Contents

List of abbreviations	9
Acknowledgments	11
Chapter One: Contextualizing and Theorizing Christian Political	
Mobilization in Malaysia	13
Overview	13
Objectives, scope, methods, and limitations	18
The repression–mobilization nexus: A contested relationship	20
The matter of regime type and political context	24
Towards a typology of repression and mobilization	25
Political mobilization and alternative responses	27
Of framing, resources, and political opportunities	31
Chapters	33
Chapter Two: A Competitive Authoritarian Regime, Islamization, and	
the Christian Community	35
Introduction	35
Under a competitive authoritarian regime	37
Christians and Christianity in Malaysia	43
Overview	43
Christianity and decolonization	48
The Islamization processes	50
Overview: From the 'dakwah' movements to political rivalry	50
Process 1: State-led Islamization	51
Process 2: The politicization of Islam	52
The general effects of Islamization	53
Islamization's specific effects on Christians	55
Prohibition of preaching to Muslims	55
Prohibitions on using select Malay and Arabic words	55
Restrictions on the importation of Christian literature	56
Church buildings, lands, and burial grounds	57
Management of missionary schools	57
Overt and surreptitious conversions of Christians	58
Conclusion	59

Chapter Three: Unflinching Principles and Whimpers of Protest, 1980–90	61
Introduction	61
Initial responses to state-led Islamization	63
Introduction of regulatory repression in the early 1980s	65
Banning of the Al-Kitab	65
Restrictions on using 'Islamic' words	66
Targeted repression in the early 1980s	67
Resisting repression	69
Defying state policy under the pretext of nation-building	69
Forging networks and alliances	70
Fledgling electoral mobilization	73
Operasi Lalang and its aftermath	74
Several Christian experiences	74
Moving towards principled engagement	77
Legitimizing civil disobedience in the Kuching Declaration	78
Conclusion	79
Chapter Four: Learned Submission to Semi-opposition Engagement,	
1991–2002	83
Introduction	83
Reasons for the community's apolitical approach	84
Closed-door meetings and mixed results	85
Absence of enforcement	86
Learned submission and fear of repression	86
Growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic churches and intra-Christian divisions	88
The Reformasi: A catalyst of political mobilization?	91
Electoral mobilization in the 1999 general election: Of official and	
unofficial voices	93
Resisting the push for an 'Islamic state'	95
Targeted repression and subsequent responses	99
The Shah Alam Church of Divine Mercy	99
The 'Srigala Incident' and other Orang Asli-related incidents	100
Attacks on churches in the context of the 'War on Terror'	102
Conclusion	103
Chapter Five: Seizing Political Opportunities for Mobilization, 2003–7	105
'A breath of fresh air'	107
Arbitrary enforcement of regulatory repression	109
Restrictions on religious texts	110
Demolition of Orang Asli churches	111

The Silibin Incident	114
The growing jurisdiction of the Sharia court	114
Grassroots-level Christian mobilization	117
Emergence and further polarization	117
Invoking the Federal Constitution	121
Relationship with other mass rallies	122
Electoral mobilization	123
NECF's '40-Day Fast and Prayer' initiative	125
Oriental Hearts and Mind Study Institute	126
Conclusion	127
Chapter Six: From Resisting Repression to Oblique Oppositional	
Mobilization, 2008–15	129
Introduction	129
Contestations over usage of the word 'Allah'	131
Notable court cases	131
The Herald	132
Sidang Injil Borneo	137
Jill Ireland	137
Collective rather than Separate Cases	138
The '10-Point Solution' and the Sarawakian context	139
Targeted repression by the Selangor Islamic Department (JAIS)	141
New standard operating procedures pertaining to Christian publications	144
Increased political mobilization	145
The logic of repression	145
The NECF's 'Nation-Building Agenda'	146
Electoral mobilization	147
Grassroots mobilization	148
Mobilizing through various outlets of expression	151
Divergent approaches within the Christian community: A comparison	153
Conclusion	155
Chapter Seven: Stories from the East: Resisting Islamization and	
Preserving Local Rights	157
Introduction	157
Christians in East Malaysia	159
Sabah	161
Historical overview and federal–state tensions	161
Explaining a lack of resistance to state-led Islamization	165
Emergent resistance	166

Religious misclassification	166
Conversions of indigenous Christians	167
Grassroots mobilization and traditionalism	169
Sarawak	171
The anomalous case?	171
Relationship between Christian leaders in Sarawak and Peninsular	
Malaysia	172
Church–state relationships and divergent views	173
Politicizing religious sentiment in Sarawak	176
Conclusion	178
Chapter Eight: Conclusion	179
Introduction	179
Electoral dynamics after Barisan Nasional's defeat	180
Principled strategies, pragmatic resistance	184
Typologies and sequences of resistance	185
When defending rights also means opposing the regime	186
Emphasizing the importance of subjective interpretations	187
Closing remarks: Old structures, new manifestations?	187
Bibliography	191
Books	191
Monographs	191
Chapters	193
Journal articles	195
Theses and dissertations	199
Newspapers (printed)	199
Court cases, Statements and Letters	199
Surveys	200
Reports	200
Government reports	200
Organization reports	200
Online sources	201
Interviews	207
Appendix A: Official Letter from Najib Razak to Bishop Moon Hing Ng	
Proposing a 10-Point Solution	209
Index	211