of the NCEE, promotion of values education,<sup>315</sup> among others. The organization has also managed to encourage schools to work together in the desire to improve the educational system as a whole and the maintenance of spiritual enrichment and development.

The group has, through its efforts at promoting quality education in the country gained national reknown as more people are aware of their existence, their projects and their involvement in educational development. Other groups, as the Protestants for instance, have looked at the group as a model in the furtherance of their goals and objectives and the need for greater cooperation between and among institutions sharing a similar faith, ideology or values. Their long history, which dates as far back as the American occupation, also adds to its prestige and importance to the country.

Law-makers also look up to the CEAP with utmost respect as evidenced by the increased efforts of the legislators to meet with the group's members to try and influence them with regards to the passage of certain bills that are presented to government. They are also aware of the political clout which the group has, with members whose graduates hold prominent positions in politics and business in the country.

CEAP publications are also helpful in making many people more aware of their activities, trends in education in the country, and even the copies of papers being presented in seminars held for the benefit of academicians. These help increase the people's understanding of what the group stands for, the changes they may have initiated in the pursuit of these changes as well as the crucial needs of the educational system.

The CEAP cannot be said to have achieved all its goals, because for so long as the group exists, it will continue on refining all the efforts at attaining excellence in education, and spiritual development in the country. Nevertheless, its history, the various activities it has initiated and sustained, clearly show that the group is on its way to the full realization of its objectives.

c. **The La Salle Brothers.** Like the Jesuits, the La Salle Brothers have also gained recognition for establishing very good schools and acting as a very active religious interest group in the country. As educators, they have managed to produce quality graduates like Nick Joaquin (writer/journalist), Andres Soriano (pres. of San Miguel Corp.), among others, because of their good academic standards. Their many consortia with schools in the US, Japan and even with other schools in the country like the Ateneo, St. Paul, St. Scholastica's, etc. have allowed them to expand their educational development projects, as well as increase their interaction with other students and expose their students to a wide array of courses and experiences which they would otherwise not have had at all.

The faculty members are also given more money to pursue higher education and/or conduct their own research. This has led to an increase in the production of monographs, books and papers by the members of the La Salle community.

Like the students of the Ateneo, La Sallites must be constantly reminded that they are Filipinos and should thus contribute to the country's development once they have received their education. Their objectives should not only be focused on the development of their analytical abilities, their mathematical skills, or even their spiritual growth, but should also be aimed at contributing, whatever they can, to the country's welfare. The country is in dire need of assistance, especially in the field of education, economics and even politics. And if many of the graduates will simply forget their country, and pursue their own ambitions, the Philippines, will be left without anyone to continue the challenge which the future holds for her. Although it is understandable that many have opted to leave the country for financial reasons, the possibility of coming home to share the knowledge, resources and time with the rest of the populace should not be discounted. This should be constantly inculcated within the students, so that they will not forget that they may be able to make a difference.

As a religious interest group, De La Salle is beginning to be more politically active and socially aware, with increased participation, on the part of its brothers and students, in various activities aimed at educational and sometimes even political reform. Its active participation in the CEAP, community service stretching from Leveriza (which is just in the DLSU campus backyard) to the rural areas of Luzon, social service, and even policy-making. Under Bro. Andrew Gonzales, students are made increasingly aware of the need to be more active in political and community affairs, which may help the institution and the country as well.

National leaders are also looking at the university with much more interest as the administration seems more willing to share their time in national policy issues. A good example would be the promotion of values education and the continued improvements in the NCEE, both of which are being undertaken by schools as the De La Salle. Perhaps, before the school reaches centennial, it may have already fulfilled most of the beliefs of its founder St. John Baptist de la Salle, who saw in education, a new hope for the people, in the fulfillment of a better life.

d. UPSCA. The UPSCA is one of the most organized, structured and prominent organizations in the UP campus. It has been known to lead student efforts for more rights, good education and freedom on campus. It has through its long years of existence, managed to increase student awareness on issues as poverty, corruption in government and economic reform. Its reputation as a political organization on campus is also quite reputable, as it currently controls the UP Student Council.

The group has also contributed significantly to the UP community, with the building of the church, the continued social welfare activities and community service. Its large membership, numbering in the thousands, has made their group even more popular among the students and their activities even more so.

However, as a religious interest group, its influence is limited to the university, and its affiliate campuses in the country. Despite its concern for national and local political affairs, it does not have as much clout as the CEAP or other similar groups, because it is basically based in the UP. It is still perceived by many as nothing more than a student organization.

e. Social Action Centers. The SAC's though quite successful in terms of extending assistance and service to the poor, are not as successful in influencing educational policies in the country. Their influence is limited to the communities they work for, and have a minimal role in national affairs. This may be attributed to the fact that the concern of the SAC's is focused on the less privileged, with minimal concern given to governmental policies. The members believe that their existence and the kind of service they extend to people are enough to arouse public interest and may probably lead to change. Besides, their educational objectives are only part of their agenda, which covers a whole array of programmes aimed at alleviating the level of poverty which the poor may be experiencing.

f. Catholics. Whole life groups such as the Catholics in the Philippines are quite difficult to assess in terms of the extent of their influence or pervasiveness of their political clout. This is so because the religion is integrated into the country's socio-political fabric, that it is a challenge to discern the role which they may have actually played in the formulation of a particular policy, be it in education or any other field for that matter. Suffice it to say therefore, that the fact that they comprise the major religious group in the country, has contributed to a few changes in the educational system.

They have led the way towards the inclusion of religion in the curriculum of public schools, promotion of values in the school system and the need for increased nationalism. And since Catholicism is already integrated into society, they do not have to

319  
exert much effort in making their views known to the legislators. With Cardinal Sin, CEAP, and other Catholic groups representing them, they do not believe that more active involvement is necessary, because their mere presence is enough to remind law-makers of the necessity of spiritual development in the schools.

g. Protestants and other religious denominations. Protestants, the second largest religious denomination, in the country, is the most organized of all said groups. Perhaps because of their smaller number, they have managed to organize various activities (eg. fund-raising drives, social service, etc.) without difficulty and with much success. Their role in influencing policy is not as significant, as they have opted to open schools of their own, with minimal governmental intervention, instead of actively participating in the process of law-making. This has minimized their concern for national policy affairs considerably. Perhaps the only time they actually intervene was during the passage of the bill on religious instruction; there is no other evidence which may show more active involvement.

Muslims, Iglesia ni Kristo members and Aglipayans, are virtually insignificant in the process of law-making in education in the country. They are left on their own, and may practice their own faith and build their own schools if they so desire.

On the whole therefore, religious interest groups in the Philippines have become more active in the formulation of educational policies as compared to the Marcos years. Through their efforts, issues are discussed, policies formulated, and laws implemented, with their concerns taken into consideration. Their publications, alliances, participation in congressional committee meetings, talks, papers, among others have proven to be useful tools in the fulfillment of their objectives. Although some groups may have limited influence, their concerns are basically the same, and that is, the



provision of good, comprehensive and spiritual education to the Filipino people, an issue<sup>320</sup> which no religious interest group seems to question.

## B. Religious Interest Groups in Malaysia

### [a] Dakwah Groups.

ABIM is one of the most successful religious interest groups in the country. It has members who are still very active in the political arena; it has also managed to mobilize the youth and encourage them to pursue the twin objectives of Malayization and Islamization; and continued to increase their participation in policy matters. The group continues to attract national attention as it constantly encourages its members to discuss issues, write papers and even conduct interviews on their values, beliefs and way of life.

In terms of influence on the rest of the population, most specifically the students, its significance can also be felt. Many Malay students have opted to join the movement as they feel a sense of unity with the group in terms of their objectives and the desire to live according to the Koran and the works of the prophet Mohammad.

As mentioned earlier, they act more like reactionary interest groups, i.e. groups which simply react to policies once they are passed and voice their opinions about them, rather than attempt to influence their formulation, in the country. They may share the same ideal of Islamization with the government, but considering the number of groups which believe in the same value, and the different perceptions of what this entire process entails, it is very difficult to tell the extent to which the government actually pays attention to what the students, or any other group for that matter, has to say. The government has to constantly make a balancing act between the various Muslim groups, and also between the other ethnic groups before it can actually formulate policy. Thus, some groups like ABIM, simply try to exert all their energies at attempting to influence

government whenever they can, without any guarantee of success. Once a law is passed,<sup>321</sup> or a new policy is formulated, they simply react to them and move on from there. Government in turn, reacts again, and the whole process starts over.

For instance, when government became aware of the increasing dakwah activity in the universities, it passed the Universities and Colleges Act. Thus, the students resorted to the formation of underground usrah groups. Then, government amended the said law and passed another one, this time with stiffer penalties. To which, the students formed other groups, increased their alliances, and continued with their activities.

Thus, the success of ABIM as a religious interest group trying to influence educational policy is not the same as that of CEAP in the Philippines. Rather, its success may be understood in terms of its role as a pressure group, constantly reminding government of its commitment to Islamization and Malayization, and the need for fundamental changes in Muslim society for these objectives to be achieved.

ALIRAN. It is unfortunate that an idealistic group as ALIRAN, is not even close to success as a group and in influencing educational policies in the country. The reasons for this may be attributed to the following:

First of all, its membership is just a little over a hundred, and has not increased significantly since it was formed. This may be attributed to the fact that very few Malaysians actually believe that their goals are realistic and their means even more so. Secondly, only the intellectual and political elites actually pay attention to the group despite the nobility of its objectives, including the establishment of inter-racial, unified and peaceful Malaysia. The intellectuals could actually understand and appreciate their objectives, while the political leaders feel that their ideas may affect the attitudes of the rest of the populace towards Islamization, and could in fact pose as a threat to the

country's stability. Thirdly, with the process of Islamization increasing in intensity through the years, the hope for success is even more dim than it previously was.

Needless to say, the role of Aliran in policy-making is virtually insignificant, and the hopes for changing this dismal situation almost nil with a government committed to Islam.

**Jemaat Tabligh.** Like any ethnic group (with the exception of the Muslim groups), Jemaat Tabligh has failed to influence government in almost every possible way. Perhaps its only success, may be the fact that it continues to exist, despite the small membership, and that its members are free to practice their faith. Members are left with hardly any choice, except perhaps to continue with their current way of life, or absorb the religion and the practices of the ethnic majority.

The group has no influence on any other group, or religion. It only continues to exist because its members feel that affiliation with the group will help in the maintenance of their traditional way of life and the preservation of their culture, which they continue to be proud of.

**Darul Arqam.** Darul Arqam has failed to achieve its goal of establishing a Muslim community and preserving their traditional way of life. It has also failed to gain enough prominence in society to influence any educational policy or group of legislators, to even pay attention to what they have to say. Its members are few, and its goals are not realistic in so far as the general populace is concerned. Thus, the group has chosen to close shop and join other organizations, whose belief systems may be close to what they truly believe in.

**PERKIM.** As a religious interest group, PERKIM's biggest achievement

is its conversion of many non-Muslims to Islam (refer to chapter 4). As mentioned earlier, it was able to attain this through rural work by indoctrinating people to the faith, and helping them build their lives the minute they become Muslims. Other than this however, PERKIM has been nothing more than a tool used by government to propagate its process of Islamization and Malayization of the country. Although its been around for quite some time, it has failed to have concrete achievements in policy-making. Its influence has therefore been minimal and its significance even more so.

#### [b] Whole Life Groups

Muslims. Needless to say, the Muslims are the most significant and influential whole life interest group in the country. Their religion and ethnicity have enabled them to gain prominence in the same society, which they claimed was not fair to them to begin with, and they have been able to convince their people that living according to the ways of Islam is the only way of life for every Malaysian. They have increased quotas for the Malays/Muslims in the universities, accorded them special privileges in the schools and made Malay the medium of instruction, among others. All these are intended to alleviate their difficulties and make them on the same competitive level as the other ethnic groups.

Chinese. The Chinese, together with Indians, are the most disadvantaged group in the country in terms of the minimal influence they have in the formulation of national educational policies. Although the Chinese are known to be some of the wealthies people in Malaysia, their concerns are the least of government's priorities, and their demands even more so. A very good example would be their failure to establish the Merdeka University in the 1970's. In addition, they themselves have become disunited in terms of the way they would deal with their current difficulties. Some have opted to join the Muslims by converting to the faith, while others have fled the country, or simply

324  
remain complacent because of their belief that nothing will happen no matter what they do. These continue to make their situation even more difficult and the possibilities for change even more so. Unless government makes a dramatic change towards equity and racial harmony in the country, they will never have a significant role in policy making in education.

On the whole therefore, the religious interest groups in the country although significant in terms of the extent to which they are politically visible, continue to discuss religious, ethnic and political issues, publish their work, hold symposia, etc. play an unclear role in terms of actual policy-making. Religion, politics and education are just inseparable, and the the Islamic persuasion of government so strong, that it is difficult to tell where their influence actually begins or ends. Suffice it to say therefore, that their existence, enables the government to know and understand the different aspects of Islamization and Malayization, the different means to achieve them, and the needs of their people in general.

#### Relationship between Religion and Education:

As mentioned in the previous chapters, religion and education are closely related in both Malaysia and the Philippines. In fact, this is one of the major premises made in this paper. However, there are some differences between the two countries in terms of the manner in which this relationship is revealed and the extent to which this affects educational policies.

In the Philippines, this relationship is more implicit rather than explicit. There is no constitutional provision, or presidential decree which provides that Catholicism should in fact play a significant role in the learning process. Neither is there an official religion nor an official educational philosophy. It just so happens that majority

of the people are Catholic, that is why their policies tend to lean in favor of the members <sup>325</sup> of the faith. However, other religious groups are given just as much freedom to pursue their own efforts in education, as they are given the option to open their own schools, churches and teach their own beliefs.

In the Malaysian case, the relationship is more explicit, as the constitution provides that the official religion is Islam and the national language is Malay. Two conditions which make cohesion difficult in a country as ethnically diverse as Malaysia.

As a supplement to what has been mentioned above, religion and race (with the exception of those in the Muslim south) in the Philippines are not in any way related. They are considered two separate entities, since all Filipinos belong to only one race, the Malay. This ethnic homogeneity which exists in the country makes the law-making process easier than in Malaysia.

In the case of Malaysia, it is inevitable that religion and ethnicity overlap, since the various ethnic backgrounds of the populace, come with different religious affiliations. The Chinese profess different religions, ranging from Catholicism to Buddhism to Taoism, while the Indians are Hindu, Buddhists, etc. This makes the entire law-making process more difficult, and the establishment of a common ground for unity even more tedious.

Third, religious interest groups in the Philippines are allowed to intervene in actual policy-making in education and their input carefully considered in the process. Although this role was denied them during the Marcos years, this function has re-surfaced under the new government. They may discuss issues, write papers, conduct seminars, participate in congressional committee meetings, without fear of punishment. Once a bill is passed or a law implemented, they may also raise their views about the said provisions.

In the case of Malaysia, the role of religious interest groups is not very clear. They may conduct various types of activities, but with many restrictions. Only

Muslim groups can discuss religious issues, while others cannot; dakwah activities should be carefully supervised by government or the school in which it may be taking place; Muslim groups are given priority over other groups, etc. They therefore act as pressure groups, constantly reminding government of the need for Islamization and Malayness and presenting many options on how to go about achieving their goals.

Thus, though religion and education in the two countries are closely related, their interaction may vary and their effect on the role of religious interest groups even more so.

#### Necessity of Studying Religious Interest Groups:

There is a need therefore, for researchers and academicians to study religious interest groups in countries such as Malaysia and the Philippines because of the (a) religious interest groups play very active roles in the political system; (b) religion continues to play a significant role in the lives of most of the people in the region; (c) their study will lead to a better understanding of the entire political process in the developing countries; (d) it is about time to understand the countries in the third world based on their own culture, socio-political systems and patterns of interaction, rather than impose western modes of behavior and analysis on them.

This study is meant to initiate further research on the religious interest groups in Southeast Asia with hopes of encouraging other academicians and researchers to work towards a better understanding of the political process and the region as a whole.

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