



**CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS IN  
SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES: MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION  
FRONT (MLIF)**

**BY  
ABDUL M. LANTONG**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
ISLAMIC REVEALED KNOWLEDGE AND HERITAGE  
(USUL AL DIN AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION)**

**KULLIYAH OF ISLAMIC REVEALED KNOWLEDGE  
AND HUMAN SCIENCES  
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA**

**JANUARY 2000**

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

This study examines the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the contemporary Islamic movement in South Philippines. It analyzes the movement's historical background, origin, ideology, objectives, means to achieve its objectives, programs and activities, its influences to the Moro people, and characteristics. The study used exploratory and critical analysis. And, the major sources of data are Salamat Hashim's published works in English, press conferences, sermon (*khutbah*), speeches and lectures in *Maguindanaon* language which are recorded in audio tapes as well as the movement's monthly publications. Furthermore, secondary sources like books, journals, news papers, magazines and internet articles which are related to the MILF are also consulted.

The MILF is currently leading the Moro *jihad* against the Philippine government. Its major aim is to make the word of Allāh Supreme. Since 1970s, the MILF has been working for the independence of Mindanao, revival of Islam and establishment of an Islamic state. It emerged as the continuation of the centuries-old Moro resistance against foreign domination and colonialism to maintain their religious belief, freedom and independence. It was originated by the young Moro students abroad led by Salamat Hashim, now an *'ālim*, who firmly adheres to an Islamic ideology based on the concept of *tawhīd*.

Using *da'wah* and *jihad* as means to achieve its goals, the MILF has been able to change the outlooks of many of the Moros into Islamic line. It has revived the spirit of *jihad* among the Moro youths, and Islamic order and government become the common aspirations of many of the Moro people. The MILF as an Islamic movement can be characterized as an advocate of Islamization, having strong organization, military power, and self-reliance to reach the aim of Islamic revival. Using the Qur'ānic guidelines and the Prophetic experiences in dealing with his enemies, the MILF tends to be a pragmatic movement in dealing with the challenges posed by the Philippine government. Its policy is to fight the enemies if they fight and to incline with peace if they want peace until the goal is finally achieved.

## ملخص البحث

تقوم هذه الدراسة بتحليل الجبهة الإسلامية لتحرير مورو بجنوب الفلبين لكونها حركة "إسلامية" وتدقق الدراسة في خلفية الجبهة، ومصدرها، وأغراضها، ووسائلها، وميزاتها، وخططها، وآثارها على شعب مورو.

والمنهج المتبع في هذا البحث هو المنهج الاستطلاعي والنقدي. ومعظم بيانات البحث هي ما سجل بآلات التسجيل السماعي من المحاضرات، والخطب، والمواظع والعامه، والتي ألقاها قائد الحركة سلامات هاشم بلغه ماجنداناو، وكذلك المؤتمرات الصحفية "والمقالات الشخصية" بالإضافة إلى ما نشرتها الصحف الإنجليزية من أعماله.

تشير الدراسة إلى أن الجبهة تقود عملية جهادية، ضد الحكومة الفلبينية على حساب الشعب لإعلاء كلمة الله. ومنذ السبعينات كانت الجبهة تناضل من أجل تحرير مورو وإعادة الإسلام وإقامة دولة إسلامية. وقد عاهدت الجبهة على مواصلة المقاومة التي التزم بها الشعب عبر القرون ضد الاستعمار، وضد سيطرة الأجنبي عليهم. وذلك من أجل الحرية والاستقلال.

تأسست الجبهة من جانب مجموعة الطلبة (مورو) الدارسين في البلاد العربية آنذاك، بقيادة سلامات هاشم، وهو عالم متمسك بعقيدة الإسلام الميينة. وباستخدام الدعوة والجهاد وسيلة للوصول إلى الهدف، استطاعت الجبهة تغيير مواقف معظم الشعب العودة إلى الإسلام، وإعادة روح الجهاد، وأصبح النظام الإسلامي مقبولاً لدى كثير من الشعب. وتتميز الجبهة بجانب التزامها بالإسلام بقوة تنظيمها وبناءها العسكري، والاكتفاء الذاتي، واستعمالها الهدي القرآني والتجارب النبوية في معاملة أعداء الإسلام. وبهذا أصبحت الجبهة حركة واقعية تلتزم القاعدة : حارب العدو إذا حاربك، ﴿وإن جنحوا للسلم فاجنح لها﴾ إلى أن تحققت الغاية المنشودة.

## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uşul al-Dīn and Comparative religion)

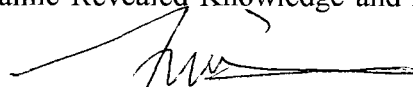


Wan Mohd. Azam b. Mohd. Amin

Supervisor

Date: 20.1.2000

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uşul al-Dīn and Comparative religion)




Fatimah Abdullah

Examiner

Date: 20.1.2000

This thesis was submitted to the Department Uşul al-Dīn Comparative Religion, and is accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uşul al-Dīn and Comparative Religion)



Wan Sabri Wan Yusof

Head, Department of Uşul al-Dīn & Comparative Religion

Date: 20/1/2000

This thesis was submitted to the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences and is accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Uşul al-Dīn and Comparative Religion)



Mohamad Aris Hj. Othman

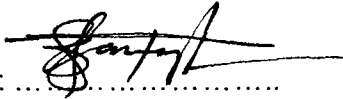
Dean, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge  
and Human Sciences

Date: 24/1/2000

## DECLARATION PAGE

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references and a bibliography is appended.

Name: Abdul M. Lantong

Signature: .....

Date: *20 Jan 2000*.....

# INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

## DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH

Copyright © 2000 by Abdul M. Lantong. All rights reserved.

Contemporary Islamic Movements in Southern Philippines: Moro Islamic Liberation  
Front (MILF).

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means (mechanical, electronic or other), including photocopying or recording, without permission in writing from the researcher except as provided below.

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may only be used by others in their writings with due acknowledgment.
2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make copies (print or electronic) for institutional or academic purposes but not for general sale.
3. The IIUM Library will have the right to make and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other university or research libraries.
4. The researcher will provide his/her latest address to the IIUM Library as and when the address is changed.
5. The researcher will be contacted for permission to copy this unpublished research for individuals at his/her postal /e-mail address available at the Library. If the researcher does not respond within 10 weeks of the date of the letter, the IIUM Library will use its discretion to supply a copy to the requester.

Affirmed by Abdul M. Lantong.



.....  
Signature

..... 20 Jan 2000 .....

Date

## This work is dedicated to

My beloved parents who sacrificed to give me a chance to earn education for the sake of Allāh.

Those Bangsamoros, striving in the way of Allāh with their possessions, properties and lives.

Those Moro youths who are struggling in the way of Allāh, for Moro freedom and their homeland.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully thank Allāh for giving me a chance to complete this work. My thanks are also due to the International Islamic University Malaysia for providing me financial assistance during my study. Without it, this research can not be conceived. I am grateful for the supervision and advise of my two supervisors, Dr. Wan Mohd. Azam b. Mohd. Amin and Dr. Pute Rahimah Makol-Abdul, whose detailed suggestions and guidance enhanced the quality of the research.

I also gratefully acknowledge the hospitality of the staff of the office of the Chairman of the MILF, Shaykh Salamat Hashim, during my two-week stay in Camp Abū Bakr for my research, and for providing me the audio tape copies of Salamat's lectures, *khutbah* and public addresses. Similarly, I thank Professor Abhoud Syed Mansur Linga for his suggestion in writing this research, Mohagher Iqbal and Jun Mantawil for providing me the copies of *Maradika* and *Homeland*, respectively, which made valuable contributions for the enhancement of the quality of this output.

And I thank my friends who helped me in various ways while I am writing this research. Special mentions are for Miss Ramla for her valuable contribution in collecting some of the material sources of the research, brother Azhar from Aceh of Indonesia, brother Shamsuddin of South Africa, brother Fawaz of Malaysia and brother Kabuyi of Uganda for editing this thesis, sister Dr. Siti Mariam Malinumbay Salasal and all the Moro students in the IIUM who helped me in one way or another while I am doing my course works and this research. To all the people who helped me in doing this research, may Allah reward them good, in this world and in the day hereafter.



## TABLE OF CONTENT

	Page:
Quote Page.....	ii
Abstract: English.....	iii
Abstract: Arabic.....	iv
Approval Page.....	v
Declaration .....	vi
Dedication.....	viii
Acknowledgement.....	ix
Note of Transliteration.....	xii
List of Abbreviations.....	xiii

### CHAPTER ONE :INTRODUCTION

Background.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	9
Objectives of the Study.....	10
Methodology.....	10
Scope and Limitation.....	11
Literature Review.....	12

### CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IN SOUTH PHILIPPINES

The Moroland and the Moros.....	19
The Islamization of the Moroland.....	21
Struggle Against Foreign Colonialism.....	23
Spanish Colonial Period.....	23
American Colonial Regime.....	25
Philippine Neo-Colonial Regime.....	30
Post World War II Islamic Resurgence.....	31
Deepening Sense of Deprivation.....	35
The Jabidah Massacre .....	36
The Ilaga Movement .....	37
1972 Declaration of Martial Law.....	39
Conclusion.....	40

### **CHAPTER THREE: MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT: THE CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IN SOUTH PHILIPPINES**

Origin and Development of the MILF.....	42
Founder: Biographical Sketch of Salamat Hashim.....	47
Ideology of the MILF.....	51
Objectives of the MILF.....	53
Means to Achieve the Objectives.....	58
Conclusion.....	63

### **CHAPTER FOUR: MILF: CHALLENGES, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

Problems and Challenges.....	65
Islamization.....	70
Strengthening of the Organization.....	75
Military Build-up.....	81
Self-reliance.....	87
Conclusion.....	90

### **CHAPTER FIVE: GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT AND THE MOVEMENT'S POLICY**

Socio-Political and Economic Development Program.....	92
The Military Response.....	95
Peace Negotiation.....	103
MILF Policy Towards the GRP.....	117
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>128</b>

## Note of Transliteration

All Arabic words and names, in this study, are transliterated according to the following rules of transliteration:

ا A	ر R	ق Q
ب B	ز Z	ك K
ت T	س S	ل L
ث TH	ص S	م M
ج J	ض D	ن N
ح H	ط T	ه H
خ KH	ظ Z	و W
د D	ع 'E	ي Y
ذ DH	ف F	

### SHORT VOWELS

a	َ
i	ِ
u	ُ

### LONG VOWELS

ا	a	asad	أسد
آ	ā	āmana	أمن
إِ	ī	īman	إيمان
أُ	ū	sūrah	سورة

### DIPHTHONGS

اَو	aw	nawm	نوم
أَي	ay	shaykh	شيخ

### DOUBLED

أُو	ūw	'adūw	عدو
أَي	īy	'amaliyah	عملية

Note: All translation of verses from the Holy Qur'ān that quoted in this research are taken from 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'ān: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Maryland: Amana Corporation, 1992)

## **List of Abbreviations**

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
AOI	Agreement of Intent
BIAF	Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces
BMLO	Bangsamoro Liberation Organization
CNI	Commission on National Integration
CCCH	Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
ICFM	Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers
ICMC	Interim Cease-fire Monitoring Committee
IFFC	Independent Fact Finding Committee
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
KSRC	Kutawato State Revolutionary Command
MAPEA	Maguindanaon Professional and Employees Association
MDA	Mindanao Development Authority
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MIM	Mindanao Independence Movement
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MSU	Mindanao State University
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
PLL	Professional Lawyers League of the Philippines
PSU	Philippine Student Union
QRT	Quick Response Team
SAW	Ṣallā Allāh ‘Alayh wasallam
SCCH	Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities
SPCPD	Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development
SPDA	Southern Philippines Development Authority

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

For many centuries, the Muslim *ummah* through the *khilāfah Islāmīyah*, was ruling a vast portion of the then known world according to the law revealed by Allāh. However, due to the recent emergence of colonial powers in Europe that occupied the Muslim lands, the domain of the *khilāfah Islāmīyah* was divided into different nation states and the Islamic law in the Muslim society was abolished. As a response, the Islamic movements<sup>1</sup> that call for the return to Islam or Islamic revival and establishment of an Islamic state emerged. These movements had influenced almost all of the present Islamic movements in the world, although the methods and approaches adopted in dealing with the challenges they confronted, differed.

In order to have a clear idea about Islamic movement, the researcher deems it necessary to define and identify its meaning, the roots of its necessity in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, its objectives, and the techniques adopted in order to attain its goals.

Islamic movement is defined by Khurram Murad as:" an organized struggle to change the existing society into an Islamic society based on the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* and make Islam, which is a code for entire life, supreme and dominant, especially in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Ikhwān al-Muslimūn, founded by Ḥassan al-Bannā in Egypt in 1928, and Jamā'at Islāmi, founded by Mawdudi in India in 1941. See Ali Rehnema (Edit.) *Pioneers of Islamic Revival* (Kuala Lumpur: S. Abdul Majeed & Co., 1995).

socio-political spheres."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Dr. Yūsuf al-Qarḏāwī defines it as: "an organized, collective work, undertaken by the people, to restore Islam to the leadership of society, and to the helm of life... all walks of life."<sup>3</sup>

By way of analysis, Islamic movement also connotes the meaning of Islamic revolution and *jihād*. For example, Islamic revolution is defined by some of the contemporary Muslim scholars<sup>4</sup> as the movement of the Muslim *ummah* to overthrow the existing un-Islamic system in order to replace it with a comprehensive and complete Islamic system, and to endeavour to implement Islamic rules, laws and policies in all aspects of its affairs. Likewise, *jihād* is an exertion of one's utmost effort, through spending of wealth, body, person, and even one's life to make the word of Allāh Supreme.

The proponents of Islamic movement, Islamic revolution or *jihād*, including armed struggle, justify the obligatoriness of these efforts by quoting verses from the holy Qur'ān, *Sunnah* of the Prophet (S.A.W), some aspects of the history of the life of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and also some rational arguments. In this discussion, it will suffice for us to mention some of the justifications from the Holy Qur'an.

---

<sup>2</sup> Khurram Murad, *Islamic Movement in the West: Reflections and Some Issues* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1981), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Yūsuf al-Qarḏāwī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*. Trans. Publishing and Translation Dept. Dār Al-Nasr (Cairo: Dār Al Nasr for Egyptian Universities, 1992), 9.

<sup>4</sup> These scholars were Shaykh Asad al-Tamimi, former imam of al-Aqsa Mosque; Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini, member of the Assembly of Experts, Iran; Ayatullah Taheri Khurrambadi, Iran; Dr. Muhammad Abdullaoui, Algeria; Dr. Abdur Rahman Doi, India; Dr. Siddi Muhammad Mohibou, Niger; Dr. Ammar Talibi, Algeria; and Shaykh Nader al-Tamimi, Palestine. See the copy of their signed document on the Root of Islamic Revolution in the Qur'an and Sunna, In. Dr. Kalim Siddiqui. Edit. *Issues in Islamic Movement (1984-85)* (London: Open Press, 1986), 201- 205.

The most commonly quoted Qur'ānic verses in support of their arguments are: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power including steeds of war;"<sup>5</sup> "The women and men guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes;"<sup>6</sup> "And the thief, male and female, cut off his or her hands;"<sup>7</sup> "Believers, take not for friend unbelievers rather than believers."<sup>8</sup>

Commenting on the above-mentioned verses, some contemporary Muslim scholars say that it is clear that obedience to social and political injunctions such as the ones laid down in the above verses, is not possible without first establishing an Islamic state- a state that rules according to the will of Allāh and applies the principles of the Qur'ān and Islam to all the affairs of the Muslim *ummah*. These Qur'ānic injunctions therefore, mean that this great responsibility lies on the shoulders of all Muslims. They must endeavour by way of *jihād* and popular mobilization to re-establish the Islamic government.<sup>9</sup>

They further quote the Qur'ānic verse: "Believers, obey Allāh, obey the Prophet, and those charged with authority among you."<sup>10</sup> According to them obedience to Allāh means submission to all that He has revealed. Obedience to the Prophet (S.A.W.) means acceptance of his *Sunnah* and the political and economic injunctions that are needed for the survival and continuation of the Islamic state. The *sharī'ah* brought by the Prophet is valid in any place and in everytime. Whatever he [the Prophet]

---

<sup>5</sup> al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8:60

<sup>6</sup> al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nūr, 24:2

<sup>7</sup> al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Māidah, 5:38

<sup>8</sup> al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:144.

<sup>9</sup> Kalim Siddiqi. Edit. *Issues in Islamic Movement* (1984-1985), 201.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Qur'an, Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:59.

prohibited or permitted are so for all time. So, the Muslims are obliged to endeavour and wage *jihād* to keep that system alive.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, In Islam, the right to legislate is for Allāh alone as He says: "The rule is for Allāh alone." Hence, as vicegerents of Allāh in this earth, the true followers of the Prophet (S.A.W.) or Muslims are obliged to exert their efforts and wage *jihād* to establish an Islamic state and government to apply or implement all the laws of the Qur'ān.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed the Qur'ānic teachings, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and history of the early generation of this *ummah*, substantiate the necessity of launching of an Islamic movement whose goals and methodology should be clear and well defined according to the criterion of the pure teachings, principles and concepts of Islam.

Sayyid Quṭb, one of the pioneering ideologues of the contemporary Islamic movement, explained the objectives of Islamic movement in a clearest way. He stated that the aim of Islam is to bring human beings into submission to God, to set them free from servitude to other human being so that they may devote themselves to the One True God, to deliver them from the clutches of human lordship and man-made laws, values, systems and traditions so that they will acknowledge the sovereignty and authority of the One True God and follow His law in all spheres.<sup>13</sup>

Mawdūdī, a noted Muslim scholar and thinker also expressed similar ideas. According to him, Islam desires, above all, that people should commit themselves entirely to

---

<sup>11</sup> Kalim Siddiqui, Edit. *Issues in Islamic Movement(1984-1985)*, 203.

<sup>12</sup> See the Document on Roots of the Islamic Revolution...in *Ibid.*, 201-206.

<sup>13</sup> See Sayyid Quṭb, *Ma'ālim fi al-Tarīq*. Trans. Mohammad Siddiqui, *Milestones* (Kwait: IIFSO, 1989), 80-81.



God's truth and that they should serve and worship only God. It also desires that the law of God should become the law by which people lead their lives. It demands too, that injustice be eradicated, that those evils be wiped out which incur God's anger and that those virtues and social values be fostered which are liked by Allāh.<sup>14</sup>

In order to achieve these goals, the proponents of Islamic movement advocate the emulation of the techniques used by the Prophet (S.A.W.) when he first established an Islamic state in Madīnah. Thus, Islamic movement calls the people towards the recognition of the sovereignty of Allāh and denial of all forms of false gods and idols. It works to produce individual Muslims who will form into a community adhering to the ideas of the movement, be well acquainted with all the meanings and implications of *kalimah al-tawhīd* (declaration of the Oneness of God), be ready to implement them into practical life and be prepared to sacrifice for that purpose; and to produce leaders or vanguards of the movement who, by their examples, the principles of their movement and everything that it stood for, will be fully demonstrated.<sup>15</sup>

History, past and present, however, testifies that the objectives of Islamic movement could not be agreed nor be tolerated by forces of *Jāhilīyah* (literally means ignorance).<sup>16</sup> Hence, *jāhilīyah* is the main obstacle to the realization of the goals of the Islamic movement. This *Jāhilīyah* according to Sayyid Quṭb, “ is not an abstract theory; it always takes the form of a living movement in a society and there is a close cooperation and loyalty between its individuals, and it is always ready and alive to

---

<sup>14</sup> Mawdudi, *The Islamic Movement: Dynamics of Values, Power and Change*. Khurram Murad (edit.) (Leicester, U.K.: The Islamic Foundation, 1984), 79.

<sup>15</sup> See Mawdudi, *The Process of Islamic Revolution*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. (Lahore: Markazi Maktaba Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, 1955), 37-71.

<sup>16</sup> Ignorance as a concept, is a state of ignorance of the guidance from God; see Sayyid Quṭb, *Milestones*, 30.

defend its existence consciously or unconsciously, it crushes all elements which seem to be dangerous to its personality.”<sup>17</sup>

It is based on the above nature of *jāhilīyah* that Sayyid Quṭb had developed his pragmatic means in confronting the forces of *jāhilīyah*, so as to achieve the noble objectives of Islam. He proposed for an active participation of Muslims in the society to counter the *jāhilīyah*. This participation should be an organised movement and a viable group, with a determination that its strategy, its social organization, and the relationship between its individuals should be firmer and more powerful than the existing *jāhilī* system.<sup>18</sup>

He further suggested that, since this movement comes to conflict with the *jāhilīyah* system of life and a political and material authority behind it, the Islamic movement had to produce parallel resources to confront this *jāhilīyah*. This movement uses the methods of preaching and persuasion for reforming ideas and beliefs; and it uses physical power and *jihād* for abolishing the organizations and authorities of the *jāhilī* system which prevent people from reforming their ideas and beliefs, but force them to obey their aberrant ways and makes them serve human lords instead of the Almighty Lord.<sup>19</sup>

Mawdūdī also held similar views: he advocated for the grabbing of power and authority in the society from the hands of the rebellious leadership against the will of Allāh and put them into the hands of the God-conscious and righteous men who are

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-99.

committed to following the divine guidance.<sup>20</sup> But, to grab the power and authority in the society, it is not enough to preach sermons, exhort people to obey and worship God or to invite them to adopt a high moral standards, rather it is necessary for morally-just people to search out and strive to achieve enough collective power to wrest control of society from the morally corrupt.<sup>21</sup>

The aforementioned methods and means to achieve the ultimate goal of Islamic movement made clear to us that approaches of the Islamic movement to confront its opponent are very pragmatic and dynamic. Among its pragmatism is it treated the people or the existing problem as they actually are and solve them according to what is necessary. Its dynamism is while it calls the people to embrace its ideals, but without compulsion, if the forces of *jahiliyah* block its way, the Islamic movement uses power to eradicate or neutralize the *jahiliyah* so that it does not hamper or blockade people to know and possibly embrace Islam or make peace with it.

Thus Islamic movement needs power: it must possess power in order to survive from the onslaught of *jāhiliyah*. This power, according to Sayyid Qutb must be at all levels, namely: the power of belief and concept, the power of training and moral character, the power to organise and sustain a community, and physical power as is necessary, if not to dominate, but at least to hold itself against the onslaught of the *jāhili* society.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, no Islamic movement can succeed without possessing these powers as evidenced by the present situation of the Islamic movements all over the world.

---

<sup>20</sup> Mawdūdī, *The Islamic Movement: Dynamics of Values*, 71.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>22</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, 147.

The aforementioned are, in brief, the meaning of Islamic movement, its objectives, means to achieve such objectives with its root and foundation in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (S.A.W.) based on the ideas of the contemporary world's two most influential leaders and thinkers of Islamic movement, Sayyid Quṭb and Abul A'la Mawdūdī of *Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* and *Jamā'at Islāmī*, respectively. Both of them had influenced, directly or indirectly, almost all the Islamic movements in the world today which call for the revival of Islam and establishment of an Islamic state.

In the Philippines, such influences can not be overlooked due to its apparent manifestations in one of the Moro movements, like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). These ideologies are warmly welcomed and embraced by the Moros because they had and continue to resist foreign domination for centuries in order to preserve their belief in the sovereignty of Allāh and the social, economic and political foundations of their society. This started from the Spanish colonial period (1521) to the American occupation of Mindanao and Sulu and forcible integration into the independent Philippines Republic in 1946.

After the independence of the Philippines in 1946, the Moros were structurally integrated into the Philippine Republic. They resented this, and their opposition led to a brutal government clampdown, leaving the Moro with no other option except to fight back. In 1960's and the early 1970's, the Philippine government intensified its efforts to integrate the Moros to the Philippine body politic through various means. However, failure to do so resulted in systematic land grabbing, and forcing the Moro people out of their inherited lands by resorting to massive massacres and genocide campaigns.

In response to the oppression and exploitation perpetuated by the Philippine neo-colonial government against the Moros, the liberation movements, like the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM), Bangsa Moro Liberation Organization (BMLO), Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), to mention, were organized.

In the beginning, these movements had similar objectives: to fight against the government to regain the lost freedom and right to self-determination of the Moro people. However, they differed on ideological and strategical issues to achieve their goals. In this study, the researcher selected the MILF to be the subject of his study because of the movement's emphasis on the revival of Islam and the establishment of an independent Islamic state in the Bangsamoro homeland, which are similar to the goals of the Islamic movements elsewhere in the world. Moreover, it attracted large numbers of followers and supporters, and it never succumbed to the government pressures, in contrast to the others.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front is significant not only as a religious but also as a political force in searching for a solution to the Moro problem. Since its emergence, the MILF has used the Islamic language and ideology-*kalimah al-tawhīd*-to mobilize and persuade the Moro people to claim their rights as a people. This has penetrated deeply into their minds, and hence the movement has become an effective instrument for the Muslim populace to assert their identity and freedom in a pluralistic society such as the Philippine society.

Since MILF continues to be a significant force to be reckoned with in the Philippines, there is a need to understand the characteristics and influences of this Islamic movement on the Moro people. This effort requires an examination of the MILF's origin, ideologies, objectives, and strategies as well as its programs and activities to overcome the challenges it faces. It is also equally important to determine the government's responses to the MILF, and the movement's attitudes towards them.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is to examine the characteristics and influences of the MILF, as an Islamic movement, on the Moros by exploring and critically analyzing its background, origin and development, ideology, objectives, means to achieve its goals, programs and activities to overcome its challenges, as well as its attitudes towards the Philippine government.

By doing so, the researcher hopes that the outcome of this study would serve as a humble contribution to the understanding of the conduct of Islamic movement for the revival of Islam.

### **Methodology**

The method of study used in this research are exploratory and critical analysis of written materials, speeches and other documents. By using these methods, the researcher hopes to be able to analyze the characteristics and conduct of Islamic movement based on the experience of the MILF.

The major sources of data and information on this research will be Salamat Hahim's published works in English, informal and unstructured interviews, press conferences, *khutbah*, speeches and lectures, which were made available to the researcher by Salamat Hashim's staff. These *khutbah*, speeches and lectures in *Basa Maguindanaon* (vernacular language of Maguindanao tribe) were recorded on audio tapes. In addition, the researcher also relies on the movement's monthly and quarterly publications as references.

To clarify some points and validate the researcher's analysis, an informal and unstructured interview with Al-Hajj Murad Ibrahim, the MILF vice chairman for military affairs and Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces chief, as well as some of the MILF officers was made.

### **Scope and Limitation**

This study is an exploratory study which seeks to make a critical analysis of the origin and development of the MILF, the movement's ideology, objectives, as well as its means to achieve the goals, and programs and activities to overcome its challenges. The study also examines and analyzes the Philippine government's programs or responses to the Moros and the MILF, and the MILF's policies towards them.

Due to time constraint, the researcher did not use questionnaires or formal interviews in data gathering. Only Salamat's works in English, *khutbah*, speeches, interviews, lectures in *Basa Maguindanaon*, and the movement's publications and other related materials were analyzed.

## Literature Review

Many works have been written on the Islamic movement in South Philippines. However, most of the researchers emphasized and gave more attention to the Moro armed struggle against the Philippine government, which is only a part of the comprehensive and all embracing practices of Islamic movement in South Philippines.

*The Contemporary Muslim Movement in the Philippines*,<sup>23</sup> written by Cesar Adib Majul is among the studies. Based on descriptive analysis, he discusses, among other things, some of the historical factors believed to have contributed to the evolution of the Muslim movements in the Philippines. Aside from the Muslim's (Moro) strong attachment to Islam, he claims that the discrimination against the Muslims by the Christian majority and the state ignited the fire of Islamic movement and armed struggle against the status quo.

Since the work was written in 1980s, its major discussion was focused on the Moro National Liberation Front's participation in the Muslim movement. However, this group is now no longer considered by many Moros as a revolutionary organization which works for the revival of Islam in the South Philippines, after joining the government in 1996. Though it needs updating on the latest development in the Muslim movement, the book is helpful, to some extent, in understanding the historical background of the present Islamic movement in the Moroland.

---

<sup>23</sup> Cesar Adib Majul, *The Contemporary Muslim Movements in the Philippines*, (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1985).