View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk

brought to you by CORE

provided by ScholarBank@NUS

Religious schools: for spirit, (f)or nation

Lily Kong
Professor, Dept of Geography
National University of Singapore
1 Arts Link
Singapore 117570
Email: lilykong@nus.edu.sg

Environment and Planning D: Society and Space
First submission: 10 October 2002
Second submission: 20 May 2003
Third submission: 31 December 2003

Post-print version

Published as:

Kong, L., (2005) "Religious schools: For spirit, (f)or nation". *Environment and Planning D-Society & Space*, 23, no. 4: 615-631.

http://www.envplan.com/abstract.cgi?id=d394

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I draw attention to the study of "unofficially sacred" sites in geographies of religion which provide significant insights into the construction of religious identity and community, and the intersections of sacred and secular. I show that such sites deserve as much attention as places of worship (the more conventional focus in the geographical study of religion) in our understanding of the place of religion in contemporary urban society. In particular, using the case of Islamic religious schools in Singapore, I examine how Muslim identities and community are negotiated within multicultural and multireligious contexts, and particularly one in which there is a highly "educative" state (Gramsci, 1971) that seeks to guide nation formation and the manufacture of consensus, and which strives to achieve a secular, modernist vision of society, characterized by economic progress and development. The specific analysis focuses, first, on the role of the state in the social construction of "schools", particularly the ways in which state-constructed definitions of multiculturalism, multiracialism, multireligiosity and modernity shape Singapore schools and education. Second, I examine the ways in which religious schools (madrasahs) are a means by which some Singapore Muslims maintain and enhance their religious life. Further, I analyse state-religion relations, state strategies at nation-building, strategies of identity and community construction among Muslims in Singapore, as well as the fractured nature of Muslim community by studying the divergent meanings invested in schools by state and religious groups.

Religious schools: for spirit, (f)or nation

INTRODUCTION

In a recent review and critique of geographical engagement with religious issues, Kong (2001) highlighted several significant ways to move analyses forward, focusing on various differentiations, such as different religious sites beyond the "officially sacred" (defined as churches, temples, mosques and other "officially" recognized places of worship), different localities, different sensuous geographies, different scales of analyses, and different population constituents. Simultaneously, Kong drew attention to the need to focus on various dialectics: of the social-spatial, public-private, and sacred-secular. In this paper, my take-off point is a recognition that "unofficially sacred" sites, in particular, religious schools, provide significant insights into the construction of religious identity and community, and the intersections of sacred and secular, and deserve as much attention as places of worship.

Religious schools, as a category of the "unofficially sacred", offer a way into studying the nature of the relationships among different religious groups in plural societies. They also provide a window to understanding how religious and secular cultures coexist – peaceably or otherwise - within societies. Tensions arising from the different meanings that may be invested in schools by, and within, different religious groups and by a secular state, deserve research attention, but have hitherto escaped systematic geographical analysis (see, however, Dwyer and Meyer, 1995; 1996).

By focusing on Islamic religious schools, my larger aim in this paper is to examine how Muslim identities and community are negotiated within multicultural and multireligious contexts. Specifically, I explore such identity and community negotiation within a context in which there is a highly "educative" state (Gramsci, 1971) that seeks to guide nation formation and the manufacture of consensus, and which strives to achieve a secular, modernist vision of society, characterized by economic progress and development. Using the case of Singapore, I examine the role of the state in the social

construction of "schools", particularly, how schools are positioned in state-constructed definitions of multiculturalism, multiracialism, multireligiosity and modernity. I then examine how some Singapore Muslims value religious education, and see their religious schools (madrasahs) as a way to maintain and enhance a specific form of religious life. The divergent meanings invested in schools by state and religious groups respectively offer an opportunity to understand the state-religion relations in Singapore, state strategies at nation- and consensus-building, and, despite various strategies at identity consolidation and community construction, the fractured nature of Muslim community.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

My empirical discussion is situated within several sets of theoretical ideas. Of relevance is the idea of the "educative" state, which seeks to educate the consent of its citizenry in the establishment and maintenance of a particular version of "civilization" or "nation". While the state seeks to construct a "national community", there are also multiple sectarian communities within national polities, for which one axis of differentiation is religion. In understanding religious groups, I engage with the literature on the nature of community and identity, and particularly with the idea that community is fractured rather than monolithic (Eade, 1991; Baumann, 1996). Further, I seek to situate an understanding of the nature of identity and community in terms of the interlocking nature of scalar analysis – where identity and community are constructed in inter-related ways at the global, regional and local level, as well as at the geography closest in – the body. I will elaborate briefly on each of these ideas in this section.

The educative state

First, I draw attention to Gramsci's (1971) notion of the state as "educator" in the construction of a new "civilization". In its quest for a new "civilization" and the maintenance of "a type of civilization and of citizen (hence of collective life and of individual relations)" (Gramsci, 1971:246), the Singapore state takes its educative role very seriously and through that, seeks to exercise hegemony. To achieve its goals, the

state needs to “eliminate certain customs and attitudes and to disseminate others” (Gramsci, 1971:246). It therefore seeks to effect its role as “educator” by “operat[ing] according to a plan, urg[ing], incit[ing], solicit[ing] and ‘punish[ing]’” (Gramsci, 1971:247). The educative function of the state is a very heightened one in Singapore, and takes a variety of forms: through public campaigns, relying on the various forms of mass media to effect them; through the shaping of public schools; and the attempts to influence private schools. These are, in Gramsci’s (1971:258) terms “positive” ways of effecting its educative function. They are positive because the state is in effect adopting strategies of consent which naturalize ways of thought and conduct: “The State does have and request consent, but it also ‘educates’ this consent, by means of the political and syndical associations” (Gramsci, 1971:259). If the state manages to reshape through persuasion the nature of educational institutions, places of worship and professional associations, for example, it will have “educated their consent”. There are, however, “negative” repressive ways of fulfilling an educative role. These are strategies of coercion in which failure to comply results in clearly delineated punitive sanctions. The courts that enforce legislation are a clear example of this. My focus in this paper is particularly on the “positive” attempt through schools to shape the ideological values of Singapore society.

Communities and identities

Counter-hegemonic responses to these state educative projects, always evident, may take the form of “wars of movement” (direct confrontation such as labour strikes and guerrilla warfare) or “wars of position” (indirect confrontation such as boycotts and the adoption of alternative lifestyles). But counter-hegemonic responses are neither monolithic nor unfragmented. The subordinate have membership in different social groups with fragmented identities as a consequence. On some issues, they may be progressive, while on others, reactionary. The possibilities for state anticipation and for interjecting and exploiting fragmentations are real. Such possibilities illustrate how communities do not exist in "an organic wholeness with self-evident boundaries" (Dwyer, 1999:54; see also Eade, 1991; Baumann, 1996), but instead have boundaries within and between that are constructed and contested. Writing in the context of "ethnic

communities", scholars have explicated how they are "imagined communities" whose "boundaries, structures and norms are the result of constant processes of struggles and negotiations" (quoting Yuval-Davis, 1991:59; see also Brah, 1992). In this sense, "communities" need to be understood as “always constructed or imagined, produced within particular discursive and historical moments” (Brah, 1992). In this paper, the Muslim “community’s” attempts at counter-hegemonic responses to the state, as well as the fractured nature of “community” will be examined.

Such construction, imagination and production of “community” as well as “identity” occur at various scales: global, national, regional, local and indeed, that of the body. As Kong (2001) points out, certain religious groups now have a more global reach than others, thanks to religious broadcasting and the Internet, which have transformed the nature of religious community. Understanding religious communities therefore requires examination of how global forces are mediated by local contexts as well as how pan-religious identities and communities (e.g. the *umma*, or pan-Islamic community) conflict with local and national affiliations. Simultaneously, scalar analysis demands that the politics and poetics of the local in religious community construction -- the school, the mandir (the temple in Hinduism), the communal hall, the pilgrimage site – are not neglected. Additionally, at the next intimate scale is an analysis of the body in identity production, including, for example, analysis of sartorial accoutrements and body engravings (see also, Dwyer, 1998). In this paper, the intersections of these various scales of analysis will be interrogated.

THE SINGAPORE SOCIAL CONTEXT: LOCAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Singapore ‘civilization’ and education

If the Singapore state is an “educator” seeking to construct and maintain a particular “civilization”, then this civilization may best be understood in two terms: a material and a non-material one. In the former, the government's vision of a healthy economy that benefits all Singaporeans has much in common with Singaporeans' visions of

their own lives in Singapore. The "Singapore Dream", as it has been called, is predicated on good jobs and salaries, better housing, private cars and generally, a better quality of life. This relies on a secular education that is perceived as a means to an end, an end characterised by a lifestyle of modernism. As Perry, Kong and Yeoh (1997) point out, surveys among young Singaporeans show much support for this articulation, pointing to a state that has educated the consent of its people in its quest for modernism and modernity. Socially, the high value placed on education in Singapore also indicates recognition of its role in achieving the Singapore "civilization".

In the latter, non-material conception of a Singapore "civilization", the vision is to develop in Singaporeans a sense of emotional bonds and an appreciation of living in Singapore because it is a harmonious, socially gracious and culturally vibrant society. It is in this light that the population has been exhorted to place emphasis on "character, culture, community, courtesy and commitment" (George Yeo, quoted in ST, 15 July 1996), beyond the more materialistic five 'C's that have been said to consume Singaporeans' aspirations -- condominium, cash, credit card, car and club membership. Importantly, within the context of this paper, it is also to be one in which harmonious multiracial, multilingual, multireligious and multicultural ties are to be respected and maintained. To educate the consent of its citizenry, ensuring their commitment to this "civilization", schools are an obvious educative site for the cultivation of multiculturalism, and various forms of "moral education" and "national education" have been in place in state schools since Singapore's independence.[1] Moreover, the state takes very seriously surveys by the World Economic Forum and United Nations which place Singapore relatively low in educational proficiency, an unhappy surprise for a country that ranks highly in economic competitiveness, labour-employer relations and politicians' honesty (ST, 20 Nov 1999).[2] One effort to rectify this is the 1999-2000 proposal for compulsory schooling from Primary 1 to Primary 6. This proposal highlights the contested relations

[1] After independence in 1965, the school system has introduced a Civics syllabus (1967), an Education of Living programme (1974), a Being and Becoming programme (1981), a Good Citizen programme in Chinese (1981), and a National Education programme (1997).

[2] In the World Economic Forum survey, Singapore is placed 30th in primary school enrolment and 28th in secondary school enrolment, lagging behind countries like the Philippines, Turkey, Slovakia and Ukraine.

between the state and the madrasahs and is analysed in greater detail in the section on education and religion.

Religion in Singapore

Singapore is characterised by a high degree of religious heterogeneity, with the population comprising Buddhists (42.5 %), Taoists (8.5%), Christians (14.6%), Muslims (14.9%), and Hindus (4.0%). In addition, 0.7% of the population adhere to other religions, and 14.8% have no religion (*Census 2000 Advanced Data Release*). While religion continues to have quite an important place in the lives of Singaporeans despite (or because of) rapid modernization and urbanization, the state has adopted a secular position while supporting freedom of worship.

Singapore is a secular state in the sense that no one religion is identified as the official state religion, unlike in Malaysia, for example, where Islam is officially declared the state religion. In Singapore, all the major world religions are represented and so the state argues that "to accommodate such totally different spiritual and moral beliefs among the people without being torn apart, Singapore must be a strictly secular state" (Ho, 1990:2). This 'secularism' does not imply official disinterest in religion (Siddique, 1989:565), nor that the state is anti-religion per se. In fact, the state allows for freedom of worship, and Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore (henceforth, the Constitution) sets out the rights of individuals and groups with respect to such freedom. This includes the right of every person to profess and practise his or her religion and to propagate it and the right of every religious group to manage its own religious affairs, to establish and maintain institutions for religious or charitable purposes, and to acquire and own property and to hold and administer it in accordance with law.

While supporting freedom of worship, the state is also committed to the principle of multiculturalism.[3] This is enshrined in the Constitution in two ways. First, a general

---

[3] Various versions of this concept have been discussed by sociologists. For example, Benjamin (1976:115) discussed the concept of 'multiracialism' in the context of Singapore as the "ideology that accords equal

clause protects the fundamental rights of the individual and citizen and prohibits discrimination by race, language, or religion (Article 12). Second, the Presidential Council for Minority Rights established under Article 69 has the general function of considering and reporting on matters, referred by parliament or the government, affecting persons of any racial or religious community in Singapore.

Despite the general secular position and the specific stance of multiculturalism, the state also recognises the special position of the Malays, and, relatedly, of the Muslims in Singapore.[4] Article 152 of the Constitution focuses on minorities and, in particular, on Malays. It spells out clearly that the government must care for the interests of the racial and religious minorities in Singapore; particularly, it must "recognise the special position of the Malays, who are the indigenous people of Singapore, and accordingly it shall be the responsibility of the Government to protect, safeguard, support, foster and promote their political, educational, religious, economic, social and cultural interests and the Malay language" (Constitution, 1985: 73).[5]

Religion and education

The schools

Every religious group in Singapore has the right to establish and maintain institutions for the education of children and provide therein instruction in its own religion (Article 16, the Constitution). There is to be no discrimination on the ground

---

status to the cultures and ethnic identities of the various 'races that are regarded as comprising the population of a plural society". Siddique (1989:565) discussed the "4Ms": multiracialism, multilingualism, multiculturalism, and multireligiosity. To her, multireligiosity "acknowledges a societal situation in which a number of religions are practised, but none is officially recognized as paramount". It is distinguished by a "religious populism supportive of moral order".

[4] 99.6% of Singapore's Malay population (aged 15 years and over) is Muslim (Singapore Census of Population 2000, Advance Data Release No.2 - Religion).

[5] This consideration for the Malays is a legacy of the politics of the 1950s. In the negotiations for the coalition government of 1959, one of the agreed conditions was that the Malays, as the indigenous population, should have special rights, which would be enshrined in the Constitution. It could also be an acknowledgement of geopolitical realities; that is, Singapore's position in Southeast Asia, a predominantly Malay world. Recognition that the Malays are the indigenous population and according them a special position could help to avert any suspicions on the part of Singapore's neighbours that it is trying to be a "Third China" (Chua, 1983:38).

only of religion in any law relating to such institutions or in the administration of any such law.

In Singapore, the state is the principal provider of education and the Ministry of Education directs the formulation and implementation of education policies, and controls the development and administration of government and government-aided schools. The Ministry also supervises private schools. Among the private schools are Islamic religious schools or madrasahs, intended originally to produce the religious elites to lead the community on religious matters. There are six full time madrasahs and 27 part time mosque madrasahs in Singapore. The former are housed in premises distinct from mosques and have full time students and programmes over ten or 12 years from primary (six years) to secondary (four years) to pre-university (two years) education. The latter are essentially religious studies programmes offered by mosques on a part-time basis. Of the total curriculum time in a full time madrasah, about 70% is usually used for religious studies (such as *Al-Quran, Tafsir, Hadis, Aqidah, Fiqh*) and Arabic language, while about 30% is for academic subjects (such as English language, Malay language, Mathematics, Geography, Science).

The curriculum

In the government and government-aided schools, a Religious Knowledge curriculum[6] was introduced in 1984 (because of a perceived moral crisis, evidenced in youth alienation, increased drug abuse, rising divorce rates and so forth) was discontinued in 1989. This was because a study revealed that increasing evidence of aggressive and insensitive evangelization, and a certain religious revivalism seemed apparent among the population, especially among particular religious groups (Kuo, Quah and Tong, 1988). In this same time period, in 1987, the government arrested some Catholic priests and lay leaders for allegedly using religion as a front for subversive activities (Gopinathan, 1995:23). This led to a rethinking of the presence of a

[6] The original offerings were to be Bible Knowledge, Buddhist Studies, Hindu Studies, Islamic Religious Knowledge and World Religions; later Confucian Ethics and Sikh Studies were introduced. The World Religions course was later abandoned as an option because, as the Ministry of Education pointed out, formulating a syllabus proved too much of a challenge (Gopinathan, 1995:20).

government-sanctioned religious knowledge curriculum in schools. While some communities were concerned at the loss of religion in the school curriculum, others, such as MUIS[7] were not because they had established religious education opportunities in madrasahs. The place of madrasahs in the provision of Islamic religious education must therefore be understood in this context.

Then in 1999, the Education Minister Teo Chee Hean followed up the proposal of compulsory education and a common national curriculum by highlighting the need to study and discuss with the Muslim community the impact of compulsory education on madrasahs (ST, 26 October 1999), give their heavy emphasis on religion and Arabic, and relatively little attention to secular subjects and English. Fears were quickly sparked among the Muslim community that madrasahs would be closed. The announcement that the state would like to introduce compulsory schooling was immediately linked to the Prime Minister's earlier revelation that the majority of madrasah students did not make it to tertiary education, and indeed, that between 1996 and 1998, an average of 65% of madrasah students left every year without completing Secondary 4, a rate thought unacceptable (ST, 25 Aug 1999). In 2000, a Compulsory Education Committee was established to look into the introduction of compulsory education in Singapore. The Committee reaffirmed the objectives of the national education system: to provide students with a common core of fundamental knowledge and skills so that they may seek useful employment and further training, and to give students a common educational experience to build national identity and social cohesion. The skills-for-employment approach belies a firm economic motivation, contributing to the material vision of the "Singapore civilization" articulated above. The nation-building approach underscores the socio-political mission entrusted to schools, anchored in a state-defined "multicultural" ideology, likewise a part of the "civilizational" mission.

[7] MUIS (Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura), or the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, was established as a statutory board in 1968 to advise the President of Singapore on all matters relating to Islam in Singapore. It has the responsibility of seeing that the interests of Singapore's Muslim community are looked after.

STATE CONSTRUCTIONS: SITES OF MULTICULTURALISM, SITES OF MODERNITY

In this section, I examine the state's social construction of "schools", as apparent from various discourses on the issue of compulsory schooling, the role of schools in Singapore and the place of religion in schools. This will be followed in subsequent sections by an examination of how Muslims in Singapore invest meanings in their madrasahs which sometimes conflict with state constructions, and at other times, converge. Before the empirical analysis, I outline briefly the methodology adopted for data collection. The empirical material on which I base my analysis of state discourse includes ministerial speeches, government press releases, parliamentary debates, and newspaper reports (in both the English and Malay presses). These constitute the avenues by which the state communicates its policies to the people, and textual analysis of such material offers insights into the state's expressed ideologies. Most of these are speeches and debates in 1999 and 2000 when the idea of compulsory education was introduced and discussed extensively publicly. Between 1999 and 2001, I also collected data via in-depth interviews with about 30 Muslim students each in madrasahs and in state schools (including males and females), about 30 Muslim mothers and fathers, and two madrasah leaders. The interviews were semi-structured and lasted between half an hour to an hour and a half, and focused on their perceptions of the importance of madrasah education and secular education. I also followed the debates in various discussion fora that had been organized by a number of Muslim groups (both online and in public arenas), such as the National University of Singapore Muslim Society and Pergas (the Muslim Teachers' Association), as well as newspaper reports (in English and Malay) on this issue. Additionally, I kept up with the material on a dedicated website on madrasahs in Singapore, featuring the activities of the six full-time madrasahs. All of this provided insights into the meanings and values that the Muslim community invested in madrasahs, as well as the divergence of views, even within the Muslim community itself.

In examining state discourse about education, two key ideological tenets emerge repeatedly as central to its construction of how schools should play their educative role in

the development of the Singapore "civilization". First, the state asserts that schools should be *a site for multiracial and multicultural ideology and practice, enhancing national integration*. In 1999, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong articulated this principle, stating that Singapore's multiracial and multireligious character was a valuable attribute worth preserving, and that "fault lines" between communities could be reduced to "hairline cracks" if Singaporeans went to national schools. By taking part in sports and other activities together, and acquiring the same social vocabulary and norms, children of different races, he said, would be brought together (ST, 31 Oct 1999). They would have the same starting point in life and be in the same common playing field. This stance foregrounds the particular state conception of "multiculturalism", not one in which multi-cultures are allowed to express themselves as they desire, but rather, one in which multi-cultures occupy and interact in common space on terms specified by the state.

Second, schools are constructed as *a site of modernity*, in which students are provided with education aimed at enabling them to participate effectively in the modern economic life of the country. This is evident at different points in Singapore's post-independence history during which the alternating educational emphases reveal an adherence to the principle of "economic relevance". In the 1960s, with the focus on industrialization as the economy's mainstay, more skilled workers were needed for the workforce and education policies strongly emphasised science and technology. As part of this thrust, technical education was introduced for all students in Secondary one and two in 1969. At subsequent points, technical ability in manufacturing gave way to "higher order" needs, in engineering (in the early 1990s), financial services (throughout the 1990s) and life sciences (in the late 1990s and early 2000s) (see, for example, BT, 30 Nov 2000). Schools (and universities), as a critical ideological site of the educative state, were central to the mission of modernity. As Mdm Yeong Yoon Ying, Press Secretary to Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, argued in the national papers in the context of a debate on the place of madrasah education in a modern state: students who concentrate on religious education are unable to acquire critical foundation skills in English, Mathematics, Science and IT. As such they will not be able to participate fully in the knowledge based economy nor fit into mainstream society where English is the common

language (ST, 11 May 1999). Mdm Yeong went further to state that madrasah students should attend mainstream schools in the morning and religious schools in the afternoon to avoid being marginalised and becoming resentful of poorer career prospects. State schools, in other words, were sites of modern education and the pathway to careers in the modern economy, while religious schools represented the antithesis.

CONFLICTING CONSTRUCTIONS: SITES OF RELIGIOUS REPRODUCTION, SYMBOLS OF COMMUNITY

The state perspective

While the state's constructions of schools are clearly rooted in its version of modernity and multiculturalism, for the Muslim community, their madrasahs take on quite different meanings, evident in the debates that erupted around the issue of compulsory schooling. The most obvious conflict stems from the fact that the Muslim community (or at least segments of it) constructs madrasahs as a site of religious reproduction and a symbol of community. Any action which may cause madrasahs to be closed was viewed as curtailing the practice of the religion and assailing the community.

Historically, in the Muslim world, Islamic education (the education of an individual in Islamic religion) was provided for in madrasahs, which were located in mosques. They were intended to produce the religious elites to lead the community on religious matters. They were therefore as much religious institutions that contributed to the reproduction of the religion as mosques were. With colonialism came a western concept that separated state and religion, with a concomitant development of a dual education system – secular and religious. The madrasah thus evolved a separate existence from mosques, providing for religious education on a full-time basis, even though part-time madrasahs at mosques have also remained, playing a reduced role in providing students in secular schools with some religious knowledge education. The madrasah, regardless of its location, remained in the conception among Muslims as a religious institution. As several Muslim parents interviewed articulated, they produced

religious leaders who would be able to keep the religious expertise in the community alive. Similarly, as the Chairman of one of the six full-time madrasahs, Madrasah Aljunied, pointed out,

> The goal is to produce religious teachers and *ulama* [i.e. the group of men with religious education and religiously related professions]. And this is to cater to the needs of the Muslims because we can't afford to import religious teachers from outside Singapore because of the different backgrounds and upbringing. It will not help Singapore if we import religious teachers and ulama from outside (Personal interview, 11 July 2000).

The current separation in physical location of a full madrasah from a mosque, and its registration in Singapore of madrasahs as private schools allocate to it the status of an educational institution. From this perspective, the state evaluates its performance and concludes that educational goals are not satisfactorily achieved there. Here, the construction of schools as the site of modernity is privileged, and madrasahs are evaluated as lacking in this direction. The state therefore wishes to insert itself in the educative mission to ensure that the goals of modernity are adequately taken care of for the community.

The official Muslim perspective and strategies

Many Muslims, on the other hand, conceive of madrasahs as religious institutions whose directions "can only be determined by Muslims" (Comment by member of audience at a public forum organized by the National University of Singapore Muslim Society, 1 Jan 2000). Two conceptions of madrasahs are emphasized among the madrasah leaders interviewed. One conception revolves around the primary role of the madrasah in the production of religious leaders, thus underscoring the conception of madrasahs as a central institution in the reproduction of the religion (Interview with Chairman, Madrasah Aljunied, 11 July 2000). The second is the madrasah as a site of "holistic education", emphasizing moral upbringing and "solid faith", with a measure of academic work included (Interview with Principal, Madrasah Al-Irsyad, 19 May 2000).

Indeed, as Ustaz Fatris Bakaram, the Principal of Madrasah Al-Irsyad indicated, if students only managed to achieve a secular education at the secondary school level, but were religious and had a high standard of morality, the madrasahs would have achieved their objectives. The fundamental distinction therefore resided in the fact that the state's construction of a madrasah is as an educational institution while the Muslim community, or parts thereof, saw the madrasah as a religious institution, with the primary role of reproducing the religion. Segments of the Muslim community, particularly madrasah leadership and Pergas, the Muslim Teachers' Association, were extremely concerned therefore that the proposed introduction of compulsory education would threaten the existence of madrasahs. In 1999 and 2000, the national English and Malay newspapers regularly carried articles about compulsory education and its perceived effects on religious education, and the role of madrasahs in the life of Muslims. Various Muslim civil society groups also contributed actively to the public discourse by organizing public discussions, and some were directed both at preventing any closures and in promoting the growth of madrasahs. In analyzing the discursive content, it is apparent that their strategies sought to emphasize alternative constructions of religious schools.

One theme apparent in the public discourse sought to return the understanding of schools to one which did not separate the secular and the religious. A supervisor of Madrasah Al-Arabiah, for example, articulated at a public forum on "Madrasah education: prospects and challenges" (30 November 1999) his discomfort that knowledge is split into the religious and secular realms when, rightly, both should be integrated. Following from this position, strategies have been explored which return to the notion that the separation of the sacred and the secular should be blurred.

Madrasahs either stand on *wakaf* (endowment) lands which are not abundantly available, or they have to be built on state land obtained on leasehold at a high cost, and both have proven problematic because of lack of availability and prohibitive expense. Madrasah Al-Irsyad has therefore entertained a possible strategy of co-location with a mosque. By thus situating itself within a mosque, it hoped to take advantage of the benefits that the state bestowed on Muslim places of prayer, such as cheaper land and a

longer lease (see Kong, 1993). While the idea remains only a possibility to be explored, nevertheless, from an analytical perspective, it is apparent that Madrasah Al-Irsyad has no conceptual difficulties with "conflating places" that have become separate over time. A religious school could easily co-locate with a place of worship, returning to the earliest conceptions of madrasahs as an integral part of mosques. In this manner, the conceptual distinction between religious and secular education is also blurred as the physical separation is removed.

Another strategy to resist potential closure was the effort to rebuild and develop modern facilities for madrasahs, and through that, emphasizing their role as a continuing central symbol of Muslim community heritage and a symbol of collective struggle. For example, in 2000, even while the future of madrasahs was being debated, Madrasah Al-Irsyad embarked on a fund-raising campaign to raise S$18 million to enable it to establish a new and permanent building of its own. Its publicity material revealed its own constructions of a "religious school" within the context of a modern Singapore, seeking to centralize itself in the symbolic Muslim community, urging Singapore Muslims to "accept Madrasah Al-Irsyad as our common heritage and to feel a sense of ownership". At the same time, it positioned itself as a symbol of collective struggle, urging the community "to share our … struggle to produce students with a strong Islamic foundation …" (http://www.madrasah.edu.sg). This sense of struggle found resonance in a comment by a member of the audience at a public forum (NUSMS, 30 November 1999) who saw the madrasah somewhat hyperbolically to be "the last bastion in terms of Islamic institutions".

Resistance within the Muslim community

Fractures within the Muslim community, however, emerge despite official attempts to construct the madrasahs as symbolically central and a binding force for the community. To some, the attempt to improve and upgrade madrasahs was less about creating a common heritage symbol, and more about a pragmatic donation campaign, one of many. The surfeit of such campaigns worked against the attempts to construct a sense

of community around the campaigns. A Muslim parent, Zamiyah, captures the sense of frustration best:

> We have donations through the internet, the telephone. "Makcik [madam], donate for this madrasah, that madrasah." No need lah. I am fed up. Always donating, donating, donating. Always asking for donation. I am always donating. Donate, donate, donate. Enough! There is the internet, and everyday, there is talk on the radio about donations regarding madrasah. I feel it is enough. No need to approach us. We see them and we have to walk the other way. We can't even walk in peace.

In brief, while there seemed to be general agreement within the Muslim community that madrasahs were religious institutions that were critical to the reproduction of religion, their construction as community symbols and sites of collective struggle appealed only partially to the community, revealing fractures within.

CONVERGING CONSTRUCTIONS: SYMBOLS OF MULTICULTURALISM, SITES OF MODERNITY AND INNOVATION

The official view

In an attempt to align with the state's construction of schools as a site of multiculturalism, madrasah leaders make reference to historical events and the place of madrasahs in times past to suggest that madrasahs contributed integrally to multicultural accord. Madrasahs and madrasah products are constructed as lynchpins of multireligiosity and multiculturalism. Ustaz Pasuni Maulan, Chairman of Madrasah Aljunied, expressed the view that the reason why the Singapore Muslim community was a moderate one was because of the good values inculcated by madrasah teachers. As such, he argued, it was madrasah graduates who "harmonized" life in Singapore's multiracial setting. Further, he declared that in the 1960s race riots in Singapore, madrasah graduates were called upon to help calm the situation (NUSMS public forum, 1 January 2000).

Madrasahs also found other ways to assert their willingness to engage in a multicultural context although the evidence cited was uneven. In my interviews with madrasah principals, they pointed out that they were more than willing to have their students participate in activities with state (secular) schools in their vicinity, and did indeed do so. Thus, the Principal of Madrasah Al-Irsyad shared the example of how his madrasah and the neighbouring St Michael's School would invite each other to annual sports events. However, madrasah students were not always invited by their neighbours (Interview with Chairman, Madrasah Aljunied, 11 July 2000), nor did they always join in activities when invited. For example, students of Madrasah Al-Irsyad did not join St Michael's School in their National Day celebrations at nearby Kampong Java Park because they held their own activities.

In the same way that portions of the Muslim community attempted to create a convergence of meanings with the state via the ideology of multiculturalism, madrasahs also sought alignment with state conceptions by casting themselves as the Muslim community's symbol of modernity and innovation. In seeking to develop new premises and facilities, Masjid Al-Isryad sought to "improve the image of the madrasah by providing an environment and facilities which are comparable to those found in government schools" and hence constitute "the pride of the Muslim community in Singapore" (http://www.madrasah.edu.sg). Similarly, Madrasah Aljunied reflected the strategy of centralizing the madrasah as a symbol of community and stimulus for innovation. When the President of MUIS expressed concern that there was a declining number of Muslims who were endowing their property for public and religious use, and urged that the *wakaf* spirit should be kept alive, Madrasah Aljunied led a campaign for a new form of "*wakaf*". In 1998, a project was started where 36 parts of the new madrasah building would be endowed by different donors, who would have their names inscribed in the relevant parts of the madrasahs as long as they contributed between $3,000 and $10,000. The project collected around S$1.3 million, and was hailed as an innovative *wakaf* strategy, the madrasah consequently a site of innovation (*Berita Harian,* 9 Nov 1999), adapting practices to modern times.

Dissent within community

On both matters of multiculturalism and modernity, Muslims in Singapore once again do not constitute a monolithic whole. Not every Muslim agrees that madrasahs offer opportunities for modern education and careers in a knowledge based economy; nor is there agreement that madrasahs occasion multicultural interaction.

Zanaria, a mother of four, describes the difference in opinion, even within her family, where her husband has an express preference for their daughters to be schooled in a madrasah, because, in his view, daughters need not have a lot of education. As he put it,

> no matter how high an education the girls achieve, their role is still in the kitchen, so there is no need for them to go very far (14/12/99).

Zanaria, on the other hand, believes that her sons and daughters need to be given the best educational opportunities at state secular schools. Both, however, implicitly agree that madrasahs do not offer opportunities for high quality academic development.

Zanaria's views represent those of a segment of Muslim parents interviewed who argue that madrasahs are so inclined to the study of religion that it is difficult to imagine what career prospects their graduates can have in modern Singapore. As Kamariah, a Muslim mother with three children in government schools expressed:

> The madrasahs are very inclined to religion. Very inclined. I don't know what prospects they will have because when they go to religious class, their career is more on religion, and I think, … um … what can they do? I don't know! (13/12/99)

Similarly, the emphasis in madrasahs on Arabic language and the concomitantly low level of English proficiency where the latter constitutes the working language in Singapore poses a concern for some parents. As Zamiyah points out:

> We live in a country which is multiracial, so we have a mix of languages, and English is necessary for all to use. So we have to send our children to regular schools. For religion, we can send them during the weekends (26/12/99).

Zamiyah is not alone among Muslim parents in arguing that the values that are desired for their children are most importantly inculcated at home while fundamental religious knowledge can be learnt at mosques in the part-time madrasahs, which offer after-school classes in religion. Further, they argue, in a multiracial country, it was important for their children to have the opportunity to interact with children of other races. In short, attempts by madrasah leadership and other supporters to cast madrasahs as symbols of multiculturalism and sites of modernity and innovation are not entirely persuasive even to other Muslims in Singapore.

REPOSITIONING DISCURSIVE DEBATE: SHIFTING SCALES OF THE GLOBAL AND THE BODY

Whether the Muslim community foregrounded conflicting or converging constructions of the madrasah vis-à-vis state constructions of schools, the analysis thus far has focused on the scale of the *local*. At another level, I will illustrate in this section how segments of the Muslim community also sought to situate their responses simultaneously in real and imagined *global* terms, and at the level of a geography "closest in" – at the scale of the *body*.

The global

At the scale of the global, two issues emerged, both related to how other Muslim communities across the globe are drawn into the local debate about compulsory schooling and its perceived threat to madrasahs. The first pertains to the support given to local madrasahs in their efforts to maintain and/or develop their premises and facilities. Some madrasahs obtain capital donations from their global links, for example, the Madrasah Al-Ma'arif obtaining funds from the Islamic Development Bank of Saudi Arabia in the establishment of school buildings. Others are more circumspect. Madrasah Aljunied, despite a need to step up its efforts to raise funds, does not make special attempts to seek assistance from its global links. The Chairman explains:

> Because we don't want it to become something suspicious from any quarters. We think that we have resources in Singapore. Why ask other people to help us if we can help ourselves (Personal interview, 11 July 2000).

Even though it has a significant alumni in countries such as Brunei and Sarawak, many of whom are well-to-do and influential, Madrasah Aljunied declares that it has not actively sought their support and help, but have only accepted relatively small sums from a few individuals when such assistance has been voluntarily offered. Global linkages are thus viewed as a double-edged sword, hinting at global-local tensions while presenting opportunities.

Apart from global financial support for local madrasahs, the global-local linkages are evoked in yet another way, in the search for examples globally to serve as models to be emulated locally, thus constructing global "ideals". This strategy is adopted by both the state and by defenders of the existing madrasah system. On the one hand, Malay-Muslim Members of Parliament argue that madrasah education need not commence at primary school level, rendering compulsory education from Primary 1 to 6 unproblematic. Sidek Saniff, Senior Minister of State for the Environment, for example, cited the example of Malaysia where religious education did not necessarily start from

the primary level (ST, 9 April 2000). Similarly, then Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Zainul Abidin Rasheed cited the example of Malaysia and Indonesia where religious schools took in pupils from secular schools (ST, 11 April 2000). On the other hand, Pergas, the Muslim Teachers' Association, argued that Malaysia and Indonesia were irrelevant examples as those countries did not practise compulsory education. Besides, religious studies could be found in the basic primary school curriculum (but not in Singapore) and it was easier for the students in these countries to then go on to the secondary level for religious studies. Furthermore, it argued, Islamic attire was allowed in schools, and in Malaysia the Jawi script was preserved (ST, 15 April 2000). Subsequently, Malay leaders in government have urged that other "role models" of Muslims in multicultural societies should be sought. Member of Parliament Mohamed Maliki observed that many religious teachers in Singapore were trained in universities in countries where Muslims formed the majority, when the gaze should be trained on situations where Muslims formed a minority. Similarly, Northeast Community Development Council Mayor Zainul Abidin Rasheed, suggested that Muslim scholars should be sent to newer centres of Islamic learning set in more plural and open societies such as Jordan, Morocco or the U.S. and Europe, rather than Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia where most people were Muslims (ST, 29 June 2002).

Madrasah leaders have also adopted the strategy of constructing global "ideals", in order to find a way out of a situation of conflict. The Joint Committee of Madrasahs visited Australia to examine how Islamic subjects were introduced into schools. As the Chairman of Madrasah Aljunied explained, they chose Australia because they did not want to be "confined to Muslim majority countries but to gain knowledge from a country where the Muslims are minorities" (11 July 2000). In this, there appears to be a convergence of views. Again, however, there are alternative voices, as Saharudin Kassim, special assistant to the President of MUIS, exemplifies. He argues that it is incorrect to assume that only Islamic institutions in multiracial environments such as Australia, Europe or the US can produce scholars and teachers who understand the socio-political realities of globalization, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism. Indeed, he suggests that many Western universities engage scholars, researchers and lecturers from

the Middle East, while moderate and progressive Islamic scholars exist in Middle Eastern institutions (ST, 29 June 2002). Nevertheless, the above analysis illustrates the introduction of the global into local religious debates.

The body

Shifting scale from the global to a geography closest in, another strand of the debate on compulsory schooling focuses on the body. This is captured in the views of a writer to the Forum Page of the Malay newspapers, Berita Harian (26 Nov 1999). The writer concedes that there are distinct advantages to the national curriculum in public schools which the Muslim community could benefit from. However, he points out that the real reasons why Muslim parents increasingly chose madrasah education over secular schools for their children rest not only with the desire to provide their children with religious instruction, but to ensure that they can live a Muslim way of life, including prayer (*salat*), wearing the *tudung* or Islamic headscarf, and covering the body for females (*penjagaan aurat*). This is to be understood in a context where the tudung is disallowed in state schools where there are standard school uniforms. Debate on the appropriate attire for Muslim female students in state schools positions the body as a site of identity and expression of religiosity, and particularly, as a site of struggle over meanings.

At the level of civil society, various Muslim groups argued for the state to allow what they considered to be Islamic attire in public schools, thus in one sense seeking an Islamisation of public schools. A representative of Pergas appealed to the Prime Minister, arguing that refusal to allow the preferred attire in fact narrowed the opportunity for true inter-racial, multi-cultural mixing (ST, 21 May 2000). Another group, Taman Bacaan, attributed the increasing enrolment in madrasahs to inflexibility in national schools over Muslim attire (ST, 15 April 2000). Majlis Pusat also suggested that the Ministry of Education allow Muslim attire and the teaching of religious knowledge, which it believed would decrease enrolment in madrasahs (ST, 15 April 2000). Despite these consistent representations, the Prime Minister was adamant that national schools

provided a common area for interaction and the Islamic dress code could change the nature and possibilities of this common area (ST, 8 May 2000).

This politics of the body was not merely a discursive argument employed by civil society groups to resist compulsory schooling and support continued existence of the madrasahs. It was an ideological position embraced by some Muslim parents I interviewed. Suriani, who sent her daughter to a madrasah, articulated it thus:

> My priority is religion. Her uniform is significant. In the madrasah, she is covered. You cover everything, right. That is why I am interested in sending her to the madrasah. I really like that (9/12/99).

Rohani, a mother of three, was not enamoured with the "free" environment of secular schools, and similarly looked to the madrasah for her daughters. Similarly, Norhayati makes the argument pointedly:

> I tell my daughter, I can send you to a 'normal' school, but you have to cover up [referring to the Islamic dress]. But some schools say "cannot cover up, must open". So I think that is not acceptable, and say, "never mind, she can go to a Muslim school". My husband suggested that I go and see the principal [of the 'normal' school] and tell the principal to allow our daughter to cover up. I said no need to do that. It is difficult. If she goes and 'covers up' alone, and others don't, she will be shy. Other students will ask her why she is all covered up. I said better not. Let her go to a Muslim school. It will be different if 'normal schools' have Muslims 'cover up' and give Muslims time to pray (14/1/2000).

These parents' position on the issue puts the spotlight on the politics of the body, drawing attention to the way in which the Islamic dress for females is no longer merely metonymic of an Islamic way of life, it is constructed as central to Islamic identity. As she points out, if Islamic dress were possible in 'normal schools', she would have had no qualms sending her children to them instead. The fact that religious leaders (*ulama*) are necessarily males suggests therefore that it is not the reproduction of religious leaders that prompts parents to send their children to madrasahs but a conception that in madrasahs, the environment is safe for their daughters.

Over the last three years, this geography closest in has taken on far larger proportions in Singapore. At the start of the 2002 school year in January, four female Muslim students in various public primary schools were suspended from class for donning the Islamic dress rather than the school uniform. The state refused to relent, holding consistently to its construction of schools as sites of "multiculturalism", as it defines the concept. The school uniform was held to be emblematic of the common ground that was to be created among divergent groups. The insistence on the part of any one particular group to be distinguished was deemed unacceptable. While one student has since returned to school donning the school uniform, another three have not, resorting to the madrasah and home schooling.

For some Muslim students in secular schools, the constriction on dressing and behaviour (for example, the strict separation of boys and girls even in queues purchasing food with a discipline master hovering) is what makes them glad that they are not in madrasahs. As a 16-year old Muslim student, Fajariah, from a public school shared:

> My cousins advise me against it. I mean, at a young age, you are not very religious. Little kids, they won't be so inclined. You want to play, and you see primary school kids running round the field, and you want to be like them. So you just want to go to a secular school (13/12/99).

Further, Fajariah comments on how "wearing the veil" prompts particular behaviours which discomfort her:

> The commitment they require is very heavy, like wearing the veil. I guess when you put on the veil, it's like the commitment is … it's like you know you have to be good. Prim and proper. I'm a very active person, you know, so it's like I can't commit myself to wearing that thing and be a quiet and good girl and all that sort of thing (13/12/99).

Even Sharina, a pupil in a madrasah, expressed unease for other practical reasons: heat and discomfort in the equatorial climate of Singapore. However, for yet other madrasah pupils, the ideological stance of strict dressing is very much embraced and understood as

a strict religious requirement. Once again, divergent views are evident among Muslims in Singapore.

While the debates over Islamic religious schools in Singapore were matters at a local scale, and many public and private discourses did focus at that level, what this section illustrates is the interconnectedness of other scales. Thus, both the scale of the global and that of the body are drawn in intimately to the issues surrounding six local madrasahs and their continued existence and role in a secular Singapore.

CONCLUSIONS

After protracted debates within the Muslim community and dialogues between community and government leaders, the state announced that it would proceed with compulsory schooling with effect from 2003, but would exempt students who were attending madrasahs (ST, 16 Aug 2000). However, the maximum number of full-time madrasah pupils exempted from compulsory education would be capped at 400. This was because MUIS estimated that the Malay/Muslim community would need 110 religious teachers and *ulama* each year for the next ten years. Hence, the 400 pupil cap would be more than enough to supply the number of teachers needed (ST, 16 Aug 2000).

Other madrasah students would have to meet minimum academic standards. As defined by the state, these standards were based on the average aggregate score of Malay pupils in six national schools with the worst performance. If madrasahs did not meet the minimum standard, there would be no further exemption beyond the 400 pupils, and the madrasah would then have to carry on as a part-time madrasah or one offering secondary school education only. To help madrasahs, the then Minister for Muslim Affairs, Abdullah Tarmugi, announced that a Steering Committee led by MUIS would be established to help five madrasahs in their fund-raising efforts to pay for their education programmes. The sixth madrasah would have a special S$2 million government fund to help it to implement programmes for English, Mathematics and Science (ST, 16 Aug 2000). The educative state thus asserted its vision of a "Singapore civilization" and the

means by which such a civilization is to be achieved, via educating the consent of its citizens. The fractures within the Muslim community allow this vision and strategy to be implemented, privileging the notion of a school as a site of modernity. However, the Singapore state has observed the community construction of madrasahs as sites of religious reproduction. In wresting ground for the notion of schools as the site of modernity, it has simultaneously acknowledged the community's alternative construction by giving sufficient space to allow the existence of madrasahs to produce religious leaders.

The debates surrounding compulsory schooling and the madrasah have subsided from the height of engagement in 1999 and especially in 2000, but the lessons about negotiations in a multireligious society defined as a secular state remain. For geographers seeking theoretical insights into "new" geographies of religion, the case is instructive on multiple fronts.

Stated simply, the empirical circumstances examined in this paper contribute to the theoretical argument that schools are a very important educative site for the state, in inculcating prescribed multicultural and multireligious values, and in equipping students with "modern education" to achieve desired developmental goals. Schools are guarded "sacredly" as an educative site to ensure that the ideological values that the state wishes to purvey have a vehicle for purveyance. However, tensions surround different meanings associated with schools, particularly religious schools. The main tensions involve those between a secular state interested in promoting its version of multiculturalism and modernity, and madrasahs, which are more interested in inculcating religious leaders and protecting girls from "negative" outside influences, with the argument played out at different scales at the local, but also involving the global and the body. At the same time, divergences within the Muslim "community" reveal that "communities" are not monolithic and that counter-hegemonic responses are fragmented.

Focusing the argument on religious schools reveals that geographers seeking to understand issues of religious identity and community, state-religion relations, and sacred-secular tensions, would do well to extend their analysis beyond the traditional

focus on the "officially sacred" – the churches, mosques, temples, shrines. A critical examination of religious schools, set alongside scrutiny of secular schools, provides revealing insights into sacred-secular tensions in contemporary society, as different constituents invest multiple and oftentimes divergent meanings in these different types of schools. The separation of the sacred and the secular is also called to question in this study, and strategies devised which seek to conjoin rather than separate reveal the constructed nature of the separation in the first place. The importance of paying attention to various differentiations and dialectics that Kong (2001) advocated is also spotlighted here – the differentiation and dialectic of the sacred and secular; the social and spatial; the local-global-body; and the officially and unofficially sacred. The constructed nature of these various dimensions is foregrounded as each is challenged and counter-challenged by the state or segments of the Muslim community.

References

Badcock, B. (1996) ''Looking-glass' views of the city', *Progress in Human Geography*, 20(1), 91-99.

Baumann, G. (1996) *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-ethnic London*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Benjamin G. 1976, "The cultural logic of Singapore's 'multiracialism"', in *Singapore: Society in Transition* Ed. R. Hassan (Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur) pp 115-133

Berita Harian (Malay-language newspapers, various issues), Singapore.
BH, 30 Nov 2000
BH, 9 Nov 1999
BH, 26 Nov 1999

Brah, A. (1992) "Difference, diversity and differentiation", in Donald, J. and Rattansi, A. (eds.) *"Race", Culture and Difference*, London: Sage, 126-45.

BT (*Business Times*, various issues), Singapore.

Census 2000 Advanced Data Release, Singapore: Department of Statistics, Singapore Government Printers.

Chua B H. 1983, "Re-opening ideological discussion in Singapore: a new theoretical direction" *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* 11 31 –45

Constitution, 1985 *The Constitution of the Republic of Singapore* revised edition (Government Printing Office, Singapore)

Duncan J. 1990 *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge)

Dwyer, Claire and Meyer, Astrid (1995) "The institutionalisation of Islam in the Netherlands and in the UK: the case of Islamic schools", *New Community*, 21, 1, 37-54.

Dwyer, Claire and Meyer, Astrid (1996) "The establishment of Islamic schools: a controversial phenomenon in three European countries", in Shadid, W.A.R. and van Koningsveld, P.S. (eds.) *Muslims in the Margin: Political Responses to the Presence of Islam in Western Europe*, Kampen, The Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 218-42.

Eade, J. (1991) "Nationalism and the quest for authenticity: the Bangladeshis in Tower Hamlets", *New Community*, 16, 493-503.

Gopinathan, S. (1995) "Religious education in a secular state: the Singapore experience", *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 3(2), 15-27.

Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci,* edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, New York: International Publishers.

Gregson, N. (1993) 'The 1988initiative': delimiting or deconstructing social geography?', *Progress in Human Geography*, 17(4), 525-30.

Harvey, D. (1992) 'Social justice, postmodernism and the city', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 16(4), 588-601.

Ho A P, 1990, "The Maintenance of Religious Harmony Bill" *Mirror* 15 April:1-4

Kong, L. (1993) 'Ideological hegemony and the political symbolism of religious buildings in Singapore', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 11(1), 23-45.

Kong, L. (2001) 'Mapping 'new' geographies of religion: politics and poetics of modernity', *Progress in Human Geography*, 25(2), 211-33.

Kuo, Eddie C.Y., Quah, Jon S.T. and Tong Chee Kiong (1988) *Religion and Religious Revivalism in Singapore*, Singapore: Ministry of Community Development.

Ley D, 1988, "Culture's geographies" *Environment and PlanningD: Society and Space* 6 115 – 116.

NUSMS (National University of Singapore Muslim Society Forum)

Perry, M., Kong, L., and Yeoh, B. (1997) *Singapore: A Developmental City-State*, Chichester: John Wiley.

Siddique S. 1989, "Singaporean identity", in Management of Success: *The Moulding of Modern Singapore* Eds K S Sandhu, P Wheatley (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore) pp 563-577

ST (*The Straits Times*, various issues), Singapore.

ST, 15 July 1996 "Cultivate the other 5Cs, like courtesy, character and culture"
ST, 11 May 1999 "Madrasahs don't teach critical skills"
ST, 25 Aug 1999 "Lessons from madrasahs"
ST, 26 Oct 1999 "Compulsory education: Ministry to study impact on madrasahs"
ST, 31 Oct 1999 "No intention to close madrasahs"
ST, 20 Nov 1999 "Under study: compulsory schooling up to Primary 6"
ST, 9 Apr 2000 "Accept government's word on madrasah"
ST, 11 Apr 2000 "Madrasahs occupy a special niche"
ST, 15 Apr 2000 "Pergas wants dialogue with Malay MPs"
ST, 8 May 2000 "Madrasah students must meet minimum education standards"
ST, 21 May 2000 "Appeal on Islamic attire"
ST, 16 Aug 2000 "Government to raise $2m for "scholar" madrasah"
ST, 29 Jun 2002 "Will registration weed out extremist Muslim teachings?"

Thrift, N. (1994) 'Review of *Writing Worlds*', *Antipode*, 26(1), 109-111.

Winchester, Hilary, Kong, Lily and Dunn, Kevin (in press, 2003) *Landscapes: Ways of Imagining the World*, Pearson.

Yuval-Davis N, 1991, "The citizenship debate: women, the state and ethnic processes" *Feminist Review* 39 58-68.

Yuval-Davis, N. (1992) "Fundamentalism, multiculturalism and women in Britain", in in Donald, J. and Rattansi, A. (eds.) *"Race", Culture and Difference*, London: Sage, 278-92.