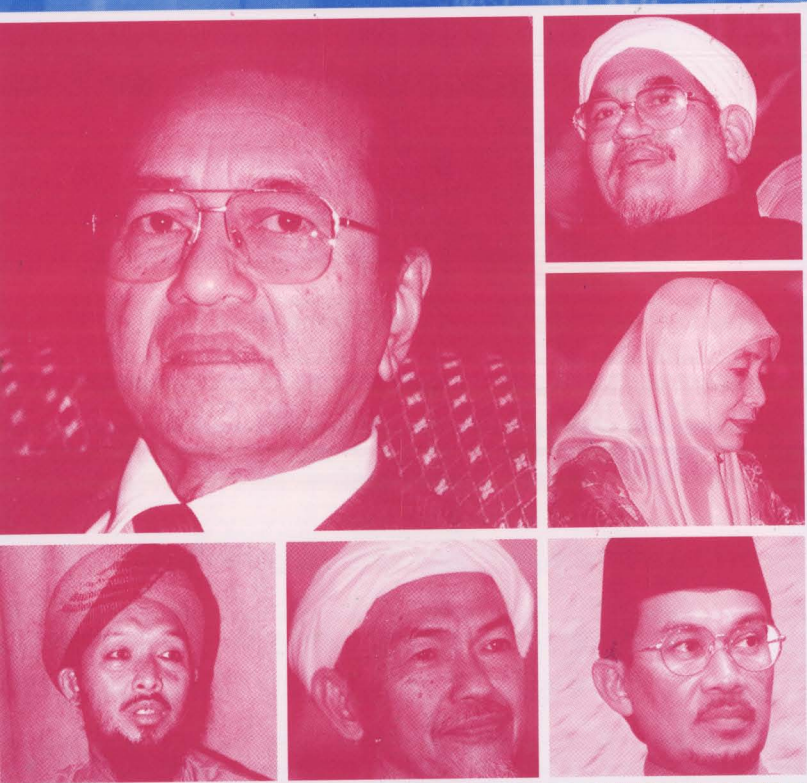


The Politics of Islam in Contemporary Malaysia



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Preface

This book is an extension project of my academic sojourn in Lancaster, United Kingdom for almost three and a half years. My interest in political Islam was focused on the Middle Eastern region and it further flourished when I worked on my Master's dissertation on the concept of *jihad*. Initially, I planned to make a comparative study between the dynamism of political Islam in Southeast Asia and the Middle Eastern region but later found out that I should investigate more deeply Malaysia's political Islam. There were several areas that needed further studies. The continuous debate on the ideal Islamic polity between conflicting parties i.e. Umno and Pas enticed me to research this topic. Furthermore, although many scholarly articles and books have been published on this area, there is yet a book or article that tries to link the notion of political Islam and security predicaments as important variables in Malaysia. This book then is a modest attempt to fill that gap.

Some parts of this book (especially chapter 7 and 8) are reproduced here, with the kind permission of the publisher, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, www.iseas.edu.sg/pub.html. It was earlier published in the journal of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Volume 21, number 2 (August 1999) under the title "National Security and Malay Unity: The Issue of Radical Religious Elements in Malaysia."

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