THE MIDDLE EASTERN INFLUENCE ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL
THOUGHT IN MALAY SOCIETY, 1880-1940

BY

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby solemnly declare that this thesis is written by me and does not represent the work of any other person.

(MOHAMMAD REDZUAN OTHMAN)
DECEMBER 1994
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................... i
TABLE OF CONTENTS ........................................................................................................... iii
ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................... v
NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION AND SPELLING ............................................................... vi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .................................................................................................... viii
INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................... 1
CHAPTER 1 ............................................................................................................................. 31
THE MIDDLE EAST AND MALAYA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
   Early Trade Relations ........................................................................................................... 33
   Islamisation of the Malays .................................................................................................. 40
   Cultural Influence on the Society ...................................................................................... 50
   Encounter with the Western Challenge ............................................................................ 65
CHAPTER 2 ............................................................................................................................. 76
THE ARABS OF HADRAMAUT AND MALAY SOCIETY: ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION
   Origin, Migration and Settlement ...................................................................................... 78
   Establishment of Islam ...................................................................................................... 85
   Politics of the Malay States ............................................................................................... 94
   Economic Progress and Social Change ........................................................................... 104
CHAPTER 3 ............................................................................................................................. 113
HIJAZ AND MALAY RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM: EFFECT AND IMPORTANCE
   Malay Conduct of the Hajj ................................................................................................. 114
   Practice of the Tariqah .................................................................................................... 126
   Islamic Scholarship and Educational Development ....................................................... 136
   Wahhabism and the Triumph of Ibn Saʿūd ................................................................. 150
ABSTRACT

The religious and political influence of the Middle East in Malay society is the subject of this study which explores its development and impact for the period 1880-1940, with three Muslim centres in the Middle East, namely Hijaz, Egypt and Turkey, being the major focus. The influence of Hijaz evolved particularly with regard to the conduct of the Hajj and its role as a nucleus for early Malay Islamic education, while the influence of Egypt includes literary and political thought, in addition to religion. The first two, Masjid al-Ḥarām and al-Azhar University, apart from being important educational centres, also influenced Malay religious thought through the authority exerted by their ʿulamāʾ. In the case of Turkey whose contact with the Malay World dated back to the golden age of the Ottoman Empire, its influence nurtured early Malay Islamic political thought. The success of Kemal in establishing the modern Turkish republic was enthusiastically followed and it influenced to some extent the social thought of the Malays.

The Malay perception of the Middle East and its influence in Malaya were disseminated, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s, by journals and religious schools, founded by those who had graduated from there or who had sentimental links with the region. This study also elaborates on the role played by the Arabs, the Middle Eastern element in Malay society, in bringing about the process of social change. The British response to the Middle Eastern influence on the Malays is also examined by this work, due to the fact that they were the colonial masters of Malaya, who also exerted a considerable influence in the Middle East. The historical background of the influence is also briefly surveyed with regard to the Islamisation of the Malays and their early contact with the Middle East.
NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION AND SPELLING

This study involves the use of Arabic and Malay words for which a general system of transliteration and spelling needs to be devised. In the absence of a standard form for the spelling of various Arabic and Malay terms, some inconsistencies are unavoidable. The researcher, however, has decided, for the sake of convenience and to a certain extent uniformity, to adopt the following rules in dealing with these spellings:

1. Arabic/Islamic Terms

In this case, a modified version of the Encyclopaedia of Islam’s system of transliteration as used by the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Edinburgh is adopted, except that words ending in tā’ marbūtah are spelt with 'h', for example:

Bid'ah and not Bid' a
al-Qiblah and not al-Qibla
Shari'ah and not Shari'a

As for Arabic words, in general these have been quoted in an Arabic transliteration rather than the Malay version. For example:

Ka'bah and not Kaabah
Där al-'Ulūm and not Darul Ulum
'Ālim/'Ulamā' and not Alim/Ulamak

In another case, Shaykh al-Islam (Muslim Jurisconsult) is spelt as in Arabic contexts, not as Shaykhul Islam, while Qāḍī (religious judge) is spelt in this way rather than Kathi or Kadi.
Exception, however, is made for words which are popularly used in Malay, where even though they are originally Arabic, the local usage is adopted. For example:

Adat rather than ŠĀdat
Hijaz and not Ḥijaz
Sufi and not Şūfi

2. Malay Words
Since the standardisation of Malay spelling took place only a few decades ago, the new Malay spelling system is only used in recent and contemporary works. The Malay spelling used in this study is as found in the original sources where the old method or the Indonesian way of spelling were used. For example:

Neracha and not Neraca
Bahtra and not Bahtera
Pilehan Timoer and not Pilihan Timur

3. Names of Malays and Local Muslims
For names of local Muslims and other personalities known locally, even though they were Arabic, the spelling used is according to local usages. For example:

Abdul Rahim and not ʿAbd al-Rahīm
Abdul Majid and not ʿAbd al-Majīd
Zainal Abidin and not Zain al-ʾAbidīn

4. Names of Middle Eastern Muslims
Names of such persons, despite the fact that some of them are known locally, are spelt with the proper diacritical marks as often used in academic works. This exemption is made since the names are exclusively Middle Eastern. For example:

Ibrāhīm al-Kurānī and not Ibrahim al-Kurani
Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and not Jamaluddin al-Afghani
Rashīd Riḍā and not Rashid Rida or Rashid Ridha

vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of abbreviations used in the thesis:

BA  British Adviser
CO  Colonial Office
CUP Committee of Union and Progress
FMS Federated Malay States
FO  Foreign Office
GA  General Adviser
GAPENA Gabungan Penulis Nasional (Union of National Writers Associations of Malaysia)
HC  High Commissioner
HCO High Commissioner's Office
ISEAS Institute of South East Asian Studies (Singapore)
JMBRAS Journal of Malayan/Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSBRAS Journal of Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
MB  Menteri Besar (Chief Minister)
MBPI Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence
PASPAM Persaudaraan Sahabat Pena Malaya (Malayan Pen-Pal Brotherhood)
PIB Political Intelligence Bureau
SITC Sultan Idris Training College
SP  Surat-Surat Peribadi (Personal Papers)
SS  Straits Settlements
SUK Setiausaha Kerajaan (State Secretariat)
UKM Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (National University of Malaysia)
UM  University of Malaya
INTRODUCTION

Islam has been a driving force which has brought about political and social change in Malay society. So important is Islam to the community that its introduction has been a source of revolution from within.¹ As Muslims, the Malays were proud of their Islamic heritage and regarded themselves as an integral part of a wider brotherhood and civilisation. Since Islam originated from the Middle East, the Malays also traditionally looked to that region as a source for leadership and guidance. Equally important, since they first became Muslim, elements from the Middle East had exercised a great influence on the society, and this was facilitated and expedited by their own travels to the region, as part of a religious obligation and in order to further their education. From the Middle East Malay scholarship also had its origin, when printed works on religious knowledge were introduced which in turn permitted the enhancing and improvement of their understanding of Islam.

In addition, the Middle East also had been the source of the Malays' perception of the wider world. It was from here that their consciousness of the problems faced by the Muslim World of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries was derived, either as a result of a period of residence or later through news from journals published there, which were heavily utilised by the local periodicals of that period. The Middle East also had been a source of profound influence on Malay political thought and it was from here that Malay political ideas of an Islamic orientation had their origin.² Middle Eastern-originated sources of


² It is important to note that it was only on the eve of World War II that the nationalist trend came onto the scene.
influence were also instrumental in bringing about social change in Malay society through the role played by religious scholars. These religious scholars, who were either themselves Middle Easterners or were locals who had received their education in the Middle East, were the pioneers in the development of early Malay religious education.

Despite the fact that the Middle East has exerted a tremendous influence on the Malays, for a student of Malaysian history the study of the impact of Middle Eastern Islamic political thought on the society is a challenging task. Even though works of Malay historiography and literature do shed some light on the early Malay contact with the Middle East and its influence, it was not until recently that the significance of these works for the study began to be fully appreciated. Prior to this available published works on the Malay relation with the Middle East seem to concentrate more on the spread of Islam, and this shortcoming is further aggravated by the tendency in the writing of Malaysian history up to the 1960s to devote more attention to the immigrants than to the Malays.

In addition to this, the early works on modern Malayan/Malaysian history are found to have given a significant attention to various aspects of colonial history, and their work was based on colonial records and put its emphasis on colonial administration and related economic studies. Although these works

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3 Some works of Malay historiography and literature which contain accounts of Malay relations with the Middle East and their significance which are also discussed on a number of occasions in this work are Sejarah Melayu, Hikayat Hang Tuah, Bustanus Salatin, Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa and Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah.


5 The writing of early modern Malayan/Malaysian history had been largely in the hands of Western scholars or non-Malay historians. Since the pioneers of its writing were people with different cultural and political backgrounds, the selection of methods and topics for investigation had been very much conditioned by their own choices. Some early works by these Western scholars and non-Malay historians on Malayan/Malaysian history include Rupert Emerson, Malaysia: A Study of Direct and Indirect Rule, London: Macmillan, 1937 (reprinted Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1964);
contributed richly to the "colonial record" history, they gave little attention to the
development of Malay society and were almost indifferent to the subject of Islam
or the importance of the Middle East to the community.6

This study is concerned primarily with the influence of the Middle East and
its impact on the development of the religious and political thought of Malay
society for the period from the late nineteenth century until the eve of World War
II. It is an attempt to provide a comprehensive work on the subject, several
aspects of which have been explored by a number of historians one of whom,
even though limited in scope, is Moshe Yegar.7 A similar attempt was also made
by Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki whose effort, which in a number of aspects would
otherwise be of great help to this study, was rather incomplete due to the
scantiness of material consulted, particularly the primary sources in Malay and the
British records.8

6 Since many of these early historians of modern Malaya/Malaysia failed to perceive the importance of
this subject in their historical writings, and since most of them were not able to consult the relevant
historical materials in the Malay language, the importance of the development of Malay thought in its
relation to the Middle East was neglected or not given high priority. On the other hand, local historians
who wrote on Islam or the Middle East in its relation to Malay society were heavily dependant on oral
sources that were almost entirely indigenous in nature.

7 See Moshe Yegar, Islam and Islamic Institutions in British Malaya, Policies and Implementation,
Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1979 (particularly the discussions in
Chapter 4, "Influences on British Religious Policy in the Straits Settlements", pp. 94-117).

8 In his work, "Modern Muslim Thought in Egypt and its Impact on Islam in Malaya", PhD. Dissertation,
University of London, 1965, Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki consulted only a limited number of Malay
sources. In his work, he listed four Malay journals among his references, but his writings appear not
to reflect an understanding of their contents. Zaki also failed to consult the primary sources from British
records which resulted his findings being very superficial. In a work which deals with the influence of
Egypt on Islam in Malaya and is supposed to be an important part of the dissertation, only six pages
in Chapter Three and a number of others in Chapter Four were allocated to its discussion in a thesis
of 424 pages. Even though there is no mention of it, it seems that part of Part One of the dissertation
was published as The Reformers of Egypt, London: Croom Helm, 1979, while Part Two, which was
supposed to deal with the impact of modern Muslim religious thought in Egypt on Islam in Malaya, was
omitted.

C.N. Parkinson, British Intervention in Malaya 1867-1877, Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1960;
University Press, 1961; Wong Lin Ken, The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914, Tucson: University of
Arizona Press, 1965; Chai Hon Chan, The Development of British Malaya 1896-1908, Kuala Lumpur:
University of Malaya Press, 1964; Emily Sadka, The Protected Malay States 1874-1895, Kuala Lumpur
The most important contribution to this study, however, was the work of William R. Roff who was the earliest scholar to produce much more comprehensive works by utilising the available primary materials. Despite the contributions made by the works of these scholars on the importance of the Middle East on the development of the religious and political thought of the Malays, their works are already somewhat dated, as their facts are based on research conducted almost three decades ago, a period when historical writing based on local sources was at a very initial stage. In the intervening decades, Malaysian history-writing has advanced tremendously, boosted particularly by the establishment of history departments in two more local universities, in addition to the one that already existed, which not only made research on local history their main agenda, but also provided it with significant new horizons. In addition to the exploration of historical works related to colonial and other aspects of Malaysian history, the new generation of historians in these departments, who recognised its significance, also showed greater interest in the study of the development of Islam in Malay society, which in a number of ways was related to the Middle East.

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10 It was not until in the 1970s that the Malaysian National Archives where these materials could be consulted were more properly organised and references on local sources such as Malay periodicals and personal letters made available. A concerted efforts to collect Malay manuscripts and books printed before the 1940s were also initiated in the 1970s by institutions like the Malay Collection of the University of Malaya and the National Library, Kuala Lumpur.

11 The earliest history department established in Malaya was the Department of History, University of Malaya, Singapore which opened in 1959. The History Departments of the Universiti Kebangsaan and Universiti Sains Malaysia were established in the 1970s.

12 It is important to note that the study of the history and politics of Malay society particularly as related to Islam was also undertaken by academics from other disciplines like Malay studies, sociology, political science, Islamic studies and so forth. Among noted scholars who have published works on Islamic-related subjects are Professor Khoo Kay Kim, Professor Mohd. Yusof Hashim, Mohd. Sarim Hj. Mustajab, Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, Mahayuddin Haji Yahaya, Hamdan Hassan, Safie Ibrahim, Muhammad Abu Bakar and others. Even though their works are not specifically on the subject of Middle Eastern influence on Malay society per se, as explored by this study, their works do touch on various aspects of it.
The new interests shown and the use of historical sources available locally as well as sources from overseas which were earlier untapped led to new findings and interpretations which superseded earlier works or altered certain perspectives of Malaysian history that had been unquestioned for quite some time. For instance, with due regard for his contribution to the study of Malay nationalism and the role of Islam, including the influence that originated from the Middle East, when we look at the premise of Roff’s approach to its development in the 1920s and the 1930s, it is apparent that too much emphasis was given to the role played by Malays who received an English education at Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, and the Malays who received a vernacular education at Sultan Idris Training College (SITC), Tanjong Malim, compared to those who received their education at the madrasahs who were Middle Eastern-influenced.

Certainly the Malay College and Sultan Idris Training College had played their part in the development of Malay nationalism, but although Roff mentions a number of religious schools or madrasahs in his book, his discussion of their significance is very brief and is not in proportion to their importance as compared to the role played by these two institutions. It is a fact that was overlooked by Roff that the early development of Malay consciousness was also significantly

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13 One the most important libraries where much information regarding the Malays is still untapped is the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library. The library, in which are deposited many Malay books and periodicals, some of which are not available elsewhere, only recently catalogued its holdings and thus made them accessible to researchers. One of the earliest researchers who fully utilised books deposited in the library is Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak in his work, “Malay Book Publishing and Printing in Malaya and Singapore, 1807-1949”, PhD. Thesis, University of Stirling, 1992.

14 See the discussions in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 of William R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, op.cit., pp. 91-157.

15 In his book, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, William R. Roff mention only three religious schools; Madrasah al-Hadi of Malaka, Madrasah al-Iqbal Islamiyyah of Singapore and Madrasah al-Mashhor of Penang. Even though Roff was aware that there were “tens upon tens” of religious schools operating in Perak alone (see p. 77 of The Origins), it seems that he was not drawn into the discussion of their importance and significance in the development of Malay consciousness as compared to the discussions he dedicated to the Malay College and Sultan Idris Training College. Since the early years of the twentieth century many religious schools were established in the Malay states and these schools flourished by the second and third decades of the century. For a brief history of some madrasahs found in Perak and northern Malay states alone, including Madrasah al-Arabiyah al-Khairiyah, Bayan Lepas, Madrasah al-Ma’arif al-Wataniyah, Kepala Batas, Madrasah Mariah al-Arabiyah, Kuala Kangsar, Madrasah al-Saadiyah, Bagan Datoh and Madrasah al-Arabiyah al-Islamiyyah al-Wataniyah, Seberang Perai, see Wihdatul Madaris, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1935, pp. 33-51.
contributed to by graduates of numerous religious schools found all over Malaya who were far greater in number than the students of Malay College and Sultan Idris Training College combined.\textsuperscript{16} In the middle of the 1930s, some of these religious schools even entered a new phase of better coordination and advancing their effectiveness when a number of them in Perak and northern Malaya took the initiative of publishing the journal \textit{Wihdatul Madaris} with the aims among things of strengthening the bond between them, of exposing their activities to public scrutiny, and of encouraging their students to acquire knowledge of writing in Arabic and Malay.\textsuperscript{17} In addition to this endeavour, the new phase introduced by the \textit{madrasahs} was also marked by a concerted effort to streamline the running of the their \textit{madrasahs} and their curriculum.\textsuperscript{18}

As for the early development of Malay consciousness, one important \textit{madrasah} which should be recognised, whose contribution to the process was almost comparable to that of the Malay College and Sultan Idris Training College was Maahad II Ihya Assyarif, Gunung Semanggol, Perak. Since its establishment in 1934, the importance of this \textit{madrasah} in the growth of Malay political consciousness, quite apart from its role in promoting religious education, was actively promoted by its teachers, whom from its inception until 1941 were more than half either Makkan or al-Azhar educated people and had been exposed to political development in the Middle East.\textsuperscript{19} After World War II, Maahad II Ihya Assyarif continued to play a dynamic role in the development of Malay political consciousness with an Islamic orientation which climaxed with the formation of the

\textsuperscript{16} One \textit{madrasah}, Madrasah al-Masriyah in Penang which was established in 1906, for example, had more than 1,000 students studying there in 1937 who came from as far afield as Cambodia, Thailand Indonesia, Singapore and elsewhere. In Kelantan in 1917, a religious school, Pondok Kampung Paya in Kubang Kerian under Tok Kenali, already had about 100 huts which housed approximately 200 students who came from all over Malaya.

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Wihdatul Madaris}, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1935, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., pp. 5-6.

\textsuperscript{19} See Nabir bin Haji Abdullah, \textit{Maahad II Ihya Assyarif Gunung Semanggol 1934-1958}, Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Sejarah Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1976, p. 266. Among the members of the staff was one from the former Yugoslavia.
first Islamic Party, the Hizbul Muslimin during a conference held at the *madrasah* in 1948 with the aim of forming an Islamic state for Malaya.\(^{20}\)

Apart from Maahad II Ihya Assyarif, recent works on the study of the development of Malay nationalism have found that the growth of Malay consciousness was also significantly nurtured by other religious schools, one of these schools being Madrasah al-Mashhor in Penang founded by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi in 1919. This *madrasah* was an important place of sojourn for the *Kaum Muda* 'ulamā’, who were not in line with the thinking of *Kaum Tua* 'ulamā’, and it emerged as an important breeding ground for the reformist movement.\(^{21}\) Another religious school which was also noted for its important role, particularly in the early development of Malay political consciousness was Madrasah Diniah Kampung Lalong, Padang Rengas, Perak, established in 1924 by Shaykh Junid Tola, a graduate of al-Azhar University. In the late 1930s, the enrolment of this religious school reached no less than five hundred, and its students came from all over Malaya as well as from Thailand and Indonesia. The *madrasah* did not only teach religious subjects, but also included in its curriculum were various non-religious subjects and the practice of self-reliance which was directed toward economic nationalism.\(^{22}\) The role played by the *madrasah* in the 1920s and in the 1930s enabled it to emerge as one of the fertile grounds for the nationalist movement after World War II.\(^{23}\)

Apart from the role of the *madrasahs* in the development of early Malay political consciousness, recent researches on the development of Malaysian

\(^{20}\) For a discussions on the involvement of this religious school in politics, see ibid., Chapter 1V, pp. 154-202.


history concerning Islam and the influence of the Middle East have also made it necessary to reassess others of Roff's analyses such as his findings related to the political and religious ideas advocated by two important early Malay journals, al-Imam and Pengasoh. In his observations on al-Imam, the first Malay reformist journal in the Malay World which was modelled on the Egyptian al-Manâr, Roff wrote, "It must be stressed that al-Imam's first concern was with religion and not directly with social, even less with political, change." Comprehensive studies on al-Imam, however, have proved that Roff's conclusion needs to be reviewed since although the journal's basic concern was with religion, the strong influence of al-Manâr led many of its columns to be also dedicated to issues related to social and political matters which contributed to the Malays' awareness of the need for change.

With regard to Pengasoh, the fortnightly journal produced in Kelantan by the Council of Religious and Malay Customs, Roff concluded that the journal acted as a mouthpiece on behalf of the Kaum Tua. Roff's opinion on the journal which was first published in July 1918, that it urged an opposing point of view and condemned the Kaum Muda as irreligious, was also subjected to criticism by later

24 This is particularly so in the case of al-Imam, despite of Roff's claim to have analysed the journal thoroughly. See William R. Roff, Sejarah Surat2 Khabar Melayu, Penang: Saudara Sinaran Bhd., 1967, pp. 15-17.

25 William R. Roff, "Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua: Innovation and Reaction Amongst the Malays, 1900-1941", in K.G. Tregonning (ed), Papers on Malayan History, Singapore: Journal of South-East Asian History, 1962, p. 166. A few years later when the same article was published (see Chapter Three, "Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua: Innovation and Reaction. Al-Imam and the Reformists", of his book, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, op.cit., p. 57) the words "It must be stressed that" were omitted. This omission, however, did not seem to have drastically altered the author's opinion on the issue.

26 For a detailed critique of Roff's analysis of al-Imam, see Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, "Al Imam Sepintas Lalu", Jurnal Sejarah, Vol. X1, 1972/73, pp. 29-40. For a discussion on the religious, social and political thought of al-Imam, see also Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, "Gerakan Ansarul Sunnah Dalam Kegiatan Kaum Muda Di Melaka", B.A. Thesis University of Malaya, 1972/73, pp. 17-33. The subject was also discussed at length by Abu Bakar Hamzah, Al-Imam. Its Role in Malay Society 1906-1908, Kuala Lumpur: Media Cendikiawan Sdn. Bhd., 1981 (The book originally was the author's M. Phil. in South East Asian Studies, University of Kent at Canterbury, Kent, 1981); and also his article, "Al-Imam and Politics", Islamika II, 1982, pp. 131-143.

researchers who studied its contents. A study of the issues highlighted by the journal shows that it cannot be conclusively suggested that *Pengasoh* was a *Kaum Tua* journal, since it was a journal which was concerned with reforms in Malay society and exhorted the Malays to strive hard for the future survival of the community.

Several other pieces of evidence, including some put forward by later researchers, also indicate that the journal was not categorically a *Kaum Tua* mouthpiece as envisaged by Roff; for example its willingness to publish in its columns the writings of Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin and Za’ba, who were strong advocates of *Kaum Muda* ideas, and the fact that it even employed Abdul Rahim Kajai, who was strongly opposed to *Kaum Tua* thinking, as its assistant editor. When the Wahhabis captured Hijaz, *Pengasoh* was one of the journals of that period which allocated many of its columns to news and developments there and elaborated this at length for its readers. Apart from disseminating news on what was happening in Hijaz the journal also took the initiative in attempting to convince its readers that the Wahhabis were not heretics as believed by many, but belonged to the Sunni *Madhhab*, by describing its doctrines and practices.

The approach taken by *Pengasoh* clearly showed that it was not the voice of *Kaum Tua*, although it also did not claim to represent the *Kaum Muda* thinking

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28 See Roff's comment on *Pengasoh* in his *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, op.cit., pp. 79-80.


31 See *Pengasoh*, Vol. 7, No. 157, 29 October 1924, pp. 1-3; Vol. 7, No. 160, 11 December 1924, pp. 5-6; Vol. 8, No. 177, 20 August 1925, pp. 9-12; Vol. 8, No. 178, 3 September 1925, pp. 9-12; Vol. 8, No. 179/180, 18 September/2 October 1925, pp. 10-13; Vol. 8, No. 185/186, 16 & 30 December 1925, pp. 8-13; Vol. 8, No. 187, 14 January 1926, pp. 6-12.

32 See for example *Pengasoh*, Vol. 7, No. 157, 29 October 1924, pp. 4-8 on the Wahhabi belief; Vol. 7, No. 159, 27 November 1924, pp. 1-2 on the similarity between the Wahhabi and Sunni belief; Vol. 7, No. 163, 25 January 1925, pp. 4-5 on the need to have a true understanding on the beliefs and doctrines of the Wahhabis; Vol. 9, No. 196, 26 May 1926 pp. 1-4 on visits to the grave and the stand taken by Ibn Sa‘ūd on the practice of *bid‘ah*; Vol. 9, No. 198, 25 June 1926, pp. 2-3 on the *fatwā* given by the ‘ulamā’ of al-Azhar on the visits to the grave, smoking and music.
which was championed by other journals published by the reformist group.\textsuperscript{33} A further indication that Pengasoh was not a Kaum Muda journal can be seen in its castigation of the "ulamā‘" who abused their authority, the same attack levelled by the reformist journal al-Imam. When al-Ikhwan, a journal published by the Kaum Muda group made its debut, it was openly welcomed by Pengasoh.\textsuperscript{34} Similarly when Seruan Azhar, another progressive journal, was published by Malay students in Cairo, it was also warmly hailed by Pengasoh.\textsuperscript{35}

These findings and interpretations, such as those concerning al-Imam and Pengasoh, and the role played by religious schools in the development of Malay nationalism, which have been subjected to intense study by local historians, are available in printed form. Many other works on Malaysian history, including those related to this study, however, are still in the form of dissertations or seminar papers deposited at local and overseas libraries.\textsuperscript{36} Because of their importance and the interest shown, particularly in their role in providing a new horizon in Malaysian history, efforts have been made through initiatives by various

\textsuperscript{33} Khoo Kay Kim, "Malay Society, 1874-1920s", op.cit., p. 191.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., p. 191. See also Pengasoh, Vol. 9, No. 204, 22 September 1926, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{35} See Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 182, 1 November 1925, pp. 7-9. Pengasoh also welcomed the publication of another progressive Malay journal, Majalah Guru, published in Seremban, with the hope that its ideas would lead the Malays to progress (see Pengasoh, Vol. 7, No. 160, 11 December 1924, p. 10). We should be aware that it was only later when a relatively conservative group of "ulamā‘" dominated the Kelantan Religious Council that the progressive ideas promoted by these journals were intensely disapproved of by Pengasoh, as when it condemned certain aspects of Turkish modernisation which were promoted by al-Ikhwan (see al-Ikhwan, Vol. 3, No. 16, 1929, pp. 215-222).

departments in local universities and other academic associations to publish some of these works in order to reach a wider audience.\(^{37}\)

Before we proceed to other aspects of the subjects undertaken by this study, it would be useful to consider in a proper perspective the geographical location and the community it covers. Principally this study is concerned with Malays in British Malaya, but who exactly are the people categorised as the "Malays" before the nation achieved independence in 1957, is difficult to determine.\(^{38}\) The records of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries appear to use the term primarily in reference to the Melakan Malays.\(^{39}\) It was only by the seventeenth century that the term "Malay" was used in very much the same way as in the modern sense.\(^{40}\) Since then in a loose and general way the term has

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\(^{38}\) For a discussion on the development of race consciousness by the Malays before World War II, culminating after the war in the opposition toward the Malayan Union proposal and the struggle for independence, see Tan Liok Ee, "The Rhetoric of Bangsa and Minzu. Community and Nation in Tension. The Malay Peninsula 1900-1955", Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Australia, 1988, pp. 1-21. After Malaya achieved independence in 1957 the definition of the term "Malay" was more clearly defined and incorporated in Article 160 (2) of the Federal Constitution. The article states that "Malay means a person who professes the Muslim religion, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom and (a) was before Merdeka (Independence) day domiciled in the Federation; or (b) is the issue of such a person". See Idrus Talog Davies, "Malay" as Defined in the States Malay Reservation Enactments*, *Intisari*, No. 2, n.d. p. 27.

\(^{39}\) For a study on the concept and expression of Malay or "Melayu" as recorded by indigenous Malay writings, particularly in *Sejarah Melayu* and *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, see Virginia Matheson, "Concept of Malay Ethos in Indigenous Malay Writings", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. X, No. 2, September 1979, pp. 351-371.

been also applied to the entire indigenous Malay-Muslim population of South East Asia.\textsuperscript{41}

Likewise the lands which are inhabited by Malays were not commonly regarded as a single entity since there was never a kingdom which successfully ruled all the Malay speaking Muslims, even during the Kingdom of Melaka, or an empire in which all Malays participated.\textsuperscript{42} A number of terms were, however, used to designate the region, some of which have continued to be used until the present-day while others are confined in usage to Indonesia or Malaysia. Among these is the term "Nusantara", which used to refer to this region during ancient and colonial times but is now more commonly used to refer to Indonesia.\textsuperscript{43} Similarly the term "Malaysia" now refers to independent British Malaya and North Borneo rather than the whole region inhabited by Malays.\textsuperscript{44} Toward the end of the Japanese occupation there was an effort to unite Malaya and Indonesia into a "Greater" political entity known as Melayu Raya or Indonesia Raya championed by nationalist leaders, among whom were Ibrahim Yaacob and Soekarno.\textsuperscript{45} The

\begin{footnotes}
\item[41] Ibid., p. 2.
\item[42] Ibid., p. 2.
\item[43] One of the earliest scholars who used the expression "Nusantara" which loosely refers to the whole region inhabited by Malays, particularly in the early period, is Bernard H.M. Vlekke, \textit{Nusantara. A History of East Indian Archipelago}, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1944. The expression is also used by a number of Western and local scholars in their works on their study of this region, such as D.G.E Hall ("On the Study of Southeast Asian History", \textit{Pacific Affairs}, Vol. XXXII, No. 3, September 1960, p. 273), Slamet Muljana (\textit{Runtuhnya Keradjaan Hindu-Djawa dan Timbulnya Negara Islam di Nusantara}, Djakarta: Penerbit Bhratara, 1968) and Mohd. Dahan Mansoer (\textit{Pengantar Sejarah Nusantara Awal}, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1979).
\item[45] For a discussion of the effort to create a post-colonial united Indonesia and Malaya, see Cheah Boon Kheng, \textit{The Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941-45: Ibrahim Yaacob and the Struggle For Indonesia Raya}, \textit{Indonesia}, No. 28, October 1979, pp. 85-120; Angus McIntyre, \textit{The "Greater Indonesia" Idea of Nationalism in Malaya and Indonesia}, \textit{Modern Asian Studies}, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 75-83.
\end{footnotes}
more popular terms used for the Malay-Muslim inhabited region of South East Asia which have continued to be used until the present-day are the "Malay Archipelago" and the "Malay World". By the "Malay Archipelago" is meant the areas covering the countries of present-day Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, the majority of which are mostly dominated by a Muslim-Malay speaking population.

Comparatively the term "the Malay World" is more widely used today and is increasingly accepted by scholars in their works. The term, however, was used as early as the middle of the 1920s by Malay students at al-Azhar University in Cairo, who through their mouth-piece, Seruan Azhar, mooted a spirit of political unity among Malays. In the 1930s this cause was also taken up by Pengasoh which suggested that the independent Malay World should be politically united.

In Malaya the term "Malay World" was also widely used in the Malay vernacular schools and even used as the title of a history text book. In 1928 the idea of a "Malay World" was also advocated by the journal Dunia Melayu (The Malay World) which was published with the aim "to glorify the Malay race". On its front page was published its logo; a globe with the word "the Malay World" written in the

46 Even though the term "Malay Archipelago" normally refers to these countries, some scholars propose to enlarge it to all lands inhabited by all the "Malay" race stretching from Madagascar to the west to Taiwan to the East, and Indo-China to the north and Indonesia to the south. See Mohd. Taib Osman, *Perubahan Sosio-Budaya Dan Hubungannya Dengan Pengajian Manusia Yang Dikatakan "Melayu", in Rampaian Pengajian Melayu, Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Pengajian Melayu, University of Malaya, 1984, pp. 240-242. The term Malay Archipelago, however, is commonly used to refer to the Malay-Muslim population of South East Asia and is widely used by a number of scholars in their works. Among them are Syed Naguib al-Attas (Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesia Archipelago, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969) and T.W. Arnold (The Preaching of Islam, Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1979, Chapter XII, "The Spread of Islam in the Malay Archipelago", pp. 367-412).


50 See Dunia Melayu, Vol. 1, No. 1, 20 December 1928.
middle with the ocean in the centre and on top a ship. Around the sides of the globe were depicted symbolically Malaya, Sumatra, Singapore and Java.

The loosely united Malay World which had existed since ancient times, however, was already on the road to severe political breakup when the Treaty of London was signed between the British and the Dutch in 1824, as a result of which it was practically divided into the political entities represented by present-day Malaysia and Indonesia. Despite the advent of colonialism which followed and the newly created political entities, the close relationship between the Malays continued unabated, facilitated by travel and settlement, particularly as regards Sumatra, since the island is situated relatively close to the Malay Peninsula.\(^{51}\) Those Sumatrans who settled in Malaya, despite retaining strong links with their place of birth, played a significant role in the religious and political development of Malaya and considered themselves ethnically as Malays.\(^{52}\) The close relation between the Malays of the two regions was further strengthened by the belief that they were members of one homeland with one custom, one way of life, and what is more, virtually one religion.\(^{53}\)

Although the main concern of this study is with the indigenous Malays, the Arabs who became domiciled in Malaya are also included in the discussion since during the period of this study there is an absence of a clear-cut definition of those ethnically considered to be "Malays". Furthermore, the Arabs are included because they belonged to the same religion as the Malays and to a certain extent shared

\(^{51}\) Indeed up to 1941 a large proportion of the Malay population, except for Kelantan and Trengganu, came from various parts of the island. See Khoo Kay Kim, "Recent Malay Historiography", op.cit., p. 252.

\(^{52}\) Take for example in the case of Shaykh Muhammad Taib, who came from Padang in Sumatra. He had a great deal of influence in Perak and also in Pahang and Selangor. He was eventually appointed as the Chief Qa'di in Perak and a member of the State Council. Although he was related to Sultan Abdullah of Perak by marriage and had a high status as a shaykh, he does not appear to have been an aristocrat in the normal sense. Even when he had finally departed from Perak he still maintained his business connection in the state. Later, he pursued a more conventional business career in Selangor from 1876 until his death in 1925. He became one of the richest Malays in Selangor, owning tin mines, plantation lands and a large number of houses and shops in Kuala Lumpur. See J.M. Gullick, Malay Society in Late Nineteenth Century. The Beginning of Change, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1987, pp. 225-226.

their culture. In addition to this, but equally importantly, they were the most accepted and comparatively the most assimilated ethnic group within the British Malaya Muslim community. Through the role they played in the political process, inter-marriages and their long history of interaction with the Malays, the Arabs were enabled to exercise a profound influence on the political, religious and educational development of Malaya.54 Since there was a close religious and social bond between the Arabs and the Malays, even developments that evolved entirely within the Arab community had some impact on Malay society.55

Geographically this study involves two regions, British Malaya and the Middle East. Through trading activities the Malays had been, from time immemorial, as familiar with the region now known as the "Middle East" as they had been with India and China. Until recently, however, they did not have any specific word for the Islamic heartland, that is, the lands predominantly inhabited by people of Persian, Arabic, and Turkish speech.56 The earliest and probably the nearest equivalent for the name "Middle East" known by the Malays would perhaps be the phrase used in Sejarah Melayu which refers to the region as part of the "negeri di atas angin" ("the land above the wind" or the lands to the windward of the southwest monsoon), while Melaka was described as among the "negeri di bawah angin" ("the lands below the wind", or the lands to the windward of the northeast monsoon).57

54 As for example the case of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, a prominent Kaum Muda activist whose mother was a Malay and his father an Arab of Hadhrami descent.

55 Take for example the Arab *Alawi-Irshādi dispute which resulted the *Alawi Arabs hardening their ethnic identity. The stand taken by the *Alawi Arabs was also a contributing factor to Malay dissatisfaction with them and led to a growing anti-Arab sentiment in the late 1930s among a certain sector of the Malay community. For a discussion of the Arab *Alawi-Irshādi dispute, see for example A.S. Bujra, "Political Conflict and Stratification in Hadramaut - I", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1967, pp. 356-363.

56 Other than the Middle East, another term that is commonly used today to describe this region is West Asia. Ironically this term is also used to include Egypt, which is situated in Africa.

Apart from Sejarah Melayu, the term is also found used in other traditional Malay literary works. In Hikayat Hang Tuah, the legendary Malay hero, Hang Tuah, on his mission to Rum (Turkey) for the Sultan of Melaka is said to have stopped in Egypt and was granted audience by the Egyptian Grand Vizier who wanted to know more about the Malay Kingdom of the "land below the wind".\(^{58}\) In Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai and Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa it is also narrated that from "the land above the wind" came the people who converted the Malay rulers and their subjects to Islam, constructed mosques and taught them how to read the Qur'an.\(^{59}\) The straightforward explanation as to why the term Middle East was unknown to the Malays is the fact that the term was introduced by the West and was not even local to the area itself.\(^{60}\)

Originally the term Middle East was coined by the American Naval Officer Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan in 1902 to address the strategic location of the area. The term was then made familiar to a wider public due to the role played by Valentine Chirol, a prominent historian and journalist of the "Middle East".\(^{61}\) The widespread use of the term "Middle East" as a region was then taken up by military strategists during and after World War 1, but its exact area was never specifically defined, which resulted in the admission or omission of certain countries to the region from one time to another.\(^{62}\) The term, with the slightly earlier term "Near East", however, soon passed in to general use, though both are


relics of a world with Western Europe in the centre, and other regions grouped around it.\textsuperscript{63}

Despite the fact its obsolete and parochial outlook, the term "Middle East" has won universal acceptance and has been even adopted (somewhat illogically) by the Russians, the Chinese and the people of the Middle East themselves.\textsuperscript{64} As for the Malays, even when the term was already popularly used in the West in the early decades of the twentieth century, it was still unknown to them. Instead the widely used term was "The Muslim World" which normally referred to this region; otherwise the name of the specific Muslim country was used.\textsuperscript{65} In this study the term "Middle East" is used in reference to three major Middle Eastern countries whose modern entities are Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. These entities were selected since during the period of this study they were the foci which had the greatest influence, particularly as Istanbul may be taken as the political centre of Islam, Cairo the intellectual and Makkah the religious.\textsuperscript{66} In addition, these three cities were also important for their contributions to the early enhancement of Malay religious knowledge, since it was from here that Islamic treatises in Arabic and Malay were printed and distributed all over the Malay World.\textsuperscript{67}

The period chosen for this study is between 1880 to 1940. The period is selected to give a suitable time frame, despite the difficulty of selecting any exact


\textsuperscript{64} G.M. Wickens, "Introduction to the Middle East", op.cit., p. 1.

\textsuperscript{65} See for example \textit{Malaya}, a monthly Malay journal with illustrations published in 1926 which also included a special section "The Muslim World" in which the news from the Middle East was the main feature. Similar sections are also found featured by other newspapers and journals such as \textit{Idaran Zaman}, \textit{Taman Bahagia} and \textit{Dunia Melayu}.


date for a point of departure or conclusion, particularly in a study of this nature.\textsuperscript{68} The period is selected on the basis of a number of considerations. With regard to the Malay Peninsular, it is closely related to the political and social changes that took place in Malay society following the British intervention which led to the creation of British Malaya.\textsuperscript{69} This intervention, which progressed in several stages, started with the occupation of Penang with Province Wellesley, Singapore and Melaka between 1786 and 1824 and led to the formation of the Straits Settlements in 1826. Next, after an interval of about five decades, in 1874, Perak, Selangor and Sungai Ujong (one of the states of the Negeri Sembilan confederation) accepted the Residential System and thus became British Protectorates.\textsuperscript{70}

In this study, the 1880s are seen as the beginning of the important period in the political development of Malay society which follows the extension of full-scale British influence in the Malay states. The intervention was further extended in 1896 when the states under the Residential System together with Pahang were grouped together in the Federated Malay States. To the south, this period also saw Johore enter into closer relations with the British Government. In 1909, when Siam transferred to Britain her rights over Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu, which were referred as the Unfederated Malay States, the area of British rule over "British Malaya" was extended to the present northernmost frontier.\textsuperscript{71} Finally, Johore was formally brought into the British system with the appointment of a British Adviser in 1914. From the completion of the intervention in the early twentieth century until the Japanese occupation of 1941, the extension of British

\textsuperscript{68} One example of the difficulty is seen when discussing the role of the Hadhramis in bringing about social and political change in Malay society (Chapter 2 of this study) where their role needs to be traced back to the early nineteenth century before it can be put into a proper perspective.

\textsuperscript{69} Even though this study is concerned with Malaya, it is must not be forgotten that until after World War II, Malaya was not one country. Since there were nine rulers, there were indeed nine countries. Administratively, however, owing to the presence of the British protectorate, there were three divisions - the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States and the Unfederated Malay States.

\textsuperscript{70} Eunice Thio, "The British Forward Movement in the Malay Peninsula, 1880-1889", in K.G. Tregonning (ed), \textit{Papers On Malayan History}, Singapore: Journal of South-East Asian History, 1962, p.120.

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., p. 120.
administrative policies and their implementation was of significant impact on various aspects of Malay life, including those concerned with Islam and the relations with the Middle East.72

The Malay reaction to the British penetration in Malaya was slow, but elsewhere in the Middle East, even though not directly as a result of British intervention, the 1880s marked an important development for the community. Far away in Makkah during this period several prominent ʿulamāʾ such as Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustafa al-Fatani and Shaykh Ahmad Khatib bin Abdul Latiff al-Minangkabawi emerged as important ideologues in the early development of Malay religious and political thought. The two prominent ʿulamāʾ who taught Malay students at Masjid al-Ḥarām were not significant only because of their religious thought, but also because they were staunch anti-colonialists who had a great influence on their students, who dispersed all over the Malay World. In Makkah, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib was the first Malay ever appointed as Shafiʿī Imam at the Masjid al-Ḥarām.73 It was also during this time that Shaykh Wan Ahmad Zain was entrusted with the running of the first ever Malay publishing house in Makkah by the Ottoman government.74 His appointment indicated his prominence not only among the Malay community but also in the eyes of Sultan Abdul Hamid. The establishment of this publishing house was an important symbol in the development of a new era of Malay intellectualism since it was from this publishing house that many religious texts written in Malay were published and distributed all over the Malay World.

To have a better understanding of the subject undertaken by this study, it would be of great benefit to present a brief evaluation of various works to which

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72 Even though there was no change on the status quo of the beliefs and practices of Malay Islam following the British intervention, nevertheless in other areas such as the conduct of the Ḥajj, the intervention contributed to profound changes in its administration. For a discussion of the British involvement in the Malay conduct of the Ḥajj after the intervention which contributed to its profound changes in its administration, see pp. 291-295 of this work.


we shall refer. To begin with, the subject of trade contacts and Islamisation and its influences have traditionally been in the forefront of the study of the Middle Eastern influence on Malay life. Among the works which deal with the early trade relations is an article by Rita Rose Di Meglio on Arab trade with Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula from the eighth to the sixteenth centuries,75 J.V. Mills on Arab and Chinese navigators in about 1500 A.D.,76 G.R. Tibbets on the early Muslim traders in Southeast Asia,77 and J.A.E Morley on Arabs and the Eastern trade. All these writings provide a detailed and useful insight on the early trade relations between the Middle East and the Malay World.

Concerning the Islamisation of the Malays and its importance in changing the Malays' weltanschauung, a highly influential work remains the book by Syed Naguib al-Attas, Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesia Archipelago. His arguments in this book on the major flaws in the interpretations of the Malays' Islamisation by Western orientalists were further reinforced in his inaugural speech given in 1972 on the occasion of his appointment as Professor of Language and Malay Literature, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.79 Enlightening articles by Ismail Hamid and G.W.J. Drewes on the Islamisation of the Malays have also been referred to in this study.80

Alongside these works, other valuable sources on the Islamisation of the Malays

79 This speech was published as Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, Islam Dalam Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Malayu, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1984.
referred are works by Caesar Adib Majul, S.Q. Fatimi and T.W. Arnold, who are also well known scholars on the subject. 81

The presence of a lasting Middle Eastern influence in Malaya, however, is best demonstrated by the presence of its stock, that is the people of Arab origin among the population of Malaya. Despite their importance, strangely not much has been written on their role and influence in Malaya, except for a number of undergraduate research works which throw some light on them. 82 A study by Mahayuddin Haji Yahaya on the history of the Arabs in Malaysia and Arabs in Pahang also provides a useful guide to the community. 83 Mahayuddin’s work, however, even though it gives a good account of the origin of the Arabs which is basically due to his ability to consult sources in Arabic, pays very little attention to their role in the development of religious and political thought in the community or to its influence on Malay society.

Another work which tries to provide an understanding of what used to be a close-knit community is an article by Omar Farouk Shaeik Ahmad on the Arabs in Penang. Even though Omar belongs to an Arab family which was among the pioneers on the island who played a significant role in the development of religious education there, and was in a better position to give inside information on the Arabs, his work only describes the historical setting and their social patterns, rather than their thoughts in religion and politics. 84 In fact, it is the work by Safie


Ibrahim which is more enlightening as it provides an important understanding of the theological and social thought of the Arab community in the 1920s and the 1930s. Another important reference which is also useful for this work particularly on the ideas of Islamic modernism and social change among the Arabs is an article by Joseph Kostiner.

With regard to the subject of the conduct of the Hajj by the Malays, even though this religious duty had been carried out since they became Muslim several centuries ago, earlier insights on the subject are very sketchy. The religious obligation, however, has ever since attracted many Western scholars and spies alike, the most referred-to accounts being the writings of Christian Snouck Hurgronje. His observations during his six-month sojourn in Makkah were elaborated in *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century*, with an earlier version under the title *Mekka* published in German in 1888-89. Hurgronje entered Makkah on 22 February 1885, disguised under the name Abdu al-Ghaffur. His stay in the holy city, however, had to be brought to an abrupt conclusion in August when he was asked to leave following his involvement in the loss of a stone of historical value, leaving him without having the opportunity to observe what was

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87 Christian Snouck Hurgronje was a Dutch Arabicist and Islamologist. He served as an Advisor on Arab and Native Affairs in the Netherland East Indies. As a knowledgeable scholar his advice had been taken as a basis for the Dutch policy on Indonesian Islam regarding the conduct of the Hajj by the East Indies Malays and for formulating their policy during the Acheh War. For discussions on his role toward formulating these policies, see Harry J. Benda, "Christian Snouck Hurgronje and the Foundation of Dutch Islamic Policy in Indonesia", in Harry J. Benda, *Continuity and Change in Southeast Asia*, New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1972, pp. 93-92; W.F. Wertheim, "Counter-insurgency Research at the Turn of the Century - Snouck Hurgronje and the Acheh War", *Sociologische Gids*, Vol. X1X, 1972, pp. 320-328.

supposed to be the core of his account, to see how the actual conduct of the Hajj was performed.89

Notwithstanding Hurgronje's careful and scholarly preparation for his social and topographical study, his narrative, it must be said, is intermingled with the language of prejudice, which was very much conditioned by his background and the purpose of his mission. Although we need not deny some of the facts contained in his accounts, nevertheless when one considers his relatively short stay in Makkah as an alien who had for the first time set foot on the holy land, and also the nature of Makkan society, one feels rather sceptical that he would be able to gather so much information in such a short period. It is most likely that Hurgronje's writings were based mainly on passing observations and also from whatever information he came across while he was in Hijaz rather than his own full participation in the activities that he describes.

Since many of his accounts are dubious in nature, several of Hurgronje's descriptions cannot be counted as facts because they are based on fabrications and gossip. Take for example his fictitious account of the widespread practice of "gay" and "lesbian" love among Mekkan men and women during festivals in the months of Rabi' al-Ākhir and Jumādā al-Ūlā.90 Given the secretive nature of the Makkan society in which he elaborated in his accounts and the fact that he gave no mention of the source of his information, the objectivity and accuracy of his facts is seriously in doubt. On another occasion, Hurgronje elaborates on the anecdote he claimed to have heard from someone of a "Jawah" pilgrim being fooled into marriage to an Egyptian woman just for material gain.91 Even though the story was based on a mere anecdote, Hurgronje elaborated on it at length as if it was a true and important source for his description of the general behaviour of the Malays in Makkah.

89 If not for the affair involving the stone known as the Teima or Stela stone, Hurgronje would perhaps have stayed longer in the Holy City. For an account of his involvement in the affair which led to his expulsion, see Augustus Ralli, Christians at Mecca, London: William Heinemann, 1909, pp. 237-243.

90 C. Snouck Hurgronje, Mekka, op.cit, p. 51.

91 Ibid., pp. 252-253.
While being over-meticulous about some sensational descriptions, Hurgronje fails to give a comprehensive account of the achievements of some Malays in Makkah. Even though he was aware of the prominence of Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustafa al-Fatani, his account of him is relatively brief. Hurgronje also fails to mention another famous religious scholar, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib bin Abdul Latiff al-Minangkabawi, who was a highly respected šālīm as Shaykh Wan Ahmad and closely associated with the Sharīf of Makkah. It is rather surprising that such a prominent šālīm as Shaykh Ahmad Khatib went unnoticed by Hurgronje, unless his importance is being deliberately downgraded because of some personal reason or in order to make room for other more trivial matters.92 Hurgronje’s failure to give such an important piece of information about the Malay community in Makkah is one of many examples which suggests that his findings were not as comprehensive or scientific as supposed by many, especially Westerners.93 Hurgronje’s version of Makkah in the latter part of the nineteenth century may have been regarded at the time as a magnum opus, but for a student of Islam, particularly of the Malay community in the Holy City, his book cannot be completely treated as a purely academic and factual work.

The earliest descriptive exposition of the conduct of the Hajj by a Malay, however, is that of Haji Abdul Majid Zainuddin who was the First Malay Pilgrimage Officer. Being a Pilgrimage Officer, Haji Abdul Majid was in the best position to explain the Malay conduct of the Hajj from the preparatory stages at home, the situation in Jeddah, the journey to Makkah, the conduct of the rituals while in Makkah and Medinah and the physical structures of the Holy Cities to the journey

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92 According to Haji Agoes Salim, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib was "not on good terms" with Snouck Hurgronje when the Dutch scholar was in Makkah in 1885. Shaykh Ahmad Khatib was strongly anti-Dutch and very outspoken in his opposition to their colonial rule (see Deliar Noer, Modernist Muslim Movement, op.cit., p. 31 [footnote]). His disagreement with Hurgronje might be the answer to Roff’s curiosity (see William R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, op.cit., p. 60 [footnote 17]) as to why his name as a prominent šālīm of Makkah was not mentioned by Hurgronje in his account of Mekka.

back home. The life of Haji Abdul Majid together with various aspects of the conduct of the Hajj including the problems of health, security, travel and welfare is the subject of a useful discussion by William R. Roff. In addition to this, in another work, Roff also discusses the aspect of the health and security of the conduct of the Hajj by pilgrims from Malaya before the involvement of the British administration.

A number of other works are also worthy of mention for their contributions to various aspects of the study of the Malay conduct of the Hajj. The political, economic and various other influences of the Hajj have been discussed by Jacob Vredenbregt. Meanwhile, aspects of the conduct of the Hajj with regard to its pattern, politics, health and welfare have been discussed at length by Mary Byrne McDonnell. Recently there has appeared a work by Hamdan Hassan, who, even though he does not deal directly with the performance of the Hajj, gives a detailed study of a Makkah-originated tariqah, the Tariqat Ahmadiyah, in Malay society.

On the subject of the influence of Cairo on the development of Malay religious and political thought, useful accounts are provided by two articles. These

97 See Jacob Vredenbregt, "The Haddj. Some of its Features and Functions in Indonesia", Bijdragen van het Koninklijk Instituut, Vol. 118, 1982, pp. 91-154. Even though the subject of the discussion is the conduct of the Hajj in Indonesia, it has much relevance for the situation in Malaya. In fact it includes a discussion of the pilgrim brokers and the Alsagoff firm in Singapore (see pp. 126-128).
are Roff's "Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920's" and Abaza's, "Some Research Notes on Living Conditions and Perceptions Among Indonesian Students in Cairo".\textsuperscript{100} Roff's article is particularly helpful in giving in-depth information on the activities pertaining to the publication of \textit{Seruan Azhar} and the personalities involved. Abaza's article deals with the social aspects of Malay students' life in Cairo, and, as indicated by the title, particularly with their living conditions. For an objective and comprehensive study of the Malay religious and political thought which originated from Cairo, it is important that the journals published by Malay students studying there, the \textit{Seruan Azhar} and \textit{Pilehan Timoer}, and the reformist journal, \textit{al-Imam} published in Malaya, but with a strong Cairo influence, be analysed thoroughly.\textsuperscript{101} This analysis was partly undertaken by Roff but not by Abaza in which respect her work could be improved.

Meanwhile, as regards discussion of the Turkish influence and its impact on Malay religious and political thought, two articles by Anthony Reid are particularly helpful for the study of the influence in sixteenth and nineteenth century Malaya.\textsuperscript{102} Reid's articles, which used both primary and secondary sources in English, Dutch, Turkish and Malay provide useful information on the Turkish influence and the Malay response. Another article by A.C. Milner studies the impact of the Turkish revolution and the rise of Kemal on Malays in Malaya.\textsuperscript{103} Milner's work, however, depended heavily on secondary sources and sources written in English. For a study of the Malay response to early twentieth century Turkey and the Kemalist Revolution, the best reference would be the


\textsuperscript{101} I am indebted to the Library of the University of Malaya for supplying me with complete microfiches of \textit{al-Imam, Seruan Azhar} and \textit{Pilehan Timoer}.


\textsuperscript{103} A.C. Milner, "The Impact of the Turkish Revolution on Malaya", \textit{Archipel}, 1986, pp. 117-130.
Malay newspapers and journals including Neracha, Pengasoh, Seruan Azhar, al-Ikhwan, Idaran Zaman, Bahtra and Majalah Guru which mirrored the Malays' views of the political developments taking place there.¹⁰⁴

In this study, in addition to the Middle East and Malaya, the role of the British is also important in the discussion since they were the colonial masters at that time and exerted a strong influence on both regions. Relating to the British policy and response to the Middle Eastern influence on the Malays, the best source is the correspondence between British officials and the Colonial Office which is available at the Public Record Office, London. Another source, the semi-intelligence journal, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, which is also deposited there, also provides valuable information on British views on this influence. Some of the information found in the Bulletin was derived from the official correspondence, while others were reports gathered through British informers. For example, the reports on the Malays who formed the deputation representing Malaya to acknowledge Sharif Ḥusayn of Makkah as Caliph as reported by its No. 21 issue of the Bulletin turns out to be taken from correspondence between the British Consulate in Jeddah and the Foreign Office in London.¹⁰⁵

A heavy dependence on the Bulletin as a main source for British official views, however, is sometimes offset by shortcomings in its accuracy and statistical data. Some of the information given in the Bulletin is found to be overzealous, while other reports are misleading. Thus in the fourteenth issue, it refers to the visit of a religious teacher Haji Wan Ahmad bin Wan Ngah to Lenggong, a district

¹⁰⁴ In fact throughout this study newspapers and journals have been used extensively as a main source of reference since they provide an important reflection of Malay thought. Their significance in this respect was candidly summarised by Za'ba “… Often, of an evening, one sees at the wayside Chinese shop some lettered man, perhaps an old guru of the local school or perhaps the local penghulu, reading one or other of these papers, and a little crowd of elderly people less literate than he eagerly listening, questioning, and commenting around him. Thus they learn what is happening in the rest of the world, thereby making themselves ever less and less the proverbial “frog under the coconut shell” …”. See Zainal-Abidin b. Ahmad, “Malay Journalism in Malaya”, JMBRAS, Vol. XIX, 1941, p. 249.

¹⁰⁵ See L/PS/10/1111. Oriental and India Office Collection, E3934/44, From H.B.M. Agent and Consul of the British Agency in Jeddah to his Britannic Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 16 April 1924.
in Perak and the speech given at the "Bandarsah". On checking the actual event, it turns out that the Bandarsah referred to was actually a "Madrasah", which to the locals is a place for congregational prayers though not as elevated as a mosque where Friday prayers were held.

In the same issue of the Bulletin, Haji Wan Ahmad is branded as pro-Turkish and anti-British just because he preached that the performance of the Hajj should be taken as an opportunity to meet the Turks. The British are clearly seen here as over-reacting to his activity, which they related to Turkey and the Pan-Islamic movement. In another issue, the Bulletin reports that the Malays on the whole were not interested in the political affairs of the Hijaz following the capture of the Holy Cities by the Wahhabi forces. The report is rather misleading if we look at what was being reported during this period by the journal Pengasoh and the newspaper Idaran Zaman concerning the Malay enthusiasm at the success achieved by Ibn Sa'ūd.

Other works on the British response to the Middle Eastern influence on Malay religious and political thought are referred to in Chapter Two, "The Malays and the Caliphate, 1895-1914" of the dissertation by Alun Jones, "Internal Security in British Malaya 1895-1942", and in Chapter Two, "Khilafat, Non-Cooperation, Akali and Kirti" and Chapter Three "The Malays: State Insurrection and Early Leftists" of Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginnings of Political Extremism in Malaya, 1915-1935". These unpublished works provide many useful accounts of the issue which were based on British records.


107 CO 371/11698, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 33, October/November 1925; enclosure Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Amery, 28 November 1925.

108 For a discussion on the enthusiasm shown, see pp. 150-165 of this work.


The preparation of this thesis involved utilising various primary sources scattered all over Malaysia as well as sources found in the United Kingdom and the Middle East. Many of the primary sources were in the form of files of official correspondence, rare books (some are the only copy that still exists) personal collections and various journals and newspapers. Most of the Malay books, personal collections and periodicals consulted were written in Jawi. It is a great advantage that the research has been conducted in the United Kingdom where enormous numbers of the primary sources required are readily obtainable from the Public Record Office and the Oriental and India Office Collection of the British Library in London. The disadvantage, however, is that many materials also related to this study are found in the archives situated in Kuala Lumpur and several others situated in Malaysia's state capitals.

Despite the assistance of modern methods of information transfer which have facilitated the acquisition of some of the research materials needed by this research, the absence of foolproof means of identifying specifically required materials has meant that a vast amount of files and papers have needed to be gone through. This study, however, has been greatly helped by the secondary materials that have already been collected as far back as a decade ago and the work done on the subject long before the study actually started. The secondary sources utilised by this work include books, journals, theses and working papers, written both in English and in Malay, and were collected from the libraries of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London and the University of Malaya Library, Kuala Lumpur. In addition to these sources, some information was also obtained by consultation with individuals conducted before the research started and during field research in Malaysia in early summer 1993.

This study ends on the eve of World War II. Again selecting the exact point of ending is a problem. The Japanese occupation, however, has been generally accepted as new point of departure in the periodisation of Malaysian history which is also applicable to the development of Malay religious and political thought as

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111 My short visit to Egypt in January 1993 has provided me with some idea of the printing of Malay books in Cairo and the activities of Malay students there.
undertaken by this study. The short period of Japanese rule did not instill a Japanese influence; instead the harsh rule created a new sense of political will among the Malays. Before the war, the Middle East was the most significant source of influence in the development of Malay political thought, although by the late 1930s new influences from Indonesia and the West were beginning to gain momentum. After the war, even though the Middle Eastern influence still prevailed, it was strongly contested by the influence from the West which later emerged triumphant in Malay nationalism.
CHAPTER 1

THE MIDDLE EAST AND MALAYA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For many centuries Arabs from the Middle East have exercised a great deal of influence in the Malay World, both in commercial and religious matters, and for a considerable time many may have come here to spend the greater part of their lives. The Arabs' intercourse with the Malay World had its origin from their trading activities in the Indian Ocean which are reported in several accounts, some of which predate the beginning of the Christian era, handed down by Greek and Roman writers.¹ From here Arab traders extended their trading ventures to China, where according to G. R. Tibbetts, who cites a Muslim historian, their presence may well have dated from as early as the fifth century AD.² Since the Malay World and other parts of South East Asia are situated approximately in the middle of the route between India and China, it is most probable that this region was first successfully reached by Arab traders a little earlier than the latter.³

Constant contacts with the Malay World in the past inspired some of these Arabs to write accounts of their trading expeditions which have provided this

² See G.R. Tibbetts, "Pre-Islamic Arabia", op.cit., p. 207.
³ Ibid., p. 207.
region with a rich historical literature. This information, which includes accounts of the Malay Peninsular in ancient times, has been one of the main sources to which Malays have been indebted when writing their early history. Among these Arab writers who wrote about the Malay World between the second half of the ninth and the first half of the tenth century were Ya'qūbī (875-80), Ibn al-Faqīh (902), Ibn Rustah (903), Isḥāq ibn ʿīmrān (circa 907) and Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī (d. 923 or 932).

From contacts that were initially based on trading activities the Malays became converted to Islam. The Islamisation of the Malays elevated their bond with the Middle East, which no longer merely rested on a commercial basis, but now encompassed the important areas of religion and education which opened a new chapter in their relationship. Ancient times had seen an active Arab involvement with the East, but after Islamisation this became a two way traffic, and increasingly the Malays were making more journeys to the Middle East than did the Arabs to the Malay lands. Although the Arab's earlier predominance was confronted by colonial powers which arrived in Malayan waters from the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Malays' attachment to the Middle East was unbroken and its social, political and economic influence continued to dominate their lives.

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Early Trade Relations

In all probability, it was the Arabs of the southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula who were the first navigators of the Indian Ocean and who discovered the Far East.\(^7\) Evidence of their being great mariners may be found in their old lexicons, pre-Islamic poetry and the religious writings of the pagan Arabs.\(^8\) The strategic location of the Malay Peninsular which was situated on the ancient international maritime route enabled it to emerge as a vital stopping place for foreign merchants and since pre-Islamic times it was also a regular shipping route for Arab traders.\(^9\) By the middle of the ninth century the Malay Peninsular became increasingly frequented by the enterprising southern Arabian Arabs, since it was an obligatory passage between East and West for any ship bound for China.\(^10\)

The southern Arabian Arabs' active involvement in inland trade as well as maritime trade in the adjacent seas and beyond to the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean as a source of livelihood was encouraged by a number of factors. The contributing internal factor was the arid and barren homeland (with the exception of few coastal areas) which was not suitable for agricultural activities.\(^11\) Another important contributing factor which also led these Arabs to turn to trade for a living was the stagnation or the decline of the economy of the area and the increase in

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the population, which could not be accommodated any more by the cities of Hadhramaut.  

The prominence of the southern Arabian Arabs in trading ventures was also tremendously assisted by the advantage of their location which enabled them to function, centuries before the advent of Islam, as intermediaries between Europe and the East. Furthermore, their trading activities in the Indian ocean were also greatly encouraged by favourable geographical conditions related to the monsoons which assisted the establishment of trade. The monsoon winds which blow steadily across the Indian Ocean, and then blow in the reverse direction for several months at a time, allowed the passage of sea transport from South-West Asia and from ports further East. Taking full advantage of the monsoons, Arab traders were able to calculate the time taken to reach their destination and for the return journey with great accuracy.

For these southern Arabian Arabs, however, it was more than just their enviable strategic position, the monsoons, the aridity of the region and their entrepreneurial skills that stimulated them to become traders. Their active involvement in trading activities, particularly in the Indian Ocean, was also encouraged by the existence further north of a fairly high form of organised society living in conditions of prosperity. This society provided an important market for their merchandise from the East, including above all essentially luxury goods. The advent of Islam (622 A.D.) further motivated the Arabs to be more venturesome, spurred by the motive of spreading the new faith in addition to trading activities, and by 651 A.D. they had already sent their first embassy to

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15 History has shown the presence of a nearly continuous period of human civilisation in the Middle East or Southern Europe from the time of the Sumerians onwards. This continuous period of civilised society is believed to have created an almost permanent demand for these eastern products, although varying in intensity depending on the degree of civilisation at a given time. See G.R. Tibbetts, "Pre-Islamic Arabia", op.cit., p. 183.
China. The rise of two powerful dynasties, the Umayyad Caliphate in the West (660-749 A.D.) and the Tang Dynasty in the East (618-907 A.D.) also encouraged the sea trade between the eastern and western parts of Asia and enabled the Arabs' trade to flourish significantly.

Apart from the Arabs, the Persians are also noted as having been actively involved in the Eastern trade. It appears that their most important trading port during the ninth and tenth centuries was situated at Siraf, to the south of Shiraz on the Persian Gulf. They are known to have sailed to China as early as the Sasanid Dynasty (234-634 A.D.) and on the way they also traded with the Malays. The presence of Persian traders in China as early as 300 A.D, separately from the Arabs, is clearly indicated by the existence of a Persian settlement and counting houses in Canton as noted in Chinese records. These records also indicate that it was from here that the earliest known emigration of large numbers of Muslim traders to the Malay World originated. It took place

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toward the end of the ninth century following a abortive revolt in 878 A.D. against the Tang emperor.  

These emigrants took refuge at Kalah on the west coast of the Malay Peninsular, which some historians believe is the present-day Kedah (Merbok estuary). The conclusion that it was Kedah, however, is inconclusive due to conflicting accounts given by various Arab geographers as to the site. Recent historical and archeological researches have come up with new suggestions concerning its most likely location, which include either Kelang in the Malay Peninsular or Takuapa in present-day Southern Thailand. Despite the confusion that shrouds its location, what is certain is that Arab and Persian trading shipshad fully penetrated the seas of South East Asia by the seventh century and continued to frequent those waters for almost the next thousand years. Apart from Kalah, other parts of the Malay World were also frequented by these traders following their departure from Canton, including ports under the domination of the kingdom of Srivijaya.

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23 For an enlightening discussion of the candidature of Kelang as the possible location of Kalah, see S.O. Fatimi, "In Quest of Kalah", Journal of Southeast Asian History, Vol. 1, No. 2, September 1960, pp. 62-101; see also his article, "Peace, Unity and Universality", Intisari, Vol. 1, No. 1, n.d., p. 28; and Brian E. Colliss, "The Traders of the Pearl", Vol. 1X, op.cit., p. 24. Paul Wheatley, who also tried to identify the exact site of Kalah, however, arrived at a conclusion that none of these places fit all the accounts given by various Arab geographers. He concluded that Kalah could be any place along the coast from the Mergui Archipelago to the west coast of the Malay Peninsular. See Paul Wheatley, "Desultory Remarks on the Ancient History of the Malay Peninsula", in John Bastin & R. Roolvink (eds.), Malayan and Indonesian Studies, Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1964, note F, pp. 68-70; For a discussion of the archeological evidence, as opposed to literary findings, for the candidature of Pengkalan Bujang in Kedah and Kakhao Island near Takuapa in Southern Thailand, see Alastair Lamb, "A Visit to Sirat", op.cit., pp. 1-19; for the candidature of Kakhao Island see also Lamb's article, "Takuapa: The Probable Site", op.cit., pp. 76-86.


Even though the Middle Eastern traders, particularly the Arabs were acquainted with the Malay World from early times, at first the products of this region did not constitute the bulk of their trading items of commerce and their trading activity there was not as extensive as it was with China. Until the tenth century, relatively limited amounts of spices were traded by Arab traders and the bulk of the oriental trade goods that were brought to Baghdad, which was one of the most important market centre in the Middle East, had been largely luxury items. Similar goods were also traded in Cairo and Alexandria and although there was mention of spices (mainly cloves and occasionally nutmeg and mace) in the commercial records, these trading items were extremely rare and expensive. In was only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the spice trade began to increase in importance, together with textiles and dyes. The importance of spices as trading goods emerged when in Europe the mixture of pepper, ginger, cinnamon, sugar, cloves and nutmeg came into demand to cure all sorts of ailments. In addition, spices were also useful as flavoring for meat and became increasingly popular in the European diet.

The increasing importance of the Malay World to Arab traders was clearly demonstrated when they discovered that many of the commodities which were demanded by China, India and the Arab World and (via the latter) Europe could be found in this area of South East Asia. By the thirteenth century when bulk commodities began to enter the East-West trade, a triple segmentation of long-distance trade to facilitate trading transactions began to surface. This segmentation led to discontinuation of the traditional voyages of the Arab dhows

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26 Ibid., p. 108.
30 Rita Rose Di Meglio, "Arab Trade", op.cit., p. 108.
to China and trade became organised in three sections, divided by intermediate emporia on the Indian coast and the Straits of Melaka. This century also saw two premier South East Asian emporia, Srivijaya and Fo-lo-an which Paul Wheatley believed is Kuala Brang in Trengganu, being regularly frequented by Arab traders.

By the fifteenth century the segmented trading pattern was fully taken advantage of by the East-West traders and only a few junks from China still reached India. Most of them instead stopped at Melaka while Indian-owned ships covered the section between Melaka and the Indian coast and Arab-owned ships dominated the Arabian Sea. Due to increased Arab intercourse with the various islands of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, Melaka which was founded in the early years of that century had by this time come into prominence as the successor of Kalah. Its strategic location in the Straits of Melaka and the conversion of its rulers to Islam encouraged an increasing number of Arab ships to make its city-port their main trading centre in the East. It has been found that in the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries, apart from Arabs from southern Arabia, there were also considerable numbers of Arabs from Egypt who travelled to Melaka. These Arabs formed among others the foreigners who made up a relatively large colony of merchants in the city-port. By the last half of the fifteenth century, Melaka became an essential terminus of the Indian Ocean trade with a population of some 40,000 to 50,000, with foreign merchants forming a large colony.

31 Andre Wink, "Al-Hind", op.cit., p. 44.
36 Ibid., pp. 262-263.
Despite the fact that Arabs continued to be actively involved in the Eastern trade, the actual fact was that from the twelfth century onward, trade in the Middle Eastern had begun to show signs of decline which gradually had a significant effect on the Arab trade in the Far East. The decline of the Middle Eastern trade was contributed to by a number of factors. The internal factor was the diminishing supply of products due to devastating wars, a drop in the region's capacity to export agricultural produce, the decline in the production of its handicrafts and the contraction of its population. In addition to these circumstances, the external factors which were also instrumental in its decline were the ability of the former customers of Middle Eastern traders in Europe to produce their own commodities, the capacity of European merchants to buy the exotic products of the East directly from the producing areas and the expertise achieved by the Europeans in producing more competitive goods which greatly undermined the products of the Middle East.37

Beginning from the closing years of the fifteenth century, the Arab trade in the Far East suffered another crucial blow. Following the success of the Christian Conquistadors in the Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese waged a campaign to eliminate the Muslims elsewhere in the world. For the one and a half centuries that followed, the Portuguese managed to control the maritime trade in the Indian Ocean which significantly affected the previous Arab monopoly of trade in the Ocean which had never been seriously challenged before.38 The fall of Melaka to the Portuguese in 1511 was an important turning point that contributed to the diminishing role played by Muslim traders, particularly the Arab traders from the Middle East in the waters of the Malay World. Although with much reduced trade relations, contact with the Middle East continued to flourish through Islam. The role


of the Arabs in trade in the Malay World only emerged again in the middle of the nineteenth century with the leading role now played by Arabs from Hadhramaut.

**Islamisation of the Malays**

The study of the Islamisation of the Malay World has long attracted the interest of scholars and orientalists because its introduction to the region demonstrates a distinctive uniqueness compared to other parts of the Muslim World. Despite its distance from the Muslim heartland in the Middle East and no evidence to show any military expedition or specially assigned missionary efforts by Muslim rulers from there or from the Indian subcontinent to spread the religion to them, today Malays constitute one of the biggest groups in the Muslim population of the world. The Islamisation of the Malays which took place during the period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century proved to have a radical effect on their lives and marked an important watershed in their history.\(^39\)

As in other aspects of their history, most of the studies on the Islamisation of the Malays were initially dominated by Western historians and orientalists, which subjected it to an interpretation which sometimes conflicted with local perspectives. In the study of the Islamisation of the Malays *vis-a-vis* the role and importance of the Middle East in bringing about this process, three issues have dominated the discussions.\(^40\) The first issue is the origin of the preachers who introduced and spread the faith to them. Although various other theories have been put forward on the origin of these early preachers, including Champa and China, the discussions which focussed on Indian and Arab origins eclipsed other discussions. Most of the orientalists who have studied the spread of Islam to the Malay World,

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however, have arrived at the conclusion that Islam was brought to the region from the Indian subcontinent, instead of from Arabia or Persia.41

The theory that the religion was brought from the Indian subcontinent was first mooted by the Dutch scholar Pijnappel, the first professor of Malay Studies at the University of Leiden. Pijnappel, however, asserted that Islam in this region was brought by Arabs, though they did not come directly from Arabia, but rather from Gujerat and Malabar.42 The theory of Indian origin was further enhanced by the study in 1912 A.D. made by J.P. Moquette who found that the style of gravestones at Pasai dated 1428 A.D. (17 Dhul Hijjah 831AH) was identical to the style of the stone found at the grave of Maulana Malik Ibrahim (d. 1419 A.D.) at Grisik. Following this discovery, it was established that the gravestones at both Pasai and Grisik were similar to those found at Cambay and Gujerat.43 Their assertion to this theory was further supported by the fact that the Gujerati ports were major ship-building centres and by the fifteenth century their merchants were familiar traders at Malay ports.44

The theory of the Indian origin of Malay Islam put forward by Pijnappel prompted other orientalists to embrace the same theory, the earliest being Snouck Hurgronje.45 Hurgronje, however, went even further by arguing that the Islam which came to this region was introduced specifically from southern India.46

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43 Ibid., pp. 443-444. Taking this as evidence, later scholars of the Islamisation of Malays such as R.A. Kern, B. Schrieke, G.H. Bousquet, B.H.M. Vlekke, J. Gonda, T.W. Arnold, R.O Winstedt, Brian Harrison and others also conclude that Islam was introduced to this region from the Indian subcontinent. See S.Q. Fatimi, Islam Comes to Malaysia, Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute Ltd., 1963, pp. 5-6.
Morrison, who made a study of the introduction of Islam to Samudra-Pasai, the Muslim kingdom where Islam is believed to have first been introduced, also concluded that the Islam which was introduced to this region came from there. He based his argument on the long standing trade relation which had existed since pre-Islamic times between the two regions and his study of Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai which he concluded to be wholly coloured by a southern Indian background. Similarly Kenneth Hall, a historian who made a "re-assessment" of the study of the introduction of Islam to the Malay World, also came up with a parallel conclusion that Islam was introduced to this region from southern India.

Another historian, A.H. Hill, however, though he subscribed to the theory that Islam came to the Malay World from India, not directly from Arabia, believed that both the southern and northern Indian Muslims played their role in the Islamisation of the Malays. R.O Winstedt who had researched extensively on Malay culture, although aware of the historical role played by the Arabs in the Islamisation of Malays, which was partly contributed to by their marriage to native women, was not convinced that they had much influence on the process. Interestingly, to prove his point, Winstedt cited several examples quoted from the traditional Malay literary work, Sejarah Melayu, which showed that some Malays were not so receptive to the teaching of Islam and that difficulties were faced by the Arabs in teaching the religion to them. He believed that the available evidence for the Islamisation of the Malays pointed to India, and the significant role

51 Ibid., p. 172.
played by the Arabs in enhancing the process only emerged after the invention of steamships and that these Arabs were from Hadhramaut.52

Despite the theories proposed by these orientalists, there were, however, several scholars who put forward the theory of the "Arab factor" in the introduction of Islam in the Malay World. One of the earliest to come up with this theory was Professor Keyzer of Delft Academy, one of the earliest scholars of Muslim law in Holland, who linked the coming of Islam with Egypt where the Shafī'i school has of old occupied an important place. Other Dutch scholars, Niemann and De Hollander, who also studied the Islamisation of the Malays also pointed out the role played by Arabs, so did other scholars including John Crawfurd, William Marsden and the Portuguese historian, Diego de Couto.53 T.W. Arnold who studied the propagation of the Muslim faith was also of the opinion that although the religion was introduced by missionaries from southern India, nevertheless proselyting efforts were also actively undertaken by Arabs.54

The study of the Islamisation of the Malays vis-a-vis the prominent role played by Arabs from the Middle East in the process, however, is far from complete if local traditions are not taken into account as being as important as archeological findings or cultural indications. Various native reports from the region, either in the form of written records or oral traditions, speak about past legacies, and although sometimes mixed with fictive elements, they indeed record the past history of this region.55 The use of local traditions in the study of the introduction of Islam to the Malay World, however, has been rejected by most orientalists and Western scholars.56 They view the narratives preserved by local
traditions that Islam was introduced to this region from Arabia as having no historical basis, and categorically believe that all the evidence points to India as the source whence Malays received the knowledge of their faith.\footnote{Malay Historical Works*, in K.G. Tregonning (ed), \textit{Malaysian Historical Sources}, Singapore: Department of History University of Singapore, 1962, p. 38.}

Looking at the Malay traditions, it clearly appears that the early Muslim missionaries who converted their forefathers to Islam were Arabs who came directly from Arabia. Most of them married native women after converting them to the faith and the role of preaching the new religion was then continued by their descendants. Some of them converted native rulers and married into their families and later inherited from them and became sultans or rulers of certain states; still others held religious offices such as \textit{Qāḍīs}, \textit{Mufīs} and religious teachers.\footnote{See T.W Arnold, \textit{The Preaching of Islam}, op.cit., p. 370.}

Among the Malay literary works which mention the role of Arabs in the process of Islamisation are \textit{Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai} and \textit{Sejarah Melayu}. In \textit{Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai} the founder of the kingdom, Merah Silu is said to have seen in the dream the Prophet Muḥammad and the arrival of Shaykh Ismail at its port sent by the ruler of Makkah to teach Islam to its people.\footnote{Ismail Hamid, "A Survey of Theories", op.cit., pp. 94-95.}

In \textit{Sejarah Melayu}, the ruler of Melaka, Sultan Muhammad Shah, also has a similar dream in which the Prophet appears to him, teaches him the confession of faith and charges him to go and fetch Sayyid Abdul Aziz, an Arab, the next day from a ship which will arrive from Jeddah.\footnote{G.W.J. Drewes, "New Light", op.cit., pp. 437-438; See also W.G. Shellabear, \textit{Sejarah Melayu}, Petaling Jaya: Penerbit Fajar Bakti Sdn. Bhd., 1984, pp. 41-42.} In another Malay literary work, \textit{Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa}, an Arab missionary, Shaykh Abdullah al-Yamani is said to have come directly from Arabia and converted to Islam the ruler of Kedah, who was subsequently known as Sultan Muzaffar Shah.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 437-438, See also ibid., pp. 55-56.} Early descriptions of the role of an Arab missionary are also found in the Achehnese

\footnote{Ismail Hamid, "A Survey of Theories", op.cit., p. 95.}
chronicle, which reports that Islam was introduced into the northern tip of Sumatra sometime around 1112 A.D. by an Arab preacher, whose name is given as Shaykh Abdullah Arif. One of his disciples, Shaykh Burhanuddin, later continued Shaykh Arif's Islamic missionary works as far away as Priaman on the west coast.62

The second issue which dominated the discussion of the Islamisation of the Malays, which in a way is also related to the first, is when the religion was first introduced to this region. The findings by researchers on the subject have concluded that it is impossible to determine the exact date but there is a possibility that Islam was introduced to this region in the early centuries of the Hijrah, long before any historical notices of such influences were at work.63 Accounts given by Malay traditions, however, indicate that the religion was established in the region at its earliest at the beginning of the twelfth century. Apart from a report given by the Acheh chronicle which said that Islam was introduced to the area around 1112 A.D., another report mentions that in 1204 A.D., Sultan Johan Shah, said to have come from the "windward" converted the people there to Islam. He married a daughter of Baludri of Acheh and became the ruler of the kingdom for almost thirty one years. After his death, his son, Sultan Ahmad succeeded him as the new Sultan of Acheh.64

In addition to these accounts, another kingdom in north Sumatra which composed the realms of Perlak and Samudra was also reported to have been Muslim by 1282 A.D.65 The establishment of Islam in this area was also reported by Marco Polo, the great Venetian traveller, who on his voyage back from China


63 See for example the supposition made by T.W. Arnold on this possibility, on the ground that extensive Arab commerce with the East existed from the very early times. In the second century B.C. the trade with Ceylon was wholly in Arab hands and by the beginning of the seventh century of the Christian era, their trade with China through Ceylon received a great impulse. By the middle of the eighth century Arab traders were to be found in great numbers in Canton, while in the tenth to the fifteenth century, until the arrival of the Portuguese, they were the undisputed masters of the trade with the East. See T.W. Arnold, The Preaching of Islam, op.cit., pp. 367-368.

64 S.Q. Fatimi, Islam Comes To Malaysia, op.cit., p. 38.

65 Syed Naguib Al-Attas, Preliminary Statement, op.cit., pp. 11-12.
visited Perlak in 1292 A.D. and mentioned that the townspeople of the kingdom were Muslims, while the hill-people were not living in a civilised manner. In Trengganu on the northeast coast of the Malay Peninsular, a stone inscription dated 1302 A.D. discovered at Kuala Brang indicates that there were early Muslim settlements in the state.

A study on this inscription which is written in Jawi and is strongly influenced by Arabic shows that it was written by someone who had a deep knowledge of the Malay language of that time. The content was a proclamation of Islamic law which seem to have been directed to the ruler and people of Trengganu. With this proclamation, officially Trengganu emerged as the first Islamic state in the region. Despite the fact that Trengganu proclaimed its Islamic law in the early fourteenth century, this does not mean that Islam came to the area in that century. There is a possibility that Islam had already been practiced there a few centuries earlier, and therefore the date 1302 A.D. on the inscription stone should be taken as the date of the proclamation of Islamic law in Trengganu, not as the date at which Islam was introduced in the state.

Following the discovery of several new findings, a recent study of the introduction of Islam in the Malay Peninsular suggests that the religion may have been introduced to this region at a much earlier date directly from Arabia, most probably a few centuries after it was established there. The discovery of a tombstone with an Arabic inscription dated 419AH/1028AD in Teluk Cik Munah, Pekan Pahang, and the finding of a tombstone of Shaykh Abdul Kadir Ibn Husayn Shah Aliran dated 290AH/902AD in Tanjung Aris, Alor Setar indicate that

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Islam had probably been established in these localities by the tenth century. Meanwhile, the finding of a Kelantan dinar dated 577AH/1181AD shows that Islam was practiced and influential in the state by the twelfth century.

Whatever the arguments on the date of the Islamisation of the Malays among scholars who have studied the subject, they are, however, unanimous in their opinion that the process was set on a firm footing in the early fourteenth century and accelerated at a faster pace during the following centuries, ultimately leading to the conversion of the population of the surrounding areas in the region to Islam. On the basis of the available evidence and arguments, it seems clear that the suggestion made by B. Schrieke that the Islamisation of the Malay World actually occurred in the course of the sixteenth century and later as a result of the antagonism between the Muslim traders and the Portuguese which culminated with the capture of Melaka in 1511 A.D. is almost untenable.

The third issue which dominates discussions of the Islamisation of the Malays is how it took place and what were the factors that led to the process. Scholars seem to agree that trade played the major role in the Islamisation of the Malays, a theory which was first suggested by Tome Pires who wrote in approximately 1515 A.D. While it was clearly through trade that Islam was initially introduced in the Malay World, it seems highly questionable that the large scale conversion that took place in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries can be explained adequately as resulting only from these early trading contacts.

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72 See for example the three phases of Islamisation proposed by Syed Naguib Al-Attas, Preliminary Statement, op.cit., pp. 29-30.
75 Syed Farid Alatas, "Notes on Various Theories", op.cit., p. 165.
In this context, it is also important to look at the local perspectives, while not denying the role played by traders, Arab and non-Arab, in the process. Looking at the Malay literary works discussed above, it is clearly demonstrated that the process which converted the Malays to Islam took place from the top, whereby Arab preachers came directly from Arabia and converted the Malay rulers to the religion. These court literatures seemingly show that only after the rulers had embraced Islam did their subjects follow suit. This episode as described in Malay literatures also indicates that the Arabs who converted the Malay rulers were not traders, but preachers who came purely to propagate the religion of Islam.76

Apart from the role played by the courts, A.H. Johns believes that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the Sufi Shaykhs from the Middle East who passed through the Malay World on the outward journey to China also played an important role in converting the indigenous population en masse to Islam.77 Syed Naguib al-Attas on the other hand, while subscribing to the theory, also stresses the importance of Sufi metaphysics through which a highly intellectual and rationalistic religious spirit entered the receptive minds of the Malays, effecting a rise of rationalism and intellectualism which was not manifested in pre-Islamic times.78 These Sufis who acted as a catalyst in their missionary work also played a role in deepening the Malay desire for fuller communion with Islam; a comparison to a certain extent could be found during the same period in Anatolia.

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76 The use of these Malay literary works to support the evidence that Islam was introduced from Arabia, however, was rejected by among others, T.W. Arnold who argued that there is no historical basis for such a belief, and he strongly believed that all evidence available seems to point to India as the source where the Malay received their faith. See T. W. Arnold, The Preaching of Islam, op.cit., p. 370.


78 Syed Naguib Al-Attas, Preliminary Statement, op.cit., p. 5.
with the role played by the dervish orders in the Gazi state, out of one of which the Ottoman dominion emerged, in deepening Turkish appreciation of Islam.79

Apart from these theories, several others are also suggested by a number of scholars to explain the rapid process by which Islam was accepted by the Malays. S.Q. Fatimi attributed its success to the role played by Muslim missionaries who contrasted with the failure of the Christians. In the process of spreading the religion, the Arabs and other Muslim missionaries conciliated the natives of the country by acquiring their language and followed their manners, intermarried with them and melted into the mass of the people. In the process they also did not, on one hand give rise to a privileged race, nor on the other, to a degraded caste.80 Schrieke who suggested that Islam was introduced to this region at a much later date also attributed the rapid spread of Islam in this region to the role played by the Muslim Shahbandars (Harbour-masters), Muslim scholars and contact with the traders and also the religious and political role played by Aceh in enhancing the process.81

The fact that the overwhelming majority of Malays in Indonesia and Malaysia are Muslims suggests that the Islamic faith was received and welcomed with greater enthusiasm there than anywhere else in South East Asia. It also suggests that the acceptance of the faith by the people of this region was voluntary rather than a result of the use of force or military expeditions sent to South East Asia by any Muslim power that reigned supreme in the Muslim World of the Middle East or the Indian subcontinent.82 In the process of spreading the


80 S.Q. Fatimi, Islām Comes To Malaysia, op.cit., p. 83; See also S.M. Imamuddin, "Islam in Malaysia", op.cit., p. 278.


82 Muhammad Saleem Ahmad, "Islam in Southeast Asia: A Study of the Emergence and Growth in Malaysia and Indonesia", Islamic Studies, Vol. X1X, No. 2, 1980, pp. 134-135. According to S.Q. Fatimi who quoted from Groeneveldt, Chinese sources gave an account that Mu’awiyah, the founder of the Umayyad Dynasty and the Muslim navy made plans to invade the Malay lands in 674. His intention, however, was abandoned when he received a report showing the peaceful, equitable and settled condition that prevailed there under the ruthlessly just rule of Queen Sima. See S.Q. Fatimi, Islām
religion, although sometimes the sword has been drawn in support of the cause, preaching and persuasion rather than force and violence have been the main characteristics of this missionary movement.\textsuperscript{83} Given the nature and scale of the acceptance of Islam by Malays which was unique by itself compared to what was happening for instance in the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent, their Islamisation will continue to be a subject of discussion by Western orientalists and local scholars alike.

**Cultural Influence on the Society**

Despite the fact that Islam has changed the culture and social behaviour of the Malays, several orientalists who have studied its practice and influence among them consider the process which took place about six hundred years ago to be not a spectacular landmark in their history. J.C. van Leur who was not impressed by the process, suggests a parallel between Islamisation and Indianisation since, according to him, "both these world religions were only a thin, easily flaking glaze on the massive body of indigenous civilisation".\textsuperscript{84} Even R.O Winstedt, a scholar of Malay culture, did not recognise the significance of the religion in Malay life and believed that any Islamic influences in the society have been mixed with Hindu belief.\textsuperscript{85}

Despite the conclusions made by some of these orientalists, others such as Van Nieuwenhuijze acknowledged that Islam undoubtedly is an important ingredient in Malay culture and has acted as a means for their social and cultural

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\textit{Comes to Malaysia, op.cit.,} p. 69.

\textsuperscript{83} T.W. Arnold, \textit{The Preaching of Islam,} op.cit., p. 409.


self-identification. The theory of the insignificance of the Malays' Islamisation upheld by several Western orientalists, on the other hand, was strongly repudiated by a number of local scholars, the strongest critique of the opinion being offered by Syed Hussein Alatas and Syed Naguib al-Attas, who believed that the advent of Islam is the most momentous event in the history of this region. The Islamisation of the Malay World is also believed to have provided one of the most important ideological factors that have transformed the culture of the area. This transformation of culture through a change in religion has been made possible because Islam stresses not only correct belief but also right conduct.

The transformation of Malay culture by the influence of Islam and the Middle East was first begun by Pasai. After its conversion to Islam, the Muslim ruler of Pasai bore the title al-Malik al-Zahir which was an imitation of the name of the Mamluk Sultans in Egypt which suggests the association of the kingdom, at least by name, with this Muslim empire of the Middle East. In the thirteenth century, Pasai grew into an important Muslim political power in north Sumatra and there is evidence to show that a branch of the Pasai royal house ruled in Kedah in the middle of the fourteenth century. As a Muslim kingdom, Pasai acted as the patron of Islam in this region, and its court and mosque emerged as the earliest centres of Islamic education in the Malay World.

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When Ibn Battuta visited Pasai in 1345/6 A.D., he mentioned that its Sultan, al-Malik al-Zahir, was a religious man who walked on foot to Friday prayers and was fond of religious debates. He was also very zealous in propagating Islam to the surrounding areas by means of conquest and he had the upper hand over all the non-Muslims in the vicinity who paid poll-tax to him. As an important centre of Islam, Pasai was visited by noted Muslims such as al-Muntazir, a descendent of the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad who died there in 1407 A.D. Pasai was also an international meeting place of Islamic scholars and theologians who came from the world of Islam to disseminate religious knowledge, and it is also reported to have hosted such 'ulamā' as Qāḍī Amīr Sayyid from Shirāz, Tāj al-Dīn from Isfahān and Amīr Dawlāsā from the Sultanate of Delhi.

After the ruler of Melaka became Muslim, he concluded a family alliance with the Sultan of Pasai by marrying the latter's daughter. Both Pasai and Melaka then emerged as important centres of Islamic learning and were instrumental in the propagation of Islamic faith throughout the Malay World. Although Pasai claimed priority as a theological centre, it was Melaka that was destined to become one herself. As a place where theologians and preachers gathered, discussions became more frequent and ultimately Melaka emerged as a leading centre of Islam in the region during the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries.

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97 Caesar Adib Majul, "Theories on the Introduction", op.cit., p. 344. Even when Pasai was on the decline, its importance as a religious centre continued and the 'ulamā' of Melaka still referred to it on problems related to religion.
Following the demise of Melaka, Acheh rapidly rose to become the most important commercial, cultural and religious centre of the Malay World; for the Muslim merchants and traders had moved away from Melaka and chosen Acheh as their base for their trading activities. Along with the merchants and traders, there had come to Acheh scholars of Islam and men of letters, and by 1560 A.D., Acheh had emerged as the most important centre of learning, culture, and commerce, replacing the fallen Melaka. From the *Bustanus Salatin* of al-Raniri, we learn that during the reign of Sultan 'Ali Ri'ayat Shah (1571-1579 A.D) some of the sciences of the Muslims were already taught at Acheh Darul Salam including the intellectual sciences (al-Maqulat) taught by Muḥammad Azhari, a learned Shafi'i scholar who came from Egypt.  

Being an extension of the legacy of Pasai and Melaka as a leading centre of Islam, Acheh also inherited several of their traditions including that of Islamic writings which were spread through the medium of the Malay language. According to Winstedt, to Acheh the significance of the Malay language was equivalent to that of Latin to Europe in the Middle Ages. The extensive use of the Malay language in Acheh for the flowering of Islamic literature and religion led to its modernisation and made its widespread use possible throughout the Malay World. Its use also enabled it to spread as a vehicle for philosophical discourse and as a language of Islamic philosophical literature. The comprehensive utilisation of the Malay language also enriched its vocabulary through the borrowing of large number of Arabic, Persian and some Turkish words.

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102 There are a number a works which deal with words of Middle Eastern origin borrowed by the Malay language following Islamisation. For the Arab loan-words in Malay, see for example, Amran Kasimin, *Perbendaharaan Kata Arab Dalam Bahasa Melayu*, Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia,
The extensive use of the Malay language also led to the widespread utilisation of the Arabic script as a medium of writing which was known in Malay as *Jawi*. In Acheh, the Malay language and Jawi writing, apart from being used to spread knowledge, were also used as a means of communication, even with the West. Among the earliest surviving examples of Acheh's correspondence is the "golden letter", being a communication between Sultan Iskandar Muda (reign 1607-1636), the greatest ruler of Acheh and King James 1 of England dated 1615. The letter, which uses the Malay language and Jawi writing is


It is not known who actually named the Arab alphabet used by Malays "Jawi writing" or "writing by the people of Jawi". It is rather ironic that as believed by many, Jawi refers to Java since it was not until 1478 that the Island of Java came under Muslim domination. Before and after the advent of Islam in the island, Javanese already had their own writing which was entirely different from the Jawi writing. Arab sources, however, do mention the term al-Jawah from before the middle of ninth century, but the term is applied to the people of Sumatra and Malays in general. In fact when Marco Polo and Ibn Batutta visited the island they called it Java. It seems that the Arabs identified the land inhabited by the Malays in the region as Java. Even though there is no concrete basis of argument for the use of the term, the writing was already used since the early days of the Muslim kingdoms in north Sumatra. Existing evidence, however, suggests that the writing was well established by the early fourteenth century and this is indicated by the Trengganu inscription stone dated 1303 A.D. For a discussion on the use of the term "Jawi" and its use following the Islamisation of Malays, see Omar Awang, "Kesan Pengaruh Ugarma Islam Dan Bahasa Arab Dalam Bahasa Melayu", in Hamdan Hassan (ed), *Islam dan Kebudayaan Kebangsaan*, Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication & Distributors, 1979, pp. 93-107; Omar Awang, "The Trengganu Inscription as the Earliest Known Evidence of the Finalisation of the Jawi Alphabet", in Lutfi Ibrahim, et al., *Islamika III*, Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Pengajian Islam, 1985, pp. 190-191; Henry Yule, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, op.cit., pp. 286-287 (Note 1).

The reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-36) is generally regarded as the "Golden Age" of Acheh, a period marked by great external military expansion and domestic blossoming of economic, literary and religious activities.

Apart from this "golden letter" there are a few other early seventeenth century manuscripts connected with the correspondence between Acheh and Westerners now extant. These include a copy of a letter from the Sultan of Acheh to Queen Elizabeth 1, dated 1011AH/1602AD and the original letter which
remarkable in its style and format in which it borrowed heavily from the Middle East. Its sumptuous illuminations betrayed elements of Safavid (in the beautiful blue dome-shaped ʿunwān) and Ottoman (in the floral poppy motifs) influence, fused in the indigenous interpretations.106

The use of the Malay language and Jawi writing in Acheh, however, were most extensive in the dissemination of religious knowledge. The most impressive and definitive findings on its earliest use for the purpose are found in the book, ʿAqāʿīd al-Nasāfī which deals with the fundamental beliefs and faith of the Muslims based upon the essentials of the religion of Islam.107 The contents of the book were not only widely taught and studied in Acheh, but also throughout the Malay World from the late sixteenth century.108 The extensive use of the Malay language and Jawi writing also led to the flourishing of various fields of knowledge and literature in the language. More importantly, various branches of Islamic studies such as Islamic law, tradition, Qur’ānic exegesis, philosophy, Sufism and so forth received much attention from religious scholars who began to write on them and contributed to a large body of books known in Malay as Kitab Jawi.109

106 Three-quarters of this letter from Sultan Perkasa Alam Johan (Sultan Iskandar Muda) of Acheh whose reign marked him as the major power of the Western Indonesian Archipelago to King James 1 of England, dated 1024AH/1615AD are devoted to describing the majesty of the Sultan, his great wealth and the breadth of his dominions. This letter which is nearly one metre high is regarded as one the oldest and most beautiful illuminated royal Malay letters and also the largest and the most spectacular the British collection ever had. See Annabel Teh Gallop and Bernard Arps, *Golden Letters: Writing Traditions of Indonesia*, London: The British Library and Jakarta: Yayasan Lontar, 1991, p. 34.


109 Literally, *Kitab* means "books" and *Jawi* refers to the Malays, as the Arabs in the past referred to all people in the Malay World as Jawi or Jawah. Therefore, Malay writing using the Arab alphabet is called Jawi writing. See Mohd. Nor Ngah, "Islamic World-View of Man, Society and Nature Among the Malays in Malaysia", Mohd. Taib Osman (ed), *Malaysian World-View*, Singapore: ISEAS, 1985, p. 6. See also footnote 103.
One of the earliest and most notable authors of Kitab Jawi in Aceh was Nuruddin al-Raniri, who wrote Kitab Da' Khalaq al-Samawat Wa al-Ard (The Creation of Heavens and the Earth) in 1639 A.D. at the request of Sultan Iskandar Thani of Aceh (reigned between 1636 A.D. and 1641 A.D.).\textsuperscript{110} Al-Raniri was a prolific Kitab Jawi author who produced more than twenty three books.\textsuperscript{111} By the early nineteenth century, the Kitab Jawi tradition was by no means confined to Aceh, but had spread throughout the Malay World and Arabia. In Hijaz, prominent authors of Kitab Jawi include Muhammad Arshad bin Abdullah al-Banjari,\textsuperscript{112} Abdul Samad al-Falembani,\textsuperscript{113} and Daud bin Abdullah al-Fatani, who is described as by far the most productive author of Kitab Jawi in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{114} Another remarkable Kitab Jawi author who established his name in


\textsuperscript{111} Mohd. Noor Ngah, "Islamic World-View of Man", op.cit., p. 7. Among other famous books by him are Sirat al-Mustaqim (the Straight Path) which was written in 1054AH/1644AD. For list of his books, see Wan Mohd. Saghir Abdullah, "Al-Allamah Syeikh al-Raniri", Majalah Dian, No. 92, September 1976, p. 55.

\textsuperscript{112} Muhammad Arshad bin Abdullah al-Banjari studied in Hijaz for thirty five years and wrote nine books. His famous book is Sabil al-Muhtadin (The Way of the Guided) which was completed in 1195AH/1780AD. For the life of Shaykh Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, see Wan Mohd. Saghir Abdullah, "Syeikh Muhammad Arsyad bin Abdullah", Majalah Dian, No. 102, October 1977, pp. 97-102.

\textsuperscript{113} His famous book is on Sufism, entitled Hidayat al-Salikin and completed in 1192AH/1778AD. Although the book is actually a translation of al-Ghazali's Bidayat al-Hidâyah, Abdul Samad also added to it some of his own personal views. In addition, he also wrote Sayr al-Salikin which actually an adaptation of al-Ghazali's Īyaḥ āulum al-Din. His other works include Zuhrah al-Muhrî Fī Bāyān Kalimah al-Tawhīd on scholastic theology based on the lectures of the Egyptian Sâlim Shaykh Ahmad Ṭab al-Mun'im al-Damānhibi which were delivered in Makkah; the "Urwah al-Wuthqa which deals with awrāḍ and is supposed to be recited at certain fixed times. His other works include Nasihah al-Muslimin Wa Tadhkīrah al-Mu'minin Fī Fīlāt al-Jihād Fī Sabīl Allah Wa Karāmah al-Mujahidin Fī Sabīl Allāh and Ratib 'Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani. See Muhammad Uthman El-Muhammad, Peradaban Dalam Islam, Kota Bharu: Pustaka Amran Press Sdn. Bhd., 1982, p. 169 (Chapter X, "The Islamic Concept of Education According To Shaykh 'Abdu'-S-Samad of Palembang And Its Significance In Relation To The issue of Personality Integration"). For the life and works of Abdul Samad al-Falimbani, see also Wan Mohd. Saghir Abdullah, "Syeikh Abdul-Samad al-Falimbani", Majalah Dian, No. 100, August 1977. pp. 91-99.

\textsuperscript{114} Mohd Noor Ngah, Kitab Jawi: Islamic Thought of the Malay Muslim Scholars, Singapore: ISEAS, 1983, p. 6. His total works number more than sixty one books, the greatest being Furu' al-Mas'al written in 1254AH/1838AD. For a life and a brief discussion of 12 of the works by Shaykh Daud bin Abdullah bin Idris al-Fatani that are still in print, see Virginia Matheson and M.B. Hooker, "Jawi Literature in Patani: The Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition", JMBRAS, Vol. 61, Part 1, 1988, pp. 19-27; See also H.W.M. Shaghir Abdullah, Syeikh Daud bin Abdullah al-Fatani. Ulama' dan Pengarang Terulung Asia
Makkah in the nineteenth century was al-Nawawī al-Jāwī al-Bantani al-Tanānī who wrote more than forty one books.\footnote{115}

Apart from \textit{Kitab Jawī}, the use of Jawī writing in Acheh also enabled the non-Arabic literate Malays to understand the contents of the Holy Book when \textquoteleft{}Abd al-Ra'uf bin Ali al-Jawi al-Fansuri al-Singkili produced the first Malay commentary on the whole Qur'ān, \textit{Tarjumān al-Mustafīd}.\footnote{116} The commentary has been traditionally regarded as an authoritative translation of \textit{Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wil} of al-Baydawi (d. 685AH/1285AD).\footnote{117} \textit{Kitab Jawi} and the commentary on the Qur'ān were widely used as texts in religious teaching throughout the Malay World and were instrumental not only in the spread of Islamic knowledge, but also in the growth of the Malays' intellectualism.\footnote{118} In the nineteenth century, before these \textit{Kitab Jawi} were printed locally, they were printed in Makkah, Bombay, Istanbul and Cairo.\footnote{119}


\footnote{116}{See Peter Riddell, "Earliest Quranic Exegetical Activity in the Malay-Speaking States", \textit{Archipel}, No. 38, 1989, p. 108. \textquoteleft{}Abd al-Rauf was born around 1615 in Singkeli, Acheh, a small town on the west coast of the island of Sumatra. He spent approximately nineteenth years studying exegesis, jurisprudence and other Islamic sciences in Arabia during the 1640s and 1650s before returning to Acheh in approximately 1661. Apart from \textit{Tarjumān al-Mustafīd}, \textquoteleft{}Abd al-Ra'uf also wrote about twenty books, one of his most well-known works being \textit{Umdat al-Muhtājin}. He died around 1693.}

\footnote{117}{Peter Riddell, "The Source of \textquoteleft{}Abd al-Ra'uf's Tarjumān al-Mustafīd", \textit{JMBRAS}, Vol. LVII, Part 2, 1984, p. 113.}


\footnote{119}{Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning", op.cit., pp. 230-231. One early bookshop in Singapore known to sell religious books, Qur'ān and \textit{Hikayat} published in these places was the Haji Muhammad Taib Haji Abdul Shukur, 11 Baghdad Street, Singapore. See the advertisements for the bookshop which
After several centuries of use as a vehicle for the spread of religious knowledge with Kitab Jawi as its main torch-bearer, the Malay language and Jawi writing were firmly established throughout the Malay-speaking World.\textsuperscript{120} Even with the advent of the British administration when the use of Romanised script was encouraged, Jawi continued to be favoured by the Malay public who had came to look upon it as their own national script.\textsuperscript{121} In Johore, following the extension of British administration to the state, its Sultan, Sultan Ibrahim made a special request that apart from the official use of English and Malay in the court of justice and departments, the Malay written language, the Jawi, should also be given official recognition.\textsuperscript{122}

The advent of Islam and the widespread use of the Malay language and Jawi also led to the emergence of Malay Islamic narratives as written literature.\textsuperscript{123} These narratives had their origin as a genre of Islamic literature which had existed since the time of the Prophet.\textsuperscript{124} Following the tradition of Muslim storytellers in early Islamic times, Muslim missionaries who preached Islam to the Malays also used Islamic narratives for propagating religious consciousness to their audience. These Islamic narratives, which are popularly known as the

\footnotesize{appear regularly in Neracha. For example Neracha, Vol. 2, No. 58, 6 November 1912; Vol. 3, No. 115, 24 December 1913.}


\footnotesize{121 This fact was demonstrated by Za'ba who points out that before 1941 in Malaya all Malay newspapers and journals were in Jawi since it was strongly favoured by the majority of the Malay public. Attempt by some at that time to produce them in Romanised script proved abortive since Malays regarded it as alien. See Zainal-Abidin b. Ahmad, "Malay Journalism in Malaya", JMBRAS, Vol. XIX, 1941, p. 248.}

\footnotesize{122 Letter of Sultan Ibrahim of Johore to the Governor of Straits Settlements, Sir Arthur Young, 11 May 1914; Appendix in Ahmad Fawzi @ Mohd. Ahmad Pawzi bin Mohd. Basri, "Johor 1855-1917: Perkembangan Dalam Pentadbirannya", M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1972, p. 344.}


\footnotesize{124 Ismail Hamid, Arabic And Islamic Literary Tradition With Reference To Malay Islamic Literature, Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication & Distributors Sdn. Bhd., 1982, p. 115.}
Malay Islamic *Hikayat* and were recited on special occasions and for entertainment, include the *Hikayats* of the Prophet Muḥammad, the Ancient Prophets, the Companions, Muslim Heroes and Pious Muslims.\(^{125}\)

In addition to these Islamic *Hikayats*, other works of this type, particularly of Persian origin, including epics and romantic literature, were also brought into Malay literary life, thus enriching its various genres. Earlier Malay literary works which were directly of Persian origin are mostly on the theme of Muslim patriotic history with reference to the Persian scene. Books of this nature had a direct consequence, particularly in Melaka, on the efforts which were made to link the traditions of its Sultans and their court with those of the Middle East. The most important work of this literary type is *Hikayat Iskandar Dhul Karnain*, which was used as a source by the compiler of the *Sejarah Melayu* for his genealogy of the Melaka Sultans.\(^{126}\)

Other famous Malay *Hikayats* which are also of Persian origin include *Hikayat Amir Hamzah* and *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah*, which have been demonstrated partly to be faithful translations from Persian insofar as their Persian originals have been preserved.\(^{127}\) These two *Hikayats*, particularly *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiah*, proved to have a strong influence on the Malays. In a famous episode in the *Sejarah Melayu*, there is a description of how in the highly charged atmosphere during the war with the Portuguese the restive young Malay nobles keeping guard sent a messenger to the Sultan, requesting that *Hikayat*


\(^{126}\) The way the book was written bears some resemblance to Firdausi’s method in compiling the *Shah Name*, which traces the history of Persian kings through Alexander and Darius down to the time of Mahmud of Ghazna. Probably that epic, or more likely, a Malay compilation based upon it, were known to the writer of *Sejarah Melayu*, and suggested a method for introducing the material from the Alexander legend, as well as the generations of Persian successors. Since the first ruler of Melaka (about 1400) is called Iskandar Shah, we may believe that the story was current and perhaps the actual Malay translation was made quite early in the fifteenth century. See G.E. Marrison “Persian Influences in Malay Life (1280-1650)”, *JMBCAS*, Vol. 28, Part 1, March 1955, p. 60 & p. 63.

Muhammad Hanafiah be read to them, hoping to gain encouragement from his exploits.\(^{128}\) In addition to books of historical literature, the *Hikayats*, other Persian forms of literature were also adapted into Malay, including books on legends, tales and theology.\(^{129}\)

The introduction of Islam to the Malay World also brought other Middle Eastern literary traditions into Malay literary life including poetry, *Shafir*. The Malay *Shafir*, however, had its origin and influence from the type of Arabic and Persian poetry which first came to the Malay World via the Sufi literature.\(^{130}\) The originator of Malay *Shafir* was Hamzah Fansuri, who was also the earliest Malay writer in the genre, in addition of composing a number of prose works.\(^{131}\) *Shafir* was well established in Malay literature in the sixteenth century, and by the

\(^{128}\) Muhammad Hanafiah was the son of ʿAlī, the Fourth Caliph, who died 700 A.D. and subsequently became a hero of the Shiites. In the Malay World, Muhammad Hanafiah represented the Muslim warrior par excellence as far back as the Melaka empire. See Annabel Teh Gallop and Bernard Arps, *Golden Letters*, op.cit., p. 71. The incident referred can be found in W.G. Shellabear, *Sejarah Melayu*, op.cit., p. 203.


seventeenth century it was widely used all over the Malay World. Another early prose form introduced to Malay literature was *Ruba’i* which had its origin from Persia. Apart from *Shafir* and *Ruba’i* other Arab-Persian poetic genres found in the Malay literature include *Bayt*, *Nazam*, *Mathnawi*, *Kitâat*, *Qasidah*, *Marhaban*, *Berzanji*, *Hadrah*, *Dabus* and *Zikr*.134

The influence of the Middle East on Malay society and cultural life was not only confined to language, writing and literature, but it was also a source of influence which flavoured a number of Malay cultural performances. The flavour fitted the Malays well since they assumed that a material culture which is Middle Eastern, Arabic or to a certain extent Persian, symbolises Islamic culture. In addition, the performances are also an important factor of their cultural identity, and a source of authority and legitimacy in defining the realm of Malay-Islamic tradition. In Penang, the *Boria* performance might be linked to the Persians since probably Shi’ite elements were strong in the early days of the Settlement. The performance used to be a religious observance of the tenth day of Muḥarram (called *Ashura* to commemorate the brutally murder of the Prophet’s grandson Ḥusayn at Karbala) and was celebrated by parties of local amateurs putting on a form of dramatic show and song contests called *Boria* which presented a re-enactment of the Karbala tragedy in all its poignant pain and pathos.136

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In Johore, a cultural performance, the *Zapin* or Malay folk dance also had an Arabian origin, but its development among Malays was attributed to the dance tradition of the Hadhramaut Arabs which then influenced the Malay dance. The folk dance is considered a manifestation of Malay-Islamic evolution and involved the interaction of Arabic influences through its musical instruments; the *gambus* (lute or ʿūd), *marwas* (hand drums) and *dok* (long drum).137 *Zapin* is normally performed at a particular social gathering such as a wedding ceremony, in addition to commemorating religious celebrations associated with the Prophet’s birthday, the Islamic New Year and the festivals of ʿĪd al-ʿFitr and ʿĪd al-Adha. *Zapin* was highly regarded by Malays and it was the only dance tradition which was allowed to be performed in or near the mosque. The dance’s seemingly Arabic origin was not only a symbolic representation of Islamic culture but was also considered by Johore Malays to be a permissible performance tradition allowed by the rigorous and strict code of Islamic conduct.138

From the Middle East was also the origin of several other popular Malay cultural performances, but adapted and given local settings. In some cases, these cultural performances were brought by Arabs, while others, even though they originated from the Middle East, were brought to the region through India or elsewhere. In Trengganu, the traditional *Rodat*, singing to praise God and the Prophet accompanied by the beating of a special small Malay gong (*rebana tar*) actually originated from the Middle East, but was brought to the state by traders from Sambas, Borneo who traded there.139 Another popular Malay cultural performance which was Arab-influenced, although likely to have passed through India but adapted to the local environment, was the *Ghazal*.140

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138 Ibid., pp. 42-43.


140 *Ghazal* is an Arabic poetic genre believed to have originated in Arabia in pre-Islamic times, which passed into Persian, Turkish and Urdu as well as Malay. *Ghazal* has acquired different meanings in these languages, and in Persian and Urdu it developed into a vehicle for serious poetry used by famous poets including Ghalib and Iqbal. See Dato Abdullah bin Mohamed, "The Ghazal. In Arabic
In Malay society, however, the Ghazal did not develop into a poetic genre as in the Middle East. Instead it is rather a name applied to a musical session, a sort of salon musical party, consisting of traditional folksongs controlled and disciplined by a small number of musical instruments - mostly of foreign origin - with the harmonium as the leader.141 The same phenomenon applies to the stories of Majnun and Laila which were well-known in the Middle East and also known to the Malays. The Middle Eastern motif of the stories, however, is alien to the form of Ghazal that flourishes in the Malay World because their original theme of chivalrous love is totally alien to the Malay idea of love.142 The same applies to the "victim" of love, since in the Middle Eastern Ghazal, the "victim" is the male lover, whereas in the Malay Ghazal the "victim", or the abandoned and hopeless one, is the girl.143 Even though the Malays adopted the Arabic name "Ghazal", it is actually a new form of Malay love song where the music and lyrics are essentially Malay in character, while the dominant musical elements are melody and harmony not rhythm.144

Even though most of the cultural performances believed to have originated from the Middle East were generally well-received by the Malay public, in some cases like the Boria, they were strongly criticised by some quarters since some elements in its staging were viewed as deviant and even contrary to the teaching of Islam. Its evils and abuses were revealed by Muhammad Yusof bin Sutan Mahyuddin in his books Boria dan Bencananya (Boria and its Evil) and Sha'ar Boria.145 At the peak of its popularity when the Malays were obsessed by this performance, Boria was even condemned for leading to moral decadence. The

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144 Dato' Abdullah bin Mohamed, "The Ghazal", op.cit., p. 28.
staging of the yearly performance which involved the spending of a large amount of money was also accused of being as the reason for the downfall of the Malays in Penang.146

The Islamisation of the Malays, however, did not mean a complete change in their lifestyle or a total following of the cultural pattern of the Middle East. One aspect of Malay life which was well guarded by them was the kingship. As in the pre-Islamic era, the Malay kingship and the concept of government was centred around the king (raja). When they became Muslim the name of the institution was changed to Sultan. In Malay society it was the Sultan who was the object of loyalty, not the ummah under the leadership of a Caliph. This explains why even though the Middle East has been a source of various influences, the British Malaya Malays' response to political developments there, particularly with regard to Muslim leadership, was comparatively less aggressive as compared to the Indians or even the Netherlands East Indies Malays.

In addition to politics, another aspect in which the Malays did not follow their Middle Eastern counterparts entirely was that of costume. Partly due to climatic difference, the Malay attire was little influenced by Middle Eastern dress, even though in a way it conformed to Islamic requirements.147 While it was common for religious scholars and Hajis to wear the turban and the skull-cap and at times to appear in a white robe like their co-religionists in the Middle East, the wearing of the veil by women was ignored. The same applied to some of the Malay practices and adat, which even though they were contrary to Islamic norms, were until recently, widely practiced.148


148 Take for example the practice of the matrilineal inheritance law of Adat Pepatih in Negeri Sembilan where the female is given a higher allocation of the shares which is contrary to the Islamic rules of the Faraid. Until recently, some other practices like Main Pantai (the offerings to the spirit of the sea before the beginning of the fishing season) on the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and Mandi Safar (sacred bath taken on the last Wednesday in the month of Safar of Muslim calendar) in Melaka which are contrary to the teachings of Islam were still widely observed. For the discussion on Mandi Safar, see Zainal-Abidin bin Ahmad, "Malay Festivals And Some Aspects of Malay Religious Life", JMBRAS,
Marshall G.S. Hodgson once made a striking observation when he commented that in the sixteenth century of our era, a visitor from the planet Mars might well suppose that the human world was on the verge of becoming Muslim. The visitor’s assumption, according to him, would have been based on his understanding of the strategic and political advantages occupied by the Muslims, and also on the vitality of their general culture.\footnote{Marshall G.S. Hodgson, "The Role of Islam in World History", International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 1, 1970, p. 99.} Although there might be some truth in Hodgson’s remarks as far as these particular advantages are concerned, other aspects of Muslim life were not that encouraging. Economically, since the twelfth century its growth in most part of the Middle East had already begun to show signs of stagnation, and deteriorated in the following centuries and it continued to do so until the nineteenth century. And, except in Iran and very briefly in Turkey, this economic decay was also accompanied by intellectual and cultural decline.\footnote{Charles Issawi, "The Decline of Middle Eastern Trade 1100-1850", in D.S. Richards (ed), Islam and the Trade of Asia. A Colloquium, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970, p. 245.}

Politically too, the early years of the sixteenth century saw the beginning of a challenging episode in the history of the Muslims in their encounter with the Christians following the latter’s triumph in the Iberian Peninsula.

In the Malay World, their encounter with the West began when the Christian-Muslim rivalry originated from Europe was extended to the region, spearheaded by the Portuguese and the Spaniards. The emergence of the Portuguese in particular as a powerful maritime power in the Indian Ocean and the success of Alfonso de Albuquerque in capturing Melaka in 1511 A.D., marked the beginning of the Malays’ political and economic confrontation in their relation with the West. With the victory achieved, the Portuguese were provided with a base which controlled the sea routes that passed through the Straits of Melaka and the

trade upon which Melaka's prosperity depended. In addition to economic gain, Melaka also provided the Portuguese with the logistics for a political base and a centre for their efforts to spread Christianity. The presence of the Portuguese in Melaka not only posed a serious threat to the economy of the Malays and their Islamic faith but also to their existence, since it was also a policy of Albuquerque to destroy the Muslim powers of the region.

Following the demise of Melaka, the Malay political and trading activities and the development of Islam shifted to Acheh and later on to Johore-Riau. Even though in their confrontation with the West the Malays managed to preserve their faith, and at the early stage, their political existence, the Portuguese supremacy in the Straits of Melaka, followed in turn by the Dutch and the English proved to have a disastrous effect to their trading-based economic activities. In the succeeding centuries Malay trading activities suffered a steady and serious decline while the importance of the Arabs and Persians in the East-West trade diminished. Acheh and Johore-Riau were finally subdued and by the early twentieth century the British emerged triumphant in the Malay Peninsular, managing to bring all the Malay states under their administration.

The British intervention in the Malay Peninsular, however, was chiefly motivated by economic gain rather than the pursuit of a religious cause. Contrary to the policy adopted by the earlier Portuguese conqueror, when the British administered Malaya, they pursued a policy of keeping aloof from matters related to the Malays' religion and customs as guaranteed in the treaties they concluded. Their supervision on these matters was effectively carried out by dominating the power of the Sultans who were the source of religious authority. Since Malays looked upon their Sultans as sacred religious symbols, the British manoeuvre


153 The importance of Arabs as a trading community together with that of the south Indian Muslims only reappeared in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, centred in Penang and Singapore.
discouraged them from using Islam as a political weapon against colonial interference as was the case in the Middle East.\textsuperscript{154}

Since Islam was not taken as a serious threat by official British policy, the need for full scale interference in its affairs did not arise and the structure of the Malays' Islam remained relatively unchanged, as did their relationship with the Middle East. The British policies of non-interference in matters related to Malay culture and religion were clearly reflected in their administrative approach, and there was a good deal of genuine friendship between the British and the Malays on the basis of tolerance and the avoidance of religious issues. The adoption of this policy also meant that the famous clause in the treaties they made with the Malay Sultans of no interference in these matters was also taken to mean that Christian missions to the Malays were strictly forbidden.\textsuperscript{155}

Under these conditions, the British also took the necessary care to avoid offending Muslim susceptibilities in this way.\textsuperscript{156} Since the earliest days of their intervention this policy had been upheld by various British administrators, as could be seen in their response in Penang to the activity of Thomas Beighton of the London Missionary Society in the late 1830s. Beighton, who enthusiastically distributed tracts that mainly dealt with the comparison between Christianity and Islam, irritated their Muslim recipients in the island who complained to Governor S.G. Bonham (1803-1863 A.D.). When his activities became increasingly offensive

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{154} In the Middle East where British interference took place not long after the British intervention in Malaya, the opposition to British domination such as the Urabi Pasha Revolt of 1882 in Egypt and the Mahdist Uprising of 1885 in Sudan clearly showed a distinct Islamic element. The policy adopted by the British in Malaya of non-interference in Malays' religion and culture, and dominating the power of the Sultans, proved to be crucial in their colonisation, since also unlike in the Middle East, Islam in Malaya had been isolated from politics and did not emerge in the forefront as a rallying point against the colonial power. See M.A. Rauf, \textit{A Brief History of Islam. With Special Reference to Malaya}, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 94.
  \item \textsuperscript{155} G.E. Marrison, "Islam and the Church in Malaya", op.cit., p. 296. Marrison, however, believed that this prohibition was erroneous since there was no such provision in the treaties concluded. He noticed that the alleged misunderstanding existed not only amongst the British administrators but also amongst the Malays themselves.
\end{itemize}
and there was sign of growing uneasiness on the part of the Malays who received a stream of unsolicited materials, it prompted Bonham to summon him for an interview to ease the tension.\textsuperscript{157} In another instance in the early twentieth century, after one J. Moore had adopted Malay dress and lived as a Malay for a few weeks, the District Officer visited him and told him either to adopt European dress and cease his work among Malays or leave the district at once.\textsuperscript{158}

The policy adopted by the British authorities, however, was obviously for reasons of political expediency, rather than their high regard for the Malays' religion and customs. The policy was also dictated by economic concerns, since they were more anxious to see Malaya kept free from any threat of religious zeal which was deemed to be an explosive issue.\textsuperscript{159} The British colonial authorities believed that economic progress and political stability could be achieved as long as this status quo in Malay society was preserved.\textsuperscript{160} This British policy, however, was resented by some Christian missionary workers, who felt that the opportunity was being lost to evangelise the Malays, now that there was a more encouraging environment for the purpose, particularly as Malays looked on the British more positively as compared to the Portuguese and the Dutch.\textsuperscript{161}

The official policy of non-interference in Islamic matters adopted by the British administration, however, did not deter Christian missionary workers, who instead channelled their active proselytising efforts to the immigrants, particularly


after the establishment of Methodism in Singapore in 1885.\textsuperscript{162} Singapore which had developed as an important trading metropolis also emerged as a headquarters for the Malay mission since in the city-port the constraints on missionary work among Malays were less severe, compared to the Malay States.\textsuperscript{163} The persistent conviction of these Christian missionaries that they should evangelise the Malays, despite the limitations, was encouraged by their optimism that their efforts would be successful since they were pursuing a "holy cause" and were supported by funds. This was opposed to what they believed to have been the case in the Malay's earlier Islamisation by Arabs which they considered was entirely for "worldly advantage", while the spreading of Islam had been undertaken "merely as a secondary task".\textsuperscript{164}

The early enthusiasm of Christian missionary workers was also boosted by their expectation of dividends for the cause following the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate. The termination of such an important institution in Islam was taken as a good sign which would have some bearing on their works. It was also taken that the event would change the Malays' outlook toward their religion and provide a good prospect for the spread of Christianity among them.\textsuperscript{165} Furthermore, these early Christian missionary workers also believed that Malays were not as religious as was thought and that there was room for Christian proselytisation.\textsuperscript{166}

In their efforts to spread Christianity, the evangelists believed that one of the most effective means to reach the Malays was by distributing Christian

\textsuperscript{162} Robert Anthony Hunt, "The Role of the Methodist Church in Malaysian Society", Paper Presented in Departmental Seminar, History Department, University of Malaya, 7 September 1988, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{163} E.G. Tisdall, "Singapore as a Centre for Moslem Work", \textit{The Moslem World}, Vol. VIII, No. 1, January 1918, p. 5. The belief that Singapore was ideally equipped for the Christian mission was also shared by Shellabear. See Shellabear, "Singapore As Strategic Centre", \textit{The Moslem World}, Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1918, p. 185.

\textsuperscript{164} E.J. Tisdall, "Singapore as a Centre", \textit{op.cit.}, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., p. 9.

literature, especially the Gospels and other portions of the Scripture to them, to win their hearts.\textsuperscript{167} In order that this literature should reach them, they believed that it should be produced in the Malay language, the language which was widely used throughout the Malay World.\textsuperscript{168} This fact indeed was realised as early as 1629 when a Dutchman, Albert Conelius Rayl, translated the Gospel of St. Matthew into Malay with the aim of making it available to the inhabitants of the Malay Peninsular.\textsuperscript{169} This translation of the Bible was the first of its kind in a non-European language, and even though its translation was only completed in 1735, it remained the master version in Malay for many years in both Roman script and in Jawi writing.\textsuperscript{170}

The use of Malay language and Jawi as a mean of spreading Christian messages, specially to reach a wider Malay audience, was also initiated by the journal \textit{Bustan Ariffin}, the first Malay journal to be published. This quarterly Christian missionary organ was first published in January 1821 and altogether six editions of it were issued until April 1822.\textsuperscript{171} The effort pioneered by \textit{Bustan Ariffin} was also taken up by other journals, and between 1821 to 1898 there were five journals published by Christian missionaries in \textit{Jawi} with the aim of providing Christian tracts, mainly to the Malays.\textsuperscript{172} The use of the Malay language and


\textsuperscript{170} Ibid., p. 285. The Malay response to the translation of the Bible is difficult to ascertain, but in 1912, it was claimed that 15,000 copies of it in Malay Jawi and Malay Roman Scripture were sold. A large proportion of them was apparently sold in the East Indies but some were also sold in the Federated Malay States and Johore. See "Note on Current Topics", \textit{The Moslem World}, Vol. 1V, No. 2, 1914, p. 92.


Jawi for the purpose of Christian evangelism was further extended by the exertions made by W.G. Shellabear, who was also by far the most prominent of the Christian evangelists among the Malays and himself was actively involved in producing Christian literary works in the language.¹⁷³ In one of his recommendations to the missionary workers, he suggested that any suitable literature which might already be available in the Roman character, either English or Dutch spelling, should be rapidly adapted by rewriting it in Jawi so that it could be printed and distributed to the Malays.¹⁷⁴

To ensure the success of missionary work, Shellabear even went to the extent of suggesting that various Mission Boards who planned to send their missionaries to work with any Muslims including Malays should be equipped not only with the Malay language but also with a knowledge of Arabic language and literature.¹⁷⁵ Despite these suggestions and efforts, some Christian missionaries felt that even the use of Jawi and Malay as the official language by the colonial governments was counter-productive to missionary efforts since it would further boost Muslim propaganda and promote the spread of Islam.¹⁷⁶ They considered that the use of the Roman character for the Malay language should be recommended which would greatly lessen the advantage enjoyed by Islam, even though it was used as an official language of the government administration.¹⁷⁷

The existence of Christian missions to evangelise the Malays, despite British administrative restrictions, alarmed some Malays, especially those who had received their education in the Middle East. These Malays were concerned by these activities because they were comparatively better exposed to the current Christian-Muslim animosity and its potential for a spill-over into the region. It was


also through the efforts of these Middle Eastern-educated Malays that \textit{al-Imam}, the first Malay reformist journal, was published, inspired among other things by the wish to curb the activity of Christian missionaries, which they believed had begun to spread the Gospel to the Malays.\footnote{Mohd. Sarim Hj. Mustajab, "Akhbar dan Majalah Agama", op.cit., p. 37.} Apart from these Middle Eastern educated Malays, the Malay students in Cairo also viewed critically the menace of Christian missionary activities among Malays, which they believed was also part of the hidden agenda of the colonialists to divide the Malay World.\footnote{Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 21, June 1927, pp. 407-408.}

Since the time of the British penetration during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, several areas of Malay life, such as demography, economics, politics and education, had undergone a radical change. The Malay response to the changes, however, was not necessarily a result of a direct British presence or the policies they adopted, since in a number of cases it was the Malays themselves who had to react to it to keep pace with the rapid development following the intervention. Following the rapid expansion of British colonialism and a capitalistic economy, a literate work force was needed to support the extension of British administration. This led to the establishment of English schools, first concentrated in the Straits Settlements, the oldest being the Penang Free School (1816), followed by Free Schools in Melaka (1826) and Singapore (1834).\footnote{See H.R Cheeseman, "Education in Malaya, 1900-1941", \textit{The Malayan Historical Journal}, Vol. 2, July 1955, pp. 31-32.}

By the second half of the nineteenth century, more schools were founded, including those of Christian missionary organisations. At the beginning, the English schools received a poor enrollment from Malay students because parents equated English education with Christianity and were not enthusiastic.\footnote{N.J. Ryan, "The Malay College, 1905-1963", \textit{Malaysia in History}, Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1964, p. 26. The Malays’ suspicion toward the English school could be seen for example in a case which happened in Melaka when a boy was sent by his parents to enrol in one of the schools in the state in 1928. This move, said to be the earliest and the only one that took place there before World War II, caused much uproar in the community and aroused constant accusations that the boy had been converted to Christianity. See Abd. Rahim Abdullah, "Orang Melayu dan Pendidikan Sekular", in Khoo Kay Kim (ed), \textit{Melaka Dahulu dan Sekarang}, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, 1982, p. 101.} Despite their
suspicions, by the early twentieth century an increasing number of Malay pupils began to enrol in these schools and the shift in attitude was encouraged partly by the understanding that no attempt would be made to influence them to change their religion, on the grounds that the existing goodwill might be sacrificed thereby. In addition to English education, the British also introduced Malay vernacular schools. In 1896 there were already 130 Malay vernacular schools established in the Malay States and the figure increased to 171 by the beginning of the twentieth century. As for the Unfederated Malay States of Johore and Kedah alone by 1920 there were 129 schools with a total enrolment of more than 9,000. In the same year figures show that altogether there were approximately 46,000 pupils attending 757 Malay schools all over British Malaya, or 12 percent of the total Malay population between the ages of five and fifteen.

The main feature of these English and Malay schools was their more systematic approach in their method of teaching and the better provided facilities as compared to the traditional or pondok religious education. The introduction of modern education by the British indirectly challenged these traditional forms of education and was one of the reasons which inspired them to modernise to keep abreast of the current changes. One of the earliest religious schools that followed the pattern of the English schools was Madrasah al-Hamidiyah Limbong Kapal in

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182 G.E. Marrison, "Islam and the Church", op.cit., p. 296.
184 The traditional education that existed in the Malay society comprised Qur'anic and Pondok education which were the mainstay of Malay traditional education. The Qur'anic schools had been in existence since the introduction of Islam and were comparatively very simple. Classes were usually held in the houses of the teacher or in the village mosque after prayers (normally after Maghrib prayer). The lessons given were Qur'anic recitation, in addition to certain elements of Islamic observance (Fard al-'Ain). It was toward the end of the nineteenth century that Pondok schools began to appear in the Peninsular Malay States. It is quite certain that they first appeared in Kelantan and Kedah almost simultaneously. The Pondok schools were residential schools. The students came from various places to study under a particular teacher and built a little pondok (hut) in the vicinity to stay in. There was no age limit; many of the students were adults and often studied for more than ten years. In the Pondok the students sat on the floor in front of the teacher who taught and explained religious texts to them. The curriculum, apart from Qur'an were Fiqh, Tawhid, Mantiq, Tafsir and Hadith. See Khoo Kay Kim, "Recent Malaysian Historiography", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. X, No. 2, September 1979, p. 256; Zahoor Ahmad bin F. Hussein, "Growth of Islamic Education in Malaysia", Educational Journal, Vol. 3, 1965/65, pp. 54-58.
Kedah. This madrasah which was established sometime in 1913 by Haji Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek, a Makkan-educated "ālim, was among the earliest religious schools to use a formal education system with proper school buildings, timetables, a bell and specialised teachers.185

In Madrasah al-Hamidiyah, as opposed to the pondok schools, the curriculum included subjects such as mathematics, geography, and the English and Malay languages, in addition to religious subjects and Arabic. The promotion of students from one level to another was through examinations and those who had completed their studies were awarded certificates.186 By the 1920s and 1930s more madrasahs of this nature were established all over Malaya with the undertaking mainly championed by the reformist minded Malays who realised the importance of establishing madrasahs with a more systematic approach as in English schools, while not abandoning their goal of teaching religious subjects to their pupils.

Even though to a certain extent the advent of British colonialism in Malaya had indirectly influenced the Malay's Islam, their commitment to the faith never at any time wavered. After more than four centuries of proselytising efforts to spread Christianity to them, initially with the militant approach taken by the Portuguese under the direction of Francis Xavier, and later by the methods of persuasion adopted by British Christian missionary organisations, the attempt made practically no headway. Contrary to what was believed by the early Christian evangelists, the fact was that the Malays were solidly Muslim and remained so.187 The Malays had already incorporated Islam as a core element of their culture, and any threat


to Islam became viewed by them as a challenge to their culture and their way of life. The fact that they were Muslims meant that the Malays' relation with the Middle East continued unbroken and the British intervention proved to have no effect on their Islamic faith. The policy adopted by the British administration, which stayed aloof on matters related to Christian evangelism, preserved the status quo and was generally welcomed by the Malays. The British intervention and its influence, whether direct or indirect, also proved that the Malay relationship with the Middle East was never at any time severed and in fact it was the prosperous economy achieved by Singapore and Penang from the middle of the nineteenth century under British rule which played a major part in encouraging the Arabs from Hadhramaut to trade there.

The British policy as opposed to that of the Dutch in the East Indies was neither to stop the Malays travelling to the Middle East for religious or educational purposes nor to forbid the Arabs of the Middle East to travel to Malaya. The booming economy of British Malaya in the early twentieth century allowed more Malays to travel to Hijaz to perform their religious duty and to further their studies there or in Cairo. Instead of resisting it, to a certain extent the British in fact facilitated this travel, particularly the conduct of the Hajj, which was the most important means of fostering a closer relation between the Malays and the Middle East. This increase in contact also enabled the Malays to broaden their religious horizons. This British policy, however, was not out of any obligation to or sympathy for the Muslim cause, but simply for the benefit of their economic interests which were always at the fore-front of their concerns.


189 See for example the relief expressed by the editorial of Semangat Islam because the British administration in Malaya did not interfere in the religious affairs of the Malays as compared to what being done by the French in Morocco. The journal also applauded the open-minded policy of the administration which even tolerated its publication which clearly showed its anti Western sentiments. See Semangat Islam Vol. 2, No. 13, 1 November 1930.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARABS OF HADHRAMAUT AND MALAY SOCIETY: ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION

Most Arabs who are settled in Malaysia today trace their roots from Hadhramaut, a piece of land situated at the southern extremity of the Arabian Peninsula.¹ Arabs of whatever origin, at least until recently, however, were perceived by Malays as the descendants of the Prophet, a genealogical link which elevated them to a noble ancestry, supernatural powers and an inherited missionary role.² With the title Sayyid or Shaykh added to their names, they reaffirmed their distinguished status which gained them a special respect as direct inheritors of the wisdom of Islam and possessors of an unexampled piety and religious merit.³ This respect which the Arabs enjoyed in the eyes of Malays was also supplemented by the

¹ Before 1968 the term "Hadhramaut" was applied chiefly to the South Arabian states of the Kathiri and Qu’aiti Sultanates. Since 1968, however, the term has been applied to the governorates of Shabwa and Hadhramaut of the Republic of South Yemen. The latter state united with North Yemen in 1990 and the area became part of the unified state of Yemen.

² Abdallah S. Bujra, The Politics of Stratification. A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town, Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1971, p. 23. Even though most Arabs who came to Malaya traced their origin to Hadhramaut, a small number of them also came from Hijaz and elsewhere. In Malaya these non-Hadrami Arabs played a significant role as religious teachers and in the propagation of Islam among the Malays.

belief that they possessed special powers, which it was feared could cause harm if not properly observed when dealing with them.4

The most effectual factor in the Malays' respect for the Arabs, however, stemmed from the feeling of indebtedness to the community which had contributed to and influenced the development of their civilisation which was brought about by the process of Islamisation. As for the Arabs, the authority and respect they enjoyed were also contributed to by their hard work, sincerity and commitment to bringing about social change in the Malay community, and their capability of adapting themselves well to the society.5 Arab religious scholars, especially their first few generations, were a prominent feature in Malay life, as were Arab entrepreneurs.6 They were also prominent for their role, since the early days of their presence, in the politics and administration of the Malay states.

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4 This belief seems to have been universally accepted throughout the Malay World; a similar notion was also found in nineteenth century Aceh. See C. Snouck Hurgronje (Trans. by A.W.S. O'Sullivan), The Achehnese, Vol. 1, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1906, pp. 155-156. The supernatural power believed to have been possessed led to the graves of some pious Arabs being highly revered by Malays. Among these graves recorded by Winstedt were those of Shaykh Muhammad and Shaykh Ahmad at Bukit Gedong, Melaka, Shaykh Muhammad Ali at Simpang Lima, Kelang and Sayyid Makbuli at Taiping. See R.O. Winstedt, "Keramat: Sacred Places and Persons in Malaya," JMBRAS, Vol. II, Part III, December 1924, pp. 275-276.

5 Ismail Hamid gave an interesting example of an Arab woman in his village in Perlis before and during World War II who adapted herself well to the community and gained great admiration from fellow villagers. She was the only literate woman in the community, taught religious knowledge, and provided a form of entertainment to them by narrating Islamic histories. See the account of her in Ismail Hamid, Arabic and Islamic Literary Tradition. With Reference to Malay Islamic Literature, Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication & Distributors Sdn. Bhd., 1982, pp. v-vi.

6 Abdullah Munshi who wrote around 1807 demonstrated to us an interesting example of the prominent role played by Arab religious scholars in Melaka and the Malays' high expectations of them. Following the death of his Qur'an teacher a successor had to be found and it was at this juncture that an Arab shaykh from Yemen, a certain Mu'alim Muhyil-Din domiciled in Acheh came to Melaka and astounded everyone by his skill in reciting Qur'an. To support his presence there forty or fifty students each agreed to pay him $5.00 a year. Apparently he was an effective teacher, ensuring that his students understood the basic principles of recitation. After a year he returned to Acheh and his place was taken by Shaykh 'Alawi Ba Fakih of Yemen who showed an extraordinary knowledge of Arabic and knew Malay. Melakan elders arranged his stay and fifty or sixty students signed up and paid $5.00 each. He first lectured on the Umm al-Barāhīn, then on various other works of fiqh with special reference to ritualistic matters governing prayers and related aspects. See A.H. Johns, "Islam in the Malay World, An Exploratory Survey with Some Reference to Quranic Exegesis", in Raphael Israeli and Anthony H. Johns (eds.), Islam in Asia, Vol. II, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1984, p. 129; Yusof A. Talib, "Munshi Abdullah's Arab Teachers", JMBRAS, Vol. 63, Part 2, 1990, pp. 27-29.
Despite the fact that the Arabs had an early history of close bonds with the Malays, their increasing ethnic consciousness and unwillingness to share their well-connected economic interests were resented by the Malays. This resentment was increasingly visible in the 1930s and found its expression in several Malay vernacular newspapers and journals, and social organisations which championed the cause of the ethnic Malays.

Origin, Migration and Settlement

The Malay World has been known to the Arabs since early times from the trading activities of their merchants on the way to China. Despite these early contacts, their apparent presence in the region was only recorded in 55AH/674AD by the Chinese who mentioned the existence of a Muslim settlement in East Sumatra, San-Fu-Chi (Palembang) headed by an Arab chief. In the following centuries, after the advent of Islam in the Middle East, a greater body of evidence was unearthed which further showed their presence in this region, such as the finding in Kedah of two silver coins of the Abbasid Dynasty from the reign of al-Mutawakkil (847-861AD). The finding of these coins, one on them dated 848AD, at least shows the existence of a trade link between Kedah and the Arab World during the ninth century.

When the Muslim Kingdom of Perlak was founded in the early twelfth century, there is a tradition which says that it was established by Sayyid Abdul Aziz (ruled 1161-1188), an Arab who came from the Quraish tribe. His descendants are also said to have exercised a strong leadership influence in the kingdom until it was taken over by the family of the descendants of the local

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princes.⁹ The presence of Arabs who exerted a strong influence in the northern part of Sumatra was also reported by Marco Polo and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa who stopped there awaiting the change of monsoons on their world journeys.¹⁰ Traditional Malay literary works, however, are more explicit in their accounts of the influential role played by Arabs in the early history of the Malay kingdoms. Sejarah Melayu for instance, gives an account of an Arab, Shaykh Ismail from Makkah, who came to Samudra to spread the religion of Islam.¹¹ In another account an Arab from Jeddah, Sayyid Abdul Aziz, is said to have converted to Islam the Sultan of Melaka, later known as Raja Muhammad.¹² Sejarah Melayu also mentions the visit to Melaka of a Sufi master from Makkah by the name of Maulana Abu Bakar who brought with him the book "Kitab Dār al-Maḍlūm (Durr al-Manẓūm)" by Abū Ishāq (al-Shirāzi).¹³

Even though Sejarah Melayu states that Arabs who came to this region were from the port of Jeddah, later Arabs who came here generally travelled from the main city-port of Aden. The emergence of Aden as an important city-port dated back to the fall of Baghdad in 1258 when some Arab trading activities were shifted there. Its importance as a trading centre was recorded by Marco Polo (1294) and later by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (1325-1355), who visited it and mentioned it as a prosperous city-port. A century later in 1443 when a Venetian, Nicolo Conti visited the port, he described it as "an opulent city remarkable for its buildings".¹⁴ The land in

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¹² Ibid., pp. 54-56.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 114-115. According to Sejarah Melayu, Kitab Dār al-Maḍlūm was written by Abū Ishāq in Medina. After it was completed, he requested one of his students, Maulana Abu Bakar, to bring it to Melaka so that its teaching could be disseminated there. In Melaka, the arrival of the book was greeted with high regard and even Sultan Mansor Shah learned its content, taught by Maulana Abu Bakar himself. Realising the importance of the book, the Sultan ordered it to be sent to Pasai to be translated into Malay. See also Yahya Abu Bakar, "Melaka Sebagai Pusat Islam Abad ke XV Masihi", Sari, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1983, pp. 37-38.

which the city-port was situated was also recorded in the Malay literary work, *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, when on his journey to Rum, the Malay legendary hero Hang Tuah mentioned passing through it before entering the Red Sea. Aden continued to function as an important trading port in the following centuries and was also an important gateway for the Arabs of Hadhramaut who began to migrate to the Malay World, including Malaya, before the arrival of the Dutch in the seventeenth century.

The Arabs of Hadhramaut or the Hadhramis originally belonged to the Kathîrî tribe of Southern Arabian stock, but towards the close of the fifteenth century disputes erupted among members of the ruling family. As a result of this struggle they were left only with the eastern portion with its chief towns of Tarîm and Saiwûn under their control, while the western part with the ports of Shîhr and Mukallâ were controlled by its rival, the Qu‘a‘îti Sultanate. These major towns, Tarîm and Saiwûn, were identified as the chief centres of intellectual activity while al-Mukallâ and Shîhr were largely mercantile. Since pre-Islamic times the Hadhramis have often been described as the most sophisticated and enterprising people in South Arabia, even though the area had a long history of tension and disaster. They also had a long history of migration to neighbouring Arab countries as well as to the distant countries of East Africa, India and the Far East where in 1938 it was estimated that at least half as many Hadhramis lived outside Hadhramaut as did inside.

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15 Kassim Ahmad (ed. with new intro.), *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1993, p. 553. After ten days' sailing from Acheh Darul Salam, Hang Tuah is said to have reached Bab Mokha with the state of Abyssinia situated to its left.


When exactly the Hadhramis decided to migrate in large numbers to the Malay World is difficult to ascertain, but there were several reasons which explain its causes. The geo-political and economic situation of Hadhramaut itself was an important factor which encouraged this tendency in their struggle for survival. The arid lands which frequently suffered from long periods of drought followed by floods resulted in Hadhramaut being unable to supply enough food to its population. Over the previous centuries revenues obtained from transit commerce had also ceased to flow due to the decline in trade with the Far East. The difficulties faced in earning a living ultimately stimulated emigration as a way out in search for a decent livelihood. Since the early days, the Hadhramis were also tempted to go overseas not only to seek a living for themselves but also to carry on the tradition of remitting home annually such monies as would enable them to purchase the necessities (and often the luxuries) of life which could not be produced locally.

Another reason for the migration of the Hadhramis was the prolonged conflicts among the tribes in the area and also the devastating war with the Wahhabis. The Wahhabis tried to eliminate what they considered to be incorrect practices of Islam including those of the Hadhramis, and as a result many of their books were destroyed and mausoleums of their saints were demolished. The desire to avoid persecution and bitter ideological conflicts forced many Hadhramis to emigrate. In addition to the hostile and unfavourable conditions in their homeland, the conducive environment overseas was also a factor that encouraged them to migrate. In the early twentieth century there was an increasing demand for religious teachers, including in Malaya, following the opening of several Arabic religious schools. Hadhramaut which has a long history as an important centre of


learning was never short of a supply of the 'ulamā' whose influence and reputation extended overseas and provided a source of teachers for these schools.\textsuperscript{23} Despite all these causes, undoubtedly the overriding factor which led these Arabs to migrate was their search for happier livelihoods than those provided in their own infertile and impoverished homeland.\textsuperscript{24}

Even though a steady trickle of Hadhramis had been migrating to Malaya prior to the British intervention, significant numbers of them did so only in the early nineteenth century. When Singapore came under British administration in 1819, the Arabs were among its pioneering settlers. A substantial degree of Arab migration to the region, however, was most noticeable from the middle of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 partly explained the reasons for the increase in the migration since the port of Aden was situated in the middle of the shipping route. Aden, which reemerged as an important port between Europe and the Far East following the opening, enabled the Hadhramis to travel to and from the region with ease. The rapid economic growth experienced by the Malay States and especially Singapore under the British administration, also attracted many Arab entrepreneurs who wished to venture their fortune there.

Despite their relatively large-scale migration, the exact number of Arab migrants after the arrival of the British was unknown, except for the Straits Settlements where they were recorded.\textsuperscript{25} Available records show that the early Arab population was concentrated mostly in Singapore. In early January 1830 they were recorded as 28, all of them male, out of a total population on the island of

\textsuperscript{23} Abdallah S. Bujra, \textit{The Politics of Stratification}, op.cit., p. 4.


\textsuperscript{25} Take for example the case of Penang where the census recorded that the Arab population in the island was as follows: 1871 (322 out of the total population of 61,797); 1881 (521), 1891 (449 out the total population of 123,886), 1901 (473), 1911 (702), 1921 (520). See Omar Farouk Shaeik Ahmad, "The Arabs in Penang", \textit{Malaysia in History}, Vol. XX1, No. 2, December 1978, p. 5.
20,243 and this continued to increase steadily in the following decades.\textsuperscript{26} In 1884, according to Van den Berg, who referred to the Straits Settlements census, out of the 1,637 Arab population found in the Straits Settlements, 835 of them lived Singapore.\textsuperscript{27} In the island, the early Arab population were concentrated in the area which used to be known as the Middle Road in a "quarter" bounded by Arab, Baghdad, Basrah and Jeddah Streets.\textsuperscript{28} In the Malay States, however, no record of their early population is available, even though they were widely distributed and demographically formed a very distinctive minority group in the village communities.\textsuperscript{29}

The Hadhramis who migrated to Malaya and elsewhere were generally divided into two groups. The first were the Sayyid group, who claimed that they were the descendants of the Prophet and traced their genealogy through the line of Īsā al-Muhājjir, whose great grandson, Ālī bin Ālawi, institutionalised the Ālawiyyah Sayyids in Hadhramaut in the early twelfth century.\textsuperscript{30} These Arab Sayyids regarded themselves as having the highest descent and most notable religious status in the society.\textsuperscript{31} Most of the Arabs who migrated to Malaya claimed to belong to the Sayyid Ālawiyyah or the Sayyid group.\textsuperscript{32} As part of their

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{26} See \textit{Singapore Chronicle}, No. 165, Thursday 15 July 1830. The census of the population of Singapore shows the number of each class of inhabitant taken on 1 January 1830.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} William R. Roff, \textit{The Origins of Malay Nationalism}, op.cit., p. 40. Van den Berg, however, considered that the figure of 445 adult males in Singapore given was "much too high". He believed that there were "at the most 200 adult (male) Arabs actually settled at Singapore". He attributed the alleged excess to the number of Arabs in transit to the Netherlands Indies. His own figure of 580 male and female Arabs in Singapore includes children only if more than ten years old.
  \item \textsuperscript{28} J.A.E. Morley, \"The Arabs and the Eastern Trade\", op.cit., p. 167.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} The earliest recorded census of their population was made in 1891 for the state of Perak (51), Selangor (27) and Negeri Sembilan (20). See J.A.E. Morley, \"The Arab and the Eastern Trade\", op.cit., Appendix C, p. 175.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} Mahayuddin Haji Yahaya, \textit{Latarbelakang Sejarah Keturunan Sayid}, op.cit., pp. 13-14.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Abdullah S. Bujra, \textit{The Politics of Stratification}, op.cit., p. 13.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Mahayuddin Haji Yahaya, \textit{Sejarah Orang Syed Di Pahang}, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1984, p. 26. Despite the fact that most Hadhramis who migrated to this region claimed to belong to the status group, Roff believes that most of them were actually common folk from the towns with a primary interest in small-scale trade. See William R. Roff, \"South-East Asian Islam in the
\end{itemize}
family tradition the Sayyid group traced their genealogy through the patrilineal line whereby those who were born from an Arab father were considered to be Arab, even though the mother was not. Based on this criterion, the Sayyid group could be divided into those of pure Arab descent where both parents were Arabs, and "born Arabs" whose mothers were non-Arab. Since the number of Arab women who migrated was small and intermarriage with the Malay women was common, the "born Arab" Sayyids were much greater in number.33

The Arabs of the Sayyid group were a close-knit community and as much as possible tried to preserve their identity. To keep their family genealogy intact and their place of origin identified, they were recognised by their family names. In Kedah as elsewhere, where many of the migrant Hadhramis of this group settled, they were identified by their family names, the most prominent including those of al-Baraqabah, al-Shahabuddin, al-Junayd, al-Aidid, al-Sagoff, Ba Faqih, al-Kaff, al-Mahdali, al-Jamalullah, al-Qadri, al-'Attas, al-Mihrar, al-Jufri, Al bin Yahaya and al-Idrus.34 Apart from the Sayyid group, another group of Hadhramis who also migrated, but were much fewer in number, consisted of "scholars and holy men" (mashāyikh, plural of shaykh) "tribesmen" (qabā'īl, plural of qabīla) and "the poor" (masākin, plural of miskin).35 These Arabs normally used the title Shaykh which implies that they were not descendants of the Prophet, while there were also others who preferred to discard the use of any title.

Even though the Arabs who migrated to Malaya and elsewhere tended to foster a close and lasting relationship with their countries of domicile, before World

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33 Take for example the case of the Straits Settlements where in 1921 only 370 out of 1,858 Arabs were born in Arabia; in the Federated Malay States, 107 out of 656; and in the Unfederated Malay States, 238 out of 1,802. See J.E. Nathan, *The 1921 Census of British Malaya*, London: Waterloo & Sons Ltd., 1922, p. 91.


War II they seldom broke the bonds with their homeland.36 They normally preserved strong emotional and spiritual ties with Hadhramaut which were manifested in dress, language and intensity of religious life. Periodically they returned to their homeland to visit families, to make the pilgrimage and often ultimately to die.37 Those who finally decided to return and settle down in their homeland after long years of absence brought into existence in Hadhramaut a society of retired businessmen who had became almost more used to speaking Malay than their native tongue and who had on their walls pictures of Singapore, Penang or Batavia.38 Even though the Hadhrami migration has long ceased, their presence can still be felt, represented by their descendants. Today they constitute an important component of the Muslim population of Malaysia and are increasingly closely becoming identified as part of the Malay community.

Establishment of Islam

The Islamisation of the Malays also introduced the Arabs' intellectual culture, which they associated with a higher civilisation, to replace the mental stagnation of the earlier Hindu-Buddhist period.39 One aspect of the culture introduced to

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36 This bond was clearly evident in the Kathiri State where many Arabs in Malaya originated. Extensive social and commercial ties bound these two widely divided regions together and its economy became almost wholly dependent on funds remitted to Saiwun and Tarim from the extensive Far East business holdings of several great Kathiri families. Their contribution to the prosperity of the state was observed by a Dutch explorer, D. van der Meulen who visited Hadhramaut in May and June 1931. He recorded that when his entourage reached Horeida, the tribal village of the family of al-‘Attas, they saw many beautiful houses and mosques which were built from the wealth accumulated in Java and Singapore. In the village they also found a large number of Dutch subjects, many of whom spoke Malay, and one even frequently heard the language being spoken on the streets. See D. van der Meulen, *A Journey in Hadhramaut*, The Moslem World, Vol. XXII, No. 3, July 1932, p. 387.


and adopted by Malays following this process was the use of the Arabic script, known as Jawi, which for many years, perhaps for centuries, may have been developed and refined by Arabs who had learned the Malay language. The process of Islamisation also led to a massive borrowing of Arabic from which almost every word in Malay related to religious worship was obtained. The extensive use of Jawi and the borrowing of Arabic had encouraged Malay intellectual progress and the broadening of their world view, in addition to providing a conducive environment for the deepening of their knowledge using the script as a medium.

In the traditional Malay society where Islam played a pivotal role in daily life, knowledge of Jawi and of Arabic determined one’s religiosity and intellectual status in the eyes of fellow Muslims. This ability, however, was largely confined to those who had undergone a religious education, some knowledge of which was sufficient for them to be recognised as ulamâ’. Nevertheless, the Arabs had a tremendous advantage since their mastery in the language of Qur’ân made them generally accepted by Malays as authorities on the religion. The acceptance of their authority had enabled them to play a dominant role in religious affairs of the Malay sultanates since their inception. The involvement of Arab religious scholars in providing their services in the religious affairs and establishments of the states were most apparent in Kedah, Trengganu and Johore.


In Kedah, the Arabs' influence in the state had its origin from the arrival from San'a' in Yemen of an Arab ʿālim Shaykh Abdul Jalil al-Mahdani in 1122AH/1710AD who was appointed as religious teacher to the Sultan. Apart from being a religious teacher, during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Jiwa Zainal Azilin Muazzam Shah II (1710-1778) Shaykh Abdul Jalil was instrumental in the introduction of Kedah's Thirteen Laws. When he was appointed as the Mufti of Kedah, Shaykh Abdul Jalil was also responsible for formulating regulations for the Sultan and his officials based on the regulations of the Caliphs and Ministers of the Abbasid Caliphate.\(^{44}\) In the early twentieth century when the post of Shaykh al-Islam was created in the state to advise the Sultan on the administration of religious affairs, the first appointee was Shaykh Muhammad Khayat, subsequently succeeded by Shaykh Abdullah Dahlan, both of them Arabs.\(^{45}\)

In Trengganu, the Arabs had been one of the distinct elements in its ruling class, who exerted a strong influence and were entrusted with the running of the religious affairs of the state.\(^{46}\) Traditionally, the most important Arab family there, who played an important role in running its religious administration, was the family of al-Idrus.\(^{47}\) The earliest prominent member of their family was Sayyid Muhammad bin Zainal Abidin al-Idrus (1794-1878), also known as Tokku Tuan Besar. During the reign of Baginda Omar (1831 and 1839-1876) he was appointed Shaykh al-ʿUlama'.\(^{48}\)


\(^{47}\) The earliest of the al-Idrus family to settle in Trengganu was Sayyid Zainal Abidin, a grain merchant from Java who arrived there at the end of the eighteenth century.

Tokku Tuan Besar was a highly respected ālim in Trengganu and a prolific religious teacher. He was regarded as a pioneer in the writing of the traditional religious literature in the state and was also known as an expert in writing and teaching (Ahl al-Qalam wal ahl al-Kalām). He wrote a number of religious books which were widely used in religious teaching in Trengganu such as Kanz al-Ūlā, Jawāhir al-Saniyāh, Tahliyat al-Wildān, Mukhtasar, Fiqh Sullam al-Tawfiq, Targhīb al-Sibyān, Sīrat al-Nabawīyyah and al-Durrah al-Fākhirah. Apart from being appointed Shaykh al-ʿUlāmāʾ, Tokku Tuan Besar was also a respected leader and generally regarded as the head of the ʿulamāʾ and the Arab community in Trengganu.

During his reign, Baginda Omar also appointed the son of Tokku Tuan Besar, Sayyid Muhammad Zain bin Sayyid Muhammad as a Minister with the title Engku Sayyid Seri Perdana. During the reign of Sultan Zainal Abidin III (1881-1918), the ruler appointed Sayyid Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad al-Idrus (Tokku Paloh) as Shaykh al-Islām.

Another Arab family who also played a significant role in the development of Islam in Trengganu were the descendants of Sharif Muhammad bin Abdullah (Sharif al-Baghdadi) of Baghdad. Before he came to the state, Sharif Muhammad

53 Sayyid Abdul Rahman al-Idrus (known as Tokku Paloh) was born in 1817 in Paloh not far from Kuala Trengganu. He was the second son of Sayyid Muhammad from his wife Hajah Aminah. Tokku Paloh learned religious knowledge locally and in Makkah where his teachers included Sayyid Ahmad Dahlan and Sayyid ʿAbdallāh ʿAlī al-Zawawi. While in Makkah he was also introduced to the Tariqah Naqshbandiyah which he practiced upon returning to Trengganu. Tokku Paloh was married to Makku Andak, the aunt of Sultan Zainal Abidin III. He died in 1918. For his life, see Mohammad bin Yusuf, "Sayyid Abdul Rahman bin Sayid Muhammad (Tokku Paloh)", Malaysia Dari Segi Sejarah, No. 13, 1984, pp. 52-56; Mohamad Abu Bakar, "Riwayat Hidup", op.cit., pp. 22-30
is said to have gone to Makkah, proceeded to Acheh, and later settled in Kampung Pauh, Kuala Brang. The most famous of his descendants was his grandson, Shaykh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah, also known as Tokku Pulau Manis (1650-1736). Shaykh Abdul Malik was a highly respected ‘ālim in Trengganu and wrote a number of religious books such as Kafiyah Niyyah, Kifayah, Ḥikam and Naql which were used as texts for his teaching.

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the early twentieth century, there were several prominent ‘ulamā’ in Trengganu of Arab origin or closely associated with the Arabs like Chief Minister Sayyid Abdullah bin Muhammad Zain al-Idrus, Tokku Paloh, Tok Shaykh Duyong and others. Because of the presence of these prominent ‘ulamā’, Trengganu during this period, like Acheh and Kelantan, was also known as the "forecourt of Makkah" (Serambi Makkah). The tradition whereby Arabs were given preference in the religious administration of Terengganu prevailed until recently when in 1940, an Arab, Shaykh Hassan Yamani was appointed Mufti of the state. After his

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55 Shaykh Abdul Malik Abdullah was born around 1650 in Hulu Trengganu. He received his early education in Acheh before proceeding to Hijaz where he stayed for about a decade. In Hijaz Shaykh Abdullah also acquired the Tariqah al-Shadhiliyyah. Upon returning to Trengganu after completing his studies he was appointed as Shaykh al-'Ulama' and as a Mufti whose religious rulings were sought. He died in 1736. For his life, see Shafie bin Abu Bakar, "Sheikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah (Tuk Pulau Manis), Warisan, No. 5, 1989, pp. 12-23.


57 His real name was Wan Abdullah bin Wan Mohd. Amin [1802-1889]. Even though he was not of Arab origin, he was closely associated with them and he used to travel to and from Makkah between 1832 and 1846. For his life, see Mohamad Abu Bakar, "Tok Syeikh Duyong", op.cit., pp. 47-65.

58 Mohamad bin Abu Bakar, "Tok Syeikh Duyong", Purba, No. 3, 1984, p. 47.

59 Shaykh Hassan Yamani was born in Makkah on 23 September 1897, a son of Shaykh Said Yamani, a famous ‘ālim who taught at the Masjid al-Ḥarām. He received his education in Masjid al-Ḥarām and Madrasah Salāţiyah in Makkah. He came to Malaya in the 1930s and taught in several madrasahs in Perak, including Madrasah Idrisiyyah and Madrasah II Illya as-Syarif. He was appointed Mufti of Trengganu following the death of Orang Kaya Kamal Wangsa (Haji Wan Sulaiman bin Daud). Shaykh Hassan died on 11 January 1972 and was survived by a number of children, one of whom is Shaykh
retirement in 1952, another Arab, Sayyid Yusof Zawawi was appointed as the new Mufti.60

In Johore the Arabs, particularly those of the al-Attas family, were also highly respected in matters related to religion. They were normally given the priority in holding religious posts, especially the post of the state Mufti. Available record shows that an Arab, Sayyid Ahmad al-Attas was appointed as the Mufti of Johore in 1873. In 1883, the post was taken over by Sayyid Mohamad al-Attas while Sayyid Salim Ahmad al-Attas was appointed to the post of Shaykh al-Islam.61 The longest serving Arab as a Mufti for Johore, however, was Sayyid Alwi Tahir al-Haddad who was appointed to the post on 8 March 1934, following the retirement of Sayyid Abdul Kadir Mohsin al-Attas.62 Sayyid Alwi was a respected 'alim who prior to his appointment lived in Batavia where he was the Advisor to the Sayyid Society in Java, the Ar-Rabitah al-Abawiyyah.63 While in office, he managed to gain the trust of Sultan Ibrahim of Johore and served for twenty seven years until he retired in early December 1961. During his tenure of office Sayyid Alwi was well-known for his staunch opposition to Qadianism, the Kaum Muda ideas and the practices of the Tariqahs.64

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62 Pejabat Agama Johore, 68/34, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), 8 March 1934.

63 MB 68/34, President of Johore Religious Department, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch); British Consulate General Batavia to R.O. Winstedt, General Adviser, Johore, 15 May 1934.

Apart from Kedah, Terengganu and Johore, Arabs also contributed to the running of the religious administration of other Malay states. In Perak, Sayyid Hussain al-Faradz Jamalullaib, who traced his genealogy to the Prophet, was reputed to have been the religious teacher of its first Sultan, Sultan Muzaffar Shah 1 when the Sultanate was established in the early sixteenth century.\[65\] In Kelantan where they were also highly respected by the community, during the reign of Sultan Muhammad II (1837-1886), an Arab from Hadhramaut, Shaykh Daud bin Shaykh Muhammad al-Bahrain was appointed from 1845 to 1855 as the Mufti of the state.\[66\] During his reign, Sultan Muhammad II also embarked on an administrative reform whereby the Islamic judicial system and religious administration were improved. As a first step towards reforms, he appointed Sayyid Ja'afar bin Sayyid Alwi, an Arab from Hadhramaut to become a judge of the Criminal Court.\[67\] During the reign of Sultan Mansor (1891-1900) Sayyid Muhammad bin Sayyid Alwi who was related to Sayyid Jaafar was also appointed to the post of judge, and was the third most powerful man in the state after Dato' Maha Menteri and Dato' Paduka Raja.\[68\]

Even though many Arabs managed to win the favour of Malay Sultans and served as religious functionaries in their courts, since the early years of the twentieth century, their most apparent role was in Islamic mission, establishing the religion among Malays and in inculcating its better understanding. Since by then many Arabs were relatively well off, they used their influence and wealth in the establishment of mosques, along with came religious activities. They taught religion in the mosques, gave Qu'rān-reading instruction, delivered sermons and lectures, led the Muslims in congregational prayers and sat on mosque


committees. It is significant that it was the Arab religious teachers who made the mosque not only a place of worship but also a centre of learning.\textsuperscript{69} Through their efforts, the early twentieth century also saw several religious schools being built in Malaya where with their wealth they established endowments from whose income these schools were maintained and the teachers were paid. This practice whereby the income from Waqf properties was used to maintain religious schools was the tradition used in the Middle East for the running of religious institutions which the Arabs imitated to run the schools they established here.\textsuperscript{70}

One of the most important Arabs who played a significant role in establishing a number of Arabic schools in Malaya was Habib (Sayyid) Hassan al-Attas.\textsuperscript{71} In 1914 he founded Madrasah al-Attas in Johor Bahru and another in 1923, Madrasah al-Attas Ketapang, Pekan, being the first Arabic religious school in Pahang. In Singapore a wealthy Arab, Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff (1850-1927) established Madrasah al-Sagoff in March 1913.\textsuperscript{72} Apart from these Arabic schools, other religious schools established by them were the al-Mashhor in Penang and al-Junayd in Singapore. The establishment of these schools in Malaya, also known as Arabic school or madrasah by the wealthy Arabs, was part

\textsuperscript{69} Omar Farouk Shaeik Ahmad, "The Arabs in Penang", op.cit., p. 6.


\textsuperscript{71} Apart from being addressed as Sayyid, in addition the al-Attas family is also addressed as Habib, which means the beloved or the honoured. See Abdallah al-Bujra, The Politics of Stratification, op.cit., p. 15. Habib (Sayyid) Hassan was born in 1832, a son of Sayyid Ahmad bin Sayyid Hassan al-Attas, a trader who arrived Pahang in the early nineteenth century from Hadhramaut. Habib Hassan received part of his education at al-Azhar University in Cairo and had lived in Egypt for twelve years. Upon his departure from Egypt he returned to Singapore where he taught at Madrasah al-Sagoff for two years before he moved to Garoet in the Praeanger Residency to teach at a school there. Like his father, Sayyid Hassan was also an influential figure in Pahang and managed to accumulate wealth through his entrepreneurial skill and his close relationship with the Pahang royalty. Sayyid Hassan was a generous man who used his wealth to finance religious education, built many mosques and donated lands for Muslim burial grounds in Pahang, Johore and Hadhramaut. He died on 21 March 1932. For his life and contributions to Islamic life in Malay society, see Almarhum Sayyid Hassan Ahmad al-Attas. Seorang Mujahid dan Pembangun Ummah, Johor Bahru: Wakaf Almarhum Syed Hassan bin Ahmad Alattas, 1984, pp. 11-32; Mahayuddin Haji Yahaya, Sejarah Orang Syed di Pahang, op.cit., pp. 90-91. See also CO 537/931, Marriot (Governor's Deputy) to Amery, 1 April 1925; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 28, April 1925.

\textsuperscript{72} See Neracha, Vol. 3, No. 75, 5 March 1913 (front page); Tunas Melayu, Vol. 2, No. 2, 12 March 1912.
of their desire to establish the Arab tradition in the land as well as to produce more efficient teachers educated in the Arabic medium. From these schools the students obtained a proficiency in Arabic which enabled them to understand the Arabic text well, thereby becoming better "authorities" in religious matters and extending better understanding of Islam to fellow Malays.⁷³

The wealthy Arabs who established these schools not only established endowments for their maintenance, but also provided them with high-quality teachers brought from Arabia. One of the outstanding madrasahs established and endowed by Arabs whose teachers were imported from Arabia was Madrasah al-Mashhor.⁷⁴ At the madrasah, the tradition where the majority of its teaching staff were Arabs was maintained and resulted in a high standard of Arabic being taught; in fact was about the best in Southeast Asia. The high reputation attained by Madrasah al-Mashhor led to a rapid increase in its enrolment, with students coming from all over Malaya, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Brunei, the Philippines, Indonesia and even India. This distinction enabled the school to emerge as a leading centre for Arabic and Islamic education in the whole of Southeast Asia before World War II.⁷⁵

In addition to having the majority of its teachers imported from Arabia, Madrasah al-Mashhor also maintained, from its establishment, a tradition of appointing Arabs as mudir. After its earliest mudir, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, left the madrasah in 1919, his place was taken over by another Arab, Shaykh Abdullah al-Maghribi. In 1923 the post of mudir was filled by Shaykh Abu Bakar al-Rafi' whose tenure in office in the 1920s and 1930s was generally regarded as the

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⁷⁴ Madrasah al-Mashhor was established in 1916, at first as a school teaching Qur'an and other basic Islamic knowledge. Its establishment was due to the efforts of several Arabs, among whom were Sayyid Mahzar Aidid, Sayyid Ali Bawazir, Sayyid Umar al-Sagoff, Sayyid Umar Mahzar and Sayyid Hassan al-Baghdadi. It was named Madrasah al-Mashhor in honour of a respected Sayyid in the island, Sayyid Ahmad al-Mashhor. The first teacher at the school was Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Habshi. See Rahim Osman, "Madrasah Al-Masyhur Al-Islamiyyah" in Khoo Kay Kim, et al., Islam di Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, pp. 76-77.

period of the school's highest reputation. During this period many graduates of the madrasah were sent to Cairo to further their studies. While in office, Shaykh Abu Bakar also brought about several improvements in the school's infra-structure and introduced new approaches in its teaching. As a progressive 'ālim, Shaykh Abu Bakar also contributed to the moulding of the religious and political thoughts of his students and his reformist ideas were prevalent to a high degree among the students of the madrasah. Beginning from the late 1930s, although the role of Arabs in religious affairs and the propagation of Islam still persisted, the Malays gradually became increasingly prominent, when a greater number of their students returned to Malaya after acquiring knowledge of Arabic and Islam in Makkah and Cairo.

Politics of the Malay States

Early Arabs who arrived in the Malay kingdoms and later in the Malay states played an active role not only in religious affairs, but in politics and administration as well. Their roles were noticeable virtually in all the Malay states, with their dominant involvement particularly evident in Kedah and Negeri Sembilan. The role they played, however, was nothing new because they had a long history of such involvement dating from the establishment of the kingdom of Melaka. In this kingdom, one particularly important political event which involves an Arab, as related by Sejarah Melayu, was the subversive role played by Maulana Jalaluddin, an Arab leader from the "land above the wind" in helping Raja Kassim and Seri

77 One of the students of the madrasah who through the initiative of Shaykh Abu Bakar al-Rafi' was provided with a scholarship to further his study in Cairo was Abu Bakar Ashaari. See Ar-Rajaa, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1 August 1928, p. 14.
Nara Diraja to topple Sultan Abu Shahid. In the Melaka Sultanate, Arab religious scholars and Arabs who married into the high officials class or the Pembesar and the royal family were categorised as part of the upper strata of its privileged class. Apart from Melaka, another early Malay kingdom where Arabs are known to have exerted a substantial influence was Sulu. In Aceh, apart from the Chuliahs, the Arabs had also always been an important element in the development of its political history. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, Arabs were able to exert political influence in several Malay sultanates and they were even successful in carving out empires in Siak (Sumatra) and Pontianak (Kalimantan).

In the Malay states, the most significant Arab political influence, which is visible even to the present day, was in Kedah. Arabs' political involvement in the state may be traced back to the early eighteenth century, when the families of al-Jamalullail, al-Shahbuddin and al-Aidid began to settle in the State. Politically, the most influential of these families was the family of al-Jamalullail. The earliest member of the family said to have settled in the state was Sayyid Ahmad bin Sayyid Hussain Jamalullail who came to Kedah from Hadhramaut in

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80 Ibid., p. 53. Take for example Sayyid Muhammad, who was only a ship's captain (Nakhoda), but was awarded the title Shah Andika Menteri by the Sultan of Melaka for his role in luring Tun Tijah away from Pahang.

81 Around 1450, an Arab missionary from Makkah and authority on Islamic jurisprudence and religion by the name of Abu Bakr arrived in Sulu from Johore. He created the Sulu Sultanate and adopted the title Paduka Mahasari Aulana al-Sultani Sharif al-Hashimi. All the succeeding Sultans of Sulu claimed descent from him and in fact no one could become Sultan unless he could prove that he was his descendant. See Caesar Adib Majul, "Islamic and Arab Cultural Influences in the South of the Philippines", Journal of Southeast Asian History, Vol. 7, No. 2, September 1966, p. 65.

82 Dominant Arab influence in the Acehnese court could be seen for example when they successfully challenged the authority of Sultanah Kamalat Shah and forced her to abdicate in 1699. In 1702, they again proved their political power by replacing Sultan Badr al-Alam with a nominee from their own group. See Lee Kam Hing, "Foreigners in the Acehnese Court, 1760-1819", JMBRAS, Vol. 43, Part 1, 1970. p. 65-66. See also William Marsden, A History of Sumatra, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford reprint, 1966, p. 454; Mohammad Said, Atjeh Sepanjang Abad, Medan: Published by the Author, 1961, p. 215.

1148AH/1735AD. His influence in the state was further widened following his marriage to Sharifah Aminah al-Qadri of the Arab al-Qadri family. The family’s most significant political role in the state, however, was played by Sayyid Ahmad’s son, Sayyid Harun Jamaiullail, an influential figure in the Kedah court who was awarded the district of Arau in 1212AH/1797AD.84

The political role played by Arabs in Kedah, however, was intensified when the state was invaded by the Siamese. During the twenty one years (1821-1842) of Siamese occupation, the Arabs rallied behind the Sultan and were actively involved in the struggle to free the state from the invaders. In the struggle against the Siamese the Arabs also played a significant role in the resurgence of religious militancy with its call for Islamic unity following the conquest.85 This resurgence led to the efforts by Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Shah II and other Kedah princes to regain possession of the state and took on the character of a jihād (holy war) against a power which was not only non-Malay but kāfir (infidel) in nature. For nearly two decades, Kedah princes and the Arab leaders joined hands in their resistance against the Siamese which attracted the attention of Malays everywhere. Arab merchants in the Straits Settlements and even some Europeans lent covert support, and it was probably about this time that the Penang-based Red Flag society was formed as a rallying point for Islamic opposition.86

In 1240AH/1824AD, a military campaign was launched against the Siamese, headed by Sayyid Zainal Abidin, Sultan Ahmad’s half-Arab nephew, popularly known as Tunku Kudin, who managed to recapture Kuala Kedah, though it was retaken by the Siamese, resulting in his own death.87 The defeat did not deter the Kedah royal family and another attack was planned assisted by an Arab,

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84 Sayyid Harun Jamaiullail was born in 1150AH/1737AD. He was a religious scholar and earned a living as a trader. He was married to Tengku Safiah, the daughter of Tengku Dziauddin. Through this marriage Sayyid Harun managed to exert a strong influence in the state. See Hussain Baba, "Sejarah Negeri Dan Raja2 Perlis", JMBRAS, Vol. 42, Part 2, 1969, p. 174.


86 Ibid., pp. 119-120.

Shaykh Abdul Samad who had just returned from Makkah. In an unsuccessful offensive launched in 1244AH/1828AD Shaykh Abdul Samad was killed. Apart from being actively involved in launching attacks against the Siamese, Arabs also played a prominent role in the foreign affairs of Kedah during the occupation. One of the Sultan of Kedah's trusted Arab emissaries was Shaykh Abdul Kadir Mufti bin Shaykh Abdul Jalil al-Mahdani who fled with the Sultan following the invasion. He was sent by the Sultan to Bengal to demand money owed by the East India Company for the lease of Penang.

In addition to supporting the Kedah royal family in its military struggle against the Siamese, the Arabs were also actively involved in an effort to regain Kedah's sovereignty through diplomatic means. Kedah finally regained its independence not through war, but through negotiation, which was actively conducted among others by Sayyid Hussain Jamalullail. The loyalty of the Jamalullail to the Sultan and their contribution to the state's politics was rewarded when in 1843, with the approval of the Siamese, Sayyid Hussain Jamalullail, whose father, Sayyid Harun Jamalullail had earlier been appointed Penghulu of Arau, was made Sultan of a newly created state, Perlis. The family of Jamalullail was the only Arab family to rule a Malay state, and is the ruling family of Perlis to the present day.

Through a long history of influence, the Arabs in Kedah were also accorded high status, equal to that of the royal family. Marriages between Arabs and the Kedah royal house were common and the offspring of these marriages were recognised as belonging to the royal family, even though some of them still retained the title Sayyid to symbolise their Arab origin. This relationship with the

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88 Ibid., pp. 149-150.
89 Ibid., p. 151.
90 Hussain Baba, "Sejarah Negeri Dan Raja2 Perlis", op.cit., p. 176.
91 Sayyid Hussain Jamalullail was born on 10 January 1805, the eldest son of Sayyid Harun bin Ahmad Jamalullail. Sayyid Hussain ruled Perlis for thirty years until his death in 1873. See ibid., p. 177.
palace also made the Arabs a prominent elite group in Kedah.\textsuperscript{92} The exceptionally high status they enjoyed put them in the category of the Malay ruling class, thus exempting them from the corvee system which was an obligation upon a commoner. When the police force was introduced in Kedah following the British intervention, the Arabs were not drawn to the service since becoming “the government's dog” was considered disgraceful and did not accord with their prestige. This special status attained by the Arabs was further recognised when in 1932, in order to strengthen the identity of the elite class in the state, a ruling was issued whereby the royal family were forbidden to marry anyone outside their circle without a written consent from the Sultan or his deputy with the exception of marriage with the families of the Arabs.\textsuperscript{93}

Another state where Arabs played a significant role in domestic politics was Negeri Sembilan. Contrary to their role in Kedah where they contributed to regaining the sovereignty of the state from Siamese occupation, in Negeri Sembilan they were responsible for bringing about British intervention. Prior to this time, the most prominent Arab in nineteenth century Negeri Sembilan politics was Sayyid Sha’aban bin Sayyid Ibrahim al-Qadri. As in other states, Arabs were highly respected in Negeri Sembilan and being an Arab ensured Sayyid Sha’aban an easy access to the Malay royal families, and he soon became son-in-law of Raja Ali after marrying, in turn, two of the latter’s daughters.\textsuperscript{94}

In 1832, Raja Ali was declared \textit{Yam Tuan Besar} after successfully overcoming challenges by other contenders for the position. Following his success, he appointed Sayyid Sha’aban as his heir-apparent with the title \textit{Yam Tuan}


\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., p. 99.

\textsuperscript{94} Khoo Kay Kim, “Syed Sha’aban bin Syed Ibrahim al-Kadri”, \textit{Peninjau Sejarah}, Vol II, No. 1, April, 1967, p. 40. Sayyid Sha’aban was born in Rembau. His father was a religious teacher of Arab descent and his mother a common Melaka lady. Meanwhile, Raja Ali was an important figure in Negeri Sembilan whose great grandfather was Raja Adil, the second Raja from Sumatra to become \textit{Yam Tuan Besar} of Negeri Sembilan.
Muda.95 Sayyid Sha'aban was more than a son-in-law of Raja Ali, being also his trusted adviser.96 The appointment of Sayyid Sha'aban was contested by other Negeri Sembilan chiefs and the middle of the nineteenth century Negeri Sembilan saw widespread intrigue and tension in the state as a result of the power struggle. Following a dispute over the building of a stockade to collect tolls at Simpang, which was the point where Sungai Rembau joined Sungai Linggi, war broke out and Sayyid Sha'aban was forced to retreat to Melaka by the combined forces of the ruler of Linggi, Dato' Muda Muhammad Katas. Even though Sayyid Sha'aban made several attempts to regain his post, until his death in early 1873, it was of no avail. His death marked the end of an early attempt by an Arab to dominate the politics of Negeri Sembilan. Although Sayyid Sha'aban failed to achieve his ambition to become ruler, his influence was deeply felt. One of his sons, Sayyid Hamid by one of the daughters of Raja Ali's, was in the 1870s appointed as Yam Tuan Muda.97

Sayyid Sha'aban and Sayyid Hamid were not the only members of Sayyid Ibrahim's family to hold positions of power and authority in Negeri Sembilan. Another member of the family who also played a prominent role in the state's politics was Sayyid Abdul Rahman bin Sayyid Ahmad al-Qadri, Dato' Kelana of Sungai Ujong (March 1873-January 1880). He was Sayyid Ibrahim’s grandson and a British protege, and the adversary of the conservative Dato' Bandar Kulop Tunggal.98 Sayyid Abdul Rahman was the Negeri Sembilan chief who was instrumental in bringing about the British intervention in Negeri Sembilan when on 21 April 1874 he together with Dato' Muda of Linggi signed an agreement of friendship with Andrew Clarke, Governor of the Straits Settlements. The signing of this treaty implied that their territories were put under British protection.99 Their

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96 Khoo Kay Kim, "Syed Sha'aban", op.cit., p. 41.
97 Ibid., p. 46.
98 Ibid., p. 46.
action was resented by other chiefs of Negeri Sembilan, who under the leadership of Yam Tuan Antah struggled against the British, who they feared would deprived them most of their power.

The struggle between Kelana and Antah drew the British deeper into the quagmire of Negeri Sembilan politics when they sided with the former, among other things by supplying him with Arab, Turkish and Egyptian mercenaries. Following the dispute over the area of Terachi, war broke out in December 1875 and the British openly decided to back the claim of Dato' Kelana to the land. In the war that ensued in which the British were actively involved, at first Yam Tuan Antah managed to score a number of victories, but his successes proved short-lived when a reinforcement of 500 well-armed men arrived from Lukut. Yam Tuan Antah had to retreat to Johore and was allowed to return to Negeri Sembilan only as Yam Tuan of Sri Menanti, not of the whole state. With this victory, the British gradually exerted their political influence over the whole state and in September 1886 the Penghulu of Jelebu, Sayyid Ali bin Zain al-Jufri, in conjunction with the lesser chiefs, signed a treaty which put his district under British protectorate. In 1889 the rulers of Rembau and Tampin joined the Sri Menanti Confederacy of 1887 (Sri Menanti, Jempul, Terachi, Gunung Pasir, Ulu Muar, Johol and Inas) to make a confederation of Nine States, and all agreed to place their dominions under the British protection. Finally in 1895, the Yam Tuan of Sri Menanti together with the rulers of Johol, Sungai Ujong, Jelebu, Rembau and Tampin placed their respective states under British protection and asked for a British Resident.

103 J.M. Gullick, "The War With Yam Tuan Antah", op.cit., p. 16
The Arabs from Hadhramaut also had a long history of influence in Perak, where all the four great posts of the state, except for that of Temenggong, have been at least at one time held by them. These Arabs were also accepted as part of the Perak royal family and were addressed as Tengku. One of the earliest Arabs to have been trusted with the highest post in Perak was Sayyid Abu Bakar who during the reign of Sultan Iskandar (1752-1765) was appointed Bendahara. In nineteenth century Perak, successive Arabs had also been holding the post of Orang Kaya Besar, the last holder being Sayyid Jaafar. The last Perak great post held by an Arab was that of Orang Kaya Menteri Sri Paduka Tuan. The earliest known Arab appointee was Fakih Yusoff who was appointed to the post during the reign of Sultan Muzaffar Shah (1728-1754). During his reign two Arab brothers, Sharif Hussain and Sharif Abu Bakar, were also appointed to the post, the latter then being promoted to the post of Bendahara.

In Pahang when Bendahara Tun Ali came to the throne in 1806, he fostered a close relationship with the Arabs in the state by appointing Sayyid Umar, who was also his son-in-law, as Chief Minister. Following Tun Ali’s death in 1857, Bendahara Mutahir was appointed the new ruler with the support of several Arabs like Sayyid Umar al-cAttas and Sayyid Deraman Abdul Rahman. The appointment of Tun Mutahir to the throne, however, was contested by his younger brother Tun Ahmad, whose campaign against his elder brother was also supported among others by an Arab chief, Sayyid al-ldrus. His claim to the throne was also backed by other Arab families like the al-Khirid, al-Habsyi and al-Yahya. Following the victory of Tun Ahmad and the death of Tun Mutahir,

106 Ibid., p. 140. In Perak, the Bendahara was the second most powerful man in the state. He acted as chief minister and commander-in-chief. He earned his revenue from tolls on the imports and exports of the Kinta river.
107 Ibid., p. 143.
Arab influence in the state grew tremendously, especially those families who supported him. When Pahang came under the British protectorate, several Arabs were appointed as Penghulus because of their loyalty.\(^{111}\)

In Trengganu, the Arabs were also influential in the political and administrative affairs of the state. During the reign of Sultan Zainal Abidin III (1881-1918), when Trengganu was divided into various districts and its administration put under various chiefs who were the Sultan's close family and officials, an Arab was among those who received an award. Tuan Bong or Sayyid Abu Bakar who was related by marriage to the Sultan's niece was given Ulu Trengganu.\(^{112}\) When the Trengganu Uprising broke out in 1928, one of the instigators of the disturbances was Sayyid Sagoff, who in the event of its success was to be appointed the state's Chief Minister (Wazir).\(^{113}\) In Selangor, when the Civil War of the 1870s in Kelang was fought between Tengku Kudin and Raja Mahadi, several Arabs were involved in support of both parties. One of those who were actively involved in the war was a warrior of Arab origin from Pontianak, Sayyid Mashhor bin Muhammad al-Shahab who supported Raja Mahadi.\(^{114}\) On the side of Tengku Kudin during the war an Arab, Sayyid Zin was appointed by him as his chief of staff.\(^{115}\)

In Johore, even though Arabs were relatively less active in their involvement in state politics compared to other Malay states, they were entrusted with the conduct of its external relations. Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff was reputed to be a close confidant of Sultan Abu Bakar, who on a number of occasions

\(^{111}\) Ibid., p. 98.

\(^{112}\) On this division of the state, see C.O. 273/351, John Anderson to the Earl of Crewe, Secretary of State for Colonies, Colonial Office, No. 303, 22 September 1909; enclosure W.L. Conlay Report, "Extracts From the Journal of the British Agent Trengganu for the Period 11 July to 31 August 1909", No. 53/09, 8 September 1909, pp. 19-22.


accompanied him on his overseas visits. Because of his prominent role also in the economic development of Johore, Sayyid Mohamad was awarded the *Pingat Darjah Kerabat*, the first foreigner of non royal descent in the state to receive it, which implied that he was regarded as part of the royal family. During the reign of Sultan Ibrahim, the Caliphate Conference was held in Cairo in May 1926 to discuss the issue of the future of the leadership of the Muslim ummah. The Sultan, who was invited to the Conference, welcomed its convening but declined to attend it in person. Instead he sent Sayyid Hassan bin Ahmad al-Attas to attend the conference on his behalf. As in the case of Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff, Sayyid Hassan al-Attas was also awarded the *Pingat Darjah Kerabat* in 1926 which demonstrated his close relationship and his status as a trusted subject of the Johore royal house.

Despite the fact that Arabs had played an active role in the politics of the Malay States, varying in intensity from one state to another, their role gradually reduced when the British administration in these states became increasingly dominant. Even though Arabs were no longer an influential factor in the politics of the Malay sultanate, compared to their role in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, they managed to retain Perlis as the only Malay state where the Sultan is of Arab descent until to the present day. After Malaya achieved independence and when the Arabs were increasingly identified as Malays, they continued to play an active role in the political process which was now channelled through the mainstream Malay political parties.


117 See Pej. Agama 180/241, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch). Letter from Sultan Ibrahim to the President of the Universal Caliphate Congress of Cairo, Egypt, 17 April 1926; and letter from the Sultan Private Secretary to the President of the Congress, 21 March 1926.

118 Almarhum Sayyid Hassan bin Ahmad al-Attas, op.cit., p. 22.
In addition to their interest in the political and religious affairs of the Malay states, Arabs were also noted for their economic involvement. During his visit to the East Coast Malay States in 1837-38 (1253AH) Abdullah Munshi recorded that there were Arabs in Pahang, who even though few in number, were highly respected, rich and mostly earned their living as traders. From his account it is clear that Arabs were already actively involved in business activity decades before the introduction of a capitalist economy following the British intervention.

In the absence of a dominant Malay trading class, the Arabs emerged as the most prominent entrepreneurs representing the Muslims in business activities, apart from the Indian Muslims, with their business interests well-established in Penang and Singapore. The late nineteenth century Singapore, where their business interest was most established, was described by the Dutch scholar L.W.C. van den Berg as "the most flourishing, though not the largest Arab colony in all the Indian Archipelago" and their numbers were said to be increasing year by year, as it was "the point by which all Arabs pass who go to seek their fortunes in the Far East". One of the earliest and the most prosperous Arabs who made his fortune in trading ventures in Singapore when it was put under British administration was Sayyid Abdul Rahman al-Sagoff. The business fortune of the al-Sagoffs in the island experienced a rapid expansion during the second generation of the family following the marriage of his son Sayyid Ahmad to Raja Siti, a daughter of a rich lady, Hadjee Fatimah.

119 Kassim Ahmad, Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah, op.cit., pp. 11-12.


122 Hadjee Fatimah was a rich Malay lady with business connections in the Malay States and Celebes. When she died her fortune was inherited by her son-in-law Sayyid Ahmad. See Charles Burton Buckley, An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore, Singapore: Frazer and Neave Ltd., 1902, p. 564.
When Sayyid Ahmad al-Sagoff died, his business was taken over by his son Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff. Sayyid Mohamad was very effective in furthering the business ventures of the al-Sagoffs in Singapore, and after taking over the family business he was not only successful in accumulating wealth in the island, but also managed to make himself the most influential Arab in Johore, and a close friend and even a financial backer of Sultan Abu Bakar. Sayyid Mohamad was a respected man of high leadership quality and reputed to be one of the richest men in the Straits Settlements. He was also a generous philanthropist who contributed to a number of benefactions for the interest of Muslims in Singapore such as the founding of the al-Sagoff Waqf Fund, the Muslimin Trust Fund Association, the al-Sagoff Outdoor Dispensary and the Muslim Boys Orphanage. When he died on 3 July 1906 the sorrow at his death was echoed throughout the island and Johore. His funeral in Singapore was attended by prominent British officials, the Johore Menteri Besar and also Sultan Ibrahim. As a mark of respect, on the day of the funeral all government offices in Johore were closed and the flag at the Raffles Hotel was flown at half-mast.

Apart from the al-Sagoffs, there were also other famous Arab families in Singapore whose business activities dated back to the early days of the island.

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123 Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff was the most famous member of the Arab families in Singapore and managed to accumulate a huge fortune through his business connection not only in the Malay World but also in Europe and the Middle East. His company Alsagoff & Co. exported commodities such as timber, rubber, sago, coconuts, coffee, cocoa and pineapples, while its imports comprised general merchandise for local consumption. Because of his tremendous leadership and success in the life of the day, Sayyid Mohamad became a celebrity not only in Singapore and Johore, the Riau Archipelago, the Moluccas and Celebes, but also further afield in the Middle East. He was entrusted by the Ottoman Government with the position of Honorary Consul-General in Singapore and for his services he was received into the Osmaniah Order of the Ottoman Empire by Sultan Abdul Hamid II. For the life and business activities of Sayyid Mohammad al-Sagoff, see Syed Mohsen Alsagoff, The Alsagoff Family in Malaysia, op.cit., p. 11. See also CO 273/126, letter from R.W. Maxwell (Acting Inspector-General of Police) to the Colonial Office, 12 March 1884.


125 Singapore Free Press, 3 July 1906. Property belonging to the al-Sagoff was also found in Jeddah. see CO 273/505, 17 August 1920.

126 Syed Mohsen Alsagoff, The Alsagoff Family in Malaysia, op.cit., p. 11.

They included the families of al-Junayd, al-Kaff and al-Jufri. As for the al-Junayds the most famous member of the family was Sayyid Omar bin Ali al-Junayd. He was a native of Arabia who owned extensive business interests and realised a large fortune.\textsuperscript{128} He was also a respected merchant in Singapore who endowed a large piece of land as a Muslim burial ground and built a mosque at Bencoolen Street.\textsuperscript{129} As for the family of al-Kaff, the most famous was Sayyid Mohamad bin Abdul Rahman al-Kaff who traded in Singapore and Java.\textsuperscript{130} Apart from Singapore, the Arabs were also well established in Penang where one of the island's earliest settlers, Sayyid Hussain al-Aidid, was reputed to be the richest man there.\textsuperscript{131}

The most important and lucrative business in which the Arabs were actively involved from the beginning of the twentieth century until World War II was the inter-island shipping trade in the waters of the Malay World.\textsuperscript{132} One of the most prominent Arab merchants in Singapore who at one time owned several large trading vessels, and towards the end of his life some steamers, was Sayyid Massim bin Salleh al-Jufri.\textsuperscript{133} Another business activity that was exclusively in the hands of the Arabs was the pilgrimage industry. The Arabs were well suited

\textsuperscript{128} Sayyid Omar bin Ali al-Junayd was the nephew of Sayyid Muhammad bin Harun al-Junayd who came to Singapore in the very early days of the settlement. Charles Burton Buckley, \textit{An Anecdotal History}, op.cit., p. 563.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., p. 563. His cousin Sayyid Ali al-Mohamad al-Junayd who inherited the business fortune after his death was also a generous man who gave a piece of land at Victoria and Arab Street to Tan Tok Seng's Hospital, another for a Muslim burial ground, and built public wells.

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., p. 564. Sayyid Mohamad bin Abdul Rahman al-Kaff had no son and his estates and businesses were inherited by his younger brother Shaykh al-Kaff. His son Sayyid Ahmad bin Shaykh al-Kaff inherited very extensive landed property in Singapore.

\textsuperscript{131} Sayyid Hussain Aidid was related to the Sultan of Aceh and came to Penang from Aceh in 1792. In Penang he established himself as a merchant and also as agent of the Sultan of Aceh. His big godown and office situated at the junction of Acheen Street and Beach Street was known as "Rumah Tinggi" or the high rise building, as in those days there were no building of three storeys high. This particular property was a useful indicator of his wealth. H.P. Clodd, \textit{Malaya's First British Pioneer, The Life of Francis Light}, London: Luzac & Co. Ltd., 1948, p. 119.

\textsuperscript{132} Their trading items were \textit{batik} and other cloth products and a wide range of other goods such as spices, tobacco, coconuts and timber.

\textsuperscript{133} Charles Burton Buckley, \textit{An Anecdotal History}, op.cit., p. 365.
to the industry since they had well-established business connections in Singapore and Penang, from which the pilgrim ships departed, and they also had good contacts in the Hijaz.\textsuperscript{134} One of the Arabs who was highly appreciated not only for his running the business which provided Muslims with the needed service, but also credited for the sterling qualities of his assistance toward the pilgrims from Singapore to Makkah, was Sayyid Ibrahim Omar al-Sagoff.\textsuperscript{135}

Another business venture where Arabs were actively involved was the plantation industry. The most prosperous Arab who made his fortune in this industry was Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff. Through his close relationship with Sultan Abu Bakar, Sayyid Mohamad was awarded in 1878 a land concession of 60,000 acres stretching between Sungai Permas and Sungai Pontian Besar to be used for cultivation (except opium).\textsuperscript{136} The concession, which was called "The Alsagoff Cucob Concession" by the British, was renamed the "Constantinople Estate" by Sayyid Mohamad.\textsuperscript{137} The estate was a thriving economic area and to overcome its labour shortage, a Javanese work force was extensively used. Many of these Javanese worked as contract labourers and were provided with expenses to perform the Hajj on the condition that they would work on the estate for a certain period of time. In one of the estates, the Air Masin Estates, there were about two hundred Javanese employed as workers.\textsuperscript{138} The Constantinople Estate was a self-contained settlement with its own facilities and marketplace. To


\textsuperscript{135} Genuine Islam, Vol. 1, No. 6 & 7, June/July 1936. He was the grandson of Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff. The appreciation was expressed by Shaykh Ali Mattar, the Manager of the Jeddah Pilgrim Office during a tea party on Friday evening, 17 July 1936 given by the Pilgrim Brokers' Association which was attended by pilgrim brokers, merchants and businessmen of the Arab, Malay and Indian communities of Singapore in honour of the appointment of Sayyid Ibrahim Omar al-Sagoff as Justice of the Peace.

\textsuperscript{136} See J/Pelb., National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), "Alsagoff Concession Kukup", 15 March 1906. See also GA 253/24, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), "A Brief History of the Alsagoff Concession, Kukup, Johore", n.d.

\textsuperscript{137} Saadiah Said, "Kegiatan Keluarga Alsagoff", op.cit., p. 53.

facilitate transactions on the estate, the Sultan of Johore even gave permission to its management to issue its own currency, known as the Constantinople Currency. This currency, with denominations made up of 25 cents, 50 cents, $1.00 and $2.00, was printed by the Sa’aidi Press, Singapore. The currency was first circulated on 1 May 1878, two months after Sayyid Mohamad was awarded the Concession.

Another Arab who made his fortune in the plantation industry was Sayyid Hassan al-Attas, who was also a highly respected Arab in Pahang. Through his close relationship with Sultan Ahmad of Pahang he managed to secure 14,000 acres of land and accumulated wealth whose revenue he used to finance a number of educational institutions and other social benefactions for the Muslims. His son, Sayyid Mohamad also ventured into the plantation industry and opened pepper and coffee estates in Muar. In Kedah, the Arabs were also involved in agricultural ventures and were the major landowners in the state, especially in the districts of Yan and Kubang Pasu. The Arab family who owned most of these agricultural lands were the al-Idrus, al-Baraqabah and al-Jamalullail. The Arabs were also actively involved in business enterprises in Selangor, where after the conclusion of the Kelang War, Sayyid Zin in association with Tunku Kudin engaged in commercial undertaking from 1883 onward. They made business ventures related to a mangrove concession and in the Padi and

139 Khazin Mohd. Tamrin & Sukiman Bohari, "Orang Jawa Pontian: Kedatangan dan Kegiatan Dalam Aspek Sosio-Ekonomi dan Politik Tempatan", Jabat, No. 10, April, 1980/81, p. 40; For a sample of every denomination of the currency, see Saadiah Said, "Penglibatan Keluarga al-Sagoff". op.cit., Appendix, 6, 7, 8 & 9, pp. 149-152.


142 The land concession stretch from Kuala Pahang to Air Hitam and was awarded for cultivation for 99 years. See Sultan Pahang 33/1916, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch), 1306AH/1888AD.


144 Faridah Romli, "Orang Syed di Kedah", op.cit., p. 74.
Sago Planting Company where Tunku Kudin had a half interest. The Arabs also invested in the property market and Sayyid Mohamad made an attempt to venture into the mining industry in Johore in the late nineteenth century.

Another business venture in which Arab were also actively involved was the printing industry. In the 1930s, the Arabs were particularly active in the publication their own Arabic journals, and between 1931 to 1941, there were at least fifteen of them published in Singapore, ranging from those which lasted for just a few issues to those which survived for several years. These journals found their readership not only in Singapore but all over the Malay World and Hadhramaut. The Arab involvement in the printing industry, however, started much earlier and they had been active in sponsoring the publication of several Malay journals. When the first Malay reformist journal, *al-Imam*, was published in 1906 the major role in bringing it into existence was played by Arabs, who not only contributed the editorials but also supported it through financial backing. In 1930 one of the al-Sagoffs, Sayyid Hussein bin Ali al-Sagoff, founded the first Malay daily newspaper, *Warta Malaya* with Onn Jaafar. When a weekly newspaper *Lembaga* (1933-1941) was published with Onn bin Jaafar as its editor, it was financed by Sayyid Alwi bin Abbas al-Attas.

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149 Sayyid Hussein bin Ali al-Sagoff was born in Makkah in October 1903. He was a well-known publisher who also published weekly Malay pictorials, *Warta Ahad* and *Warta Janaka*, apart from *Warta Malaya*. See Syed Mohsen al-Sagoff, *The Alsagoff Family in Malaysia*, op.cit., p. 39.

150 Ramlah Adam, "*Lembaga Malaya 1934-1941*", *Malaysia Dari Segi Sejarah*, No. 8, April 1979, pp. 59-60.
Even though Arabs had played an important role in bringing about Muslim economic progress and a social change in the Malay society through their contribution in matters related to religion, their growing exclusiveness and their elitist lifestyle, particularly in Singapore, created an atmosphere of distrust on the part of the Malay community. The Malays' grievances against the Arabs in the island were also related to various land transactions as a result of which Kampong Gelam district which was originally predominantly Malay, was left only five percent Malay-owned as against thirty five percent Arab-owned. In other parts of the town centre much previously Malay property had also fallen into their hands, despite the fact that the proportion of the total Arab population was not very large.\(^{151}\) The Malays' uneasiness about the Arab community came into the open when the Kesatuan Melayu Singapura (Singapore Malay Union) was formed in 1926 with the primary aim of safeguarding their position and advancing their interest. This association was also founded because it was considered necessary to have an organisation which would look after the needs of the Malays as distinct from those of the Arabs and Indian Muslims who, the Malays felt, were inclined to leave them in the lurch.\(^{152}\)

By the early 1930s the ethnic gap between the Malays and these other communities became increasingly wide and this had an adverse effect on social relations between Malays and other Muslims, to the point where the Muslims in Malaya were categorised on the basis of their ethnic origin.\(^{153}\) During this period the issue of "pure Malay" against that of non-Malay Muslims was also widely

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152 Khoo Kay Kim, "Sino-Malaya Relations in Peninsular Malaysia Before 1942", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. XII, No. 1, March 1981, p. 104; Stanley Saunders Bedlington, "The Singapore Malay Community: The Politics of State Integration", PhD. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1974, pp. 19-20. Malay feelings were also contributed to by the practice in Singapore whereby the British often appointed Arabs or Indian Muslims as leaders of the Muslim community because they, rather than the Malays, were men of wealth and property.

153 The elitist lifestyle was also practiced by the Indian Muslim community which led to the use of a popular connotation DKA (Darah Keturunan Arab - Arab Descent) and DKK (Darah Keturunan Keling - Indian Descent) to differentiate them from the Malays.
debated, and championed by among others, Abdul Rahim Kajai.\textsuperscript{154} The situation worsened when the Malay civil servants and journalists who were active in inculcating social awareness in their community openly expressed their disillusionment with the behaviour of Muslims of non-Malay origin, particularly the Arabs, for abandoning the cause and the needs of their fellow brethren, but instead confining themselves to their own community interest. The Malay feeling of disappointment was not felt only in Singapore, but also in Penang, though there was no evidence to suggest that similar feelings were widespread in other Malay states.

When Malay newspapers experienced a rapid growth in the 1930s, an organisation to promote literature and culture was formed by the name of PASPAM or Malayan Pen-pal Brotherhood, under the auspices of the newspaper \textit{Saudara} in Penang. At the height of its popularity it claimed to have several thousand members, representing various Muslim communities in Malaya.\textsuperscript{155} On 11 November 1934, PASPAM held its first national conference at Taiping in Perak, the first ever such conference of any sort held by Malays and attended by members from all over Malaya.\textsuperscript{156} The growing distrust by the Malays towards their non-Malay co-religionists which was prevalent at that time, however, proved to have an adverse effect on the popularity of the organisation. By the late 1930s this suspicion affected its progress and it was much weakened when its Malay members were not in favour of a leadership dominated by non-Malay Muslims.\textsuperscript{157}

The Malays’ criticism of the sincerity of the Arabs and their domination of the Malay press also created an awakening as a result of which there was a strong feeling that the community should have a newspaper of its own rather than

\textsuperscript{154} For Abdul Rahim Kajai’s categorisation of “pure Malay” against that of DKA (Arab descents) and DKK (Indian descents), see Abdul Latiff Abu Bakar, Abdul Rahim Kajai Wartawan dan Sasterawan Melayu, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1984, pp. 107-109.

\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Warta Malaya}, 28 November 1940, p. 10.


working with newspapers financed by Arabs like the existing dailies. This feeling led to the dramatic birth of *Utusan Melayu* on 29 May 1939, initiated by several Malays in Singapore who wanted to have a national newspaper not dependent on money from Arab or other alien sources.\(^{158}\) When the newspaper was published under the editorship of the well-known Malay journalist Abdul Rahim Kajai, it became an open forum for the definition of the term "Malay".\(^{159}\) In its effort to champion the cause of the Malays, the newspaper also supported the action taken by Kesatuan Melayu Singapura in its struggle to protect their interest from the onslaught to which it was subjected by the Arabs and Indian Muslims.\(^{160}\)

The strong bond between the Arab and Malay communities fostered by early generations of Arab migrants suffered an uncomfortable period when the socially and economically conscious Malays began to feel that their cause had been abandoned by economically established Arabs who as fellow Muslim brethren, they had hoped, would assist them in bringing about changes in society. Despite these feelings, the Malays had to acknowledge the long history of the role played by Arabs in the development of their civilisation and their sincere contribution to the establishment of a number of religious institutions from which the Malays benefitted in the deepening of their religious knowledge.

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\(^{159}\) Ibid., p. 71.

CHAPTER 3

HIJAZ AND MALAY RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM: IMPORTANCE AND EFFECT

To the Malays, Hijaz (Makkah and Medinah) has been of profound importance to their faith ever since they became Muslim. Five times a day, they face the Ka'bah in Makkah in their daily prayers, an obligation which constitutes the second pillar of Islam, and at the same time they are fully aware that the grave of their beloved Messenger of God, the Prophet, is in Medinah. As one of the Islamic tenets, once in their lifetime, those who have the wherewithal and are physically able, are commanded to perform the Hajj in Makkah, the fifth and the last pillar of Islam.1 These religious obligations and attachments undoubtedly had a significant impact on their life and were also the most important factor that bound the Malay World to the Holy Land.

The intensity of the Malays’ attachment to Hijaz, however, was most meaningfully manifested by their determination to accomplish the Hajj, which for them was attended by great difficulties and costs. To the faithful, fulfilling it was a culmination of their status as a true believer, achieving personal piety and establishing communion with Allah.2 Hijaz, however, was not only a destination for a pilgrimage, but also a place where Malay scholarly religious achievement

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1 Even though Muslims are only commanded to perform the Hajj once in their lifetime, it was not uncommon for Muslims in Malaya to perform it far more than once. For example by 1936, Sayyid Ibrahim Omar al-Sagoff, a prominent Muslim leader in Singapore, who was also a pilgrim broker, had already performed the Hajj more than seventeen times. See Genuine Islam, Vol. 1, Nos. 6 & 7, June/July 1936; See also Isabella L. Bird, The Golden Chersonese and the Way Thither, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1967 (First Published London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1883), p. 361.

could be realised after years of academic sojourn. These Malays who performed the Hajj and received their religious education in Hijaz were actually those who played the most significant role in inculcating religious and educational awareness in the society before World War II.

Hijaz was also significant to the Malays since at the vicinity of the Masjid al-Ḥaram was settled a Malay community strong in its scholarly tradition. Malay ʿulamāʾ had been among prominent teachers at the grand mosque and their religious works were widely referred to throughout the Malay World. Through religious and physical contacts, Hijaz had been also an important factor which influenced the course of the political, religious and doctrinal thought of the Malays, though the triumph of the Wahhabis and the rise of Ibn Saʿūd was an important turning point.3 Like other Muslims, the Malays anxiously watched the outcome of the events which would have a prolonged repercussion on their faith. Despite the fact that in a number of ways the Wahhabi creed differed slightly from the practices of the Shafīʿite Malays, except for a short period of confusion it appears that the rise of the new order there was generally welcomed by the greater section of the community. In the era of rapid social change in the 1920s and 1930s which gripped the community, the Malays seemingly were receptive to the propagation of progressive religious thought, and the Wahhabi creed was identified by them as belonging to this, with Ibn Saʿūd as the awaited leader.

**Malay Conduct of the Hajj**

According to Bernard Lewis, the annual event of the Hajj had been the most important cause of voluntary and personal mobility before the age of European

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3 Until the surrender of Sharif ʿAbdul ʿAziz to Ibn Saʿūd in 1925, Makkah has always enjoyed special political status as a capital city for the Muslim community with the ruler, the Sharif, who could receive delegations from other states. More important, perhaps, Makkah housed the religious scholars who acted as ultimate arbiters of differences within the ummah and who could confer legitimacy on any Muslim ruler or withdraw it from them. See Sidney Jones, “The Contraction and Expansion of the ‘umat’ and the Role of the Nahdatul Ulama in Indonesia”, *Indonesia*, No. 38, October 1984, p. 2.
discoveries.4 This mobility, however, continued after the discoveries and its importance was observed by the Malays with vigour since travel to the Holy Land is one of the most remarkable occasions in one's life, apart from birth, circumcision (for a boy) and marriage. Despite the significance of this religious obligation to the community it is difficult to ascertain when it was first performed by them, but it is thought to be as early as the introduction of Islam to the region. People of the early Malay city states such as Melaka, Acheh, and Riau, as early as the fifteenth century, are known to have been performing the fifth pillar of Islam and travelling to centres of learning of Islam in the Middle East.5

Despite the scarcity of the information, works of literature and historical reports do shed some light on its early performance by Malays. A prominent local historian MISBAHA (Mohd. Saleh Haji Awang), who based his findings on a report made by Tome Pires, concluded that the earliest known Malay to perform the Hajj was Sultan Alauddin Riayat Shah (1477-1488) of Melaka.6 An account of the conduct of the Hajj is also found in the Malay literary work, Hikayat Hang Tuah, where the legendary Malay hero, Hang Tuah, is said while making a stop at Jeddah on a diplomatic mission to Rum, was persuaded by the Shahbandar (harbour-master) to undertake the Hajj. In addition to fulfilling the religious obligations, while in Hijaz Hang Tuah also took the opportunity of visiting the grave

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6 See MISBAHA (Mohd. Saleh Haji Awang), Haji Di Semenanjung Malaysia. Sejarah dan Perkembangannya Sejak Tahun 1300-1405H (1896-1985), Kuala Terengganu: Syarikat Percetakan Yayasan Islam Terengganu Sdn. Bhd., 1986, pp. 116-117. Winstedt, however, gave a different account when he mentioned that Sultan Mahmud tried to dissuade his father, Sultan Alauddin from making the Hajj on the ground that "Malacca was the real Mecca". His account further added that Sultan Alauddin died when he was about to leave for Makkah. See R.O. Winstedt, "History of Malaya", JMBRAS, Vol. 13, Part 1, 1935, p. 52.
of the Prophet in Medinah, the grave of the Prophet’s companions at Baqí’ and Uthūd, and the graves of other shaykhs, saints and prophets.7

Even though the Malay performance of the Hajj to Hijaz is believed to have been undertaken since they became Muslim, conclusive evidence of this is only found in the sixteenth century including the case of Hamzah Fansuri, the great Sumatran mystic who studied at various centres of learning in the Arabian Peninsula during the late sixteenth century.8 Another evidence of early Malay performance of the Hajj was by the Achehnese, Abdul Rauf of Singkel, who arrived at the Holy Land around 1643, performed the religious duty, and studied in various parts of Arabia for nineteen years, under among others the famous Medinan ʿālim ʿIbrāhīm al-Kurānī, before returning to Acheh where he gained the patronage of Sultanah Tajul Alam Safiuddin Shah (1641-1675).9 A more informative account of the Malay conduct of the Hajj, however, was provided by two mid-nineteenth century works, Tuḥfat al-Nafis and Hikayat Pelayaran Abdullah. Tuḥfat al-Nafis, which was composed during the 1860s on the island of Penyengat (situated south of Singapore) gives an account of Raja Ahmad, a son of the Bugis hero Raja Haji, undertaking the religious journey for two reasons: to fulfill a vow made during a serious illness, and to comply with the religious obligation of the fifth pillar of Islam.10

10 V. Matheson and A.C. Milner, Perceptions of the Haj, op.cit., p. 15.
Meanwhile Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munshi in his account *Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah* gave a narrative of the voyage said he undertook in 1854. His account records the difficult conditions and harrowing experiences he encountered during the journey by sailing ship which took him around three months to reach Jeddah. Abdullah's account, however, was incomplete when he died in Jeddah in October that year. Despite his unfinished narrative, his accounts turned out to be the best available and other accounts were only written in the middle of the 1920s in the work of Abdul Majid Zainuddin, Malaya's first Pilgrimage Officer and in the 1930s by Jaafar bin Jusoh al-Hajj. Though there are several other works on the Hajj including articles published by Malay journals, they only elaborated on the importance of fulfilling the religious obligation and encouraging the Malays to perform it, rather than giving accounts of the journey.


14 See Haji Abdul Majid, "A Malay's Pilgrimage to Mecca", *JMBRAS*, Vol. 1V, Parts 1 & 2, October 1926, pp. 269-287. The account by Jaafar bin Jusoh, however, was the most descriptive on the conduct of the Hajj from Malaya, and he elaborates in detail his daily experiences during the inward and outward journeys and also while in Jeddah, Makkah and Medinah. His book also includes various pictures of the port of Jeddah, Makkah and Medinah. See Jaafar bin Jusoh al-Hajj, *Perihal Pemergian Ke Mekah dan Madinah, Iaitu Pelayaran dan Perjalanan Ke Mekah al-Mushrifah Bagi Mengerjakan Haji dan Ke Madinah al-Munawwarah Bagi Ziarah Makam Rasul Allah s.a.w dan Sahabat-Sahabatnya*, Johor Bahru: Soo Ping Hang Press, 1937. For a recent work on a Malay conduct of the Hajj including preparation while still in the village, the outward journey, the experience while in Hijaz, the return journey and the welcoming party on arrival home, see Mary Byrne McDonnell, "The Conduct of Hajj From Malaysia and Its Socio-Economic Impact on Malay Society: A Descriptive and Analytical Study, 1860-1981", PhD. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1986, pp. 253-262.

In Malaya, the annual event of the conduct of the Hajj attracted a large number of the Muslim population who embarked from Singapore and Penang for Jeddah. Even though the actual culmination of the "Hajj" actually took place on 10 Zulhijjah of the Muslim calendar at Arafat, not far from Makkah, because of the time taken for the travel from one's village to the embarking ports and the journey taken to the Holy Land, the preparation for the occasion had to be undertaken at least six months ahead, right from the month of Rajab.\textsuperscript{16} This preparation included basic preparations while still at home such as selecting proper clothing, stocking a sufficient amount of food and preparing other necessities needed during the journey.\textsuperscript{17} Before the departure, the would-be pilgrim was also required to prepare the necessary paperwork, particularly from the Hajj season of 1924 on getting a pilgrim pass.\textsuperscript{18} From 1928 onward these pilgrims were also required to produce a proof of small-pox and cholera immunisations and a certification of health clearance from a doctor before being allowed to embark on a ship bound for Jeddah.\textsuperscript{19}

The Malay preparation for a conduct of the Hajj also included finding a suitable pilgrim broker, also known as \textit{mutawwif}.\textsuperscript{20} Since for most Malays leaving for the Hajj was the first ever far-away venture outside their own village, the role of the \textit{mutawwif} was extremely important to ensure the success of the purpose of


\textsuperscript{17} For a detailed account of the required necessities, see MISBAHA (Mohd. Salleh Haji Awang), \textit{Haji Di Semenanjung Malaysia}, op.cit., p. 100. Before 1934 food was not provided on board the pilgrim ship and the pilgrims had to cook their own food. Beginning from the Hajj season of 1929/30, it was made compulsory for shipping companies to provide food on board pilgrim ships. See FO 371/73712, Governor of the Straits Settlements to Lord Passfield of Colonial Office, 11 July 1929.

\textsuperscript{18} For a discussion of various aspects of the pilgrim pass such as the history of its introduction, conditions for eligibility, the details needed and so on, see Nabihah Haji Hassan, "Sejarah Pengerjaan Haji Orang-Orang Tanah Melayu. Tumpuan Kajian Di Antara Tahun 1900-1940", B.A. Thesis, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1977/78, pp. 34-48. See also \textit{Pengasoh}, Vol. 8, No, 188, 28 January 1926, pp. 10-11. For the rules of the pilgrim passes, see CO 273/535/5, Enclosure 2. The pilgrim pass, however, was only made compulsory from the Hajj season of 1927.

\textsuperscript{19} See Nabihah Haji Hassan, "Sejarah Pengerjaan Haji", op.cit., p. 58.

\textsuperscript{20} For a discussion of various aspects of the \textit{mutawwif} such as its origin and role, and the legislation laid down by the British for the institution, see ibid., pp. 65-74.
the intended journey. This institution, which Roff says is "as old as the Hajj itself" based itself on the need of all pilgrims to possess a guide both to ritual of the Hajj and to the more mundane particularities of getting to and from Makkah (and Medinah) and subsisting in Jeddah and en route.\textsuperscript{21} To a Malay pilgrim, Roff further adds, a \textit{mutawwif} was "a necessary guide, philosopher and even a friend".\textsuperscript{22}

Despite the importance of this institution in ensuring the success of the grand mission in one's life, it was managed in an unsophisticated fashion, with intending pilgrims getting in touch with the desired \textit{mutawwif} through contacts in Penang or Singapore, or by recommendations given by friends who were satisfied with the earlier services given by a particular pilgrim broker. In Penang and Singapore the \textit{mutawwifs}, whose profession lay exclusively in the hands of the Arab community and their agents, made the necessary arrangements for the pilgrims such as the booking of tickets for the journey, assigning the necessary guides and providing knowledge on how the religious obligation should be undertaken.\textsuperscript{23}

Historically the journey for the Malay conduct of the Hajj was not an easy one. Before faster travel by steamship was introduced, the journey of Malay pilgrims to Jeddah was by sailing ship which was long and hazardous.\textsuperscript{24} Even after the introduction of steamships, some Malays still preferred to travel by sailing

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 107.
\item \textsuperscript{23} For elaboration on the ritual of the Hajj, see Haji Abdul Majid, "A Malay Pilgrimage to Mecca", op.cit., pp. 271-287; Nabiah Haji Hassan, "Sejarah Pengerjaan Haji", op.cit., pp. 15-27.
\item \textsuperscript{24} For example, in his account of the journey to perform the Hajj in 1886, Tok Kenali reported the traumatic experience he encountered travelling by a sailing ship. Because of the rough seas the mast of the ship snapped and this resulted in the travelling time taken to reach Jeddah being extended to six months instead of the normal three. For his account, see Abdullah al-Qari Haji Salleh, \textit{Sejarah Hidup Tok Kenali}, Kota Bharu: Pustaka Aman Press, 1967, p. 24.
\end{itemize}
ship because it was much cheaper.25 Although travel by steamship was faster and safer it was not a completely pleasant journey and sometimes met with mishaps such as the misadventure encountered by the steamship Jeddah in August 1880 with a thousand pilgrims on board which came close to foundering off Cape Guardafui, at the entrance to the Gulf of Aden.26

In the 1920s when travel by steamship was getting more popular it took between thirteen to seventeen days for a pilgrim ship to reach Jeddah depending on weather conditions.27 Most of the travel to Jeddah was undertaken by the steamships belonging to the Blue Funnel Company, which accounted for about eighty five percent of the trips, while the rest were by ships belonging to the Nemazie and Straits-Hejaz Companies, among others.28 Despite the fact that travelling by steamship allowed the time taken for the journey to be drastically

25 When the first Hajj travel to Jeddah by steamship was undertaken is difficult to establish. Munshi Abdullah reported that the first steamship to reach Singapore was the Sesostris which anchored at the port on 3 August 1841. (Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir, Bahawa in Churta Kapal Asap, Singapore, Kampung Beras Basah, 1943, p. 1.). Travel by steamship by Malay pilgrims must had been started at least by the late 1860s, based on a letter by R.S. Ellis of the Government at Madras to the Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements in which he reported on the overcrowding of the ship SS Day Dream which was carrying 613 Malay pilgrims instead of 216 it was licensed to carry (CO 273/30 R.S. Ellis to Colonial Secretary of Straits Settlements, 19 March 1869). By the middle of 1870s, however, travelling by steamship was more frequent and there were at least seven steamers which carried Malay pilgrims to Jeddah ranging from those which carried one hundred passengers to those carried nearly one thousand (CO 273/92, "Correspondence Reporting Turkish Regulations For Pilgrim Traffic", 1 May 1875, p. 17). See also CO 273/67, 4 July 1873, for list of ships and number of passengers cleared by the Office of the Master of Attendants, Singapore for Jeddah for the pilgrim seasons of 1871 and 1872.


28 During the Hajj season of 1927 altogether there were thirty three ships which carried pilgrims to Jeddah, twenty eight of which belonged to the Ocean Steam Navigation Company or the Blue Funnel Line, three to the Nemazie of Hong Kong and the other two to the Straits-Hejaz Steamship Company of Singapore (see GA 602/27 [National Archive, Malaysia, Johor Bahru Branch] No. 2 in H.C.O. 1069/27, Secretary to High Commissioner to General Adviser Johore; enclosure Report of the 1926/27 Pilgrimage by Haji Abdul Majid Zainuddin, the Malay Pilgrimage Officer September 1927, p. 1). In terms of passengers, the Blue Funnel carried 22,554, the Nemazie 4,855 and with Straits-Hejaz Company 2,195. This total also included pilgrims from the Netherland East Indies who travelled with the steamships (see CO 273/535/5, "Report on the Pilgrimage, 1927", 17 October 1927, p. 22).
reduced, the ships which carried these pilgrims were overcrowded and conditions were squalid due to the profit-oriented nature of the shipping companies.\textsuperscript{29}

The physically unsafe, insecure, insanitary journey of long duration, in cramped and squalid conditions of Malay pilgrims to Jeddah and back persisted until the middle of the 1930s. These squalid conditions were sometimes the contributing factor which led to the high number of fatalities among Malay pilgrims, so that during the 1927 Hajj season it was recorded that eighty nine of them died during the journey.\textsuperscript{30} The unfavourable conditions and traumatic experiences, however, were not only faced by the pilgrims during the journey, but right from the start, at Malayan ports before the ship set sail for Jeddah.\textsuperscript{31} In addition to the agony of the journey, they were also vulnerable to various forms of exploitation while still at the ports and while in Hijaz.\textsuperscript{32} In the late nineteenth century this abuse was encountered in its worst form by some unfortunate ones, mostly Javanese pilgrims, who embarked from Singapore and ended up penniless and had to borrow money from the pilgrim brokers. To pay their debts, they were forced to become labourers upon returning at the plantations in Johore.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{29} The overcrowding and the squalid conditions of the pilgrim ships were early concerns of the British colonial administration which led to their involvement in the Malay pilgrimage to Makkah. See for example the correspondence CO 273/73 (9 June 1869), CO 273/34 (8 December 1869), CO 273/67 (11 July 1873), CO 273/73 (9 April 1873), CO 273/73 (29 September 1873), CO 273/75 (12 March 1874), CO 273/82, 9 February 1875), CO 273/89 (4 January 1876).

\textsuperscript{30} See Nabihah Haji Hassan, "Sojarah Pengerjaan Haji", op.cit., p. 97.

\textsuperscript{31} For example see the call made by the journal al-\textit{ikhwan} to Sayyid al-Nabil Hamid bin Umar al-Mashhor, one of the mutawwifs who handled the pilgrims in Penang. He was advised to make necessary arrangements so that pilgrim ships could come close to the pier to avoid the pilgrims travelling by boat in order to board the ship and enduring extreme heat and pitch-dark night (see \textit{Al-ikhwan}, Vol. 1, No. 9, 16 May 1927, p. 183). For a description of this traumatic experience, see also Mohd. Saleh Haji Awang (MISBAHA), \textit{Haji Di Semenan jung Malaysia}, op.cit., p. 148.

\textsuperscript{32} While still at Malayan ports there were many instances of Malay pilgrims being cheated by certain elements of the pilgrim brokers. The existence of such cases was reported by Neracha, which gave publicity to the trial of two pilgrim brokers who cheated their clients. See \textit{Chahaya Pulau Pinang}, Vol. 7, No. 3, 27 October 1906, p. 3.

The Malay conduct of the Hajj was also a costly affair since the amount of money needed to undertake the journey was substantial. For an ordinary peasant it meant a lifelong saving, as it took him almost twenty-five years to accumulate the amount sufficient to pay for the fare and living expenses while in Hijaz. The conduct of the Hajj was sometimes also a deadly affair since apart from the hazards encountered during the journey, the conditions in Hijaz could be fatal. In the 1924 Hajj season, it was reported that 540 of the 3,317 pilgrims who registered at the British Consulate in Jeddah were known to have died which was some sixteen percent, a rate not untypical of the time. During the 1927 season, out of 12,184 Malay pilgrims who set out for the journey there were no fewer than 12.5% or 1,492 pilgrim deaths while they were in Hijaz.

Despite the difficulty, cost and the remoteness of Hijaz, in relation to the size of its Muslim population, the figure for the number of Muslims from British Malaya and also from the Netherlands East Indies going for the Hajj was very impressive. In 1911, Dutch statistics recorded over twenty-four thousand of its subjects in the East Indies, which comprised almost thirty percent of all overseas pilgrims as making their journey to the Holy City. In the years 1921-1930, well over a quarter of a million Netherlands East Indies Muslims had performed the Hajj.

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34 See Jacob Vredenbergt, "The Haddj. Some of its Features and Functions in Indonesia", Bijdragen van het Koninklijk Instituut, Vol. 118, 1962, p. 135. Although this is in reference to the Netherlands East Indies peasants in Indonesia, the situation was almost similar in Malaya, where in late nineteenth century Jelebu, for example, it meant RM$200 in one's savings to perform the Hajj. See J.M. Gullick, "The Negeri Sembilan Economy of the 1890s", JMBRAK, Vol. XXIV, Part 1, February 1951, p. 48. According to Abdul Kadir Haji Din, in 1926 the cost of performing the Hajj was about $600, and in 1947 about $1,500. See Abdul Kadir Haji Din, "Economic Implication of Moslem Pilgrimage From Malaysia", Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 4, No. 1, June 1982, p. 65. Now it costs about $6,000 to perform this religious obligation. See also Mary Byrne McDonnell, "The Conduct of Hajj From Malaysia", op.cit., Appendix III, p. 639, for the cost of the pilgrimage from 1875-1981.

35 National Archive, Malaysia, File 1039/24, "Annual Report on the Pilgrimage During the Year 1924 AD (Season 1342AH)", enclosure Director, Political Intelligence Bureau, 10 October 1924.

36 For a figure of Malay pilgrim deaths according to state for the year, see GA 602/27, op.cit., p. 9. For the statistics of Malay pilgrim deaths for the period of 1865-1938, see Mary Byrne McDonnell, "The Conduct of Hajj From Malaysia", op.cit., Appendix 1V-b, pp. 641-642.

out of a Muslim population of some fifty millions. In Malaya close to fifty thousand, out of a Muslim population of less than two millions, had also done so. In general Malays sent more pilgrims to Makkah in proportion to their number than were sent by Indians, Persians or Turks.\(^{38}\)

Even though Malays had a long history of performing the Hajj, their numbers who made the journey, as is clearly shown, increased rapidly only in the early twentieth century. This rapid increase was contributed to by a number of factors, the most important being the availability of convenient transportation. The Malay World, which is situated on the major steamship routes between Europe and the Far East, provided readily obtainable transportation for the pilgrims which was further enhanced by the opening of the Suez Canal and the use of steamships. Steamship companies found that pilgrim traffic was extremely lucrative, for not only were they able to fill the upper holds and decks with pilgrims, but also the lower compartments with rice, sugar, coffee, timber and other merchandise for traders in Jeddah.\(^{39}\)

The highest number of Malays making their journey to the Holy Land was in 1927 when 12,184 of them landed at Jeddah between December 1926 and May 1927.\(^{40}\) The reason for the great upsurge in numbers is usually given as a combination of high rubber prices at home and a new sense of pilgrim security in Ibn Sa'ūd's Hijaz.\(^{41}\) Likewise, economic slump and lack of sense of security led to the drop in the number of Malay pilgrims who made their journey to Hijaz. In the

\(^{38}\) This proportion is illustrated by the number of Malay pilgrims who made their journey there during the peak years where no fewer than 52,000 pilgrims from Indonesia and 12,000 from Malaya congregated at Arafat, comprising together well over half of the total overseas pilgrims present. This number represents in a single year a population ratio of 1:1000 for Indonesia and 6:1000 for Malaya. This ratio is relatively high when compared to the ratio for the same year of nearby Egypt, which stood equal to that of Indonesia at 1:1000. See William R. Roff, "The Meccan Pilgrimage. Its meaning for Southeast Asian Islam", in Raphael Israeli and Anthony H. John (eds.), Islam in Asia Vol. II Southeast and East Asia, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1984, p. 239. See also Eldon Rutter, "The Muslim Pilgrimage", Geographical Journal, Vol. LXXIV, No. 3, September 1929, p. 271; R.J. Wilkinson, "Papers on Malay Customs and Beliefs", JMBRAS, Vol. 30, Part 4, 1947, p. 6.

\(^{39}\) Eldon Rutter, "The Muslim Pilgrimage", op.cit., p. 271.

\(^{40}\) CO 273/535/5, "Report on the Pilgrimage, 1927", 17 October 1927.

1932 season, the number of Malay pilgrims who made their journey dropped to a mere eighty due to the deep recession which led to a collapse in rubber prices. After a period of steady increase, their number experienced a slight drop during the Hajj season of 1936 when there was a sense of uncertainty as a result of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict. The greatest drop in the number of Malay pilgrims recorded before World War II was in the 1939/40 season when the outbreak of European War resulted in only forty six pilgrims managing to reach Jeddah, compared to 2,059 in the previous year.

The Malay conduct of the Hajj which had been attended with difficulties and short-comings, however, began to receive the attention of the British colonial administration in Malaya from the early 1920s. The most positive step taken toward their involvement was when Abdul Majid Zainuddin was appointed as the First Malay Pilgrimage Officer in 1923. As a Pilgrimage Officer Abdul Majid took up his duty at the beginning of every season and was the last to return when the

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42 Ibid., p. 104.
44 MB 332/40 (National Archive, Malaysia Johor Bahru Branch) "Malayan Pilgrimage For the Season 1939/40"; enclosure J.D. Dalley, Superintendent, Special Branch, Straits Settlements Police to Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements, 31 May 1940.
45 For a detailed discussion of the British Malaya involvement in the Malay conduct of the Hajj, see pp. 291-295 of this work.
46 Abdul Majid bin Zainuddin was born at Pudu, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, in March 1887. He attended the local Malay school as a child and then, in 1895, became one of the few Malay pupils at the newly opened English-language Victoria Institution. In 1902, as a result of a double promotion, he successfully sat the Cambridge Junior Certificate examination. Abdul Majid taught at Malay College, Kuala Kangsar from 1907 for twelve years until 1918 when he was appointed as the first Assistant Inspector of Schools (Malay) for Lower Perak. In the interim, however, he spent two periods totalling some twenty two months as acting headmaster of the Malay Teachers' College at Matang, Perak - again, the first Malay to hold a post of this seniority. Following his appointment as the first Malay Pilgrimage Officer, Abdul Majid left Singapore in early January 1923 with his clerk, Wan Yusuf bin Wan Hussein Temenggong. Abdul Majid held the post for the next sixteen years and in the 1940 Hajj season Che Pin bin Jusoh was appointed as acting Malay Pilgrimage Officer. Abdul Majid died in March 1943. For his life and service as a Malay Pilgrimage Officer, see William R. Roff, "The Conduct of the Haj From Malaya", op.cit., pp. 91-109. For his memoirs, see William R. Roff, (edited with an introduction and notes), The Wandering Thoughts of a Dying Man. The Life and Times of Haji Abdul Majid bin Zainuddin, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1978.
season ended. His responsibilities included registering pilgrims, who were required to do so within twenty four hours of their arrival in Jeddah, recording their departure, keeping their return tickets in safe custody, and generally succouring them in every way. Part of his responsibility was also to enquire into cases of any pilgrims who did not embark for home at the end of the season and, in the event of a death, helping the next-of-kin to recover the properties of the deceased.

By the beginning of the 1930s, the British Malaya administration of the Hajj was being taken very much more seriously compared to the case a decade earlier and the degree of responsibility assumed for pilgrims' welfare was greatly increased. A good deal of credit for drawing the attention of British officials in both Jeddah and Malaya to matters of particular concern to Malay pilgrims undoubtedly went to the Malay Pilgrimage Officer, Abdul Majid Zainuddin. On the part of the Saudi Arabian government after Abd al-'Aziz Ibn Sa'ūd established order and security in the Hijaz, every care was also taken to ensure the comfort and the health of the pilgrims. Apart from providing hospitals and health centres in the towns, all along the pilgrim routes were to be found at very short intervals hospitals, dispensaries and resthouses where treatment and medicines were given gratis and the pilgrims received every care and attention.

By the end of the 1930s undoubtedly conditions had been upgraded substantially, and the journey was more organised, safer and easier, especially in

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47 See also the statements by the Office of the Perdana Menteri of Kelantan, "Kenyataan Kepada Orang-Orang Haji", Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 198, 28 January 1926, pp. 10-11; Idaran Zaman, "Kenyataan Kepada Orang Haji", 11 February 1926.


49 Ibid., pp. 230-231.

50 His excellent service was also commended by the Menteri Besar of Kelantan who performed the Hajj in 1930. See MB 260/30, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch) "Visit To Mecca of Nik Mahmood C.B.E., Dato' Perdana Menteri Paduka Raja of Kelantan", 6 November 1930; enclosure A.S. Haynes (British Advisor Adviser to the Government of Kelantan) to the Secretary to the High Commissioner for the Malay State, 12 November 1930.

those areas amenable to Malayan government control such as shipping and providing facilities at the embarking ports. Little could be done, however, to improve medical and sanitary conditions while the pilgrims were in Hijaz or to mitigate rampant acts of extortion by certain quarters among the pilgrim brokers.⁵² Despite the difficulties and hazards faced in the pursuit of performing their religious duty, there was no occasion on which Malays showed any hesitation or misgiving which might deter them from making a "sacred" journey to Hijaz.

Practice of the Tariqahs

To the majority of Malays one of the principal aims in their life as a Muslim is to go to Hijaz to fulfill the religious obligation of the Hajj.⁵³ They believed that one’s opportunity to perform the Hajj, “the call from the Ka’bah" is determined by the divine will imparted to the rightful person. Since its fulfillment was a lifelong ambition, success in accomplishing it and thus completing the fifth and the most challenging pillar of Islam, enabled them upon their return to be accorded a new status by fellow villagers. In the nineteenth century, before the practice of keeping slaves was disallowed by the colonial authorities, the new status was even allegedly enhanced by bringing home Abyssinian slaves on the part of some wealthier pilgrims returning from the Hajj.⁵⁴

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The new status, however, was physically illustrated by wearing, probably, Arab dress, in distinction to that in which the pilgrim had departed, and often by taking a new name to signify his rebirth with the title Haji added at the beginning of his name. Apart from this apparently physical impact of the Malay interaction with Hijaz, in the late nineteenth century the intercourse also provided a new development of Malay Islam. This development was a result of the emergence of nineteenth century Makkah as the most important centre for Sufi orders in the Muslim World, since almost every order was represented there. Many Malays who went to Hijaz were not content merely to complete the ritual of the Hajj, but instead stayed there for several years to become qualified as an ālim, which was also supplemented by acquiring the practice of a certain tariqah. Some Malays who acquired the tariqah did so only for themselves, while others also became its Khalifah (master). Until the early twentieth century, Hijaz continued to be the source of the spread of the tariqahs among Malays.


These Makkans-originated *tariqahs* which were practiced in particular locations, some in several locations, while others were practiced all over the country, owed their origin and expansion to the role played by returning *Hajis-cum-*Ulāmā*. By the nature of its practice, a *tariqah* usually evolved around a particular *ālim* and its diffusion depended upon their popularity in attracting followers. It was also a common practice for students who learned religious knowledge from a particular *ālim* to follow the *tariqah* of their teacher. The acquisition of the practice of the *tariqahs* by Malays while they were in Hijaz was also significantly aided by the *ulamā* there, who inspired their students to return to their homelands with reforming zeal; thus it was as spreaders of purified orders, rather than simply as *muḥaddiths* that they left Makkah and Medinah.\(^5^6\)

According to Syed Naguib al-Attas, until the late nineteenth century there were altogether nine *tariqahs* being popularly practiced in Malaya. They were the Qādiriyah, Naqshbandiyah, Rifā‘iyah, Shādhiliyyah, Chishtiyyah, Shatṭāriyyah, Aḥmadiyyah, Tijāniyyah and the ʿAlawiyah.\(^5^9\) Among the Malay states, the *tariqahs* were most widely practiced and widespread in Kelantan, Negeri Sembilan, Kedah, Trengganu and Johore. In Kelantan, in addition to the practice of the Tariqah Ahmadiyyah, Naqshbandiyah, Shatṭāriyyah and Shādhiliyyah, being introduced by various returning *ulamā* from Hijaz, other *tariqahs* practiced included those of Shah Waliyullah al-Dehlavi and Sīdī Aḥmad al-Badawi.\(^6^0\)

The most popular *tariqah* practiced in Kelantan which owed its origin to returning *ulamā* from Makkah, however, was the Tariqah Ahmadiyyah.\(^6^1\) The teaching of the *tariqah* in the state was first initiated by Tuan Tabal (1840-1891).

\(^{56}\) John O’Voll, "Hadith Scholars and Their Tariqahs: An Ulama Group in the 18th Century Haramayn and Their Impact in the Islamic World", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. XV, Nos. 3-4, 1980, p. 268. This for example was the case with Abdul Rauf of Singkel who returned to Acheh from his studies under Ibrāhīm al-Kuranī in Medinah and took charge of spreading his teacher’s *tariqah*, the Shatṭāriyyah.


Tuan Tabal (Haji Abdul Samad bin Mohd. Salleh) who received his education in Makkah, and was among the earliest to do so, learned the *tariqah* from Sīdī Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Dandarāwī. Sīdī Muḥammad al-Dandarāwī was a student of Sīdī Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd whose teacher was Aḥmad ibn ʿĪrās al-Fāṣi, the founder of the *tariqah*. The teaching of the Tariqah Ahmadiyah in Kelantan was continued in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by the sons of Tuan Tabal, Haji Wan Musa (third) Haji Nik Wan Abdullah (fourth) and his students, Haji Ahmad Manan and Haji Daud Hussein. The *tariqah* was popularly received and managed to attract followers not only among the inhabitants of Kota Bharu, but also won over the Regent of Kelantan, Raja Muda Zainal Abidin and other members of the royal family.

Apart from the role played by Tuan Tabal, his sons and students in spreading the *tariqah*, its expansion in Kelantan was also assisted by Sidi Abu Hassan Azhari, another student of al-Dandarāwī who was at first assigned to spread the *tariqah* in India, but instead settled in Kelantan. His arrival from Makkah in 1914 intensified the spread of the Tariqah Ahmadiyah in the state, and his presence was welcomed with great enthusiasm by its followers. In Kelantan he was regarded as a living saint because of his piety and the Malays' high regard for his Arab and Makkan origin. The *tariqah* under his leadership was popularly received and also managed to spread to neighbouring Trengganu where Haji Ngah Muhammad, the Chief Minister of the state at that time, was said to be a one of its followers.

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64 Ibid., p. 14.

The Tariqah Ahmadiyah al-Dandarawiyah as it was also known, was also widely followed in Negeri Sembilin. The role of spreading the *tariqah* in this state was played by Haji Muhammad Said bin Jamaluddin from Linggi, who spread the *tariqah* upon his return after a long sojourn in Makkah. He was a contemporary of Tuan Tabalin in Makkah and also received the *tariqah* from al-Dandarawî. Even though he claimed to have been appointed the Khaliîfah of the Tariqah Ahmadiyah for the Malay World by his teacher, his authority and his task of spreading the *tariqah* in Kelantan and Trengganu ran into difficulties because the states already had their own Khaliîfah, Sidi Abu Hassan al-Azhari. Although the *tariqah* under his leadership failed to make any remarkable impact in Kelantan and Trengganu, it made spectacular inroads in Negeri Sembilan and also in Melaka.

Another *tariqah* also popularly followed in Kelantan was the Tariqah Shah Waliyullah al-Dehlavi. Even though the *tariqah* was initiated by Qutbuddin Abdul Rahim (1703-1763), better known as Shah Waliyullah al-Dehlavi of India and had been practiced there much earlier, it was only well accepted in the state when it was propagated by a Makkan-educated ʻalîm, Haji Nik Abdullah (1900-1935). Haji Nik Abdullah learned the *tariqah* in Makkah from Maulana Ubaidullah al-Sindhi while staying there to further his religious studies. On returning to Kota Bharu he became the leader of the *tariqah*. Even though Haji Nik Abdullah only managed to spread the *tariqah* for a very short period, as he died in the middle of 1935, about seven months after his return to Kota Bharu, the *tariqah* he propagated survived and even managed to attract a wide influence in the state and

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67 Hamdan Hassan, "Tuan Haji Abdul Wahid Othman", op.cit., pp. 35-36.

neighbouring Trengganu. A number of his students later went to Makkah and then proceeded to India to deepen their Islamic teaching based on the *tariqah*.

Apart from the Tariqah Ahmadiyah and the Tariqah Shah Waliyullah al-Dehlavi, other *tariqahs* were also practiced in Kelantan on a smaller scale. The Tariqah Shadhiliyyah Sīdī 'Āhmad al-Badawī was introduced in Kota Bharu by Haji Wan Ali Khutan (1837-1912), another Makkkan-educated ʻālim who once taught at Masjid al-Ḥarām. The *tariqah*, however, was more widely practiced in Trengganu, being introduced in the state in the early eighteenth century by Shaykh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah who acquired the *tariqah* while studying in Makkah and Medinah. While in Makkah, Shaykh Abdul Malik also wrote a book which dealt with *Tasawwuf*, *Hikam Malayu*, an elaboration of the book *Matn Ḥikam* written by Tāj ad-Dīn Ibn ʻĀṭāʾ Allāh as-Sikandarī, the third generation of the Tariqah Shadhiliyyah leadership.

Another *tariqah* practiced in Kelantan was the Tariqah Ṣaḥḥāriyyah, initiated by Haji Yaacob bin Haji Abdul Halim also known as Tuan Padang. Haji Yaacob was also among the earliest Makkkan-educated ʻālims in the state and the *tariqah* he spread to his students was acquired while he was studying there. The Tariqah Ṣaḥḥāriyyah, however, had a long history of being practiced by Malays, being first introduced as early as the seventeenth century in Sumatra by Abdul Rauf.

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69 Ibid., p. 68. Among these students were Haji Muhammad Salleh bin Haji Wan Musa, Haji Nik Mahmud bin Haji Wan Musa and Haji Nik Abdul Rahaman bin Haji Nik Mahmud of Kota Bharu and Haji Abdul Qadir bin Haji Muhammad of Kuala Trengganu.


Singkel. The tariqah was also practiced by the well-known Kitab Jawi author, Shaykh Daud Fatani. The doctrine of the tariqah is connected with the doctrine of Ibn ʿArabī who held that all being is essentially one (unity of being - Waḥdat al-Wujūd). In Minangkabau this doctrine was associated with the popular Mertabat Tujuh or seven phases of emanation of the absolute.

The Tariqah Naqshbandiyah was introduced in the late nineteenth century in Kota Bahru by Haji Umar bin Ismail. Before that, as early as 1857, the tariqah had already been introduced and popularly practiced in the island of Penyengat, being propagated by the Riau royal family. The Tariqah Naqshbandiyah, however, only succeeded in attracting a small number of adherents in Kelantan, but in other states it managed to appeal to a large number of followers, propagated by different Makkag-educated ʿulamāʾ who had learned the tariqah, which was introduced in Makkah and the Arabian Peninsula in the middle of the seventeenth century. In Trengganu, the tariqah was practiced by a well-known ʿālim, Tokku Paloh who while studying in Makkah learned the tariqah.

74 Syed Naguib al-Attas, Some Aspects of Sūfism, op.cit., p. 29.


from Sidi Muhammad Mazhar al-Aftmadi. In the district of Pontian in Johore, one of the most important local figures to play a significant role in spreading the Qadiriyyah-Naqshbandiyah, a branch of the tariqah, was a Javanese, Haji Ahmad Shah. In the 1930s, Haji Ahmad went to Damascus to further his study of Fiqh and Uṣul al-Dīn. He later went to Makkah where he became the student of Shaykh Aḥmad Khaṭīb al-Sambāsī, an ʿālim of the famous Tariqah Qadiriyyah-Naqshbandiyah.

In Kedah, the Shaykh al-Islam himself, Haji Wan Sidek bin Wan Sulaiman, was the leader of another branch of the tariqah, Tariqah Naqshbandiyah Mujaddidiyyah Ahmadiyyah. Haji Wan Sulaiman learned the tariqah from a famous Makkah ʿālim, Shaykh Muhammad al-Bukhārī, while studying there from 1889 until 1910. In an effort to provide a better understanding of the tariqah, in 1924 he published a book, Fatwāḥat al-Khadihiyat. In the book he outlined the origin of the tariqah and its function, as he put it, to give protection to humanity. Haji Wan Sulaiman also wrote another book on the tariqah, Nursatad'a Wasifa Qad'a in which he also explained the popularity of the Tariqah Naqshbandiyah which was being practiced by Muslims all over the world.
Tariqahs in Malaya had their origin in Makkah and were introduced by highly respected Makkan-educated ‘ulamā’, and their practices were generally accepted as a means of achieving the highest level of a true believer. Despite this, some Muslims were extremely critical of some of their practices, particularly their extreme conduct which was regarded as deviating from the true teaching of Islam and was even blamed by one of the anti-tariqah critics for causing the downfall of the Muslims. In the early years of the twentieth century, when the Tariqah Ahmadiyah was widely practiced in Kelantan, some of its practices were viewed as excessive. This led to accusations and counter accusations over its validity from a religious point of view and even involved the palace. Because of the intensity of the debate between the opposing groups which created a split in the community, the opinion of the ‘ulamā’ in Makkah, where the practices of the tariqahs originated, was deemed necessary to relieve the tension. It was then decided by the Sultan of Kelantan in 1905 that a letter be written to a prominent ‘ālim there, Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustapha al-Fatani for his opinion. Shaykh Wan Ahmad who admitted that he had learned the tariqah but was not interested in practicing it, elaborated his opinions on the practice of tariqah in his book, Kitāb al-Fatāwā al-Fatāniyah.


88 The involvement of the ‘ulamā’ of Hijaz in order to ease the tension over the practice of tariqahs in the Malay World dated back as early as 1640. During the reign of Sultan Iskandar Thani of Aceh (1636-1642), who was the patron of Nuruddin al-Raniri and the Tariqah Qadiriyyah he practiced, the books of Shams al-Din al-Sumatrani who practiced the Tariqah Shapriyah were burnt and his followers prosecuted by the Sultan’s order. The news of the tension was carried to Hijaz by students from Sumatra and prompted one of the great Medinan ‘ulamā’ of that age, Ibrahim b. Hasan al-Kuran (1616-1690), to write a major work, Ithāf al-Dhakl bi Sharḥ al-Tulfā al-Mursala ilā’l-Nabi (A Presentation to the Discriminating in Explanation of the Gift Addressed to [the Spirit] of the Prophet) setting out the principles of the practice of tariqah, which he hoped would settle the issue once and for all. See A.H. Johns, ‘From Coastal Settlement to Islamic School and City: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java”, Hamdard Islamicus, Vol. 1V, No. 4, 1981, p. 11, See also A.H. Johns, "Friend in Grace", op.cit., pp. 469-485.

89 Hamdan Hassan, Tarekat Ahmadiyah, op.cit., pp. 60-61; For the letter, see Appendix D, pp. 243-245.

The polemics on the practice of *tariqah* in its relation to the theological and doctrinal aspects of Islam were not only confined to the Malay States, but were also intensively debated among the Malay students and *ʿulamāʾ* of Masjid al-Ḥarām.91 Despite the fact that Makkah was the centre of the *tariqahs*, not all the *ʿulamāʾ* there accepted their practices, and a number of them were even bitterly opposed to them. Among the *ʿulamāʾ* in Masjid al-Ḥarām who denounced the practice of the *tariqahs* was Shaykh Ahmad Khatib bin Abdul Latif al-Minangkabawi. In his bitter attack on the practice of the *tariqahs*, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib denounced the practice of the Tariqah Naqshbandiyah as deviating from the true teaching of Islam.92 His criticism of the *tariqah* was based on the crucial role of the teacher as intermediary (*rābijah*) between devotee and God.93

Shaykh Ahmad Khatib also strongly denounced the practice of the Tariqah Shafiʿiyyah and the doctrine of the *Martabat Tujuh* or the seven phases of the emanation of the absolute, and elaborated his rejection in a pamphlet entitled "Ash-Shumūs al-Lāmīfah Fī Raddi Badʾ Ahli Marāṭib as-Sabʿah.94 He warned all Muslims in the Malay World not be influenced by the practice of the *tariqah*. He disputed the beliefs that its doctrines had their origin from al-Ghazālī and categorically branded those who practiced the *tariqah* as more harmful than the Jews and Christians.95 His former students scattered throughout the Malay World

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and also launched similar attacks on the heterodoxy of the practice of the tariqahs.96

Even though tariqahs were comparatively widely practiced by Malays and developed a sense of brotherhood among their practitioners, in Malaya none of them developed into a political movement, such as in Sudan or Libya, or even the Netherlands East Indies.97 Although Haji Abdul Rahman Limbong who led the Trengganu uprisings in 1920s was a follower of the Tariqah Naqshbandiyah, the same tariqah practiced by his teacher, Tokku Paloh, there is no evidence to suggest that the tariqah inspired him to revolt.98 The practice of tariqah in Malaya as elsewhere in the Muslim World suffered a severe blow when Makkah was occupied by Ibn Saʻūd in 1924, since the Wahhabi creed was strongly opposed to such practices. Despite this fact, tariqahs continued to be followed in Malaya, since tradition allowed them to be practiced independently by its local Khalifah.

Islamic Scholarship and Educational Development

Ever since they became Muslims, Hijaz had been an important destination for Malays to deepen their religious knowledge, in addition to what had been acquired locally. In fact it was a normal practice among the more religious Malay parents,

96 Shaykh Ahmad Khatib is rather a unique ʻulamā, since even though he upheld the teaching of the Shafi’î school against the direct interpretation of the Qur’ān, at the same time did not forbid his students from studying the writings of Muḥammad ʻAbduh and other modernists. See John R. Bowen, "Death and the History of Islam in Highland Aceh", Indonesia, No. 38, October 1984, p. 30.

97 In the Netherlands East Indies the tariqahs had a history of political involvement since 1888 when a large-scale peasant revolt broke out in Banten (westernmost Java) where the Tariqah Naqshbandiyah was somehow involved. Fifteen years later a religious teacher affiliated to the tariqah led another revolt against local elites and the Netherlads East Indies administration in the Sidoharjo district near Surabaya, East Java. See Martin van Bruinessen, "The Origins and Development of the Naqshbandi Order in Indonesia", Der Islam, Vol. 1, No. 67, 1990, p. 151. For a discussion of the Netherlands East Indies administration’s apprehensions about the practice of the tariqahs in Java manifested during the incidents of Cianjur, Sukabumi (1885), Cilegon, Banten (1888) and Garut (1919), see H. Aqib Suminto, Islam Di Indonesia. Politik Hindia Belanda. Singapore: Pustaka Nasional Pte., Ltd., 1985, pp. 64-78.

who could afford it, particularly in the eastern and northern Peninsular Malay States where religious education was most developed, to send their sons at a young age to Makkah to study Islam and to perform the Hajj. In Malay society performing the Hajj, apart from serving to authenticate one's religiosity, also confirmed one's knowledge in matters of religion. The recognition that this brought enabled the Hajis-cum-‘Ulamâ’ upon their return to their village to play a prominent role in the development of religious education or, as it was popularly known in Malaya, Qur‘anic education.

In the traditional Malay society, as in the Middle East, Qur‘anic education was considered an integral part of socialisation and its teachers, the Hajis-cum-‘Ulamâ’ played the role of faqîh. The respect and trust given to them was paramount, as was the case for instance in Morocco where, when a father handed his son over to learn the Qu‘rân, he did so using the formulaic phrase which stipulated that the child could be beaten as the teacher saw fit, provided that he was not deformed or blinded. The role played by these Hajis-cum-‘Ulamâ’ in Qur‘anic education was significant, since it laid the foundation for the early development of Malay education and assisted its consequent progress when the vernacular schools were established by the British.

The education provided by the Qur‘anic, as by the vernacular schools, was only a basic education. Before the University of al-Azhar began to attract an increasing number of Malay students in the middle of the 1920s, the main centre for Malays to further their studies was Makkah. Many Malays, particularly the young ones who went to Hijaz to perform the Hajj, stayed there for a couple of years, some for a couple of decades, to equip themselves as respected ‘ulamâ’. This process of Malays going to Hijaz in quest of knowledge had been going on


since they first became Muslim, even though it is difficult to ascertain when and who was the first to do so. It was only in the late seventeenth century that the first local, Shaykh Abdul Malik Abdullah of Trengganu (1650-1736) was known to have studied in Makkah, staying there for twelve years after receiving his early education in Acheh. He was a student of Abdul Rauf Singnel and while in Hijaz also studied under the famous Medinan ٓالِیم, إبْرَاهِیم ٓال-کرَانِی.\textsuperscript{102}

Even though Malays had been going to Hijaz for quite some time, it was only from the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century that an increasing number of them went there to further their religious education.\textsuperscript{103} During this period, Hijaz also emerged as an important centre of Malay scholarship with the presence of a number of prominent ٓعلماء, who were not only taught at مسجد المحرَّم, but also produced many religious books. Among famous early Malay religious scholars based in Makkah at one time or another from the late eighteenth century until the middle of the nineteenth century who wrote many religious texts may be included Abdul Malik Abdullah, Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, Nawawi al-Bantani and Daud al-Fatani.\textsuperscript{104} The fame of these ٓعلماء, however, was not only confined to the Malay community, but also spread among the Arabs, as in the case of Nawawi who was accorded the title سِیّد ٓعلماء المحرَّم (Lord of the Teachers of the Hijaz) for his books and the skill and learning shown in discussions with the شیخین of al-Azhar.\textsuperscript{105}

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Makkah, one of the most prominent ٓعلماء who had a great influence upon Malay students who studied there was Shaykh Ahmad Khatib bin Abdul Latif al-Minangkabawi. He was one of the most important ٓعلماء of the Minangkabau reformists and was the first

\textsuperscript{102} Shafie Abu Bakar, "Sheikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah (Tuk Pulau Manis)", Warisan, No. 5, 1989, pp. 15-16.

\textsuperscript{103} The reasons usually given for the increase were the availability of easier transportation and the growing need for religious teachers following the opening of many pondok schools in Malaya.


\textsuperscript{105} A.H. Johns, "From Coastal Settlement", op.cit., pp. 20-21.
ālim of non-Arab origin to be appointed and commissioned by the Sharīf of Makkah as one of the Grand Imams (leader in prayers) at Masjid al-Ḥarām, representing the Sharīfī Madhhab in the country.106 His former students scattered throughout the Malay World, and many of them were his staunch followers, even though some did not subscribe to his reformist ideas.107

Another prominent and highly respected ālim who also based his activities on Makkah was Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustafa al-Fatani.106 One of his early students who later emerged as a prominent ālim in Kelantan was Tuan Tabal.109 Another of his prominent students who was also greatly influenced by him was Tok Kenali.110 Shaykh Wan Ahmad was a prolific writer


107 One of Shaykh Ahmad Khatib’s former students in Malaya was Haji Mohd. Noor, the father of the well-known Malay Reformist-Nationalist leader, Burhanuddin al-Helmi. Among his students who did not subscribe to his ideas was Haji Abdul Latiff Tambi, a famous Kaum Tua ālim from Melaka whose contemporaries in Makkah included Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah, a famous reformist ālim from Sumatra. Another of his former students who did not subscribe to his anti-tariqah ideas was Haji Muhammad Said bin Jamaluddin, the leader of the Tariqah Ahmadiyah in Negeri Sembilan.

108 Shaykh Wan Ahmad Zain was born in 1856 at Kampung Sena Janjar, Patani, in southern Thailand. He received his early education from his Makkah-educated father and then at Pondok Bendang Daya, which claimed to be the largest pondok school in South East Asia. Then he continued his studies in Jerusalem and Egypt, apart from Makkah where he studied under several great scholars. By the late 1870s he had achieved a high reputation as a leading scholar at Masjid al-Ḥarām and attracted many students from the Malay World who upon returning home became leading ʿulamā at their respective localities. Shaykh Wan Ahmad Zain died on 14 January 1908 in Mina. For his life, works and his students, see H.W.M. Saghir Abdullah, Fatawa Tentang Binatang Hidup Dua Alam Syeikh Ahmad al-Fatani, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Hizbi, 1990, pp. 33-60. See also H.W.M. Saghir Abdullah, Al'Allamah Syeikh Ahmad al-Fathani. Ahil Fikir Islam dan Dunia Melayu, Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 1992.


110 During his stay in Makkah, Tok Kenali developed a close relationship with his teacher and gained his respect. In 1903, after seventeen years of being his student, Tok Kenali was brought by Shaykh Wan Ahmad to visit Syria and Jerusalem before visiting Egypt (Pengasoh, Vol. 16, No. 433, p. 8). This relationship proved to have a great influence on the religious and political thought of Tok Kenali when
who wrote original and annotated works in Malay and Arabic reputed to number around 160. His works covered a wide area of knowledge in Islamic sciences and the fields of medicine, history and politics. The prominence was also noticed by Snouck Hurgronje while he was in Makkah, and the Dutch orientalist acknowledged him as "a savant of merit". Shaykh Ahmad's stature as a respected ʻālim in Hijaz representing the Malay World was also recognised by the Ottoman government when he was entrusted by Sultan Abdul Hamid with the supervision of the Malay Press, al-Matba'ah al-Mīrīyyah al-Kā'īnah, in Makkah when it was established in 1884. From the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the emergence of Makkah as a centre of Malay scholarship was also assisted by the presence of several other publishing houses, apart from Matba'ah al-Mīrīyyah al-Kā'īnah, which published religious books in Malay and Arabic. These included al-Maktabah al-Fatānīyah at Qashashiyah established by Shaykh Wan Ahmad Zain. Other publishing houses found in Makkah were al-Matba'ah al-Kā'īnah and Matba'ah al-Taraqqi al-Majidiyyah. In Jeddah, there was also a printing press which published works in Malay called al-Matba'ah al-Shayqiyyah. The books published by these publishers were part of the merchandise which found a ready market throughout the Malay World.

he returned to Kelantan in 1908, two years after the death of his respected mentor.


113 C. Snouck Hurgronje, Mekka, op.cit., p. 286.

114 Ibid., p. 286.


The intellectual vigour of the Malay student community centred in Makkah received a fresh impetus at the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century when there was a rapid development of the Malay press in Malaya. The Malay students there in order to keep abreast with developments in Malaya, subscribed to the journals Tunas Melayu, Neracha, Idaran Zaman, Bahtra, Malaya and many others. Their long stay, and the fact that Makkah was a melting pot, was to their advantage since it did not only provide them with religious knowledge, but to a certain extent also exposed them to a knowledge of developments in the Muslim World, while at the same time they were fully aware of the social and political developments in their homeland.

These students, however, were not mere subscribers, but were also actively involved in contributing their opinions and visions. When the Malay journal Tunas Melayu which was published in the early 1913 pioneered the publication of pictures in its pages, the polemics on its permissibility were also taken up by Malay students in Makkah.117 When the journal Pilehan Timoer was published in late 1927 by the Malay students in Cairo, these students were among the first to welcome it and praise the initiative as a way forward for Malay progress. In their opinion, the publication of journals, such as what was being done by Pilehan Timoer, played a role in disseminating knowledge, which was the equivalent of setting up an institution for higher learning, something which was taken seriously by more advanced nations.118

The knowledge, respect and exposure to new ideas obtained by Malays during their long sojourn in Hijaz proved to be significant when they returned home, where before World War II they played the most important role in inculcating social awareness, particularly in the development of religious education. In Kelantan, where it was most developed, the majority of the religious teachers in the state were educated in Makkah. Because of its strong connection

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117 The polemics, however, were short-lived as Tunas Melayu in its effort to silence the critics printed a picture of the Ka'bah as its introductory picture and proof that not all form of images were regarded as idols, which are forbidden by the teaching of Islam. The publication of the picture vindicated the effort made by the journal to justify its publication of pictures. See Tunas Melayu, No. 1, Vol. 1, 12 February 1913, p. 15.

with the Holy City, Kelantan from the end of the nineteenth century until the outbreak of World War II used to be known as the "forecourt of Makkah" (Serambi Makkah).\(^{119}\) Among these teachers and prominent 'ulamā' who had received their education in Makkah since the middle of the nineteenth century were Tuan Tabal (1819-1891),\(^{120}\) Haji Wan Ali bin Abdul Rahman Khutan (1837-1912)\(^{121}\) and Haji Yaakob bin Haji Abdul Halim.\(^{122}\)

Apart from the presence of these 'ulamā, Kelantan was also called the "forecourt of Makkah" because in the state there existed many pondok schools established by Makkan-educated 'ulamā, the first being founded around 1820 at Pulau Condong by Haji Abdul Samad Abdullah after completing his studies in Makkah.\(^{123}\) The most famous pondok education in the late nineteenth century Kelantan, however, was offered at Masjid al-Muhammadi in Kota Bharu.\(^{124}\) In the early twentieth century, the education there was conducted by a well-known 'alim educated at Makkah, Haji Muhammad Yusoff bin Muhammad, popularly known as

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\(^{120}\) He was the author of a number of books such as Minhatul Qarib, Bab Harap, Minyatul Ahl, Jila'ul-Qulub, Munabihul Ghafilin, Kilayutul Awwam, Bidayah al-Ta'ālim. Some of these books were published in Makkah. See Ihsan Hardiwijaya Ibaga, "Ulama' dan Sistem Pondok Di Kelantan Abad Ke-19, Dian, No. 120, May 1979, p. 22; Abdul Halim Ahmad, "Pendidikan Islam Di Kelantan", in Khoo Kay Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Modern, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, 1984, pp. 46-47.

\(^{121}\) Haji Wan Ali bin Abdul Rahman al-Kelantani (Haji Ali Khutan) was born in 1837. He was also a respected 'alim who taught at Masjid al-I'larām. He was the author of a number of books including the famous Jauhar Mawhud (1886), Zaharah al-Marid Fi Aqaid al-Tawhid (1890), Lanfatul Aurd (1881), Majma' al-Qasa'id (1900). Haji Wan Ali died in 1912. See Nik Abdul Aziz bin Hj. Nik Hassan, "Approaches to Islamic Religious Teachings", op.cit., p. 82.

\(^{122}\) Nik Abdul Aziz bin Haji Nik Hassan, "Islam dan Masyarakat Kota Bharu", op.cit., p. 4.


\(^{124}\) Hamdan Hassan, "Peranan Pendidikan Islam", op.cit., p. 150.
Tok Kenali.\textsuperscript{125} One of Tok Kenali's students, Shaykh Idris al-Marbawi, a well-known writer, who continued his education in Makkah and then in Egypt, after attending his early education at Masjid Muhammadi, remarked that the knowledge of the teachers who taught in the \textit{masjid} was equivalent to that of the 'ulamā' at the Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah.\textsuperscript{126}

In neighbouring Trengganu the \textit{pondok} education was started in the early eighteenth century by an ʿālim, Shaykh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah (Tukku Pulau Manis).\textsuperscript{127} When he established his educational institution, Shaykh Abdul Malik used the method of teaching in Masjid al-Ḥarām as a model, where the teaching centred in the mosque.\textsuperscript{128} Since the education received by the 'ulamā' who established the \textit{pondoks} was received in Makkah, this significantly influenced the patterns and methods of teaching applied in the schools, even though its physical aspect was slightly modified to suit local conditions.\textsuperscript{129} In addition to this

\textsuperscript{125} Muhammad Yusof bin Muhammad, popularly known as Tok Kenali, was born in Kampong Kenali, Kota Bharu, Kelantan in 1868. He received his early education in Kota Bharu before going to Makkah in 1886. Tok Kenali stayed in Makkah for twenty-two years where during his stay he also taught in Masjid al-Ḥarām for twelve years. In Makkah Tok Kenali learned from ‘ulamā’ like Shaykh Hasbullāh (Muhammad bin Sulaimān), Sayyid Bakr, Shaykh Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-Khayyaṭ, Shaykh ʿAbd Muṭṭi a-Mālikīyah, Shaykh Muḥammad Arin Mardād Imām al-Ḥanafīyah, Shaykh Mukhtar “Utārid and Sayyid ʿAbdullāh bin Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Zawawī, who were the great ‘ulamā’ of Masjid al-Ḥarām in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His teachers also included well-known ‘ulamā’ from the Malay World such as Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustafa al-Fatani, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib bin Abdul Latif al-Minangkabawi, Haji Wan Ali Khutan, Shaykh Muhammad bin Ismail Daud al-Fatani and Haji Wan Daud bin Wan Mustafa al-Fatani. He returned to Kota Bharu in 1908 and started his \textit{pondok} school. Apart from his contribution in education, Tok Kenali also made a notable contribution to religious life in Kelantan as founder member of the Kelantan Religious Council and as an editor or the council’s fortnightly journal, \textit{Pengasoh}. Tok Kenali died on 19 November 1933. For his life, see Abdullah al-Qari b. Haji Salleh, "To’ Kenali: His Life and Influence", in William R. Roff (ed), \textit{Kelantan. Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State}, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, pp. 87-100; Abdul Rahman al-Ahmad, \textit{Tokoh dan Pokok Pemikiran Tok Kenali}, Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kebudayaan Belia dan Sukan, 1983.

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., p. 17.


\textsuperscript{128} Shafie Abu Bakar, "Syaiikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah dan Karangan-Karangannya", op.cit., p. 71.

influence, the pattern and method of teaching based on that of Makkah was also intended to facilitate the students when they continued their studies there.

In the pondok education the students sit in a ٰhalqa (circle) around a teacher, the same pattern as in Makkah.130 Here the students were first taught Arabic grammar followed by other religious knowledge.131 These stages of learning, learning Arabic grammar followed by religious subjects, were in fact undergone by most 'ulamā' including, the majority of 'ulamā' found in Kota Bharu before World War II prior of going to Masjid al-Ḥarām to further their studies.132 The teaching of Arabic grammar was made the most important subject in pondoks because it makes for disciplined study and aids in the memorisation of lessons. If the teacher could himself read and teach in Arabic and the students could understand it, then the procedure was for the teacher to read in the language and then translate into Malay: if not, teaching was done in Malay, utilising the Malay


131 The students, who were in their teens, who attended the ٰhalqa were taught the basics of Arabic grammar for two years. This was followed by learning the basics of the Arabic language and other religious knowledge using certain religious texts as reference works. In the course of the lessons the students listened to what was being discoursed on and tried to memorise it. After completing both stages they were encouraged to further their education at Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah.

version of religious texts. Apart from aiding the process of learning, the teaching of Arabic grammar in the pondok schools also played an significant role in contributing to the semantic coherence of the Malay language and the spreading of Malay as a language of Islamic instruction in its own right. It also enabled the spread of Arabic as a language for the dissemination of Islamic learning, apart from its established position as a liturgical language.

Pondoks were not confined to Kelantan and Trengganu, but could also be found in almost every Malay state with the exception of Johore and the Straits Settlements. These religious schools, however, were found in greater numbers in Kedah and Kelantan. Apart from the pondok, another form of religious education found in the Malay society was the madrasah education.

The institution of madrasah was based on a relatively modern concept of religious education compared to the pondok. In the madrasah, teaching was not in the form of ḫalqa, but instead was conducted in a classroom with a proper timetable, and students sat on chairs and used tables. The subjects taught were not only confined to religious knowledge but embraced non-religious subjects as well such as Geography, Arithmetic, Logic and so forth. The learning imparted in the madrasah was intended to conform with contemporary needs, and thus resembled

133 Robert L. Winzeler, "Traditional Islamic Schools", op.cit., p. 94.
136 Many religious school established in these states and others were founded by former students of Tok Kenali. Among the schools were Pondok Ahmadiyah at Bunut Payong, Kota Bharu, Madrasah Manâbi' al-Ulûm wa Maţâlî'an-Nujûm, Bukit Mertajam and Madrasah al-Falâh, Pulau Pisang, Kota Bharu (see Abdullah al-Qari b. Haji Salleh, "To' Kenali: His Life and Influence", op.cit., pp. 95-96).
137 The institution of the madrasah was a new development in Malaya at this period. However, the first educational institution based on this concept was established in Baghdad by Niẓâm al-Mulk, a famous Wazîr during the reign of the Seljuqs (1055-1194). This educational institution which he called madrasah, that is school, was established in 1065 AD/5AH and soon spread throughout the Muslim World. See M.A. Rauf, "Islamic Education", op.cit., p. 15. See also George Makdisi, "The College in Medieval Islam", in Roger M. Savory and Dionisius A. Agius (eds.), Logos Islamikos. Studia Islamica in Honorem Georgis Michaelis Wickens, Toronto: Political Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984, pp. 241-257; George Makdisi, "Madrasah and University in the Middle Ages", Studia Islamica, Vol. 32, 1970, pp. 255-264; Munir A. Ahmed, "Muslim Education Prior to the Establishment of Madrasah", Islamic studies, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1987, pp. 321-349; Gary Leiser, "Notes on the Madrasa in Medieval Islamic Society", The Moslem World, Vol. LXXXVI, No. 1, January 1986, pp. 16-23.
the modern vernacular education which already existed, except that it was of a religious orientation. Early madrasahs which were established such as Madrasah Masriyah in Penang (established in 1906) and Madrasah al-Iqbal Islamiyah (opened in 1908), however, were influenced by Egypt rather than Makkah.

Despite the fact that the madrasah education was of Egyptian origin, many of them streamlined their teaching based on that of Makkah since the Holy City still appealed to a large number of students, even when Cairo began to attract increasing numbers of them from the middle 1920s. The choice of Makkah by many parents for their sons to further their studies was contributed to by the fact that it held a long-standing authority as a religious centre, while others also chose Makkah since they were vague about the nature of education at al-Azhar or there were strong misgivings about doctrinal and political developments in Egypt which they feared could spoil their sons.

One of the madrasahs which streamlined its teaching based on that of Makkah was Madrasah Idrisiah Kuala Kangsar. When it was established in 1926, Sultan Iskandar, the Sultan of Perak at that time, agreed to invite Haji Muhammad Salleh from Kelantan, who had spent many years in Makkah, to become its first mudir (head teacher). His appointment was intended to bring the teaching in the madrasah in line with that in Makkah. Under Haji Muhammad Salleh's leadership, the curriculum and the number of years the students had to spend on their studies at the madrasah were based on the practice of Makkah. Following the death of Haji Muhammad Salleh, in 1928, Shaykh Abdullah Maghribi, formerly the mudir of al-Mashhor in Penang, was appointed as the new mudir of Madrasah Idrisiah. Upon his appointment, Shaykh Abdullah also embarked on a


139 Shaykh Abdullah al-Maghribi was born in 1894 in Tripoli, present-day Libya. He received his education in Makkah before coming to Malaya in 1918 on the invitation of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi. In 1919 following al-Hadi’s resignation as mudir of Madrasah al-Mashhor, Shaykh Abdullah was appointed as the new mudir of the madrasah. He then served as mudir of Madrasah Idrisiah, but his tenure in office was cut short when he was asked to leave in 1932 following the controversy over his advocacy of Kaum Muda ideas. He returned to Penang and established Madrasah al-Huda, sat in the board of directors of the newspaper Saudara and was also a prime mover of PASPAM (Malayan Pen-pal Association). After World War II he returned to Saudi Arabia and taught at Madrasat al-Riql in Jeddah. Shaykh Abdullah al-Maghribi died in Makkah in 1974. For his life, see Md. Redzuan Tumin, "Al-Ustaz
programme of further streamlining the approach and method of teaching at the madrasah, basing his ideas on his experience as a student and teacher in Makkah.\textsuperscript{140}

In the late 1920s and early 1930s increasing number of madrasahs were established and even some pondoks adopted a more systematic method of teaching, resembling that provided by the former. Since many students had now undergone their preliminary education locally in a rather more systematic way, this led to a pressing need for more organised institutions when they went to further their studies in Makkah. The \textit{halqa} method of teaching conducted in Masjid al-\textHaran resembled an informal education which might be more suited to those who sought a higher and more specialised religious knowledge. Together with the new sense of educational awareness, easier transportation and the boom in rubber prices led to a large increase in the number of Malay teenagers going to Makkah for the Hajj and to further their studies.\textsuperscript{141} Among them including some who found that the \textit{halqa} of Masjid al-\textHaran was not particularly helpful in their quest for knowledge, either because of their insufficient exposure to Arabic and religious knowledge or because they found that it was difficult to follow the unsystematic and advanced level of the subjects taught.

Thus some of these students preferred to study in the more systematic schooling environment of the madrasah where the approach was more effective and official grades could be obtained rather than the informal \textit{halqa}. Many Malay students who wished to study in this system of education attended a madrasah which catered for students from the Indian sub-continent situated at Jirwal in the

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\textsuperscript{140} Zulkiflee A. Karim, "Madrasah Idrisiah Bukit Chandan", op.cit., p. 44.
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\textsuperscript{141} For example during the period between 1924 to 1945, the Annual Pilgrimage Report prepared by Malayan Colonial Officers often noted a large number of Malays who yearly chose to remain several seasons or intended to stay permanently in Makkah. A rough census for 1933 alone suggested that there were about 500 "permanent" Malay residents in the city. Despite the fact that some were repatriated at Malayan government expense on the grounds of hardship, most of them preferred to remain in Hijaz. See William R. Roff, "The Conduct of Hajj From Malaya", op.cit., p. 108.
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vicinity of Masjid al-Ḥarām, al-Madrasah al-Ṣalātiyyah al-Hindiyah. It 1933, in view of the plight of these students and the need to have a separate madrasah and a hostel for students from the Malay World, Haji Abdul Majid Zainuddin sought and was granted an audience with Ibn Saʿūd. The efforts initiated by Abdul Majid led to the establishment of Madrasah Dār al-Ulūm al-Dinīyah in 1935. When the madrasah was first opened the original building was situated at Shuʿaibīyyah, not far from Masjid al-Ḥarām, given by Toh Puan Sharifah, the wife of Dato' Panglima Kinta. The first mudir of the madrasah was Shaykh Zubir bin Ahmad. The response to the madrasah was overwhelming and in the following year it was reported that its student enrollment had increased from one hundred when it started to more than four hundred. Because of the increasing need for an expansion programme, the managing committee of Dār al-Ulūm decided to send deputations to Malaya and the Netherland East Indies to solicit donations in order to meet the costs of the school house and a hostel for its students.

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142 Not much information can be obtained about al-Madrasah Ṣalātiyyah, but it was thought to have been established in the first decade of the twentieth century. There is a possibility that the madrasah was the one referred to by Muḥammad Labīb al-Batanūnī who accompanied Abbas II, the Khedive of Egypt on pilgrimage about four years before the outbreak of World War 1. In his rambling account, ar-Riḍāyah al-Hijāziyyah, he mentioned, but without much detail, two private schools in the vicinity of Masjid al-Ḥarām, one of which was ran by an Indian. See Jamal Alami, "Education in the Hijaz Under Turkish and Sharifian Rule", The Islamic Quarterly, Vols. 1 & 2, January-June 1975, p. 45. For some of the Malay students who attended the madrasah, see those interviewed in, Sabri Haji Said, Madrasah al-Ullum al-Syariah Perak 1937-1977, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1983, pp. 128-141.


144 The practice of giving accommodation for religious purposes was widely practiced by Malay dignitaries as a symbol of piety. Being a charitable ruler, the Sultan of Kelantan, Sultan Muhammad 1 (1800-1835), the eldest son of Long Yumus, the founder of the Kelantan Sultanate, established waqf houses in Makkah, Medinah and Jeddah. He took the initiative after being advised by a prominent 'ālim, Shaykh Abdul Halim in order to provide facilities for "ulama" of Kelantan studying there. See Ihsan Hadiwijaya Ibaga, "Ulama dan Sistem Pondok di Kelantan", op.cit., pp. 20-21; Abdul Halim Ahmad, "Pendidikan Islam di Kelantan", op.cit., pp. 40-41.

145 Shaykh Zubir Ahmad went to Makkah in 1922 after completing his studies in Madrasah al-Mashhor in Penang. He became the mudir of the Madrasah Dār al-Ulūm until World War II. The post of mudir of the Madrasah was then taken over by Muhammad Yassin Haji Isa (al-Padani) from Sumatra.

Classes in Madrasah Dār al-ʿUlūm al-Dīniyah were divided into four levels: elementary (taḥṣīnī), primary (ibtidāʾī), secondary (thānawī) and upper secondary (ʿālī), each level taking three years. Apart from Arabic, Malay was also used as a medium of instruction, especially in the elementary classes. Under the leadership of Shaykh Zubir the madrasah managed to get a very encouraging response from Malay students who went to Makkah to further their education. In the late 1930s and after World War II, apart from al-Madrasah al-Ṣalājiyyah, most of the Malay students who studied in Makkah were graduates of Dār al-ʿUlūm. Many of its graduates when they returned home established madrasahs which modelled their curriculum on that of Dār al-ʿUlūm.147

Makkan educated ʿulamāʾ had played an important role in the development of religious education among Malays. Their prominent role could be summed up by the findings made by R.A. Blasdell, of the London Missionary Society, who observed the practice and perception of Islam in the community in the early 1940s, and the prospects for Christian missionary work. In his observations, he described a Malay who went to Makkah on the Hajj, and remained there for nine years, becoming an excellent student in Arabic and authority on Islam. He then returned to Malaya, where he at once initiated plans for a school for advanced students in religion.148 Blasdell also notes that in this school, students of perhaps eighteen years and above came in large numbers from all over the country. He believed there was little doubt that the role he played would provide an impetus for religious instruction which would then result in a more intelligent apprehension of Islam and stronger devotion to it by the community.149 Blasdell’s comment as an outsider

147 One of the madrasahs which used the curriculum of Dār al-ʿUlūm was Madrasah al-Khairiyah al-Islamiyah, Pokok Sena. See Halim bin Man, "Madrasah Khairiyah al-Islamiyah Pokok Sena", in Khoo Kay Kim & Mohd. Fadhil Othman (eds.), Pendidikan Di Malaysia Dahulu dan Sekarang, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, p. 110. Other madrasahs which also modelled themselves on Dār al-ʿUlūm included Madrasah al-Islah al-Diniah, Matang Kunda (1935) and Madrasah al-Ulum al-Syari’ah, Batu 20, Bagan Datoh (1937). Even though the founder of these Madrasahs, Haji Muhammad Arshad, who returned from Makkah in 1918 after completing his studies there was neither a founder member nor a student of Dār al-ʿUlūm, he was the contemporary of Shaykh Zubir Ahmad in Makkah and also one of his closest friends.


149 Ibid., p. 169.
clearly showed the notable role played by the Makkan-educated ‘ulamā’ in the field of education and the intellectual awareness of the Malays.

**Wahhabism and the Triumph of Ibn Saūd**

Makkah and its ‘ulamā’ were highly revered by Malays and have been looked upon by them as a source of religious and political authority when the need for an authoritative decision arose. In seventeenth century Acheh when there was a controversy over the validity of the rule of a series of women (1641-1699), a fatwā from there led to the dethronement of the last woman ruler, Sultanah Kamalat Shah (1688-1699).150 In Kedah, following the death of the Regent in 1907, Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah (1861-1943) intended to appoint his son Tunku Ibrahim (generally known as Tunku Sulong) as the new Regent. The post, however, was traditionally reserved for the Ruler’s brother, and the State Council voted unanimously for Tunku Mahmud to fill the vacant post.151 The struggle for the throne which ensued also involved the British who were in the early stages of administering the state after the transfer of power from Siamese rule.

In 1912, Tunku Mahmud asked Arthur Young, who had succeeded John Anderson as Governor of the Straits Settlements, to declare Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah mentally unfit to rule and appoint the Regent in his place.152 At this juncture Tunku Mahmud in order to support his case sent to Singapore through W.G. Maxwell, the British Adviser, four doctor’s certificates on the Sultan’s mental health which all confirmed that there was little hope of recovery. He also enclosed

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152 Ibid., p. 83.
a ruling from Shaykh Muḥammad, a Qāḍī from Makkah, which contained an explanation from the point of view of Muslim law that a ruler ipso facto falls from power if mentally incapable of administering. The reason for Tunku Mahmud enclosing the ruling was to cover any possible objection on religious grounds of the case he tried to bring forward.\footnote{Ibid., p. 87.}

Even though Hijaz was exceptionally meaningful to the Malays, even for elucidating political questions, at least as shown by these evidences, in Malaya there was no indication to show that the people were concerned with doctrinal or political developments taking place there until the outbreak of the rivalry between Sharīf Ḥusayn and Ibn Saʿūd. Like Muslims elsewhere, their concern with the political struggle was heightened following the success of the latter and his Wahhabi warriors in capturing Makkah and Medinah in 1924.\footnote{Pengasoh, Vol. 7, No. 157, 29 October 1924, p. 4.} Malay interest in political developments there also stemmed from their anxiety over the nature of the Wahhabi creed which would have some bearing on the future of the conduct of the Hajj.\footnote{For a brief history of the Wahhabi beliefs and their difference from other Sunni doctrines, and also the rise of Ibn Saʿūd, see Ziya-ul Hassan Faruqi, "A Note on the Wahhabiyyah", \textit{Islam and the Modern Age}, Vol. 4, No. 1, February 1973, pp. 38-50; Phoenix, "A Brief Outline of the Wahhabi Movement", \textit{Journal of the Central Asian Society}, Vol. XVII, Part 1V, 1930, pp. 401-406, W.F. Smalley, "The Wahhabis of Ibn Saʿūd", \textit{The Moslem World}, Vol XXII, No. 3, 1932, pp. 227-246; Muʿīnuddin Ahmad Khan, "A Diplomat's Report on Wahhabism in Arabia", \textit{Islamic Studies}, Vol. 7, 1968, pp. 33-46. See also Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, "Wahhabism in Arabia: Past and Present", \textit{Journal of the Central Asian Society}, Vol. XV1, 1929, pp. 458-467. The article was originally a speech given by Sheikh Hafiz Wahba to a group of the Central Asian Society in London chaired by Lord Allenby and was also translated into Malay by Za'ba. See \textit{Al-ikhwan}, Vol. 5, No. 4, 16 December 1930, pp. 97-107 & Vol. 5, No. 5, 16 January 1930, pp. 130-138. For early works on the Wahhabis, see J. O'Kinealy, "Translation of Arabic Pamphlet on the History and Doctrines of the Wahhabism by Abdullah, Grandson of Abdul Wahhab, the Founder of Wahhabism", \textit{Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal}, Vol. XLIII, 1874, pp. 68-82; E Rehatsek, "The History of Wahhabys in Arabia and in India", \textit{Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society}, Vol. 14, 1880, pp. 274-351.} Since the Wahhabi doctrines were relatively unknown in Malaya, curiosity over its practices attracted tremendous Malay interest, and it was reported that there was hardly a village where Malays did not argue and discuss with one another the merits and demerits of its teachings. The intensity of these
arguments and discussions were sometimes rather heated and the people even indulged in calling each other kāfir or infidel.\textsuperscript{156}

Early in the conflict there was a clear indication of the widespread Malay scepticism over where the Wahhabi hegemony in Hijaz would lead, despite the assurance given by Ibn Sa‘ūd of the freedom of religious practice. Malays who were in Makkah while the conflict was at its height were alarmed by the uncertainty and fled to Jeddah in the hope of taking ship home. Some Arabs also fled, and in December 1924 about 150 of them arrived in Singapore from Jeddah.\textsuperscript{157} The return of many Malays from Jeddah intensified the interest in the political turmoil and led to an influx of news and stories of what was going on there. Since the political and doctrinal developments that took place in Hijaz coincided with the rapid progress of Malay journalism, the issue was enthusiastically pursued by a number of newspapers and journals, particularly those with reformist tendencies.

The news, analysis and correspondence on the developments that were taking place in Hijaz were most extensively covered by the reformist newspaper \textit{Idaran Zaman} and the reformist-inclined journal, \textit{Pengasoh}.\textsuperscript{158} Apart from these two publications which showed a distinct inclination toward supporting the cause of Ibn Sa‘ūd, another which also had a similar tendency was the journal \textit{al-Hedayah}.\textsuperscript{159} The cause of Ibn Sa‘ūd and the Wahhabis was also supported by \textit{Seruan Azhar}, even though at first it displayed an objection to Ibn Sa‘ūd when he


\textsuperscript{157} CO 537/927, Laurence Nunn Guillemard (Governor) to Amery, 31 December 1924; enclosure \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No. 24, December 1924.

\textsuperscript{158} Most of the coverage published by \textit{Idaran Zaman} and \textit{Pengasoh} were obtained from \textit{al-Ahrām} of Egypt and \textit{Umm al-Qurā} of Hijaz, and also occasionally from personal accounts given by Malays who fled Hijaz following the turmoil.

\textsuperscript{159} See for example \textit{Al-Hedayah}, September 1925, pp. 102-104. Other journals which also supported the cause of Ibn Sa‘ūd were \textit{Al-Ikhwan} and in the early 1930s, \textit{Bahtra} and \textit{Saudara}.
declared himself the new king of Hijaz.\(^{160}\) The support given by these papers to the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd, however, was not based on the existence of any earlier relations with him or any direct appeal to back his struggle. Instead the favour was based on the belief that Ibn Sa'ūd was genuinely trying to free Hijaz from Sharīf Ḥusayn who was backed by foreign powers, and that the doctrine of the Wahhabis had been unjustly tarnished as being contradictory to the beliefs of Sunni Islam.

The monthly journal *Pengasoh*, however, was the earliest journal to give extensive coverage on developments in Hijaz which sometimes took up almost half of its twelve-page issue. The journal stated that the coverage was done in this manner as it was intended to inform its readers on these developments and to please those who supported the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd. With such objectives it was not surprising that in all its reporting on political events in Hijaz the journal clearly showed its support for his cause. In its first report following the triumph of Ibn Sa'ūd, *Pengasoh* elaborated the objectives of his campaign, which it said were to free the Arab lands from foreign influence. To impress its readers, the journal reported that Ibn Sa'ūd's campaign was widely supported by Muslims elsewhere, including Shaukat Ali of the Caliphate Committee in India, who was even willing to lend his assistance in the war against Sharīf Ḥusayn.\(^{161}\)

One of the most pressing issues which caused Malay doubt about the campaign of Ibn Sa'ūd was his association with the Wahhabis. *Pengasoh* believed that many Malays were doubtful of the nature of their practices, and that among other things, they feared that they would obstruct Muslims from visiting the grave of the Prophet. In order to allay the doctrinal misgivings, the journal published a four-page article on the beliefs of the Wahhabis which was intended to give its readers a clear picture and to explain that their doctrines were not contradictory to Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.\(^{162}\) To further convince its readers that Wahhabism was

\(^{160}\) *Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 1, No. 7, April 1926, p. 131. The change in opinion that took place among the *Seruan Azhar* circle was brought about by Djanan Taib who visited Cairo in July 1926 and explained the noble cause of Ibn Sa'ūd.


\(^{162}\) See the column questions and answers in ibid., pp. 4-8.
also part of the four Sunni Madhhabs and that what was being said about them was incorrect, an explanation of the Wahhabi beliefs in relation to the Ḥanbalī Madhhab was also given in detail by the journal. Since Malays looked upon the views of al-Azhar with high regard, Pengasoh also published the opinion given by its ʿulamāʾ, which concluded that the Wahhabis were part of the Sunni Muslims. The journal believed that the confusion that lingered among Malays over the Wahhabi beliefs was a result of the role played by the Turks who had waged an anti-Wahhabi campaign.

In addition to providing an explanation of the Wahhabi creed, Pengasoh also advised those readers who wanted to have additional information on their beliefs to read further and listed a number of books on the subject, distributed by Maktabah Haji Abdullah of Singapore and al-Maktabah al-Zainiah, Penang. The emerging Malay sympathy toward the cause of Ibn Saʿūd, however, was dented when fleeing Malays from Hijaz reached Singapore and reported on the murder of ʿAbd Allāh al-Zawawī, the Mufti of Makkah who was highly respected by Malays. Realising the murder would be an explosive issue and would greatly undermine its drive to garner support for the cause of Ibn Saʿūd, Pengasoh took the initiative of detailing the events which led to his murder. From the way it was reported by the journal it appears that the Wahhabis should not solely be blamed, since the murder had not been deliberately committed, but was instead due to a confusion.

Despite Pengasoh's relentless efforts to explain the belief of the Wahhabis in its pages, some of its readers were still confused and far from convinced, particularly when the over-zealous conduct of some of the Wahhabi followers began to emerge. One correspondent of the journal who also referred to the edition of the newspaper al-Ahrām which had been referred to by Pengasoh, cast doubts on the belief of the Wahhabis. He also expressed his confusion over certain actions taken by them such as the demolition of the mausolea of the wives

163 Ibid., pp. 4-8.
and companions of the Prophet which he alleged that the Wahhabis believed to be sanctioned by the religion of Islam. Despite his doubts, the writer still placed hopes in them and assumed that what actually happened was not done by those who adhered to the true principles of the Wahhabi doctrines. To clear these doubts, the writer hoped that religious experts who could afford to do so, should go to Hijaz themselves in order to investigate what was the actual situation.

The effort to explain the nature of the Wahhabi doctrine was also undertaken by Seruan Azhar. The journal even made space for a question and answer section in its pages on the doctrine and made a point of explaining that there was no difference between the Wahhabi creed and other Sunni Madhhabs. The controversy that had arisen, it believed, was also a result of Ibn Sa'ūd waging an unpopular crusade against the practice of biq'ah (innovation) and enforcing the practice of Islam according to the Qur'an and Ḥadith which offended the interests of certain quarters.

In early 1925, the Malay coverage of the political developments in Hijaz received a tremendous boost when a weekly newspaper, Idaran Zaman, was published in Penang from the middle of January under the editorship of Mohd. Yunus Abdul Hamid, a staunch reformist. The newspaper's reporting on developments in Hijaz was also assisted by the presence of a well-known journalist, Abdul Rahim Kajai, who was its correspondent there for three years from 1924. Apart from being a reporter for the newspaper, Abdul Rahim also

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167 Ibid., pp. 4-5.
170 For the life and involvement of Mohd. Yunus Abd. Hamid in newspaper publications, see p. 212 of this work (footnote 190).
171 Abdul Latiff Abu Bakar, "Abdul Rahim Kajai: Pulau Pinang Sebagai Tempat Menuntut Ilmu Kewartawanan", in Abdul Latif Abu Bakar (ed), Warisan Sastera Pulau Pinang, Kuala Lumpur: Biro Penerbitan GAPENA, 1985, p. 4. Abdul Rahim Kajai was born in Setapak in 1894 and studied in Makkah from 1906 to 1909. After his father who was a pilgrim broker died in 1913, Kajai went to live in Makkah to carry on with the family business. On his final return to Malaya in 1927, he became the
contributed articles to the journal *Malaya* and was its distributing agent in Makkah.\textsuperscript{172}

Right from the first issue *Idaran Zaman* made its stand clear; it supported the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd and in doing so his successive triumphs were elaborated. The conquest of Hijaz by Ibn Sa'ūd was claimed not to be driven by his wish to expand the domination of Nejd, but instead in order to fulfill his obligation to God, and his success was reported to have been enthusiastically welcomed by the inhabitants of Makkah, including its prominent 'ulamā'.\textsuperscript{173} In its reporting *Idaran Zaman* was also over-zealous in its support of the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd. When one Sayyid Taha bin Umar al-Sagoff criticised the Malays for disputing over who was right in the conflict between Ibn Sa'ūd and Sharīf Ḥusayn, when he believed the right thing for them to do was to call for reconciliation, since both were Muslims, *Idaran Zaman* was quick to repudiate this suggestion. To *Idaran Zaman*, the conflict was a matter of principle and it was a struggle between truth and falsehood, and it was a responsibility of every Muslim to support the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd who was on the high moral and religious ground.\textsuperscript{174} The victory of Ibn Sa'ūd over Sharīf Ḥusayn was hailed as a victory of the faithful, and with his victory it expressed its hope that the disturbances there would be brief and the Hajj season would go on uninterrupted.\textsuperscript{175}

The publication of the newspaper was also most timely since the Malays were very eager to know the latest developments taking place in Hijaz.\textsuperscript{176} Apart from publishing reports supplied by its correspondent, *Idaran Zaman* also

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\textsuperscript{173} *Idaran Zaman*, 22 January 1925.

\textsuperscript{174} *Idaran Zaman*, 21 May 1925.

\textsuperscript{175} *Idaran Zaman*, 19 February 1925.

\textsuperscript{176} Al-ikhwan, 19 February 1925.
depended heavily on information obtained from *Umm al-Qurā*, a Saudi’s propaganda organ in Makkah. Since it based its reporting on this source it was not surprising that its coverage was pro-Saʻūd and leaned toward legitimising his new government, apart from defending the Wahhabi doctrine. In doing so, it justified the takeover of Hijaz by Ibn Saʻūd, even though his predecessor, Sharīf Ḥusayn, was a descendant of the Prophet. In its justification of this political process *Idaran Zaman* argued that Sharīf Ḥusayn was unacceptable since he was supported by non-Muslim powers. Despite the fact that Sharīf Ḥusayn was supported by foreign powers, *Idaran Zaman* expressed its relief when it appeared that these powers had abandoned Ḥusayn’s cause and expressed their clear intention of non-interference in the political affairs of Hijaz. In order to make its readers share its feelings, the newspaper published a telegram claimed to be signed by the Consuls of Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Persia expressing this intention.

Despite the continuing effort to inform the Malay public on the cause of Ibn Saʻūd, *Idaran Zaman* was aware of their persisting scepticism over his political aims and the Wahhabi doctrine. As part of its effort to relieve them of their doubts, the newspaper published a report by the Conference of Makkan ʻUlamā’ which had discussed the belief of the Wahhabis. The conference was said to have had came to the conclusion that the Wahhabi doctrine was based on a genuine Islamic teaching as outlined by Qurān and Ḥadīth. The persistent Malay reservation on the Wahhabis undoubtedly was a result of rumours that they had indiscriminately desecrated tombs that the Malays revered in the Holy Land. These rumours were discounted by *Idaran Zaman* and it published the assurance given by Ibn Saʻūd that his followers would highly respect the Prophet, his family and the

177 See for example *Idaran Zaman*, 19 March 1925.
178 *Idaran Zaman*, 19 February 1925.
179 Ibid.
180 *Idaran Zaman*, 2 April 1925.
companions, and he himself was even reported to have had directed that all mausolea should be protected.\textsuperscript{181}

\textit{Idaran Zaman} also constantly denied rumours including the violation of the holy places and the wrong-doing of Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d's forces which were widespread among the Malays. \textit{Idaran Zaman} branded those who spread these rumours as intending to create quarrels among Muslims. The Malays were advised not to listen to these rumours and as an effort to find the real truth the newspaper reported that a fact-finding mission from Egypt had been sent to Hijaz led by the Shaykh al-Azhar, Shaykh Mu\textsuperscript{s}t\textsuperscript{a}f\textsuperscript{a} al-Mar\textsuperscript{a}gh\textsuperscript{i}, to assess the current situation there.\textsuperscript{182} To further convince the Malays, a personal message from Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d addressed to all Muslims was published by \textit{Idaran Zaman} which made clear his intention to implement the \textit{Shar\textsuperscript{f}ah}, and to bring peace and justice to all Muslims from the oppressive and despotic rule of Shar\textsuperscript{f} Husayn and his family.\textsuperscript{183}

Such commitments by Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d were also elaborated by \textit{Pengasoh}, to the effect that with the implementation of the \textit{Shar\textsuperscript{f}ah}, Hijaz would become a free Islamic State devoid of non-Islamic elements. As "a Slave of the \textit{\textsuperscript{H}aramain}**, the journal reiterated that it was the wish of Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d to protect Makkah and Medinah from foreign interference and to cleanse it from cruelty, so that justice would prevail. \textit{Pengasoh} warned that the bad image and slander being attached to the struggle of Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d and the Wahhabi creed were intended to rupture the Islamic solidarity between other Muslims and the Arabs. The work of these undesirable elements was blamed for trying to weaken the strength of the Muslims, since the struggle of Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d was for the sake of the Arabs and to raise Muslim dignity.\textsuperscript{184}

The Malay perception of Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d as shown by these publications clearly showed that they were in search of an Islamic leader and he was the man who

\textsuperscript{181} See \textit{Pengasoh}, Vol. 8, No. 177, 20 August 1925, p. 12. (The full text of the telegram from the Ruler of Egypt to Ibn Sa\textsuperscript{d}d and his reply).

\textsuperscript{182} \textit{Pengasoh}, Vol. 8, No. 178, September 1925, pp. 9-10.

\textsuperscript{183} \textit{Idaran Zaman}, 30 April 1925.

\textsuperscript{184} \textit{Pengasoh}, Vol. 8, No. 177, 20 August 1925, pp. 11-12.
suited the current criteria. Ibn Sa‘ūd was described as a humble leader who waged a war against the enemies of Islam and had a good working relation with Kemal of Turkey. Muslims were urged to support his leadership and Malays were expected not to hesitate to do so. As a saviour of Islam Ibn Sa‘ūd was portrayed as being in the process of proving his credibility by first putting Hijaz on a firm footing toward becoming a prosperous region. After his initial triumph, Makkah was reported as peaceful, and the price of foodstuffs was cheap and the people were able to mingle freely. On the other hand, Sharīf Ḥusayn was regarded as an evil and Jeddah which was still under the rule of his son, Sharīf ʿAlī was reported to be in a state of famine. Its inhabitants were living in destitution with torn clothing and having to endure high prices for foodstuffs. Sharīf ʿAlī was also reported as very oppressive, imposing high taxes on his people and punishing heavily those who opposed him. He was portrayed as being a tool of Western powers and to have sold a market place to a foreigner to finance his war effort. His forces were reported as highly demoralised and wishing to abandon the struggle.

Following the final victory of Ibn Sa‘ūd when he captured Jeddah, the journal Pengasoh and the newspaper Idaran Zaman further showed their anti-Ḥusayn convictions. In announcing the victory as reported by al-Ahram, Pengasoh reiterated that the news would please its readers who were pro-Sa‘ūd. To further humiliate Ḥusayn in the eyes of its readers, the journal also published an article entitled "Hijaz Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" where previous conditions in Hijaz and Ḥusayn’s personality were compared with those of Ibn Sa‘ūd.

185 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 11, August 1926, pp. 211-213.
186 Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 179/180, 2 October 1925, pp. 9-12. Even though the report was clearly pro-Sa‘ūd, ironically the editor of the journal claims to be impartial since pro-Ḥusayn readers might not agree with the report. A similar report indeed was made a few months earlier during the conflict by Idaran Zaman which it claimed to have been obtained from returning pilgrims. See Idaran Zaman, 4 June 1925.
The anti-Ḥusayn position was also taken by *Idaran Zaman* who reported that twenty beautiful young Javanese girls were found in the palace of his son, Sharīf ʿAlī in Jeddah. These girls were used as his concubines and were only released after warnings given by the Dutch Consul General.\(^{189}\)

When Ibn Saʿūd achieved final victory over Sharīf ʿAlī, the joy of his success was reported to have been welcomed by Muslims all over the world. Following the victory *Idaran Zaman*, apart from reporting the news, also published the full text of the congratulatory telegram sent to him by the al-ʻIrshād Society of Surabaya accompanied by hopes that his success would establish the dignity of the Muslims.\(^{190}\) High expectations were also placed on his leadership which would restore the past glory of Islam.\(^{191}\) The endeavours of Ibn Saʿūd to bring prosperity to his kingdom were also highlighted, such as his efforts to explore underground water potential undertaken by a German engineer, the cost of drilling which would be shared by Muslims all over the world.\(^{192}\)

The victory of Ibn Saʿūd was also equated by *Idaran Zaman* with that of the victory achieved by the Prophet against the Quraysh since following his victory, Ibn Saʿūd, as had been done by the Prophet, decided to grant pardon to all inhabitants of Hijaz, except for the family of Sharīf ʿHusayn.\(^{193}\) His victory was viewed as the victory of good over evil, and it predicted that this victory would bring about a new era for the Islamic World.\(^{194}\) To dismiss rumours of Wahhabi intolerance of other Sunni *Madhhabs*, new rulings on the conditions for teaching in the Masjid al-Ḥarām were published by *al-Ikhwan* which clearly showed Ibn Saʿūd's respect for the four major Sunni *Madhhabs*. What Ibn Saʿūd was particularly against, according to the journal, were the practices of *bicfah* which

\(^{189}\) *Idaran Zaman*, 14 January 1926.

\(^{190}\) Ibid.

\(^{191}\) *Idaran Zaman*, 23 January 1926.

\(^{192}\) *Idaran Zaman*, 14 January 1926.

\(^{193}\) *Idaran Zaman*, 23 January 1926 & 28 January 1926.

\(^{194}\) *Idaran Zaman*, 28 January 1926.
were clearly contrary to the teaching of Islam, as outlined by the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.\footnote{Al-ikhwan, 16 December 1926, p. 81.}

The greatest Muslim fear concerning Ibn Saʿūd’s ascendancy was the future of the conduct of the Hajj. Realising its importance, Ibn Saʿūd was quick to seize the initiative by issuing a communiqué which stressed his full commitment to its future conduct. The communiqué was published in full by *Idaran Zaman*, hoping that it would allay Muslim fears for its future prospect.\footnote{Idaran Zaman, 30 April 1925.} Following his capture of Jeddah, he also made all possible efforts to ensure that the pilgrimage season of 1926 went on as usual.\footnote{GA 58/26, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch). P.I.B. 1132, A.W. Hamilton, Acting Director, Political Intelligence Bureau to the Secretary to High Commissioner, 19 January 1926.} Ibn Saʿūd also made a concerted effort to guarantee the safety and life of the pilgrims, something which had been a long-standing problems under Sharīf Husayn with pilgrims being subjected to robbery, theft and other intimidations on their journey.

Following his final victory, Ibn Saʿūd also called for the convening of a *Muʿtamar Islāmī* during the Hajj season of 1926 in Makkah to discuss the future governing of the holy places. The convening of the congress was widely reported and welcomed by Malays.\footnote{Idaran Zaman, 5 March 1925.} The convening of the *Muʿtamar*, it was also hoped, would be a forum for the exchanging of ideas among Muslims.\footnote{See *Al-ikhwan*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 16 October 1926, pp. 11-12; *Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 1, No. 9, June 1926, pp. 122-126.} *Idaran Zaman* even went a step further by suggesting that the Malays should take the proposal seriously and recommended that educated and well-respected Malays should take the necessary steps toward the formation of a committee which would represent them at the congress.\footnote{Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 10, July 1926, p. 183.} When the *Muʿtamar* was convened from 7 June to 6 July, *Al-ikhwan* congratulated Ibn Saʿūd for his efforts and expressed on behalf of the Malays its willingness to share the burden of the administration the Holy Cities

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\footnote{195}{Al-ikhwan, 16 December 1926, p. 81.}
\footnote{196}{Idaran Zaman, 30 April 1925.}
\footnote{197}{GA 58/26, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch). P.I.B. 1132, A.W. Hamilton, Acting Director, Political Intelligence Bureau to the Secretary to High Commissioner, 19 January 1926.}
\footnote{198}{See *Al-ikhwan*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 16 October 1926, pp. 11-12; *Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 1, No. 9, June 1926, pp. 122-126.}
\footnote{199}{Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 10, July 1926, p. 183.}
\footnote{200}{Idaran Zaman, 5 March 1925.}
so as to provide better conditions for the conduct of the Hajj.\textsuperscript{201} The full resolution of the Mu'tamar was also published by Al-Ikhwan which clearly showed Ibn Sa'ūd's commitment to better conditions and facilities for the future conduct of the Hajj.\textsuperscript{202}

Apart from the role played by papers in pursuing the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd and Wahhabism, the cause was also taken up by some individuals, including those with an English education, one of them being Abdul Majid Zainuddin, who was in Hijaz during the political turmoil. In his advocation of the Wahhabi doctrine he rationalised it as a real Islam which would appeal to Muslims everywhere, even in what he termed "backward Malaya". Abdul Majid, however, regretted that among Malays Wahhabism had to suffer from the stigma of being styled Kaum Muda and associated with the undesirable Communists, which he argued it was not since Islam opposed every aspect of Communism.\textsuperscript{203} The cause of Ibn Sa'ūd was also supported by other modernists like Muhammad Yusof Sutan Mahyuddin, who went to the extent of condemning those who were influenced to belittle the doctrine of the Wahhabis.\textsuperscript{204}

Despite the effort and the scale of the journalistic campaign for the cause of Ibn Sa'ūd and Wahhabism, to certain quarters it was still received with hostility and regarded as an ultra-reformist movement. This animosity stemmed from the nature of Wahhabi doctrine itself which was regarded as intolerant to certain practices of other Muslim Madhhab, including the Shafi'i to which the Malays adhered. In Makkah, the new ruling introduced after the establishment of Ibn Sa'ūd's administration whereby religious teaching was only allowed to be conducted in the mosque by approved teachers caused much ill-feeling among

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\textsuperscript{201} Al-Ikhwan, Vol. 1, No. 1, 16 September 1926, pp. 14-15.
\textsuperscript{202} See al-Ikhwan, 16 October 1926, pp. 11-13.
\textsuperscript{204} Muhammad Yusof Sutan Mahyuddin, Kejatuhan Kaum-Kaum Islam, op.cit., p. 72.
\end{flushright}
Malay residents there who feared it as an attempt to convert them to Wahhabism.\textsuperscript{205} Even though in Malaya the opposition toward Ibn Sa'\u015fu\d was not that intense and there were no public meetings to denounce him as happened in India, there were signs of a growing feeling of dislike for the Wahhabis, especially when there were reports of vandalism blamed on them and with the Malays' exasperation at the prospect of not being able to proceed with the Hajj.\textsuperscript{206}

The anti-Sa'\u015fu\d feeling, however, was more obvious within the Arab community in Malaya, which was torn between those supporting either side. One Arab, Sayyid Abdullah Dahlan, was strongly anti-\textcopyright\textsuperscript{u}usayn and in his effort to support the cause of Ibn Sa'\u015fu\d published an open request in \textit{Lembaga Melayu} on 30 October 1925, appealing for donations for a Hijaz fund which would be used to assist those who suffered hardship as a result of the power struggle. Apart from publishing the appeal in this journal, Sayyid Abdullah also issued a second appeal in the form of pamphlets.\textsuperscript{207} On the other hand, there were some Arabs who supported the cause of Sharif \textcopyright\textsuperscript{u}usayn including Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff, a prominent Muslim leader in Singapore.\textsuperscript{208} As a show of support for his cause, Sayyid Omar who had a close relationship with Sharif \textcopyright\textsuperscript{u}usayn and was decorated with his highest order, sent £2000 to Medinah.\textsuperscript{209}


\textsuperscript{206} CO 371/11698, Laurence Nunns Guillemand (Governor) to Amery, 28 November 1925; enclosure \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No. 33, October/November 1925.

\textsuperscript{207} CO 537/927. Laurence Nunns Guillemand (Governor) to Amery, 31 December 1924; enclosure \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No. 24, December 1924.

\textsuperscript{208} See L/PS/10/599 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection). Dudley Ridout, Brigadier-General, Commanding the Troop, Straits Settlements, Singapore to the Secretary, War Office, London, 15 August 1916.

\textsuperscript{209} CO 371/11698, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 34, December 1925.
In Penang, Shaykh Abdullah Maghribi, after his resignation as the mudir of Madrasah al-Mashhor, formed in 1927 an organisation to support the cause of Sharif Husayn called Jam'iyyah al-Khalafah.\textsuperscript{210} Even though the organisation did not last long and had to be closed down in the same year, and other support for Husayn dwindled after his defeat, at least there was evidence which indicated the presence of an element of anti-Wahhabi and anti-Sa'ud thinking in Malaya. The presence of such a feeling was also shown by certain tariqah groups, one of them being the Tariqah Ahmadiyah whose Khalifah, Shaykh Muhammad Said bin Jamaluddin al-Linggi, wrote a booklet which criticised the Wahhabis.\textsuperscript{211} Even though ideologically there were those who were either for or against the Wahhabis and Ibn Sa'ud, the equation proved to be not that rigid in practice. Sayyid Ibrahim Omar al-Sagoff, a prominent Muslim leader in Singapore who served in the Legislative Council in Makkah from 1923 to 1926 under Sharif Husayn and was also decorated with his highest order, then served under Ibn Sa'ud from 1926-1929 following the latter's success in the political struggle for the Hijaz.\textsuperscript{212}

By the early 1930s, the Wahhabi controversy had subsided considerably and generally Ibn Sa'ud was accepted by Malays as the ruler of the Haramain. The Malay acceptance of his leadership was much contributed to by his success in providing better security, facilities and living conditions for the pilgrims, as compared to what had been the case during the Sharifian rule.\textsuperscript{213} The role of presenting a noble image of Ibn Sa'ud undoubtedly was also significantly played by the Malay press, and one paper even portrayed him as the greatest Arab leader after the Prophet.\textsuperscript{214} In the 1930s after Ibn Sa'ud's government was firmly established in Hijaz these newspapers continued regularly to publish his speeches


\textsuperscript{211} Hamdan Hassan, Tarekat Ahmadiyah, op.cit., p. 63.


\textsuperscript{213} MB 247/1939, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), R. Irvine to the General Adviser, Johore, 3 May 1939; enclosure "Annual Report on the Pilgrimage for the Season 1938-1939AD or 1357-1358AH". R. Irvine was the Acting Secretary to the High Commissioner for the Malay States.

which clearly showed his commitment to the cause of the Muslims.\textsuperscript{215} As part of his effort to win the hearts and minds of the Malays, in 1938 the Saudi government published a bilingual journal \textit{Nidā` al-Islām} with the aim of strengthening the relation between the Malays and the Arabs.\textsuperscript{216} Even though the triumph of Ibn Sa`ūd and the Wahhabis did not disrupt the Malays' quest to perform the fifth pillar of Islam, their wish that he would emerge as the awaited Muslim leader who would lead them to a superior dignity did not live up to their expectation.


CHAPTER 4

THE TURKS FROM EMPIRE TO REPUBLIC: PERCEPTION AND REACTION

The Islamisation of the Malays and its subsequent social and political influences also introduced Turkish elements into their life. Unlike the other Middle Easterners, the Arabs and the Persians, the Turks' contact with the Malay World by way of trading activities was comparatively less significant. Their military supremacy and the great empire that they controlled, however, caught the Malay imagination which took the form of admiration manifested in several early Malay literary works. In these works of Malay court literature their regard to the Ottomans was illustrated when their respective kingdoms were linked to them, and their rulers were associated with the superiority of the empire and the nobility of its Sultans.

The Malay belief in the supremacy of the Turks also took the form of expectations of them following their confrontation with the European colonialists from the early sixteenth century onward. As a result of this conflict, the Turks were looked upon by Malays as the only saviour who had the capability of protecting their religion and the integrity of their existence. This expectation persisted during the following centuries and even continued into the early era of the British colonisation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Ottomans, on the other hand, also contributed to the enhancement of Malay expectations, particularly during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who used his Pan-Islamic design as a means of gaining the respect of the Malays as of other Muslims.

When the Turks entered World War 1, the momentum of Malay enthusiasm toward them suffered a devastating blow when the Malay journals which highlighted their cause were prevented from covering the progress of the war by
the British authorities. At the same time the British used the Malay Sultans, who were under their administrative influence, to their political advantage. When the Turks were disastrously defeated in the war and a secular Turkish Republic under Kemal Ataturk was created from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, this crucial event was observed by Malays with much interest.

The abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate clearly created an atmosphere of confusion in Malay society. Kemal’s success in establishing a new nation was applauded, but his ideas of modernisation and westernisation, particularly those which touched on Islamic values, were reported and intensely debated throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Despite the clear interest shown by a broad section of the Malay community in the political changes that had taken place in Turkey, this did not alter the course of their political history since, as anywhere else in the Muslim World, Kemalist ideas did not hatch into an effective or organised political movement. Similarly, despite the enthusiasm shown toward the Kemalist social reforms, except in a few cases, most Malays were comparatively selective and cautious in emulating the Turkish example, particularly when it emerged that Turkey was taking a drastic secular path.

Significantly, however, news reports and books that appeared on the course of these events, assisted by the growth of Malay journalism from the late nineteenth century, provided the Malays, even though superficially, with a sense of global unity under the banner of Islam. The widely reported accounts of developments in Turkey in the Malay press also played an important part in nurturing early Malay awareness of the need for political and religious changes in the community in order to achieve progress.

**Early Contact and Influences**

To the early Malays, the land which is known today as modern Turkey and its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire, was known as Rum. Early Malay literary works depicted the rulers of Rum among the great kings of the world, and from the sixteenth century, this title came to be applied to the Ottoman Sultans, the
strongest of the Muslim monarchs and heirs presumptive to the dignity of the Caliphate.¹

The Malays' glorification of the Sultans of Rum as great kings was largely symbolic, and was used by the author of an important Malay historiography *Sejarah Melayu*, to confer authority upon the rulers of the Melaka Sultanate, the earliest Malay-Muslim kingdom of the region. The conferring of this authority which was associated with their noble ancestry raised their status higher above that of the commoners. According to *Sejarah Melayu* the origin of the Sultans of Melaka was from Rum, since Raja Arisun Shah, a son of Iskandar Zulkarnain of Macedonia, married a princess from Turkestan and it was from this marriage that they traced their genealogy.² In addition to claiming that the Sultans of Melaka were the descendants of Iskandar Zulkarnain, *Sejarah Melayu* also maintained that other sons of Iskandar who ruled in Turkestan were in fact their distant cousins.³

Apart from *Sejarah Melayu*, the Malay glorification of Iskandar and his kingdom were also found in other Malay traditions, which at the same time regarded him as the great king of the West.⁴ One of these traditions also believed that as a great realm, Iskandar's kingdom was centred upon the land of sunset or


⁴ Among these traditions include that of the history of the Minangkabau Sultanate, since Iskandar Zulkarnain had three sons by the daughter of the King of the Ocean, Shahru'il Bariyah. After a contest between the three brothers in the Singapore Straits, the eldest, Key Dummul Alum Maharaja Alif went to the West to become the Sultan of Rum, the second, Nour Alum Maharaja Dempang or Dipang to the East to become the Sultan of China, while the third Aour Alum Maharaja Dirga or Durga remained in Johore to begin the later Minangkabau dynasty (See William Marsden, *The History of Sumatra*, First Published by the Author, London: 1811; reprint Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1975, pp. 341-344). A similar myth is that of Kedah related in *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, where Merong Mahawangsa after establishing the kingdom of Langkasuka then returns to Rum, leaving the kingdom to his sons, who were the progenitors of the dynasties of Siam (the eldest), Kedah, Patani, and Perak (See Siti Hawa Saleh, *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970, pp. 1-66). The legends of Alexander the Great (Iskandar Zulkarnain) and Merong Mahawangsa were also discussed in Zainal-Abidin bin Ahmad, "Some Malay Legendary Tales", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XXIV, Part 1, 1951, pp. 77-94.
These references to Rum and Turkestan as a great kingdom and the origin of Malay rulers clearly shows that Malays looked upon Turkey, which they identified with Rum, as a very powerful empire and a significant cultural centre of Islam.

A connection with Rum was also a credential deemed essential to a number of Malay legendary figures found in several Malay literary works. In the famous Malay romance *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, there is an account of the hero's diplomatic mission to the Ottoman capital. In his last years, Hang Tuah was depicted as leading a number of adventurous missions for the Sultans. After his visit to Majapahit, India and China, he was finally sent to the capital of Rum, "Stambul", to buy cannons for Melaka. In *Hikayat Acheh* the famous Sultan of Acheh, Iskandar Muda, is described as a ruler whose fame was even known to the Ottoman court. The chronicle exclaimed that as in the past there were two great kings, the Prophet Sulaiman and Iskandar Zulkarnain, so too then, the great kings were the Ottoman Sultan in the West and Sultan Iskandar Muda in the East. *Hikayat Acheh* also described the closeness of Iskandar Muda and his kingdom to the Ottomans; when the Sultan of Rum fell ill, his doctors prescribed a medicine which was found only in Acheh and an embassy was sent there to acquire it.

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6 Kassim Ahmad (annotated with new intro.), *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1993, p. 529. This event, however, is believed to have been deliberately added to the tradition in order to glorify the Kingdom of Melaka and its Sultans. Such deliberate additions are commonly found in the writings of traditional Malay historiography in order to legitimise the rulers and to aggrandise the kingdom as the equal of other kingdoms in the region. According to T. Iskandar, Hang Tuah’s account of his journey to Rum was taken by the author of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* from the information he obtained from Bustanus Salatin. Similarly the portrayal of the garden in the capital of Rum found in the former was also taken from the story of the garden created by Iskandar Thani of Acheh found in the latter (See T. Iskandar, "Nuruddin ar-Raniri: Pengarang Abad Ke-17", *Dewan Bahasa*, Vol. VII, No. 10, October 1964, p. 440). A discussion of the glorification of the kingdoms and its rulers by several Malay literary works is also elaborated in Virginia Matheson, "Concepts of Malay Ethos in Indigenous Writings", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. X, No. 2, September 1979, pp. 351-371.

Despite the fact that these traditions mentioned a long history of Malay association with the Turks, existing evidence shows that the relation between them was only well established in the early sixteenth century. The increasing attachment nonetheless had its origin from the capture of Melaka by the Portuguese in 1511 which led to Acheh in northern Sumatra becoming an important centre of Islam in the Malay World. The presence of the Portuguese in the city-port which posed a serious threat to the kingdom led the Muslims of this region to rest their hope on the Ottomans for their survival. After their success in capturing Melaka and the supremacy it gave in the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese embarked on an ambitious plan to subdue the Muslims elsewhere in their eastward movement. In the course of this, the Portuguese came into conflict with the Turks, who were also progressing in their southward expansion. In the age of oceanic discoveries both of them claimed supremacy and built seaborne empires which met in the Indian ocean.8

The Ottoman-Portuguese struggle in the Indian Ocean also drew the Achehnese into the conflict. The persistent Portuguese harassment of Achehnese vessels plying the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean resulted in a naval alliance between the Ottomans and the Malays.9 The prospect of an effective offensive by this alliance alarmed the Portuguese. They considered that this would seriously endanger their occupation of Melaka and made a concerted effort to obtain an up-to-date information on the situation.10 To offset the possibility, Jorge de Lemos,

10 Ibid., p. 420.
one-time Viceregal secretary at Goa and the author of the *Cercos de Malacca* even went to the extent of suggesting that Aceh should be invaded.\(^\text{11}\)

This atmosphere of confrontation, originating from the Portuguese invasion of Melaka which led to a closer contact between the Malays and the Ottomans, was described by *Bustanus Salatin*, written by Nuruddin ar-Raniri in the Acehnese capital in 1638. In this account, which is considered to have a historical character, he mentions that the Acehnese Sultan, Sultan Alauddin Ri'ayat Shah al-Qahar (circa 1537-1568) upon his ascension to the throne sent a mission to Sultan Rum, "to the state of Istanbul in order to strengthen the Muslim religion".\(^\text{12}\) The need to consolidate Islam in the region by Aceh arose as a result of the Portuguese threat, and accordingly Ottoman military assistance was requested in order to fight the threatening power. The appeal by the Acehnese received a favourable response and the Ottoman Sultan sent various craftsmen and experts who knew how to make guns and later settled in Aceh.\(^\text{13}\) The experts helped the Acehnese to build a fort at Aceh Darul Salam and cast large guns. The Ottoman Gazi spirit was also described as influencing the Sultan, in which spirit he himself led the *jihād* (holy war) against the *kāfir* (infidel) at Melaka.\(^\text{14}\)

The account by *Bustanus Salatin* of Aceh sending an envoy to Istanbul appealing for military assistance to fight against the Portuguese is also found in an Ottoman source, quoted by Saffet Bey, an Ottoman naval historian, whose researches appeared in two parts in the journal of the Ottoman historical society

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\(^\text{11}\) Ibid., pp. 423-424.
\(^\text{13}\) The origin of these artisans sent out by the Ottoman Sultan was said to be Syrian. They settled in a village in Aceh called Bitay, which was pronounced as Betal, an abbreviation of Bait al-Muqaddas (Jerusalem), the city where they originated. See C. Snouck Hurgronje (trans. A.W.S. O'Sullivan), *The Acehnese*, Vol. 1, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1906, p. 209. See also Anthony H. Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflection and New Directions", *Indonesia*, No. 20, October 1975, p. 43; B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, Part Two, The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1957, p. 245.
during 1912.15 Saffet's accounts centres around some letters dated 1567-1568 of Sultan Selim II (ruled 1566-1574), who ascended the throne after the death of Sultan Sulayman (ruled 1520-1566), about a planned expedition to Acheh in north Sumatra against the Portuguese.16 The first letter, dated 16 Rabi‘ul-Awwal 975 (September 20, 1567), sent by mean of a Turkish envoy, Mustafa Camus, was Sultan Selim's lengthy reply to the embassy of Sultan Alauddin Ri’ayat Shah al-Qahar. It describes how Hussein, the Achehnese envoy, had requested help against the kāfirs, who had been harassing traders between Makkah and Sumatra, and oppressing Muslims in Calicut and Ceylon, as well as the Sumatra area.17 The Achehnese envoy also conveyed messages from several of the heathen rulers of South East Asia, who promised to embrace Islam if the Ottomans could save them.18

Another letter referred to by Saffet, of approximately the same date, shows a cordial relationship between the Ottomans and the Achehnese. It concerns the instructions given to Admiral Kurtoglu Hizir Reis about the requested expedition. The instructions stated that the salaries and provisions for the men would be provided for a year, after which the Sultan of Acheh would have to support them if they were still required. About four months later, on 5 Rajab 975 (January 5, 1568), Sultan Selim wrote to Hussein, expressing his regrets for the delay of the Sumatran campaign because of the rebellion in the Yemen, which the fleet led by Kurtoglu Hizir Reis had been diverted to suppress.19 The letter concluded with


the remark that "God willing" the rebellion would be crushed, and the expedition to Sumatra would take place in the following year.²⁰

The presence of an Achehnese envoy at the Ottoman capital which demonstrates the existence of a mutual contact between them, as mentioned by Bustan Salatin and elaborated by Saffet in his work, was inclined to be accepted by a the Turkish historian, I.H. Uzuncarsili in his standard Osmanli Tarihi. In his work, Uzuncarsili relates that Aceh sent an embassy to Istanbul in 1565, who stayed there for two years in a special palace for foreign envoys, while Sultan Sulayman was away on the Szigetvar campaign.²¹ During the reign of Sultan Selim II, again the mission appealed for military assistance to fight the Portuguese. Sultan Selim responded to the request favourably and an Ottoman fleet was sent to help the Muslims of Sumatra against the Western occupier.²²

The Western sources, on the other hand, suggest a much earlier relation between Aceh and the Ottomans which also took a form of a military alliance. In particular, we have the accounts of the Venetian ambassador to Istanbul, who reported as early as June 1562 on an encounter with an Achehnese ambassador in the city asking for artillery to fight against the Portuguese which led to the Ottomans sending arms and gunners to Aceh.²³ Another source was the Jesuit L. Peres, who reported the presence of a Turkish ambassador in Aceh when some Portuguese vessels arrived there to trade during 1565.²⁴

The same Jesuit in letters written in Melaka at the end of 1566 indicates an expected attack on the city-port for which the men and artillery for the assault

²⁰Ibid., pp. 404-405. The major Achehnese offensive against Melaka took place from 20 January to 25 February 1568 and the Hijrah year of 976 began in June 1568. By the time the suppression of the Yemen revolt finally completed by Sinan Pasha in 1571 the Achehnese offensive had already over.


²³See Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence", op.cit., p. 405.

had been supplied by the Ottomans, with whom Acheh had a good relation. When the attack did take place in 1568, it was reported that it was undertaken by fifteen thousand men aided by about four hundred Turks with two hundred pieces of artillery of different sizes.\(^{25}\) Despite the fact that they were assisted by Turks in the attack, the Achehnese were still unable to capture Melaka because it had been heavily fortified, and the Portuguese were well-prepared to frustrate the assault.

The existence of the sixteenth century Ottoman-Acheh relation which implied that the Ottomans were giving protection to Acheh was also the subject of a diplomatic offensive when Acheh was invaded by the Dutch in 1873.\(^{26}\) The Porte in an official offer to mediate the war communicated with the Netherlands and other powers by giving an account of the historical links between Acheh and the Ottomans. This letter of 11 August 1873 describes the victory it said achieved by the campaign of Sultan Selim 1, who after his triumph carried his victorious arms to the extremities of the Arabian Peninsula.\(^{27}\) Following the conquest, he made the echo of his victories reach as far as the island of Sumatra.\(^{28}\) The Porte also stated that as an appreciation and honour of the Ottoman victories, the Achehnese sent a deputation to Sultan Selim, recognised him in the title of Caliph and expressly used in their letters the Sultan's title, "Protector of Islam".\(^{29}\)

Despite the fact that the Achehnese traditionally believed the Ottomans were giving them protection, which signified an intimate relation, in reality it was only symbolic and was not noticed by the European powers. In the view of the Ottomans, although there was an understanding that they gave protection to


\(^{27}\) There appears to have been a confusion here since it was Sultan Selim II (ruled 1566-1580) who actually established political relation with Acheh not Sultan Selim 1 (1512-1520).

\(^{28}\) Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence", op.cit., p. 398.

Acheh, there was no necessity to register it with the European powers, since Turkey was then at the apex of its supremacy. As a indication that they were under Ottoman protection, the Achehnese offered an annual tribute as a token gift in return. The Ottoman Sultan, however, refused on account of distance and instead, as a mark of submission to the suzerain, requested them to honour him by observing the ceremony of the Prophet's birthday or Mevlid and its recitations with special zeal as was done in the Ottoman Empire. Apart from that, the Ottoman Sultan also requested that a sermon on the religious authority of the Ottoman Caliph should be read in the mosque every Friday. Since they regarded themselves as vassals of the Ottoman Empire, the Achehnese raised the Ottoman flag in their ports and on their vessels in return for what they believed to be the high protection given.

By the early seventeenth century when the Ottoman Empire began to show signs of decay its links with Acheh also declined. The Malay admiration of and expectations from the Turks, however, persisted and had influential effects. During the reign of Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), his court in many ways was reminiscent of the Ottoman, including a palace guard composed of military slaves, similar to the Ottoman Janissaries, in addition to the Abyssinian slave officers and Turkish soldiers he received from the Porte. Traditions that Acheh had submitted to Ottoman protection were also attested by the preservation of many Turkish

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31 Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence", op.cit., p. 414. The mentioning of the name of the Sultan in the Friday prayers was a formal recognition of his authority as supreme religious leader. When Sultan Selim I conquered Egypt in 1517, following his success he sent his emissary to the Sharif of Makkah offering to confirm him in office on condition of mentioning his name in the Friday prayers. With the acceptance of the arrangement the Hijaz fell under nominal Ottoman sovereignty. See Jamal Alami, "Education in the Hijaz Under Turkish and Sharifian Rule", *The Islamic Quarterly*, Nos., 1 & 2, January-June 1975, p. 42.


cannons around the palace, and by the Turkish flag which Acehnese Sultans had adopted as their own.34

In Kedah the expectation and the belief that the Turks could be relied upon to protect the interest of the Muslims in this region was still prevalent when the state was invaded by the Siamese (1821-1842). The feelings were even sensed by Thomas Beighton of the London Missionary Society, who was well acquainted with the exiled Sultan of Kedah, Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Halim Shah II. He reported in 1828 that when the news arrived of the defeat of a Turkish and Egyptian fleet at the Battle of Navarino by the combination of French, Russian and British forces, the Sultan sent several messengers to meet him for particulars. When they were informed of the outcome of the battle, Beighton noticed that the messengers appeared upset as though some general calamity and great trouble had struck them.35 Beighton’s account shows that there was a persistent Malay regard for the Turks, sometimes with a strong emotional expectation, even during their declining years. A similar strong sentiment toward the Turks was also noted by Hurgronje among Malays in Makkah as a result of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. Hurgronje reported that even though most of the Malays there might not have a clear idea of where "Stambul" was, to them it mattered and was taken as an example of a conflict between Christianity and Islam.36

The Ottoman military and diplomatic relations with the Malay Kingdoms, as clearly shown by events, did not significantly change the course of the history of this region. The contact, however, did have some religious and cultural influences which could be felt at least until recently. These influences were not a result of any active role played by the Turks themselves, but instead stemmed from the admiration the Malays had for the supremacy of their Sultans and the great empire they had built, which they believed championed the cause of Islam. In matters of

religious administration, although there is no conclusive evidence which suggests any mutual interaction or consultation, several Malay States adopted the post of Shaykh al-Islam, an office which held the highest authority in religious affairs.  
This functionary in the Malay states was equivalent to the office of Shaykh al-Islam, the head of the religious bureaucracy in the Ottoman court.

In civil administration, in order to streamline its running in the state of Johore, Sultan Ibrahim gave his consent for the Qāḍī to use Majallat al-ʾAḥkām al-ʾAdliyyah as a reference on all matters regarding the implementation of the Civil Law. The Mejelle, the name by which it is popularly known in Turkish, represents an attempt to codify the Civil Code of the Ḥanafī Madhhab on civil transactions between people formulated by a Commission of Jurists, headed by Ahmad Djevdet Pasha (Minister of Justice between 1869 and 1876) as part of the Legislative purpose of the Tanzimat (1839-1878). To facilitate the implementation of the

37 The earliest evidence of the existence of such a post was in Johore where it was held by an Arab, Sayyid Salim Ahmad al-ʿAttas (See M.A. Fawzi Mohd. Basri, “Perkembangan dan Peranan Jabatan Agama Johor 1895-1940”, Malaysia in History, Vol. 18, No. 1, June 1975, p. 15). The post of Shaykh al-Islam was also created in Kedah in the early twentieth century. The first Shaykh al-Islam in the state was Shaykh Muhammad Khayat followed by Sayyid Abdullah Dahan. Both of them were Arabs and served for a period of about a year each. The third, Haji Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidak became the longest serving Shaykh al-Islam, serving until his death in 1935 (See Othman Ishak, "Some Aspects of the Administration of Islam in Kedah", in Asmah Haji Omar (ed.), Darulaman. Essays on Linguistic, Cultural and Socio-Economic Aspects of the Malaysian State of Kedah, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1979, p. 186). In Kedah, the duties of the Shaykh al-Islam were comparatively well-defined and independent of the office of the Chief Qāḍī, and he held the highest authority in matters related to Islam. (See CO 273/446. Meeting of Kedah State Council held on 11 May 1916. Arthur Young of the Straits Settlements to A. Bonar Law of the Colonial Office, 18 July 1916). In Perak the post of Shaykh al-Islam was first held by Haji Wan Ahmad, followed by Shaykh Muhammad Salleh in 1918. Following the death of Shaykh Muhammad Salleh in 1924 the post was left vacant until 1935 when the post of Mufti was created instead (See Esmail bin Mohd. Salleh, “Pentadbiran Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Di Negeri Perak Sebelum dan Selepas 1949”, in Khoo Kay Kim, et al., Islam di Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, p. 121). Other states which also had the office of Shaykh al-Islam were Trengganu and Selangor. Some of these states continued to have the post until the late 1930s, but posts of that name were no longer in use after World War II, although their functions in religious administration still exist.


code in the state, the Arabic version of *Majallat al-Aḥkām al-Adliyyah* which was published in Egypt was translated into Malay under the title *Majalat Ahkam Johore* and published by the office of the State Mufti.40

The code which contained 1581 sections on civil transactions was used in Johore in the early twentieth century, but its implementation was abruptly curtailed when the British Civil Code was introduced after the state was put under the British Protectorate. Even though its implementation was short-lived, the state of Johore proved to be the only Malay state in this region which used the *Mejelle* as a reference work in its implementation of the Civil Code. Despite the fact that its implementation was cut short, *Majalah Ahkam* continued to be regarded in Johore as an important work for an Islamic Civil Code as it was studied in government religious schools following its incorporation into the new curriculum in 1933.41

With the attempt to implement it in Johore, other Malay States, namely Trengganu and Kelantan, also showed an interest in adopting a similar code in their respective states for matters related to civil administration.42

The Turkish influence on Malay society was not only confined to religious administration, but also affected entertainment, attire, language and the high regard in which individual Turkish leaders were held. At the height of Malay admiration for the Turks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a popular Malay theatrical entertainment was associated with Turkey. The entertainment called *Bangsawan*, also known as *Komedi Stambul*, however, did not in any way spring from a direct Turkish initiative. In fact the troupe came from


40 For the Malay translation of the digest, see *Majalat Ahkam Johor*, Muar: Matbaa’ah Khairiyah, 1912AD/1331AH.

41 J/UG 80/33, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), 8 March 1933.

Surabaya in Indonesia, and was known “Stambul”, because of the obsession of its leader, named Jaafar “the Turk” with Turkey. Most of the stories of the entertainment, were of Turkish background and the actors wore the fez and white turban of the Turks and the Arabs.\footnote{Tan Sooi Beng, Bangsawan: A Social and Stylistic History of Popular Malay Opera, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 18.} The troupe toured Malaya where it was popularly received before it disintegrated.\footnote{Rahmah Bujang, Sejarah Perkembangan Drama Bangsawan Di Tanah Melayu dan Singapura, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1975, p. 23.}

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Malay fascination with the Turks also affected the form of attire. It became common for Malay rulers and other notables to appear in public wearing the Turkish fez, which symbolised an Islamic association. Sultan Abu Bakar of Johore was reported to wear his best black velvet tarboosh with a still more magnificent aigrette enriched with the state’s star and crescent in brilliants when he entertained his European guests at dinner. Tunku Kudin of Kedah who lived in exile in Penang also adopted a similar style of Turkish grandeur when he took his evening drive in a brougham drawn by a pair of prancing bays while his two coachmen in livery and fez perched on the high seat.\footnote{See J.M. Gullick, Malay Society in the Late Nineteenth Century: The Beginning of Change, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 193.} As a popular attire Turkish-made fezzes manufactured by the famous Imperial Haki factory which supplied fezzes to the Turkish infantry and navy were available in Singapore.\footnote{In Singapore the sole agent for the fez was Daud Maidin & Co., 91, Market Street, North Bridge Road, Singapore. See Majalah al-islam, Vol. 1, No. 5, May 1913, p. 144.}

Malay admiration for the Ottomans sometimes also took the form of respect for the Sultan. In his memoirs, Winstedt mentions coming across an oleograph of an Ottoman Sultan together with that of Queen Victoria hanging on the wall of a Malay house, whose owner worked at the District Office and could speak English.\footnote{R.O. Winstedt, Malayan Memories, Singapore: Kelly and Walsh Ltd., 1916, pp. 18-19.} The keeping of such a picture could be taken as an indication that
there was a certain degree of veneration for the Ottoman Sultan, even among the more western-oriented Malays. Elsewhere in the Malay World, in places like Upper Palembang, the Bugis territory in Celebes, Minangkabau and Acheh, the affection for Turkey was more sentimental and lasting. Until recently, it was found that pictures of Turkish war heroes like Enver Pasha and Ibrahim Edhem Pasha were still to be seen hanging on the wall of some houses. Even after Kemal abolished the Caliphate in 1924, the name of the Ottoman Sultan was still mentioned in the second part of the Friday sermon in some of these places.⁴⁸

One lasting mark of Turkish influence on Malay society, however, is its contribution to enriching the vocabulary of the Malay language. One of the earliest acknowledgements of the presence of some Turkish loan-words in Malay was made by R.J. Wilkinson in his English-Malay Dictionary of 1901-2.⁴⁹ Although Turkish words are far from numerous compared to either Arabic or English, many political and administrative terms that were commonly used in Malaya were directly adapted from Turkish.⁵⁰ Undoubtedly the Malays have borrowed some useful words from Turkish, and the quality of these loan-words was very high from the cultural and political standpoint.⁵¹ Another lasting mark of Turkish influence in Malay life is found certain Sufi practices which survived in Kelantan and elsewhere; according to Malm, the religious chants called zikir were related to the tradition known in certain whirling dervish orders found in Turkey.⁵² Even though the Turks had a history of influence on the Malays, signs of their influence were

⁴⁹ R.J. Wilkinson, A Malay-English Dictionary (Jawi), Singapore: Kelly & Walsh Ltd., 1901, introduction and p. 81. Among the Turkish loan-words he identified was the word "Pasha" or "Basha".
relatively less obvious compared to that of the Arabs who integrated with Malay society.

Pan-Islamic Appeal and Political Patronage

The notion of uniting the Muslim communities for the purpose of resisting European aggression and ultimately ousting the colonialists from Asia and Africa was expressed in the West by the commonly used phrase "Pan-Islamism". Even though the term was common currency in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scholars failed to develop a consensus on the precise interpretation of the phenomenon. In addition, even the framing the definition of the term "Pan-Islamism" itself was subjected to discussions and this is contributed to by the fact that its equivalent does not exist in any of the Islamic languages. Most European scholars and statesmen, however, considered it to be a reactionary movement, a revival of Islamic fanaticism, a combination of

53 The first use of the term "Pan-Islamism" thus far discovered is that by Franz von Werner in Turkische Skizzen published in 1877, but written before July 1876. Later in 1881, Gabriel Charmes borrowed the term in an article in the Revue de deux Mondes and popularised it in various writings, especially, L'Avenir de la Turquie, le Pan-Islamisme. In Britain the term was first used by Wilfred Scawen Blunt in an article written in 1881, but published in the Fortnightly Review of January 1882. Later that year this five-part article was issued in a book-form entitled The Future of Islam. In Britain the phenomenon was a also a subject of research by the Foreign Office which led to the publication of a booklet The Rise of Islam and the Caliphate. Pan Islamic Movement, Handbooks Prepared Under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, No. 96a & b, January 1919. See M. Naeem Qureishi, "Bibliographic Soundings in Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in South Asia", The Islamic Quarterly, Vol. XXIV, 1980, p. 22.


Muslims under the leadership of the Turks which raged aggressively against the European powers.\textsuperscript{56}

On the other hand, Muslim intellectuals tend to look upon it as an essentially progressive movement, a perception of the increasing dangers to Islam from European penetration, and a movement aimed at uniting all Muslims in order to ensure free development of their intellectual and moral faculties.\textsuperscript{57} To these Muslim thinkers, the aggressive image of Pan-Islamism was viewed as being invented by the West to justify their intervention in the Muslim lands and against the awakening of Islamic conscience urging Muslims to aim for liberty and progress.\textsuperscript{58} According to Syed Hussein Alatas, the contest between Pan-Islamism and Western colonialism had a classic example in the Malay World where its inception goes back to between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, being a continuation of the struggle between Islam and the West, first restricted to the Mediterranean region and later extended to the other parts of the world.\textsuperscript{59}

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as a result of the expansion of European domination, the Muslims, including the Malays, who felt increasingly threatened by Western encroachment responded by searching for a patronage deemed imperative to preserve their dignity. Under these circumstances the Ottoman Sultan who enjoyed the title of Caliph, an office whose concept was

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., p. 284. See also "A Pan-Islam Propagandist", \textit{Singapore Free Press}, 6 January 1899; enclosure CO 273/246, Mitchell to Chamberlain (Confidential), 6 January 1899.

\textsuperscript{57} This consciousness arises from the belief in the oneness of Islam as a religion and a social system which embraces a broad sense of nationality and political community. It inspired Muslims all over the world with an awareness of threat and danger when confronted with the current traumatic events.

\textsuperscript{58} Naimur Rahman Farooqi, "Pan-Islamism in the Nineteenth Century", op.cit., p. 284. Nikkie R. Keddie suggests that the Pan-Islamic euphoria which swept some parts of the Muslim World in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was a reaction against the aggression of Western Powers. This was felt from the 1880s, culminating in the French occupation of Tunisia in 1881, the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, the Russian conquest of Merv in 1883, the Italian seizure of Tripoli in 1911 and the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. These developments gave rise to many trends in the Muslim World, but most notably, the example of German and Italian unification which suggested to many Muslims the potency of movements for unity of divided territories behind a single government. See Nikkie R. Keddie, \textit{Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani: A Political Biography}, Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972, p. 124.

highly charged with emotion, naturally was looked to by them for leadership.60 This late nineteenth and early twentieth century feeling, however, only progressed remarkably during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (ruled, 1876-1908). The Sultan who was determined to be regarded as a leader for the Muslims, upon his installation as Ottoman Caliph inserted in the constitution which he promulgated on the 24 December 1876 his clear intention to be regarded as the protector of Islam.61

In order to realise his intentions and to gain this recognition, Sultan Abdul Hamid sent his emissaries beyond the Turkish borders, including to the Malay World.62 In Malaya, the Pan-Islamic feeling promoted by Sultan Abdul Hamid managed to nurture a strong sense of admiration which looked upon the Turks as a power to reckon with, and as a protector they could rely upon. The earliest and the most remarkable inroad which is supposed to have had an important bearing on Sultan Abdul Hamid’s Pan-Islamic appeal in this region was initiated by Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff, an influential Muslim leader who had a close relation with the Turks as well as with Sultan Abu Bakar of Johore. Through his efforts, a friendship was fostered between the two Sultans and was further cemented following the visit of Sultan Abu Bakar to Istanbul in 1879 as part of his European tour. During this visit, Sultan Abu Bakar was presented with a lady-in-waiting of Circassian origin, Rogayyah Hanum.63 In Johore, Rogayyah was highly admired and was married to the Sultan’s brother, Tengku Abdul Majid.64 Sultan Abu Bakar again visited

64 From this marriage were born two children, Ungku Abdul Aziz the fifth Chief Minister of Johore and Ungku Abdul Hamid, the head of the Johore Translation Bureau (father of Ungku Abdul Aziz, former Vice Chancellor, University of Malaya). Following the death of Tengku Abdul Majid, Rogayyah then married Sayyid Abdullah al-Attas, a rich merchant from Batavia (Jakarta). The marriage produced a son, Sayyid Ali al-Attas (the father of Syed Hussein and Syed Naguib, two prominent scholars). Following a divorce, Rogayyah was married to Dato’ Jaafar. They had seven children, including Onn (a prominent nationalist leader and the father of Malaysia’s third Prime Minister). Rogayyah died in 1902. See Ramlah Adam, Dato’ Onn Ja’afar. Pengasas Kemerdekaan, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa
Istanbul in February 1893, also as part of his European tour, where he was greeted with great pleasure by Sultan Abdul Hamid who bestowed upon him the Highest Osmanieh Order as a symbol of friendship.\textsuperscript{65}

Even though Sultan Abu Bakar had a cordial relationship with the Ottomans, he did not show much interest in propagating the Pan-Islamic ideas championed by Sultan Abdul Hamid. An early effort which had a more profound effect in projecting the patronising role of the Turks and the charismatic leadership of Sultan Abdul Hamid, however, was undertaken by a prominent \textit{\text{"{a}lim} who based himself in Makkah, Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain Mustafa al-Fatani. As a prominent \textit{\text{"{a}lim}, Shaykh Wan Ahmad managed to win the trust of Sultan Abdul Hamid when he was appointed to run the Malay press in Makkah, al-M\textit{\text{a}}\text{\text{"{a}h} a-M\textit{\text{"{a}h}y}y\textit{\text{"{a}}} al-K\textit{\text{"{a}}}\text{'inah, when it was established in 1884.\textsuperscript{66}} The trust led to a close rapport which was further nourished when Shaykh Wan Ahmad attended a conference of \textit{\text{"{u}lam\text{"{a}}} held in Istanbul in 1885 called by Sultan Abdul Hamid, representing the Sharif of Makkah. During his stay while attending the conference, Shaykh Wan Ahmad introduced a book, \textit{Sab\textit{\text{\text{"{a}}}l al-Muhtadin Li-al-Tafaqqh Fi Amr al-Din} by Shaykh Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari to Sultan Abdul Hamid, who was very impressed with it and agreed to sponsor its publication.\textsuperscript{67}} The publication of the book boosted the image of Sultan Abdul Hamid in the eyes of the Malays and marked the beginning of his religious role as a guardian of the faith.


\textsuperscript{66} C. Snouck Hurgronje, \textit{Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century}, op.cit., p. 286.

Shaykh Wan Ahmad, who was convinced of the position played by Sultan Abdul Hamid and the Turks for the cause of Islam, then added to his credentials as an author of religious books by writing *Hadiqatul Azhar wal-Riahin* in 1886. In the book a special section was allocated on the history to the Ottomans from their founder Uthman, to Sultan Abdul Hamid, and this being the earliest Malay work dealing with Ottoman history. Shaykh Wan Ahmad wrote that the Ottoman was the dynasty par excellence after the reign of the rightful Caliphs since they were Sunnis, implemented the *Sha'īrah*, and were respectful of the Companions of the Prophet and the 'ulamā'. In addition, he further stated that they were committed to the interests of the Muslims by producing famous *fatwās*, waged *jiḥād*, were attentive of the Ḥaramayn, gave aims and looked after the welfare of the Ḥujjāj. Since the Ottomans were the inheritors of the mantle of the rightful Caliph it was the responsibility of every Muslim to respect them and pray for their vitality and prolongation.68 *Hadiqatul Azhar wal-Riahin* was a widely read text in traditional religious education, and was first published in Makkah and later printed locally.69

The Pan-Islamic appeal of Sultan Abdul Hamid among Malays, however, received a remarkable stimulus in the last year of the nineteenth century following the role played by Kiamil Bey (Turkish Consul-General in Batavia from 1897 to 1899). In early 1899, while in Singapore, Kiamil was actively involved in an appeal aiming to withdraw all Muslims from European domination and to place them under the direct control of the Turks.70 In 1904, Kiamil was transferred to Singapore by the Turkish Government, despite the fact that the British refused to grant him an *exequatur*.71 His transfer to Singapore coincided with increasing resentment in

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70 CO 273/246, Mitchell (Governor of the Straits Settlements) to Chamberlain (Colonial Office), 6 January 1899.

the Riau court, whose families were linked to the island's economic activities, toward the Dutch for their unwillingness to appoint another Yamtuan after the death of the predecessor.

Following persistent Dutch refusal to listen to their protest, the Riau court made several attempts to further their cause, including sending a letter to Sultan Abdul Hamid requesting his assistance. The move was taken as a result of a secret gathering in early February 1904, held at the house of Raja Ali Kelana, the leader of the Riau court. The arrival of Kiamil in Singapore provided an additional impetus to the initiative and $20,000 (Singapore) was raised to finance the mission to Istanbul for the purpose. The manoeuvre, however, failed to produce any remarkable outcome, since it was most unlikely that Sultan Abdul Hamid was capable of confronting the Dutch, but the effort clearly indicated that the Malays looked upon the Turks as a power which could assist them and support their cause.

The Pan-Islamic appeal where the Turks were looked upon as potential saviours was also appealing to the Achehnese whose relation with them was centuries old and heightened when it was invaded by the Dutch in 1873. Following their successive failures to drive the occupier out of their homeland their only source of hope rested on the Turks. Their desperation was clearly demonstrated when the Turkish warship Ertugroul anchored at Singapore Harbour in 1889 on its visit to Japan. The Achehnese who had been humiliated by the Dutch were much excited as their expectations from Istanbul were rekindled with the coming of the ship. They sent an envoy to Singapore with letters requesting both the Turkish commander and Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff to bring their plight to the attention of Sultan Abdul Hamid. Even by 1904 when the Achehnese were

73 Ibid., p. 130.
74 Straits Times, 16 November 1889. When the ship arrived on 15 November 1899 the Johnston Pier, Singapore was crowded with Malays who came to express their pleasure and admiration for the Ottoman Caliph.
75 Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence", op.cit., p. 278.
totally subdued, they still believed that eventually the Turks would assist them to drive the Dutch out.\textsuperscript{76}

The Turks were also looked upon as a source of hope in early twentieth century Kelantan following the expansion of British colonialism to the state. When negotiations were underway to transfer its administration from the Siamese to the British, there was also an effort being made to transfer it to Ottoman administration instead. The initiative for the move was taken by Shaykh Wan Ahmad Zain who acted as intermediary for the process.\textsuperscript{77} As an anti-colonialist, Shaykh Wan Ahmad believed that only the Ottomans were able to help the Malay state from being occupied and that it was in their best interest as a Muslim state to be put under Ottoman dominion.\textsuperscript{78} His moves, however, had not materialised when he died in 1908 and no other "älim of his stature was capable of carrying out his plans.

Malay sentiments where Turks were looked upon as patrons and Sultan Abdul Hamid as leader also made remarkable progress in the last few years of the nineteenth century and onwards as a result of the role played by Malay journals, among others Jajahan Melayu, Lengkongan Bulan and Chahaya Pulau Pinang. Even though the feelings associated with the Pan-Islamic appeal of Sultan Abdul Hamid did not disrupt the British forward movement in Malaya, the role played by these journals managed to enhance his image as an Islamic leader and that of the

\textsuperscript{76} G.K. Simon, "Islam in Sumatra", op.cit., p. 212.

\textsuperscript{77} According to Abdul Rahman al-Ahmadi whose findings are based on a number of documents and accounts, the effort was initiated in the 1890s after Shaykh Wan Ahmad went to Istanbul to express the wishes of the people of Kelantan. Following the discussion, two delegates were sent; one travelled through Singapore and the other through Bangkok to meet at Kota Bharu. In early twentieth century Kota Bharu also, there resided a highly respected Turk, Shaykh "Alî Amir Husayn who had a close relationship with Sultan Muhammad IV. Shaykh "Alî was regarded by the Sultan as his military commander and was given land titles in Kota Bharu. Shaykh "Alî died on 23 March 1939. See Abdul Rahman al-Ahmadi, "Satu Kajian dan Perbandingan Riwayat Hidup Kadir Adabi Dengan Assad Syukri", M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1978, pp. 2-3.

Turks as superior people who defended the faith.79 These journals were overzealous in their reporting of Sultan Abdul Hamid and portrayed him as a great leader who was extremely concerned with Muslim welfare.80 The Turkish people was also depicted as very rich and powerful under the leadership of their respected Sultan.81 As a distinguished ruler, Sultan Abdul Hamid was highly admired by Malays and his picture in full Ottoman royal attire was sold by the journal Lengkongan Bulan to interested readers.82

When the journal Chahaya Pulau Pinang started publication in 1900, the extent of the Malays’ enthusiasm for Sultan Abdul Hamid and the Turks became obvious, as news on them constituted its main stories, which covered the second, third and fourth pages of its first issue.83 These included the news of the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Sultan Abdul Hamid’s ascent to the Ottoman throne together with a poem dedicated to him, and the Ottomans’ success in collecting a large sum in donations to build the Hijaz Railway.84 In its following editions, the Jubilee Celebration was also regularly reported and the glory of Sultan Abdul Hamid was depicted, including a grand celebration by the Turkish communities in Liverpool,

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79 Before World War 1 it was generally believed by Malays that the Turks were a superior people who could wield supernatural power. As the defender of the faith it was also believed that the Turk’s defeat in the war was a sign of the world coming closer to its doomsday. In its editorials, the journal Jajahan Melayu, (Vol. 1, No. 1, 10 December 1896 [5 Rajab 1313AH]) elaborated on the superiority of the Turks as generally believed by the Malays and went further to say that any power who wished to defeat them was daydreaming.


81 Jajahan Melayu, Vol. 2, No. 25, 6 May 1897.

82 The size of the picture was 6.5" X 4.25". See the advertisement in front page Lengkongan Bulan, Vol. 2, No. 5, 28 May 1900 and Vol. 2, No. 7, 4 June 1900.

83 The journal Chahaya/Chahyah/Chayah Pulau Pinang/Penang can be considered a relatively successful journal since it managed to survive for nearly eight and half years from 13 October 1900 to 28 March 1908. It was published by a Chinese tycoon Lim Seng Hui, the proprietor of Criterion Press, 230 Birch Street, Penang. The journal was produced in four pages in Jawi and published every Saturday. See Mohd. Dahari Othman, "Akhbar Cahaya Pulau Pinang, 1900-1908", Jabat, No. 7/8. 1978/79, p. 115.

Manchester and France. As a famous ruler, Sultan Abdul Hamid was also reported to have received precious gifts for the occasion from the Emperor of Germany and the President of France, as well as from the Muslims of Bulgaria, India and Java. When Sultan Abdul Hamid fell sick it was reported by Chahaya Pulau Pinang which also expressed its relief when he was getting better accompanied by prayers for his long-life to continue his just rule.

The early twentieth century propagation of a favourable image of the Turks and Sultan Abdul Hamid which impressed the Malays was also enthusiastically taken up by al-Imam, published in 1906. In its first issue, news on Turkey was as much a main attraction as news on Japan, the two areas together being regarded as representing Islam and Asia on the march. Under the heading "Turkey and Japan", it elaborated on the proposed Congress of Religion to be held in Tokyo. Sultan Abdul Hamid was reported to have sent three of his able representatives there and exchanged telegrams with his counterpart, the Emperor of Japan. Apart from this issue, another which also attracted the interest of the journal was the Hijaz Railway, which in its view symbolised Sultan Abdul Hamid's achievements for the future prosperity of the Muslims. The progress of its construction was regularly reported and it was forecast to be completed in September 1908 with the inauguration performed by Sultan Abdul Hamid himself.

Another aspect of Sultan Abdul Hamid's achievement which received a comparatively extensive coverage from al-Imam was his military buildup which signified the empire's power. According to the journal, the coverage was intended

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86 Chahaya Pulau Pinang, No. 5, 10 November 1900, p. 4.
87 Chahaya Pulau Pinang, No. 7, 27 October 1906, p. 3.
to please its readers who were anxious to have its up-to-date information. For these readers, the journal published among other things details of the capability of a Turkish warship complete with its tonnage, armour and speed "for those who like to read about it". The journal considered that the Ottomans had to build an advanced navy and modernise their army since it was surrounded by enemies, and believed that with this buildup they would be at par with other European powers. With its report of the Ottoman's success in building up their military capability *al-Imam* hoped that it would bring great joy to its readers.

Another issue which also attracted the journal was Turkish progress. Sultan Abdul Hamid was reported as a caring ruler who provided the infrastructures for his subjects by building schools, railways and other means of communications. *Al-Imam*, however, was aware that despite his noble efforts, Sultan Abdul Hamid had to face a formidable Western challenge. In the face of this challenge, the journal prayed that the Turks would be more resilient and would be protected until doomsday. The journal believed that there was no Islamic government that still existed other than the Ottoman Empire, and that despite the fact that the empire faced serious tribulations it would continue to be strong. In its efforts to report what it believed to be the sincere efforts of Sultan Abdul Hamid to further the cause of the Muslims, the journal deplored unfavourable reports on the empire by the Western press which it believed were part of the plot to undermine him.

When Sultan Abdul Hamid was deposed by the Young Turks in 1908, this political development did not prevent the Malays from looking on the Turks as the patrons of Islam and admiring their role. Even though the Young Turk

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93 See *Al-Imam*, Vol. 1, No. 9, 16 March 1907, pp. 281-284.


95 See for example the case of the Turkish Consul in Batavia, Muhammad Refat Bey who stopped at Singapore on Monday December 15, 1913 on his way to Istanbul. His arrival was given a special coverage by *Neracha* and a large crowd was reported at the harbour waiting to have a glimpse of a man believed to have immense knowledge, said to know forty five languages, and who could also communicate in Malay. See *Neracha*, Vol. 4, No. 114, 17 December 1913.
government was less enthusiastic about the Pan-Islamic appeal of its predecessor, to a certain extent it still favoured its role as leader of the Muslims. Under the new regime this role was most significantly played, however, by the office of Shaykh al-Islam which advanced the cause more effectively by sending religious scholars to the Malay World. Thus when the Malays requested a religious teacher, it was pleased to realise it by sending an ʻalim Jamal Effendi in 1913, to serve for five years in the Philippines on behalf of the Shaykh al-Islam.96

Early in the following year, another Turkish ʻalim, Sayyid Muḥammad Wājih al-Jailānī was also sent by Istanbul to become the Shaykh al-Islam in the Philippines.97 Even though Sayyid Muḥammad Wājih al-Jailānī’s official assignment was to the Philippines, his mission as an ʻalim also represented the Shaykh al-Islam of Istanbul to the Muslims throughout the Malay World. He was reported as a knowledgeable and pious man, and was the first Turkish ʻalim of such prominence to visit this part of the world.98 As part of his mission, when Shaykh Wājih al-Jailānī arrived at Singapore on his way to the Philippines he held a meeting at the Adelphi Hotel with the staff of the newspaper Neracha.99 His choice of meeting the editorial board of Neracha was not coincidental, since it was

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96 The request for a religious teacher by Malays was first reported by Neracha which quoted from some Egyptian newspapers that a number of Muslim leaders from the Philippines had gone to Istanbul asking the Sultan for a Qāḍī to serve there (See Neracha, No. 91, Vol. 3, 25 June 1913). A few months later the journal quoted from another newspaper, this time the newspaper Comrades published in India, about a similar mission to Istanbul, this time led by Colonel Findley, the American Governor of the Philippines, representing the Muslims for the purpose. The Ottoman Sultan was reported to be very pleased to meet the governor as it was the first time the Caliphate had received a Christian mission on behalf of the Muslims. It was as a result of this request it was reported that Jamal Effendi, a very knowledgeable religious teacher who knew languages like Sanskrit, Hindi, English, French and German, apart from being fluent in Arabic and Turkish was sent. (Neracha, No. 100, Vol. 3, 27 August 1913).

97 Neracha, Vol. 3, No. 97, 6 August 1913. The choice of Shaykh Muḥammad Wājih al-Jailānī as a representative of Shaykh al-Islam of Istanbul to the Malay World was made as he was regarded as a learned man who had knowledge of languages like Arabic and German. In Turkey he ranked as a senior ʻalim who was qualified to occupy the post of Qāḍī in prestigious provinces like Adana or Egypt. As a respected ʻalim he was awarded an Ottoman decoration symbolised by the gift of a special robe which he carried with him.

98 Neracha, No. 132, Vol. 4, 22 April 1914, p. 5. To add to his credentials Sayyid Wājih was said to be the twenty fourth in descent from Sayyid ʻAbd al-Qādir al-Jailānī the famous Sufi master and the thirty fifth in descent from Ḥusayn, the son of ʻAlī, the fourth Rightful Caliph.

an acknowledgement of the role played by the newspaper in highlighting the Turkish cause.

During his short stay in Singapore, Sayyid Muḥammad Wajīh al-Jailānī also held meetings with the Muslim communities in the island and was invited to gatherings and to give talks.100 The Singapore Harbour was congested with Muslims of all walks of life on Saturday 17 January to send him off to continue his journey to the Philippines.101 During his stay in the Philippines his activities there were regularly reported by Neracha.102 Even though Sayyid Wajīh al-Jailānī was supposed to serve longer there, his stay was cut short because of illness and he had to return to Istanbul for medical treatment, after only two and half months in the Philippines. On his return journey, on Monday April 6 the German ship he travelled on stopped for two days at Singapore. On his arrival in the island he again visited the office of the newspaper Neracha followed by a meeting with a number of prominent Muslim leaders.103

Sayyid Wajīh left for Penang the following day. Despite the short notice, when he reached Penang on Wednesday afternoon, he was greeted by a crowd of about two hundred Muslims, including the prominent Muslim leaders of the island.104 The Muslim community of Penang made maximum gain by his presence by bringing him to a mosque, Masjid Melayu at Acheen Street, where he was asked to deliver a speech. In his speech given in Arabic and translated into Malay, Sayyid Wajīh advised the Muslims to help each other for good deeds and

100 Neracha, No. 119, Vol. 4, 21 January 1914, p. 3.

101 Ibid., p. 4.

102 For example, upon reaching the Philippines he was reported as sending a number of letters to Singapore, to among others the editors of Neracha, thanking them for the hospitality he had received during his short stay on the island. The newspaper took the opportunity to edify its readers with the advice given by the Sayyid as it was for the benefit of their life and religion. See Neracha, No. 125, Vol. 4, 3 March 1914, p. 3.


104 Among the Muslim leaders who were at the pier to greet Sayyid Muḥammad Wajīh al-Jailānī were Shaykh Zakaria, Shaykh Daud, Shaykh Mustafa, Sayyid Alwi and Sayyid Hussein.
to cooperate among themselves to build schools in order to educate the Muslims. The sending of the representative of the Shaykh al-Islam of Istanbul to this region, although short-lived, further boosted the image of Turks as the guardians of Islam.

The building up of the Malays' admiration of the religious and political role played by the Turks undoubtedly suffered a major set-back when Sultan Abdul Hamid was deposed by the Young Turks. Although the Young Turk government continued to favour the Islamic role played the earlier administration, their appeal was less significant since they were more occupied with political crises at home and the wars which had to be fought on the European fronts. Looking at the Pan-Islamic ideas spearheaded by Sultan Abdul Hamid which were intended to put the Muslim World under the leadership of the Turks it is apparent that it failed to develop into an effective political force. It also did not significantly succeed in appealing to the Muslims, including the Malays, or perhaps could not have succeeded, given the nature of the Muslim World and the geopolitical realities of the time. The ideas and limited efforts that filtered through, though superficial, did arouse Malay consciousness of the challenges they had to face as Muslims against Western intrusion. It also provided them with a tinge of political awareness of their relation to the wider Muslim World, stimulated by the exposure to the confrontation between the Turks, representing a Muslim power, and the West.

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106 The spectacular Malay reception given to Sayyid Muhammad Wajih al-Jailani during his stops in his outward and return journeys was spontaneous, and this indicated the Malay's high regard for the Ottoman religious role. His presence was viewed with great pleasure and the Muslims in the islands felt it an honour and privilege to meet him.

Ottoman-European Confrontation

The Malay exposure to developments taking place in Turkey with regard to its confrontation with the West was particularly due to the role played by the newspaper *Neracha* and the journal *Tunas Melayu* under the editorship of Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha, *al-Imam*'s last editor. The role was also enthusiastically played by K. Anang who was *Neracha*'s assistant editor and in 1914 became the editor of the journal *Majalah al-Islam*. Being the only newspaper in 1912 that extensively reported on the Ottomans at war with the Italians in North Africa, and war in the Balkans, *Neracha* was extremely popular among the Malays. Its readership was not confined only to Malaya, but extended to the Netherlands East Indies and also as far afield as Makkah and Cairo.

*Neracha*, also known as *al-Mīzān*, was first published in June 1911 as thrice monthly, but had to increase its frequency from 1 May 1912 to weekly, precisely when its readers demanded more news of the Italo-Turkish war. The great demand for current developments drove *Neracha* from time to time to publish whatever latest news it had received, even though in some cases it was unable

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109 Not much is known about K. Anang whose real name was Mas Abdul Hamid. According to a British intelligence report he was the editor of a seditious paper *Islam Bergerak* (*Islam Astir*) published in Java and was a strong advocate of the Caliphate movement. He was also a close friend of Muhammad Refat Bey, the Turkish Consul in Batavia. See CO 273/516, F.M. Bradeley of the Straits Settlements to Winston Churchill of the Colonial Office, 29 July 1922; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 1, March 1922. See also William R. Roff, *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic Periodicals*, London: Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 33.

110 The Malay interest in the progress of the war was overwhelming and the editorial of *Neracha* even remarked that if not for the war they would not have subscribed to it. It further added that these subscribers were also very worried if they received their copies late since it prevented them from knowing the latest development of the war. See *Neracha*, Vol. 2, No. 28, 29 April 1912 (front page).


to substantiate it.\textsuperscript{113} During 1912 and 1913, on average rather more than half of every four-page issue, and in some cases the whole issue, was given over to reports on the war, taken mostly from the Egyptian newspapers, \textit{al-Hilāl}, \textit{al-Mu‘ayyad}, \textit{al-Manār}, \textit{al-Ahrām} and others.\textsuperscript{114}

Even though \textit{Neracha} sometimes reflected local affairs in its correspondence columns and in its editorial comments, the great bulk of the news it published indicated its strong advocacy of the Turkish cause. As a supporter of Turkey, apart from reporting the course of events of the current war, the inclination was to report on the successes achieved by the Turks. In the process, \textit{Neracha} criticised Reuters in London and the local English newspapers for disseminating news of successive Turkish defeats in the Balkans, even though the Turks had achieved victories as reported by the Egyptian and the Indian newspapers which it quoted on its pages.\textsuperscript{115}

To prove to its readers that the reporting of these successive Turkish defeats by the newspapers was untrue, \textit{Neracha} praised an English newspaper, \textit{The Observer}, which gave a balanced coverage of the losses and victories achieved by both warring parties on the battlefront.\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Neracha} was also very critical of Reuters when it reported that Turkey had sent her nationals from Istanbul to the Netherlands East Indies to instigate the Muslims there to revolt against the Dutch authority. In a letter of denial from the Turkish Consul in Batavia, Muhammad Refat Bey, which it published, the Balkan Committee in

\begin{footnotes}
\item[113] See \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No. 71, 5 February 1913.
\item[114] In most of its foreign news, normally \textit{Neracha} would acknowledge which newspaper it quoted even though the exact issue of the newspapers was not frequently mentioned. Among these newspapers, \textit{Al-Mu‘ayyad}, edited by Shaykh ‘Alī Yūsuf was its most important reference. \textit{Al-Mu‘ayyad} was the widest foreign circulated newspaper at that time and for many years was regarded as \textit{The Times} of Egypt. See George Swan, "The Moslem Press in Egypt", \textit{The Moslem World}, Vol. 1, No. 2, April 1911, p. 150.
\item[116] \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No. 63, December 1912, p. 3.
\end{footnotes}
London which was hostile to the Ottomans was blamed for creating mischievous stories to create hatred against the Muslims.\textsuperscript{117}

Apart from publishing news of the war, occasionally \textit{Neracha} also enlightened its readers on the historical background of the current conflict which was intended to further their knowledge and to provide a better understanding of current events. At the height of the Italo-Ottoman conflict, K. Anang wrote a two part series on the history of the Italian invasion of Tripoli and their intrigues to undermine the Ottoman war effort in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{118} On another occasion, for the interest of its inquisitive readers, K. Anang also wrote on the history of Albania from the Ottoman invasion until it decided to stay neutral during the war, and its struggle to achieve national independence which undermined the war effort of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{119}

As a newspaper which committed itself to the Ottoman war effort, developments in Turkey which would have a repercussion on its struggle were also closely monitored by \textit{Neracha}. Thus when Sultan Abdul Hamid was deposed, and Sultan Muhammad V ascended the Ottoman throne following political turmoil, the newspaper viewed the political development with optimism as being for the benefit of Turkey.\textsuperscript{120} In the course of expressing its optimism, \textit{Neracha} even registered its difference of opinion with some Malays who were not in favour of the Young Turk government. From its point of view, despite the fact that the new government described themselves as Young Turks, the composition of the leadership was made up of old as well as young Turks. It warned its readers not to be carried away by European propaganda wishing to see the downfall of the Young Turk government, which it believed was very sincere in its struggle.\textsuperscript{121}

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 2, No. 61, 27 November 1912, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{118} See \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 2, No. 31, 1 May 1912 and Vol. 2, No. 32, 8 May 1912.


\textsuperscript{120} \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 2, No. 50, 11 September 1912 (front page).

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
The support given by *Neracha* toward the cause of the Turks was not only confined to disseminating favourable news on them at war, but it also urged its readers to assist them spiritually and materially. In the wake of Italian aggression in North Africa and the offensive Turkey had to face against the European powers in the West, the newspaper suggested to its readers to pray for the success of Turkey, as was being done by their Indian counterparts.\(^1\) The Malays who were ignorant were criticised, particularly those who still enjoyed themselves at football matches, while their fellow brothers, the Turks, suffered on the battlefields.\(^2\) To support the cause of Turkey, the newspaper launched a donation campaign and appealed to its readers to donate at least $1.00 each in order to help the Turks to buy weapons and ammunition to further their war effort. The Malays in Perak were reported to have organised a campaign to collect donations on behalf of the Red Crescent in Turkey to alleviate the suffering of the war victims.\(^3\) Earlier during the Italian aggression in North Africa, a similar campaign was also launched and the names of those who donated for the Muslims of Tarablus were printed by *Neracha*.\(^4\)

At the height of the Balkan War, the donation campaign to help the Turks was enthusiastically pursued by *Neracha* and in an appeal for Malays to donate, it stressed the obligation of every Muslim to promote the drive, as shown by fellow Muslims of India and Egypt, despite the fact the Turks had not directly appealed for any assistance.\(^5\) As an example Malays should follow, *Neracha* publicised the effort made by Egyptian newspapers in urging the people to donate for the

\(^1\) *Neracha*, Vol. 2, No. 54, 9 October 1912 (front page).


\(^3\) Ibid.


\(^5\) *Neracha*, Vol. 2, No. 60, 27 November 1912. *Neracha* repeatedly pointed out the responsibility of the Malays to help the Turks as their defeat would be tantamount to the defeat of the Muslims. Even though the newspaper realised that the Turks were facing a difficult task on the battlefront, it advised its readers not to believe in the European propaganda campaign which wanted to see their defeat. *Neracha* believed that the Turks would ultimately win in their Balkan War against the European conspiracy.
cause of Turkey. In reminding Malays of their obligation, Neracha highlighted the responsibility of all Muslims to support the Caliphate in facing the current threat it had to confront, since the fall of Turkey was viewed as a total disgrace for all Muslims.\textsuperscript{127} To impress its readers on the positive response to the appeal by Muslims elsewhere, it reported that the Muslims in the Netherlands East Indies had already donated £1,000 to the Turkish Red Crescent Society in Istanbul.\textsuperscript{128}

The donation campaign spearheaded by Neracha proved to be popular and the response to it was extremely encouraging. In Perak the drive was headed by Raja Harun al-Rashid, a member of the Perak royal family who acted as the Secretary of the Turkish Fund. By 4 January 1913, the fund committee which was founded to coordinate the campaign was reported to have collected $7610.33 from the Sultan of Perak, the royal families and the Muslims of the state to be donated to the Istanbul Red Crescent Society. A further $899.31 was donated on 10 March and additional donations were also promised.\textsuperscript{129} From the amount of money collected it appears that the campaign for donation was a fruitful one, and the Malay response to the call was very encouraging. Funds were also raised by Muslims in Penang for the Ottoman Red Crescent Society and the money collected was transferred through Sayyid Ameer Ali, the President of the Red Crescent Society of the British Isles.\textsuperscript{130}

Apart from asking the public to donate, Neracha also campaigned for them to buy bonds at $1.00 each to support the Turkish economy in facing the current adversity. The guidelines of the bond in Arabic and English were received by Neracha from the Turkish Consul in Batavia in June 1913. In its effort to encourage Muslims in Malaya to buy it, Neracha also took the initiative of posting the guidelines to prominent Muslims and clubs and other newspapers, urging them to take the necessary actions as a shared responsibility to show their affection for

\textsuperscript{127} Neracha, Vol. 3, No. 89, 11 June 1913, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{128} Neracha, Vol. 3, No. 64, 18 December 1912, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{129} Neracha, Vol. 3, No. 77, 19 March 1913, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{130} Penang Gazette and Straits Chronicle, 6 December 1912.
the Commander of the Faithful and the Caliph of the Muslims.\textsuperscript{131} In the following month \textit{Neracha} informed its readers that it had received ten pages of the bond guidelines translated into Malay, and again appealed for the public to purchase them.\textsuperscript{132}

The role played by \textit{Neracha} in furthering the Turkish war effort proved to have a remarkable impact on the Malay perception of their struggle and even caused them to take an interest seeing its portrayal visually. This overwhelming public interest prompted \textit{Neracha} to advertise the sale of pictures of various Turkish personalities and events of the current war.\textsuperscript{133} The frequency of the advertisements, and the different sizes and types of pictures being advertised, indicated that there was a popular demand for the pictures among its readers. This demand for pictures suggested that the sense of attachment to Turkey was more than a mere desire to know about current developments and in one of its issue \textit{Neracha} even specially published, as a supplement, a picture of the Turkish Cavalry and Enver Pasha, the Turkish Minister of War.\textsuperscript{134}

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No. 88, 4 June 1913. The newspaper itself was unable to publish the guidelines due to limited space and appealed to other Muslim newspapers who were sympathetic to the cause of Turkey to do so.

\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Neracha}, Vol 3, No. 98, 13 August 1913, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{133} Advertisements for the pictures being sold by the newspaper appear regularly in its pages, for example eight different types of colour pictures of the Italo-Turkish War of A4 size at $2.00 each. The pictures included Italian troops disembarking from their ships, Turkish and Arab soldiers fighting the Italians, Italian and Turkish soldiers engaged in the war, Italian troops attacking the Dardanelles, Turkish and Arab soldiers capturing Italian bunkers, the arrival of 10,000 Arab soldiers in Turkey, a land attack by the Italians and an Italian plane shot down by the Turks (Vol. 2, No. 62, 4 December 1912); eight different types of pictures of the war in Tripoli were sold at $2.00 (Vol. 3, No. 63, 11 December 1912); pictures of Nadim Pasha, Kamal Pasha, Mahmud Mukhtar Pasha and Turkish soldiers loading guns onto a train at $1.00 (Vol. 3, No. 73, 19 February 1913, p. 4 and Vol. 3, No. 74, 26 February 1913); 13 pictures of four inches in size taken from the journal \textit{Tunas Melayu} of various events of the war for $1.00 (Vol. 3, No. 76, 12 March 1913); 13 pictures of various events of the war including the incident of Nadim Pasha being shot, sized 24 by 24 inches sold at the price of $6.00 including postage (Vol. 3, No. 77, 19 March 1913, p. 4 and Vol. 3, No 78, 26 March 1913, p. 4); colour pictures 15.5 inches by 20 inches on various events of the war in Bulgaria and Montenegro five for $1.00 (Vol. 3, No. 86, 21 May 1913).

\textsuperscript{134} \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 4, No. 122, 11 February 1914, p. 2. The enthusiasm showed also led to other journals publishing pictures on Turkey. See for example the picture of Enver Pasha, Turkish Minister of War published by \textit{Majalah al-Islam}, Vol. 1, No. 1, 13 January 1913.
The role played by Neracha also managed to create Malay awareness and hardened their sympathy toward the Turkish cause. Through the effort of Neracha, Malays were exposed to the challenges faced by their fellow Muslims and they expressed their support openly as was done by the Muslims of Telok Anson (now Teluk Intan). In early November 1912 they congregated in large numbers at Madrasah Insaniyah on the commemoration day of the Prophet’s birthday. During the occasion, a special prayer was offered for the success of the Sultan of Turkey in defending his territories against the Bulgarians. Turkish flags were flown in front of and around the madrasah during the commemoration day.¹³⁵ When news came of the success achieved by the Turkish troops in recapturing Edirne, a gathering and thanksgiving prayers were held in early August 1913 at the Mosque at Perak Road, Datok Keramat, Penang. Turkish flags were also flown during the occasion.¹³⁶ The editorial staff of the newspaper Neracha also held a similar gathering and thanksgiving prayers to mark the occasion.¹³⁷ The newspaper also reported that special prayers were also conducted in several places in Malaya for the success of Turkey.¹³⁸

In early 1913, Malay awareness of the war fought by Turkey on the European front was further boosted when Haji Abbas published a monthly journal, Tunas Melayu. The publication of the journal was a step forward in the development of Malay journalism as it was the first Malay journal to contain pictures.¹³⁹ Like Neracha, Tunas Melayu also had to satisfy the demand for latest news from its readers which drove it to report, among other things, the victory achieved by the Turks against the Greeks, taken from Egyptian

¹³⁶ Neracha, Vol. 3, No. 98, 13 August 1913, pp. 3-4.
¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 4.
newspapers of January 14 to 16, 1913. Even though it published news of the war, unlike *Neracha* it was very limited, and it concentrated more on printing pictures of events and personalities of Turkey at war in Europe. The pictures that were printed in the journal were also advertised for sale to those who were interested.

Apart from *Neracha* and *Tunas Melayu*, events that took place in Turkey were also reported on a lesser scale by *Majalah al-Islam*. In one case it published a letter from a reader, Ali Fahmi Mohammad, who expressed as appalling the barbarous attack by the Italians on Tripoli and the brutality of the Greek soldiers toward the Muslims in their Balkan campaigns. On another occasion, in order to allay any fear concerning the commitment of the Young Turks to the Islamic cause, *Majalah al-Islam* also published an elaborate set of answers to questions put forward by a reader who was sceptical over the future role of the C.U.P government in looking after the affairs of the Muslims when Turkey sided with Germany in World War I. In its advocacy of the Turkish cause, *Majalah al-Islam* also deplored the role played by Western powers in meddling in Ottoman affairs.

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141 Among the pictures published were, Sultan Abdul Hamid's personal bodyguard (Vol. 1, No. 1, Feb. 1913) p. 8; the late Nadim Pasha, Turkish Minister of War (Vol. 1, No. 4, May 1913) p. 9; a disfigured Turkish soldier (Vol. 1, No. 4, May 1913) p. 10 & p. 11; Mahmud Mukhtar Pasha (Vol. 1, No. 4, May 1913) p. 12; Bulgarian Army (Vol. 1, No. 5, June 1913) p. 9; Enver Bey a famous Turkish war hero (Vol. 1, No. 5, June 1913) p. 12; disembarkation of Turkish army at Haidar Pasha Port (Vol. 1, No. 5, June 1913) p. 24; A Turkish Hospital (Vol. 1, No. 6, July 1913) p. 79; injured Turkish soldiers being attended at Turkish Hospital (Vol. 1, No. 6, July 1913) p. 80; late Shevket Pasha, Turkish Prime Minister and Minister of War (Vol. 1, No. 7, August 1913) p. 93; Turkish doctors and nurses (Vol. 1, No. 7, August 1913) p. 95; Aya Sophia Mosque (Vol. 1, No. 8, September 1913) p. 109; Turkish army (Vol. 1, No. 9, October 1913) p. 122; Turkish military commander at Haidar Pasha Railway Station (Vol. 1, No. 11, December 1913) p. 156; Izzat Pasha, Turkish former Minister of War and Talaat Bey (Vol. 2, No. 2, February 1914) p. 28.


The awareness of the cause of the Turks propagated by Neracha, Tunas Melayu and Majalah al-Islam had a significant impact on the Malay perception of the Turks. Even long after the demise of these papers, sympathy for them still existed as when in 1921 an effort was made to raise funds for Turkey and the State Council of Kedah was asked to allow collection of money to help needy Muslims there. The Council did not object and even agreed that the State Government would contribute a dollar for every dollar collected, up to $2,000. The approval for the collection, however, would be made after the Adviser first enquired from the High Commissioner whether there was any political implication in aiding Turkey, which was at war with Greece.\(^\text{146}\)

The Malay sympathy toward the cause of the Turks in their confrontation with the Western powers was undoubtedly due to the role played by Neracha and to a lesser extent Tunas Melayu and Majalah al-Islam. Since these papers were the most widely read and the only source of information, they were extremely important in determining Malay public opinion. In June 1915, Neracha ceased publication and Tunas Melayu the previous year. Meanwhile, Majalah al-Islam lost its editor K. Anang when he was banished from Singapore in 1915 by the British for his alleged implication during the Singapore Mutiny. With the absence of these newspapers and the British policy of news blackout regarding Turkey when World War 1 broke out, the Malay source of knowledge on developments there was totally cut off. Furthermore, the British success in ensuring the loyalty of the Malay Sultans to their administration also hindered the Malays from expressing their support for the cause of the Turks.\(^\text{147}\) Despite this fact, during the years from 1912 to 1914 when they were exposed to developments there, the Malays clearly showed their burning interest which was not only confined to getting information but also to showing their sympathy and supporting the cause of Turkey. This development undoubtedly was an indication of the early nurturing of Malay political awareness with an Islamic inclination.

\(^{146}\) CO 717/15, Translation of the Minutes of the Kedah State Council, No. 51, 14 March 1921.

\(^{147}\) For a discussion of the steps taken by the British Malaya administration to prevent Malays from sympathising with the cause of the Turks, see pp. 304-310 of this work.
Modern Turkey and the Rise of Kemal Ataturk

When World War 1 broke out and Turkey sided with Germany, the British were apprehensive over the Malay response when they had to fight the Turks on the European front. The British anxiety, however, proved to be unfounded and Malaya remained relatively calm throughout the war. Even when the Caliphate movement gained momentum after its abolition in 1924, and grew to a considerable size in India and attracted many followers in the Netherlands East Indies, Malays in general were comparatively less influenced by it. Those Malays who showed a tendency to sympathise with the movement were only the educated minority who lived in Penang or Singapore.\(^{148}\)

The limited Malay interest in the Caliphate issue was contributed to by the fact that although the Ottoman Caliphate had long been an object of their fascination, it did not inspire real loyalty. In the Malay states, the monarchy had been well established and in some cases the Malay Sultan even assumed lofty Muslim titles including that of Caliph itself.\(^{149}\) Since the Malay Sultans were loyal to the British, their Malay subjects appear to have followed suit. Even when the Caliphate question was a subject of interest in the Muslim World, the Malay Sultans tried to distance themselves from the issue. When the family of the ex-Sultan of Turkey, after its abolition, appealed for financial assistance from some

\(^{148}\) In these two islands there were no Sultans and the communities there were also made up of many Arabs and Indians and may well have been characterised not so much by a Malay as a Muslim consciousness. Furthermore, in these two trading centres the Muslim communities were more touched by current developments in the Muslim World.

\(^{149}\) A.C. Milner, "Islam and Malay Kingship", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 1, 1981, pp. 52-53. With the advent of Islam, Malay States adopted Arabic names such as Darul Aman or State of Peace (Kedah), Darul Ridzuan or State of Grace (Perak) and Darul Ehsan or State of Beneficence (Selangor). As for the Sultans, in addition to their customary dignity of Raja or Tuanku, they also adopted such titles and prefixes as Ri'ayatuddin (Defender of the Faith), al-Muadzam (the August), al-Mutasim Billah (the one who relies on God's Law). See Mohd. Din bin Ali, "Two Forces in Malay Society", *Intisari*, Vol. 1, No. 3, n.d., p. 19. Similar distinction was also afforded to Sultan Abu Bakar of Johore when he died in London on 4 June 1895. The editorial of *The Straits Times* of 6 June summed up his character and achievements as those of a great Sultan like the Caliph of the Arabian Nights. He was regarded as the source of justice, the remedy for all grievances, the personal cause of everything, accessible to every man's murmur and the earthy regent of Allah. See Dato Abdullah bin Mohamed, "The Travels of Abu Bakar, Maharaja Johore, to the Far East", *Malaysia in History*, Vol. 14, No. 1, October 1971, p. 8.
of them for the past services of their predecessors to the cause of Islam, the appeal was left unanswered.150

Interestingly, however, the aspect of post-war developments related to Turkey which attracted Malay interest most was the emergence of modern Turkey under the leadership of Kemal. His achievements and military successes were welcomed by a broad cross-section of Malay society. Again it was the Malay press of that time, which was experiencing a rapid progress, which played the major role in inculcating this interest. Articles in the Malay vernacular press and books about the Turks, the political and military struggle for Turkey and works about Kemal were published and widely read.151 Kemal's success was most strongly applauded by the Kaum Muda faction, who to the extent of equating him with a Mahdi (saviour) for leading his people to regain their homeland from the enemy and building a strong nation.152 Through their journals, some of which advocated Kemal throughout such as Al-Hedayah, Al-Ikhwan, Malaya, Bahtra, Saudara and Majalah Guru, and others at an early stage, including Seruan Azhar, Pilehan Tmeer and Idaran Zaman, Kemalist reforms were closely scrutinised and regarded as setting examples for Malays to follow for their future progress.

As far as the current developments taking place in Turkey were concerned, in general the opinions found in these publications seem to agree in reacting favourably to two aspects of it. First was the political process leading to the success of Kemal in founding an independent Turkish Republic.153 Among those


151 It is important to note that in the 1920s not much on the history of Turkey had been published. One of the journals of this period which began publishing at length, beginning from 1927, the history of the Turks was Suara Melayu. This weekly journal, published every Tuesday, began publishing the series on 11 January 1927 and it was regularly featured until 12 July 1927. On many occasions the seven-page journal printed the history in its front page. See Suara Melayu, No. 52, 11 January 1927 to No. 78, 12 July 1927.

152 Saudara, Vol. 1, No. 15, 1928.

153 This was particularly true in the early stages of the revolution where the opinions concur in applauding the military vigour of the Kemalists, Turkey's achievement of independence and the spirit of change in the new republic.
who gave a positive reaction to his success was a prominent Malay writer and intellectual, Za'ba. Za'ba compared the Turkish nationalist hero with Napoleon Bonaparte, Rabindranath Tagore and Reza Khan, and in his opinion he was the sort of a great man who was lacking among Malays. As a great man Kemal, the hero of the Turks, to some was also regarded as comparable to Mussolini for the Italians. The achievement of Kemal was also openly welcomed by Malay students in Cairo, who regarded him as a trustworthy Muslim leader under whose leadership the Turks would emerge as the only people upon whom they could lay their hopes.

Second, these publications also welcomed the effort by Kemal to transform Turkey into a strong and developed nation, and to upgrade the quality of life of its people. In the early days, he was reported to have committed himself to the cause of the development of Islam in Turkey by establishing modern religious schools and publishing religious books. The effort of Kemal in promoting the progress of women in education, providing jobs by building factories and buying aeroplanes was applauded. His efforts in building high schools for boys and girls, and extending means of communication was also welcomed and widely reported by Malay journals.


156 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 8, May 1926, p. 143. Such a credit was given to Kemal as he managed to characterise his struggle as Islamic, such as the impression he gave while touring the countryside during his campaign to create a modern Turkish Republic. During his campaign trail he often went directly to the mosque, participated in the Friday prayers, and even mounted the minbar (pulpit) to deliver impromptu khutbahs (sermons), discussing the religious reforms he had in mind after the victory. See Berkes Niazi, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964, p. 483.


159 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 23/24, August/September 1927, pp. 465-468. See also Suara Melayu which reported on the building of railways and telecommunications (Suara Melayu, Vol. 2, No. 82-83, 9-16 August 1927, front page); Al-Ikhwan, Vol. 2, No. 9, 16 May 1928, pp. 281-286 which reported on the
Approval for the success achieved by Kemal was also noted by L. Richmond Wheeler, who was in Malaya during the period and found that portraits of the Turkish leader were acquired in hundreds by young Malays from the shops kept by Indian Muslims.¹⁶⁰ According to Wheeler, even though at first the interest was primarily religious in nature, these young Muslims were moderately stirred by the idea of an Asiatic Power making a stand against the overwhelming strength of the victorious Entente Powers. Wheeler attributed this phenomenon to the flood of post-war propaganda that had spread throughout the world and stimulated or created the interest. Wheeler, however, suggested that the ending of the Caliphate by Kemal had dampened the enthusiasm for him in Malaya.¹⁶¹

Wheeler's opinion on Kemal, however, seems to be contradicted if we look at the Malay interest in his reforms and the continuing enthusiasm for him as manifested in Malay publications during that time, shown particularly by Al-Hedayah, Seruan Azhar and Al-Ikhwan. The journal Al-Hedayah which was published in Kota Bharu from June 1923 was among the earliest Malay publications to show special interest in Turkey under Kemal and to suggest that Malays should emulate his achievements.¹⁶² Likewise, the journal Seruan Azhar also showed a special interest in Kemal and his successes were enthusiastically reported, and this dominated most of the miscellaneous section of its first issue.¹⁶³ Even when controversial Kemalist reforms were intensely debated, Seruan Azhar still kept an open-minded policy, and in order for its readers to

progress in economy, communications, agricultural production, education and the legal system.


¹⁶³ Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1925, pp. 18-19.
understand Kemal’s real ideas, philosophy and objectives for progress, it published a synopsis of the book by Qābīl Ādam, *Kitāb Muṣṭafā Kamal*.164

Despite the fact that there was a general approval of the early success achieved by Kemal in creating a new Turkish Republic, the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate as part of his political reforms had created confusion among Malays.165 His adoption of westernisation and secularisation came as a shock to a particular section of Malay society, especially to the *Kaum Tua* or traditionalists who regarded him as a traitor to Islam.166 Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin, a well-known *Kaum Muda* leader, as a representative of the progressive and reformist minded Malays, nonetheless expressed his sympathy toward Kemal.167

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165 For example this could be seen when not long after the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate by Kemal a organisation based in Penang which called itself as the Caliphate Association issued a declaration on the obligation of every Muslims to resurrect the institution. The association claimed that it had held several meetings and in its last gathering a vote was taken where 72 percent of those attending it was in favour for its resurrection, while only 28 percent were against. In order for Muslims in Malaya to be aware of its importance, the reasons for the reestablishment of the Caliphate and its characteristics were also outlined by the Secretary of the association (see *Lembaga Melayu*, No. 2961, Friday 23 May 1924 & No. 2968, Saturday, 31 May 1924). Interestingly, however, the call made was disputed by one person, Noor Mohd. Hashim who questioned the legality of the Association’s existence. His doubt stemmed from the inadequate information provided, such as its full address, its committee members and so forth, failing which he argued that the association might be mistaken for an illegal organisation (see *Lembaga Melayu*, Saturday, 31 May 1924).

166 Among the changes that contributed to Kemal’s westernisation and secularisation were a series of reforms involving the end of the Ottoman Sultanate (1922); the adoption of the Republic (1923); the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate, the closing down of *medresas* and the establishment of a unified secular state system of education (1924); the prohibition of dervish orders and the closing down of their numerous lodges (*tekkes*), and of the mausolea (*turbes*) of traditional Muslim heroes and saints, together with the adoption of European headgear and dress legislation (1925); the use of western legal codes, systems of weights and measures and the Gregorian Calendar (1926); the change to Latin characters and the ending of Islam as the state religion (1928); the ending of instruction in Arabic and Persian in elementary and secondary public schools (1929); the granting of the right to vote and to hold public office to women (1930-1935); the closing of the Imam Hatip schools and of the Faculty of Divinity in Istanbul University which had been established in 1924 under the new educational system (1933); and finally, the adoption of secularism and revolutionism as two of the basic principles of the amended Turkish constitution (1937). See Howard Reed, "Revival of Islam in Secular Turkey", *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. VIII, Summer 1954, p. 269.

In a ferocious attack on the traditionalist 'ulamā', he branded them as the stumbling block to reform. Shaykh Tahir warned them that the forces of change that were currently sweeping the Muslim World would be too strong, and ultimately these 'ulamā' would suffer a similar fate to the 'ulamā' in Turkey when Kemal overthrew the monarchy and inaugurated a modern, secular Turkish Republic.\footnote{168 \textit{Al-ikhwan}, Vol. 1, No. 3, 16 November 1926, p. 41.}
The abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate was also supported by Seruan Azhar which believed that Turkey as a republic was stronger and more sincere, contrary to the previous government, which it branded as traitorous and selfish, and under the control of the foreigners. Without the Caliph it also believed that the Turks would be more free, since the republic did not allow any form of foreign intervention.\footnote{169 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 23/24, August/September 1927, pp. 465-468.}
The journal's support of Kemal was also given on the grounds that it believed he was a democratic leader.\footnote{170 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 3, No. 25, October 1927, p. 504.}

Apart from the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate, the intensive debate that took place at the early stages when Kemal's success was generally welcomed, was when the controversial nature of his reforms began to emerge. One of the earliest issues of Kemalist reform which was intensely debated was the banning of wearing the fez for men and the veil for women in his clothing reform. The issue started when in its November 1925 issue, \textit{Al-Hedayah} while reporting on the current westernisation programmes that were taking place in Turkey also reported on this issue.\footnote{171 The wearing of the fez was a proud sign of the House of Uthman. See E. Stanley Jones, 'The Meaning of Revolution in Turkey', \textit{The Moslem World}, Vol. XV1, 1926, p. 256.}

This controversial issue was fast becoming the centre of polemics by Malays when Seruan Azhar and Pengasoh joined the debate. Seruan Azhar in its efforts to play down the controversial issue regarded it as a trivial matter for the Muslims to quarrel about, since their priority was to unite and to face their many responsibilities. By referring to a ruling by an ʿālim from al-Azhar and
quoting several Ḥadīths, the journal concluded that the wearing of European hats was permissible in Islam as was the wearing of other European dress.172

The issue of the fez and the execution of religious leaders who opposed the edict directing Turkish men to wear the hat was also supported by Za’ba. His support, however, was not based on religious arguments or the hat being a symbol of acceptance of Western norms, instead his blessing sprang from his doubts over the sincerity of those opposing it, since there were certain quarters who used religion to achieve personal gain.173 The Turkish law which forbade the wearing of the fez and replaced it with the European hat as an assertion of civilisation, however, was cynically rejected by the journal Pengasoh, published in Kota Bharu.

Pengasoh, which took the issue seriously, intensely debated it and even allocated almost half of one twelve-page issue to the question. The journal believed that wearing the European hat as a symbol of civilisation was ridiculous since this was nothing to do with one’s attire but rather with one’s good behaviour and knowledge. The edict which prosecuted innocent people who opposed the implementation of clothing reform was also strongly condemned by the journal.174 The legal ruling of Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Mālikī ibn Shaykh Ḥusayn, the Mālikī Mufti of Maṣjid al-Ḥarām, that those who wore the European hat with the intention of glorifying their dress were kāfir was published by the journal.175 Pengasoh also published a ruling issued by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, the Mufti of Egypt, and Shaykh Muḥammad Abū Ḍaḍl, the Shaykh al-Azhar, that it was forbidden for men to wear the European hat since it could be equated with following the practices of non-Muslims.176


173 Za’ba, “Teguran dan Jawabannya” in Abdullah Hussain and Khalid Hussain (eds), Pendita Za’ba Dalam Kenangan, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1974, p. 239. This essay was first published in Al-İkhwān, November 1926.

174 Pengasoh, No. 189/190, 3 February 1926, pp. 3-7.

175 Pengasoh, No. 204, Vol. 9, 22 September 1926, p. 7.

176 Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 192, 28 March 1926, p. 11. Interestingly, however, a few months later the journal was non-committal when one of its readers in the correspondence column made an emotional and extreme conclusion that the wearing of hats fancied particularly by the Malays of Johore was
Another controversial issue that attracted considerable Malay interest and was also intensely debated was the changing of the Arabic script to the Latin alphabet for the Turkish language. The issue was also first raised by the journal Al-Hedayah which praised the change that had taken place in Turkey. The issue, however, was repeatedly raised for several years by a number of journals ranging from those which just reported it to those which gave their opinions on the changes. As in the clothing reforms and other reforms introduced by Kemal, the journal Pengasoh rejected his replacement of the Arabic script by the Latin alphabet. The journal Dunia Melayu also condemned the change since it believed it would erode the Muslim faith. Seruan Azhar, which did not categorically object to the change if it was for the sake of expanding knowledge, nevertheless disagreed with the total abandonment of the old writing since it was the key to learning the Qurʾān which was essential to every Muslim. The Kemalist language reform, however, was vehemently defended by Al-Ikhwan which argued that it was nothing to do with religion, but only for the sake of simplicity and the progress of the people. Furthermore, according to the journal, it would not erode Turkish nationalism or the religion of Islam.

against Islamic teaching. The reader even went further by labelling those who wore a hat as following the path of the infidel. See Pengasoh, Vol. 9, No. 204, 22 September 1926, pp. 7-8.

177 See Al-Hedayah, November 1925, pp. 169-170. By taking the language reform that took place in the Turkish Republic as an example, Al-Hedayah ridiculed some Malays who make the English language so special and tend to use it rather repeatedly even when communicating with their fellow Malays, as if their own language were of no value.


179 See Dunia Melayu, 20 February 1929, p. 36.


181 Al-Ikhwan, Vol. 9, No. 2, 16 May 1928, pp. 281-286. The new alphabet law which was passed by the National Assembly on 3 December 1928 forbade printing using the Arabic script except for academic and scholarly purposes. For the history and implementation of the language reform in the Turkish Republic, see William A. Edmonds, "Language Reform in Turkey and its Relevance to Other Areas", The Muslim World, Vol. XLV, No. 1, January 1955, pp. 53-60; and C.E. Bosworth, "Language Reform and Nationalism in Modern Turkey. A Brief Conspectus", The Muslim World, Vol. LV, No. 1, January 1965, pp. 117-124.
Comparatively speaking, however, the role of championing the Kemalist reforms in Malaya was played by \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, first published in September 1926 under the editorship of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi. Al-Hadi, who was a prominent \textit{Kaum Muda} proponent at that time, welcomed the achievements of Kemal and applauded the spirit of progress he championed as the most important aspect of the revolution, which set an example to be followed by all Islamic states. From its first issue, the journal showed a particular interest in the current developments in Turkey, although on a number of occasions it did not explicitly state its stand toward the controversial reforms undertaken.

Despite this, looking at the interest shown in the subjects published by \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, one could sense its inclination to lend its support to whatever reforms were promulgated by Kemal. This included those reforms which were regarded as offending the teaching of Islam, such as the implementation of the new civil matrimonial law enforced from 4 October 1926, translating the Qur\'an into Turkish, the changing of the \textit{Shari\'ah} Court to a European-style court, the changing of the Turkish lifestyle to a more European one, and the issue of

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\textsuperscript{182} Mohd Sarim Haji Mustajab, "Islam dan Perkembangannya", op.cit., p. 183.
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\textsuperscript{183} See for example on the report of Kemal renting the Yildiz palace of Sultan Abdul Hamid to an Italian tycoon to be converted to a casino to generate income, which it published. Even though this was meant for foreign visitors, Turks were also involved in gambling activity and this led to the Turkish government reviewing its earlier decision. See \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, 16 January 1927, p. 100.
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\textsuperscript{184} See \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, 16 November 1926, pp. 57-58. According to one article, under the new law which was implemented beginning from 4 October 1926 a couple who wish to get married may do so by just registering it in the registry office. Under the new law also the solemnisation of marriage according to Islamic rites was a matter of choice and polygamy was banned. Ending of marriage as the man's prerogative, as traditionally practiced, was not allowed. The law also included several other provisions such as the legal age of marriage for both sexes, the conditions of marriage and the proceedings for the termination of marriage.
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\textsuperscript{185} \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, Vol. 1, No. 6, 16 February 1927, pp. 122-123. Instead of feeling offended as were many Muslims, \textit{Al-Ikhwan} appreciated it as a step which would allow more Turkish-speaking people to understand the Qur\'an.
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\textsuperscript{186} \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, Vol. 9, No. 2, 16 May 1928, pp. 281-286.
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\textsuperscript{187} A change proposed by a commission was in the way the Muslims prayed, so that they would follow the Christian West by using a band or orchestra. See \textit{Al-Ikhwan}, Vol. 3, No. 4, 16 December 1928, pp. 124-125.
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women's emancipation. Even though Kemal introduced reforms which were contradictory to Islam, Al-Ikhwan occasionally reported on his commitment to the faith such as his closing down of a school because four Muslim girls were converted to Christianity. The journal used the news to illustrate Kemal's devotion to Islam and dismiss the accusation that he was trying to eliminate it. What he wanted to eliminate, according to the journal, was those who made use of Islam for personal gain.

Apart from Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, another modernist who supported Kemal and his reforms was Mohd. Yunus Abdul Hamid, who was the editor of Idaran Zaman and Malaya. Idaran Zaman, which started publication from the middle of January 1925, was however at its inception more inclined to report news of political events in the Hijaz rather than Turkey. Since news on developments in Turkey were also eagerly awaited by its readers, the newspaper was also drawn

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188 See for example its discussion on the process of change that was taking place among Turkish women by comparing their life to that of the unemancipated women of Syria. These Syrian women were claimed to be lagging behind compared to their emancipated counterparts in Turkey who enjoyed a free life, choosing their partners and receiving higher education. See "Duma Perempuan Di Turki dan Sham", Al-Ikhwan, Vol. 5, No. 6, 16 February 1931, pp. 188-191.

189 Al-Ikhwan, Vol. 2, No. 7, 16 March 1928, pp. 220-221. It was an irony that the journal was unaware that despite opposition by various groups, the Turkish government under Kemal actually favoured the activities of Christian missions in the country, especially in the field of education. See Wm Sage Woolworth Jr., "The Muslim Mind in Turkey Today", The Moslem World, Vol. XVII, 1927, pp. 144-145; and Lee Vrooman, "Recent Tendencies in Turkish Education", The Moslem World, Vol. XVII, No. 4, October 1927, p. 374.

190 Mohd. Yunus Abdul Hamid was born in 1889 in Langkat, Sumatra. Before coming to Malaya he was involved in the publication of several newspapers in Indonesia such as Benih Merdeheka, Sinar Zaman and Warta Timoer. Mohd Yunus came to Penang in 1924 at the invitation of Sayyid Taha al-Sagoff. While in Malaya, apart from becoming the editor of Idaran Zaman (1925-28) and Malaya (1926-28) Mohd. Yunus was also involved in the publication of al-Ikhwan (1925-26), Saudara (1928-31 & 1934), Dewasa (1931-32) and Persahabatan (1936-37). For his life and involvement in publication, see Mohd. Sarim Haji Mustajab, "Profail Seorang Wartawan 1920an - Mohamad Younus Abd. Hamid", Jebat, No. 7/8 - 1977/78 - 78/79, pp. 159-166. See also FO 371/11698, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 39, May 1926 (295. Muhammad Yunus Abdul Hamid).

191 One of the earliest issues concerning Turkey published by the newspaper was that of the conflict between the Republic and Greece. The news was published after several issues of the newspaper had been circulated. See Idaran Zaman, 26 February 1925.
to report and comment on a number of issues related to the new republic.192 However, it was while he was the editor of *Malaya*, first published in May 1926 and widely distributed with agents and correspondents in various countries, that more reporting on Turkey was undertaken.193 Initially, however, *Malaya* was reserved in its advocacy of reforms by Kemal, but subsequently it became his supporter and defended his reforms.194

Despite the fact that much approval was given to the early triumphs of Kemal in his struggle for Turkish National Independence, even by many Islamic-oriented Malays, when it became apparent that the reforms he propagated deviated too far from Islamic principles, disillusionment and disapproval began to be voiced. This contradiction, however, was found not only in the Malay World, but also among the reformist leaders in the Middle East including Rashīd Riḍā. Although Riḍā was impressed by Turkey’s brilliant gifts in the modern art of war and by the charismatic leadership qualities of Kemal, who was capable of protecting Turkey’s territorial and political integrity, at the same time he maintained that he should not drift too far from Islamic principles and should return to the *Sha fiyah*, and the high moral ethics of the Qur’ān.195 When it appeared that

192 For instance when Sultan Abdul Majid, the deposed Ottoman Sultan extended his condolence to the earthquake victims in Java, the editorials of the newspaper questioned his sincerity, regarding this as merely intended to gain political capital out of the people’s misery (see *Idaran Zaman*, 24 February 1925). When Kemal’s forces suppressed the uprising by Kurds led by the Tariqah Naqshbandiyah leader, Shaykh Said Pulu, the newspapers endorsed the actions taken which it regarded as a necessity for Turkey’s security (see *Idaran Zaman*, 23 April 1925).


194 In one instance, in order to defend Kemal and his true commitment to Islam against allegations of anti-Islamic behaviour, *Malaya* reported denials by Turkish newspapers of the incident of Kemal throwing away his copy of the Qur’ān, which it regarded as malicious and intended to create a smear campaign against Turkey (see *Malaya*, January/February, 1928, pp. 22-24). In the same issue, *Malaya* also published the news of the closing down of four American schools in Istanbul for allegedly trying to spread Christianity among the Muslims, an action which it claimed had never been taken by the previous government (On the closing down of American schools accused of disobeying the regulations of the Ministry of Education regarding the prohibition of propagating Christianity among Muslim Turks, see L.E. Browne, “Religion in Turkey, Today and Tomorrow”, *The Moslem World*, Vol. XIX, 1929, pp. 20-21).

Kemal was committing serious offence to Islamic integrity by translating the Qur’ān into their tongue, his faith in Kemal turned into bitterness, and his action was categorically discredited as *kufr* and Kemalist Turkey as heretical.\textsuperscript{196}

In Malaya, dissatisfaction with Kemal and his revolution was not limited to only one group, but the most distinct criticism of his reforms came from Malays with an Islamic orientation who were in touch with the intellectual currents of Middle Eastern Islam. They believed that his reforms had deviated from the true path of Islam and expressed their disapproval in the correspondence columns and editorials of some newspapers. One of the earliest criticisms of Kemal’s reforms was expressed by the journal *Pengasoh* which allocated almost half of its March 1926 issue to the subject.\textsuperscript{197}

Various aspects of Kemal’s westernisation and secularisation programmes including the abolition of the Caliphate were condemned by *Pengasoh* because of their contradiction with the true teachings of Islam and the aspirations of the Muslims. Contradictions such as the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code, matrimonial laws, inheritance laws and others were closely scrutinised by the journal. By quoting several Qur’ānic texts and Ḥadīths to support its argument, the journal rejected such reforms as the permissibility of Muslim females marrying non-Muslim males and the equal division of inheritance between males and females. Having analysed the contradictions, the journal went to the extent of doubting whether the Turkish government could still be considered as Islamic.\textsuperscript{198} The strong anti-Kemal stand taken by *Pengasoh* led it into a conflict with the journal *Al-Ikhwan*, where the sticking point, as claimed by the latter, was its refusal to declare the Turks infidel as a result of the changes brought about by Kemal.\textsuperscript{199}

Opposition to Kemal’s reforms which were considered offensive to Islam was also voiced by others who earlier supported his cause. Among them was the

\textsuperscript{196} Berkes Niazi, *The Development of Secularism*, op.cit., p. 488.


\textsuperscript{198} Ibid., p. 10.

reformist newspaper *Idaran Zaman*, which in 1926 published a European newspaper report which referred to a Turkish ship on tour to European cities in order to display the products of Turkey's progress. These products included not only Turkish commercial goods, but also the so-called new Turkish women. The women on board dressed in European fashion and their hair was cut in European style. They told reporters that they smoked and danced, and that the women could walk around freely, even when not accompanied by their husbands. To *Idaran Zaman* this was too much since, the newspaper commented, these reforms were unnecessary for the progress of Islam. Turkey's fall in the past, the paper warned, had been connected to the fact that the government of Turkey had ignored the true precepts of Islam.

Even the journals *Seruan Azhar* and *Pilehan Timoer*, published by Malay students in Cairo, which earlier praised Kemal for his achievements showed their disappointment with his reforms. In its last issue before it stopped publication, even though *Seruan Azhar* supported some progress achieved by Turkey, such as the strengthening of its armed forces, widening of educational opportunities for men and women and the achievements of Turkish women in various career opportunities, the reforms which touched on religion, including the wearing of the hat, changing to the Latin alphabet and the proposal for the conduct of congregational prayer according to Western methods was roundly rejected. Even when *Seruan Azhar* still supported Kemal, the journal was occasionally rather critical of him, such as its disapproval when it was reported that a statue of Kemal was about to be erected.

The journal *Pilehan Timoer*, who first applauded Kemal's achievement in creating modern Turkey, despite as it believed, the fact that he came from a

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201 Ibid., p. 123. See also *Idaran Zaman*, 12 August 1926, p. 2. Further installments of this article, "Turki Baru" were to be found in the 9, 16, and 23 September issues. On reforms affecting women, see *Idaran Zaman*, 2 February 1929.


humble background, also rejected his reforms. In its denunciation, Pilehan Timoer was rather blunt in its reporting, such as its disapproval of his decision to separate religion from the state. Even though the journal was aware that such a decision was taken in order to avoid such abuses as happened earlier, it still felt that the decision was contrary to the true teaching of Islam. In uncompromising terms, Pilehan Timoer also expressed its conviction that the process of westernisation and secularisation that was taking place in Turkey would bring disaster to the country and its people. Kemal’s reforms, it believed, would not last long, since they were implemented by the dictatorial policy of the Kemalist government, and were opposed by the majority of the population. Sooner or later they would be challenged, and the journal predicted that Kemal would fail when the Muslims stood up to protect their religion against the traitor.

The subject of Kemalist revolution was intensely debated by the Malays right into the 1930s. Remarkably it was only in this decade that the issue was critically addressed, and wider matters ranging from history, literature, political developments, women’s emancipation, and general news were published and widely read. By the early 1930s, journals such as Al-Ikhwān, Malaya, Seruan Azhar, Pilehan Timoer and others had already ceased publication. New and surviving newspapers or journals were more direct in expressing their opinions concerning the developments in Turkey. Journals like Bahtra and Majalah Guru took a strong stand in support of the reforms that were taking place in Turkey, while others like Suara Benar took an opposite stance. On the other hand, some newspapers or journals, despite their sympathies for Kemalist reforms, preferred

204 See Pilehan Timoer, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1927, p. 9.

205 Pilehan Timoer, Vol. 1, No. 7, April 1928, pp. 112-115. The title of the article is, "Apa Yang Telah Kemal Kerjakan" (What has Kemal Done).

206 Ibid.
not to express themselves explicitly, especially on controversial issues.\textsuperscript{207} The stand taken by these various papers, whether supporting the Kemalist reforms or otherwise, is clearly noticeable from the range of issues they covered.

One important feature demonstrated by the Malay journals of the 1930s in their approach to Turkey was the awareness of the need for its readers to understand its historical background. The journal \textit{Bahtra} was among the earliest journals of this period which took the initiative of publishing a serialised history of Turkey written by Ahmad Rashid, in its effort to make developments in Turkey better understood by its readers.\textsuperscript{208} In the last few issues before it ceased publication, \textit{Bahtra} described in two series the life history and the struggle of Kemal. Kemal was regarded by the journal as one of the greatest leaders of the century, even though it acknowledged that his success was due to his iron fist policy.\textsuperscript{209} Apart from publishing the history of Turkey, occasionally the journal also supported Kemal, as when it involved itself in controversial issues like the banning of reciting the Qur'ân in inappropriate places by the Turkish government.\textsuperscript{210}

Various other aspects of the history of Turkey were also explored by several other journals. A background to the political developments which led to the

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\textsuperscript{207} See for example the journal \textit{Bumiputera} which avoided discussing the controversial issues, but instead published issues of common interest, including the success achieved by Turkey because it was free from colonisation (see \textit{Bumiputera}, 15 January 1935, front page) and it was because they were united, while it regretted that the Malays were not, even though they belonged to one religion (see the editorial, \textit{Bumiputera}, 18 January, 1935, p. 4).

\textsuperscript{208} The series ran from Vol. 1, No. 6, 22 January 1922 to No. 16, 8 March 1932. It was then continued from No. 33, 17 May 1932 until No. 37, 31 May 1932 and stopped again and continued from No. 41, 24 June 1932, 43, 5 July and 44, 8 July 1932. In the first part of the series it described the present stage of Turkish political change whereby the Ottoman Sultan had been replaced by a President and Turkey was now based in Asia not in Europe. The series was then followed by the history of Ottoman expansion in the Balkans during the early days of Ottoman supremacy. The article was not concluded because the journal ceased publication in August 1932.

\textsuperscript{209} \textit{Bahtra}, Vol. 1, No. 50, 20 July 1932.

\textsuperscript{210} \textit{Bahtra}, Vol. 1, No. 26, 22 April 1932. Even though \textit{Bahtra} expressed neither support for nor opposition to the move, the journal challenged the religious councils in Malaya to adopt a similar policy in their own state, since it believed that the Qur'ân was not only to be recited as was widely practiced, but also to be understood and followed.
Young Turk Revolution was published by the journal *Semangat Islam*.\textsuperscript{211} The journal *Persahabatan* published in brief a history of the Ottoman Empire from its founding to its termination.\textsuperscript{212} The journal *Majalah Guru*, which was strongly pro-Kemal and not in favour of the Ottomans, published an analysis of the history of the Ottoman Empire which concentrated on the reasons for its downfall.\textsuperscript{213}

Another aspect of interest in Turkey shown by the Malay press of that period were stories with a Turkish background intended as a lesson to be learned by Malays. The Asasiyah Press in Kota Bharu which published *al-Kitab*, a monthly journal which styled itself a journal of miscellaneous knowledge, pioneered the effort by publishing monthly stories under the heading *Achuman Kekaseh*, including a biography of Kemal for the delectation and improvement of its readers.\textsuperscript{214} Apart from publishing *al-Kitab*, the press was also actively involved in publishing novels, one of them entitled *Pahlawan Perkasehan dan Peperangan* (1930) fictionalising events occurring in Turkey, which according to Za'ba was written or translated by Ahmad Ismail.\textsuperscript{215} In addition to novels, the publisher and Ahmad Ismail also published works on Turkey at the time of the revolution, including *Selamat Tinggal Ayohai Timor* (1931) and *Tarikh Perjalanan Mustapha Kemal Pasha* (1931), a biography of Kemal Ataturk.\textsuperscript{216}


\textsuperscript{212} See *Persahabatan*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 23 November 1936, pp. 10-11.

\textsuperscript{213} See also Nuri, "Istana al-Uthman dan Perbendaharanya Ditontonkan Di Mata Alam", *Majalah Guru*, Vol. 8, No. 8, 1 August 1931, pp. 158 & 160; Vol. 8, No. 9, 1 September 1931, pp. 169-171. The article describes the luxurious nature of Ottoman palaces which were displayed to the public after Kemal came to power. The articles also discredited the Ottoman Sultans for their misrule, their murderous conduct and their affairs with women slaves.


\textsuperscript{216} These works and the life of Ahmad Ismail are discussed in Za'ba, "Modern Developments", op.cit., pp. 160-162.
Stories with a Turkish background were also published by *Al-Hedayah* which included in its pages a serialised novel, *Jogan Setia*, that told of the national struggle of the Turks. The novel was translated from Niqūlā Ḥaddād's, ْFir'aunat al-ْArab ْinda al-Turk which was published in Istanbul at the beginning of World War 1. In 1929, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi published a novel of Turkish background titled *Hikayat Cermin Kehidupan*. Mohd. Yunus Abdul Hamid also published two works of fiction, *Mutiara Dari Benua Timur* and *Saliha Salih atau Mutiara Dari Smyrna*, depicting life and love in Turkey of to-day.

Another journal, *Majalah Guru* which was among the most popular journals of that time and was widely read by Malay teachers and pupils of Malay vernacular schools, also published a serialised story on the lessons to be learned from the cruelty of Sultan Abdul Hamid toward two Armenian slave girls. The girls, the eldest aged twenty three and the younger twenty, were given to him in 1885, on the tenth anniversary of his ascending the throne. One of the girls was murdered by the Sultan, but when he was overthrown, the other was allowed to return to Armenia, where the Sultan's cruelty was made known. A journal published in Kota Bharu, *Majalah al-Riwayat* which translated stories from Arabic and English, published in its first issue a story about the attitude of the people of Istanbul who preferred to become government servants or to join the army rather than to run their own businesses. This resulted in the business activities in the city being left in the hands of foreigners.

217 Abdul Rahman al-Ahmadi, "Notes Towards a History", op.cit., p. 175.


221 See "Pertelingkahan Angan-Angan Antara Orang Makan Gaji Dengan Orang Berniaga", *Majalah al-Riwayat*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1 November 1938. The background of the story was a place in a certain quarter of Istanbul where Ali Pasha, the Minister of Finance lived with his wife Rahmah Hanim and their two sons, Uthman Effendi, aged twenty, and Ibrahim Effendi, aged eighteen. After completing
Early in the Turkish revolution the controversial Kemalist reforms which were intensely debated and attracted Malay interest were the clothing and language reforms, among others. In the late 1920s and early 1930s the controversial aspect of his reforms which attracted their interest and were widely debated in the Malay journals, concerned the issue of the emancipation of women. Under the Kemalist reforms the emancipation of Turkish women was a core concern which was intended to transform Turkish society from an Islamic to a Western pattern. As a symbol of emancipated Muslim women, the Turkish women's liberator, Halide Edib Hanım, was widely featured by Malay journals. Her life and struggle as a well-known Turkish feminist was given wide and detailed publicity by among others, the journal *Semangat Islam*. The journal hailed her as the bravest woman in the world, the immortal mother of Turkey and a recognised international figure when she was invited to deliver talks in Paris and London in 1925.

In 1928, *Semangat Islam* reported that Halide Edib Hanım had been invited to give a speech in the United States on the topic of "Women in Islam". Accompanying the reports was an article which described how Turkish women in large numbers were receiving a better education and were striving alongside men for the progress of the nation. Commenting on the speech given by Halide Edib, the journal regretted the conduct of certain religious leaders in the Malay community who still resisted the education of girls, which was against humanity and the teaching of Islam. Later the journal *Bulan Melayu* published the

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their studies their sons wanted to become government servants as wished by their father. However, their ambition was in conflict with the ambition of their mother who wanted them to become businessmen.


224 Ibid., p. 171.
speech given by her on the progress achieved by Turkish women under the new republic which she delivered on her visit to India.225

With regard to women's emancipation, Majalah Guru which was very bold in supporting the reforms to liberate women that had taken place in Turkey, published an article, which implied its similarity with Malay women, on the fate suffered by Turkish women before the revolution. They were confined to their house once they reached puberty and then married to men they did not know, and always subjected to the fear of being divorced easily in the presence of only two witnesses when no longer required.226 The article also cited the practice among the Turkish elite and the ruling class of keeping concubines. However, after the establishment of the republic, women were given more freedom and were even able to become politicians. They did not need to cover their faces as before, and in 1932 Miss Turkey was even declared the winner of the Miss World contest held in Spain.227 The journal reported that her success was hailed with joy in Turkey and her achievements were looked upon as a great leap forward in Turkish women's struggle for emancipation.228 Even though Majalah Guru did not categorically ask Malay women to follow the emancipated women of Turkey, it

225 Bulan Melayu, Vol. 3, No. 9, 29 November 1935, pp. 24-27. In her speech published by the journal, Halide Edib Hanım made the comparison between the negative role played by Turkish women during the reign of the Ottomans and their more positive role following the extension of education to them after the founding of the republic which had benefitted the country. She stressed that the emancipation of Turkish women was not contrary to Islam, instead it reaffirmed the demands of its teaching. According to her, the contribution of Turkish women to nation building was nothing new, since they had already participated in the war of independence. Looking at the position of women in ancient Greece and Rome, she believed that only Islam could bring about a true emancipation of women. She regretted that many Muslims misused the provision which allows a man to marry more than one wife, some even keeping mistresses, which is not in line with the teaching of Islam. In the process of emancipation, she was against Eastern women who blindly followed their Western counterparts. Instead, he wished them to retain their values of caring for the family. Bulan Melayu was the only journal at that time edited by a woman. Its editor was Hajjah Zain binti Sulaiman, popularly known as Ibu Zain.


228 Ibid., p. 66.
showed its endorsement of female emancipation by publishing a picture of an unveiled Turkish lady who had won a singing contest.\(^{229}\)

But not all newspapers and journals agreed on the issue of female emancipation as propagated by Kemal. *Suara Benar*, one of the *Kaum Tua* newspapers published in Melaka, reproduced an article published earlier by the journal *The Light* of October 1932, which detailed the programmes of emancipation of women brought about by Kemal, such as the adoption of Western dress, the amendment of Muslim matrimonial laws on ending a marriage and the progress of Turkish women alongside men in such fields as sport, careers and politics. Basing itself on this article, the journal accused Kemal of having strayed from the true path of Islam and having taken the life of Muslim women along Christian lines.\(^{230}\)

Even as late as 1940, the struggle of Kemal was still a subject of interest among Malays. Apart from newspapers and journals, several books were written to give detailed analyses of his life and struggle.\(^{231}\) The most widely read book on Kemal was *Turki Baru* by Ahmad Ismail al-Hikmah which was first published in 1932, but owing to popular demand was reprinted in 1940. According to him, the demand was due to the increasing Malay interest in Turkey, including its Ottoman past, its rivalries with the British who were the colonial masters of Malaya, and its ability to rise again after being humiliated. Because of the unique success achieved by Turkey, Ahmad Ismail believed that it was commendable for the

\(^{229}\) *Majalah Guru*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1 April 1931, p. 79. Occasionally *Majalah Guru* also published pictures to support the reform movement in Turkey in order to get the message across convincingly. Once it published a picture of the Tariqah Jalaluddin Rumi or the "Dancing Dervishes". The journal praised Kemal for banning the Sufi order because it was regarded as deviationist and to having caused the weaknesses of Islam. (See *Majalah Guru*, Vol. 5, No. 9, 16 May 1931). The tariqah was also a subject of condemnation by Muhammad Yusof Sutan Mahyuddin, who regarded it as deviating from the true teaching of Islam. He also was cynical about the 'ulamā' who critised Kemal for prohibiting the practice of the tariqah (see Muhammad Yusof Sutan Mahyuddin, *Kejatuhan Kaum-Kaum Islam dan Pergerakan Baru*, Penang: Jelutong Press, 1931, pp. 24-25).


\(^{231}\) These include Ibrahim Mahmud, *Turki Dan Tamadunnya*, Penang: Mercantile Press, 1938.
Malays to follow what was good in the Turkish experience.232 Despite the fact that Ahmad Ismail wrote the book and agreed with the actions taken by Kemal in eradicating the practices that negated the society and were contrary to the shan\textsuperscript{7}ah, he disagreed with some of the changes introduced by the Turkish leader such as encouraging free mixing between sexes which was against the true teaching of Islam.233

Although developments in Turkey had fascinated many Malays, there was no interest on the part of Kemal in spreading the reforms that he championed to other parts of the Islamic World. Undoubtedly, his reforms had provoked the religious and social thoughts of the Malays, but to what extent developments in Turkey influenced them was difficult to measure. Despite this, the existence of Kemal’s influence cannot be totally ruled out. In his talk given to members of The Fortnightly Club at the Y.M.C.A., Kuala Lumpur on 12 November 1936, Za’ba categorised three groups in Malay Islam. Apart from the Kaum Muda and Kaum Tua, Za’ba’s third Malay group consisted of a small, but growing body of young people who had developed an independent mind through receiving a more or less high standard of English education.234 The ideas of this group, according to him, were progressive in everything and in many instances ultra-progressive. Their attitude toward religion was one of scientific doubt or broad-minded indifference which was similar to the extremist attitude of those in power in Turkey.235

The progressive ideas Za’ba referred to were not only limited to the English educated Malays, but were to be found among the religious-educated Malays as well, who were also fascinated by the developments in Turkey. In Trengganu, an ĉālim, Haji Abbas bin Haji Mohammad, confessed that the radical views that

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235 Ibid., p. 110.
influenced his political thought were partly derived from the influence of the developments in Turkey, particularly the political aims of Kemal.\textsuperscript{236} When Kesatuan Melayu Muda (The Young Malay Association) was formed in 1938 under the leadership of Ibrahim Yaacob and Ishak Haji Muhammad, it favoured a more radical and leftist approach in its struggle, compared to the more moderate and accommodative Malay associations of the day. In the words of one of its frontline activists, this approach was adopted by KMM because of the association's progressive spirit which was similar to that advocated by the Young Turks of Mustafa Kemal in Turkey.\textsuperscript{237}

Even though regarded as a controversial figure, and to some a traitor to Islam, especially in his last years, to others, Kemal was still regarded as a great leader. \textit{Warta Malaya} which reported on the death of Kemal expressed its sorrow for a man it regarded as a famous statesman who had brought a new era in the history of Turkey.\textsuperscript{238} On his death, the state of Johore, which had a long tradition of close relationship with Turkey, ordered that the state's flag be flown at half-mast on the day of his funeral.\textsuperscript{239} Even long after his death, Kemal's contradictory role in his approach to Islam remains a subject of discussion among Malays. A recent critical analysis by a Malay-Muslim scholar on Kemal's reforms reinforced the conclusion that his reformism was irrational and had strayed too far from Islamic guidelines.\textsuperscript{240}

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\textsuperscript{237} Ahmad Boestamam, "Gerakan Nationalisma di Malaysia", \textit{Dewan Masyarakat}, Vol. 1X, No. 11, November 1971, p. 27.

\textsuperscript{238} \textit{Warta Malaya}, 11 November 1938, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{239} MB 38/622, No. 1. National Archives, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), "Menurunkan Bendera Johore dan Daerah Setangah Tiang Pada Hari Isnin 21 November Kerana Menghormatkan Hari Presiden Turki Ataturk Dikuburkan", 19 November 1938.

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EGYPTIAN PROGRESS, ISLAMIC MODERNISM AND POLITICS: SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

When Malays first set foot on Egyptian soil is unknown. On his mission to Rum, the legendary Malay hero Hang Tuah is reported by the Malay literary work Hikayat Hang Tuah, to have stopped in Egypt and stayed there for three months as a guest of its grand vizier.¹ Reports by Venetian sources, however, showed that there was an active Achehnese trading activities in Cairo, at least until the middle of the sixteenth century.² Egyptians, on the other hand, had been in contact with the Malay World since pre-Islamic times and available historical evidence shows that their traders extended their activities with the Indians to the Malay Peninsular and beyond to China.³ The travels of Egyptian traders to the East, however, reached their greatest extent during the prosperous years of the Fatimid (979-1175) and Ayyubid (1175-1250) dynasties. Egyptian trade continued to flourish in the Far East in the following centuries and the same applies to their contact with the Malay World.⁴

¹ See Kassim Ahmad (annotated with new introduction), Hikayat Hang Tuah, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1993, pp. 541-546.


During these prosperous years, the Egyptian intercourse with the Malays is also mentioned in a number of Malay literary works. One which is particularly interesting is a tradition which concerns the role played by Admiral Nazimuddin al-Kamil, who under the instruction of a Fatimid Sultan is said to have been instrumental in the establishment of the Pasai Sultanate in 1128. The underlying reason behind its establishment was the Fatimids' wish to control the spice trade of eastern Sumatra. Following the rise of the Mamluks, the tradition reports that a missionary, Shaykh Ismail, was sent to Pasai in 1284, introduced Islam of the Shafi’i Madhhab and converted Merah Silu, who took the name Malik al-Salih.5

Following the demise of Arab trade and the triumph of the Western maritime powers, Egyptian traders ceased their operations in the Eastern trade and also their relation with the Malays. Renewed contact only emerged again in the closing years of the nineteenth century when gradually Malay students made Egypt an important intellectual destination, in order to complement their religious knowledge after completing their earlier education in Makkah. This new Malay interaction with and exposure to the Egyptian environment resulted in the influence of Egyptian Islamic thought, literature and politics on the development of Malay thought in Malaya beginning from the early years of the twentieth century.

Malay Students in Cairo

The emergence of Cairo as a significant destination for Malays was related to its intellectual importance, since the University of al-Azhar which is considered as Manār al-‘īlm and Ka‘bat al-‘īlm is situated in the city.6 The university, which was

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6 Mona Abaza, "Some Research Notes on Living Conditions and Perceptions Among Indonesian Students in Cairo", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 22, No. 2, September 1991, p. 355. There are a number of writings published in Malay journals which show high Malay regard for the University of al-Azhar, which was established in 361AH/972AD. For example, see "Al-Azhar. Tempat Pelajaran yang Terlebih Tua Dalam Dunia", Dunia Melayu, 20 December 1928, p. 15; Persahabatan, Vol. 1, No. 15, 23 November 1936, p. 14, (the speech given by Haji Abu Bakar Ashaari during the open day celebration of Madrasah al-Huda al-Diniyah al-Islamiyah, Penang). See also Muhammad Labib Ahmad,
situated at al-Azhar Mosque, was distinguished by Hurgronje as "the Athens of Shafi'i learning", and was highly regarded as a prestigious academic religious institution by Muslims at large, including the Malays. Despite its prominence, it is only known to have received its first Malay student, Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fatani, in the early 1870s. Later it was through his encouragement that the university began to attract an increasing number of Malay students, particularly those who had studied in Makkah, to proceed with their studies in Cairo. The most famous among these early Makkah-educated Malays to study there was Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin.

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9 The major trend among Malay students to go first to Makkah and then proceed to Cairo to continue their studies persisted until the 1920s. For example in September 1924 it was reported that eleven Malay students had arrived in Cairo from Makkah to continue their studies at al-Azhar. See Pengasoh, *Vol. 7, No. 159, 27 November 1924*, p. 13.

10 Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin, whose actual name was Muhammad Tahir bin Shaykh Muhammad was born on 7 November 1869 in Kota Tua, Bukit Tinggi, Minangkabau, West Sumatra. To his name was also added the title "al-Azhari", which literally means "pertaining to al-Azhar" or "al-Falaki" because of his knowledge of astronomy. He was brought up in a family of strict Islamic background before being sent at the age of twelve to Makkah to acquire Islamic knowledge. There he stayed for around fourteen years before going to the University of al-Azhar in 1893 for three years to further his studies in astronomy. Upon completing his studies at al-Azhar he went back to Makkah and taught there for two years. In 1899 he went to Malaya and married a local girl in Kuala Kangsar, Perak. Apart from Kuala Kangsar, Shaykh Tahir also lived for quite some time in Penang, Johore and Singapore. His interest in travelling and his connection with Makkah led to his involvement as a pilgrim broker. Shaykh Tahir died in Kuala Kangsar on 28 December 1959. On the life of Shaykh Tahir, see Mohd. Sarim Haji
In the early decades of the twentieth century, when al-Azhar was still not a popular intellectual destination for Malays as compared to Hijaz, the main role in encouraging Malay parents to send their sons to further their studies there was played by its pioneering students. These students wrote to *Neracha*, which on a number of occasions published their correspondence on the advantage of continuing their education there and tried to allay fears for their safety while studying in Egypt. A role in encouraging Malay students to study in Egypt was also played by certain individuals, such as Shaykh *Abd al-Aziz Affendi al-Suhaimi*, a close associate of Shaykh Rifa‘ah al-Tahjawi al-Jawhari, Principal of al-Azhar University. In October 1924, he went to Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies to explain the advantages of continuing higher education at al-Azhar to the general Malay public, and gave recommendations for those students who wished to further their studies there.

Although Egypt managed to attract a number of Malay students to further their education at al-Azhar University from the turn of the twentieth century, it was only after World War 1, and particularly in the early 1920s with the rise in incomes resulting from the boom in rubber prices that substantial numbers of them made their way there. Apart from economic reasons, there were certain others which

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13 In its reminder to parents who wish to send their sons to Egypt, the journal *Seruan Azhar*, made it clear that even though study at al-Azhar University was free of charge, to complement the knowledge acquired there additional lessons needed to be undertaken elsewhere. As a guide to parents the journal listed the amount of expenses required annually to enrol in various schools in Cairo with and without food, lodging and books. It ranged from the cheapest, at $60 with only books provided, to $500 with all inclusive; food, lodging and books (see *Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 3, No. 29, February 1928, p. 578). According to Roff, apart from these expenses, some $300 in addition was also needed for travelling.
explain why these years saw more Malays deciding to study at al-Azhar University. The major contributing factor was the tendency of those who had completed their studies in the madrasah system of education in Malaya to continue their studies in Cairo, rather than in Makkah, where the education system was better adapted to the method used at the suraus and mosques. The opening of more madrasahs throughout the Malay Peninsular in the early twentieth century further enhanced this trend, as in the case of Kelantan, where there was a noticeable increase in the number of students continuing their studies in Cairo following the establishment of Madrasah Muhammadi at Kota Bharu in 1917. Similarly in Penang, a comparatively greater number of students pursuing their studies in Cairo occurred only after the establishment of Madrasah al-Masriyyah in 1906 and Madrasah al-Mashhor al-Islamiyyah in 1919.

costs. Since a relatively sound financial backing was needed to support a student at al-Azhar, only well-to-do or well-connected families could afford this kind of education for their sons, and this explains why there was an increase in their numbers following the boom in rubber prices. See William R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 1980, p. 88.


15 Penganasoh on 8 October 1925 reported that four students from Kelantan, Haji Ahmad Awang, Mustafa Chik Tengah, Nik Jaafar Nik Wan and Wan Adam Haji Wan Abdullah were furthering their studies at the University of al-Azhar. Mustafa Cik Tengah however, died a few months after arriving in Cairo. In the following year (see Penganasoh, Vol. 9, No. 204, 22 September 1926) it was reported that Dato’ Perdana Manteri was sending his second son, Nik Mustafa Fadhil to Cairo, together with the son of the Qâgil of the Sharâfah Court in Kota Bharu, Wan Yusoff Haji Wan Hussein, to further their religious studies there. Both of them left for Cairo on 14 September 1926.

16 The exact number of students from these schools who went to further their studies in Egypt is difficult to trace. Among the early batch of students from Madrasah al-Masriyyah who went to further their education at al-Azhar were Shaykh Junid Tola, Hussein Said and Mohd. Zain Haji Noh who went there in 1922. Meanwhile, it appears that a substantial number of students from Madrasah al-Mashhor only went to further their studies there in the middle of the 1920s. For example, it was reported that on 13 December 1925 twenty seven students had arrived in Cairo, of whom four were from the al-Mashhor (see Seruan Azhar, Vol. No. 1, p. 17). One of these students was Haji Abu Bakar Ashaari (see Prof. Dr. Harun Din, "Syekh Abu Bakar Al-Ashaari: Ulama Tegas Dan Berani", in Abdul Rahman Haji Abdullah, Gerakan Isla Di Perlis. Sejarah dan Pemikiran, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Pena Sdn. Bhd., 1989, p. 101; Anrajaa, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1 August 1928, pp. 13-14). Another early student from the al-Mashhor who went to Egypt was Abdul Wahab Abdullah from Chemor, Perak. While in Egypt Abdul Wahab’s early studies was financed by Mujâtha al-ÎHalabî, the proprietor of a well-known printing press there. Abdul Wahab was the first Malay student to pass in the diploma of Veterinary Science in Egypt (see Al-Ikhwân, Vol. 3, No. 12, 16 August 1929, pp. 385-386; Semangat Islam, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1 November 1929).
The availability of convenient transportation was also a contributing factor which enabled Malay students to proceed to Cairo. Egypt is located on an important shipping route for steamships plying between East and West through the Suez Canal, and this, further heightened during the boom years, had facilitated travel from there to Malaya and vice versa. The sudden surge in the number of Malay students furthering their studies in Cairo was also partly contributed to by the uncertainties which developed in Makkah following the capture of the Holy City by Ibn Sa‘ūd in October 1924 and the dominating role played by the Wahhabis. The rapid increase of parents sending their sons to further their studies in Egypt, however, was most evident from the middle of the 1920s. According to Roff, from the information he obtained from Othman Abdullah, a Malay student who was in Cairo at that time, in 1925 alone there were no fewer than twenty seven Malay students from British Malaya taking up residence in Cairo, bringing their number there to about eighty, with some two hundred or so from the Netherlands East Indies. The number of Malay students in Cairo, however, fluctuated from one year to another and in 1930 their number was reported as only about 120.

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17 It is difficult to determine a comparative figure of the number of students who went to further their studies in Egypt before and after the takeover of the Holy City by Ibn Sa‘ūd. According to one source, in the early 1920s there were only 629 non-Egyptian students studying at al-Azhar, of whom only seven were recorded as being categorized as Javanese, compared to its student population of 9,757. See S.A. Morrison, "El Azhar Today and Tomorrow", The Moslem World, Vol. XVI, 1926, p. 137. This figure seems rather unreliable since existing accounts shows that the number was much higher. Roff put their number in 1919 as fifty or sixty Indonesians with an additional twenty from Malaya and Southern Thailand. See William R. Roff, "Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920's", *Indonesia*, No. 9, April 1970, p. 74.

18 William R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, op.cit., p. 88; William R. Roff, "The Life and Times of Haji Othman Abdullah", Peninjau Sejarah, Vol. 1, No. 2, December 1966, pp. 63-64. The number cited by Roff is higher than that given by a contemporary account published in *Seruan Azhar* and *Pengasoh*, which put the number of Malay students there during that time as 150 (See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1925, p. 12; Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 182, 1 November 1925, p. 18). The exact number of Malay students studying in Cairo, however, has never been correctly established since no reliable record is available. Existing figures are based upon accounts and recollections which are subject to a considerable margin of error.

19 *Temasek*, Vol. 1, No. 6, August 1930, p. 115. The number given is quite low but the possibility of this number being accurate cannot be ruled out, since it may have fallen because of the depression years. The stay of Malay students studying in Cairo ranged from three to five years and as it was most uncommon for Malays to take up permanent residence in Egypt, it is most likely that the number of Malay students in Cairo before World War II fluctuated between 120 and 200.
The presence in Cairo of an increasing number of Malay students coming from all over the Malay World led to a pressing need for them to look after their own welfare and provide the necessary facilities. Common cultural background and relatively small in numbers enabled them to develop a close bond among themselves which led to the formation of an association called al-Jamā'īyyah al-Khairiyah al-Talabīyyah al-Azhariyyah al-Jawāhī (The Welfare Association of Malay Students at the University of al-Azhar) in 1923.20 The first president of the association was a Sumatran, Djanan Taib.21 As the name indicates, the preoccupation of al-Jamā'īyyah al-Khairiyah during its early years was to provide welfare services to its members. Immediately after its formation, it embarked on a programme of collecting donations in order to establish by means of a Waqf a student hostel, which was a pressing need at that time, to be used by these students who came to study at the University of al-Azhar.22

The appeal for subscriptions toward such an establishment was also supported by Shaykh Rifā'ah al-Ṭaḥjāwī al-Jawhārī, who in support of the project wrote a letter of appeal written in Arabic and translated into Malay, addressed to Muslims in Malaya and Java.23 Among prominent Muslim leaders to whom the appeals for donations were directed was Sayyid Hassan al-ʿAttas, while he was visiting Egypt in 1923. The appeal was also published in the Malay daily newspaper,


21 Others known to have held the post of President of the association are Raden Fathul Rahman Kafrawy (December 1926-November 1927), Abdullah Aidid (November 1927-?) and Haji Abu Bakar Ashaari (1930-32).

22 It appears that the appeals from al-Jamā'īyyah al-Khairiyah for donations frequently received an encouraging response. Through its journal Seruan Azhar, the association regularly acknowledged the receipt of donations from individuals in Cairo and from Malaya and Indonesia. See for example the acknowledgement of the donation of £1 (Egyptian) every month toward the organisation from Ṣayyid al-Bābl al-Ḥalabī (Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 2, November 1925, p. 39) and a donation of £10 (Egyptian) by Sayyid Hassan Ahmad al-ʿAttas (Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 4, January 1926, p. 74).

23 CO 537/931, Marriott (Governor's Deputy) to Amery, 1 April 1925; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 28, April 1925. Shaykh Rifā'ah al-Ṭaḥjāwī was particularly close to the Malay students in Cairo and took special interest in their welfare, even finding them suitable accommodation. See Pengasoh, Vol. 7, No. 159, 27 November 1924, p. 3.
Lembaga Melayu on 22, 23 and 24 January 1924.\textsuperscript{24} The effort for the establishment of a student hostel came to fruition when Sayyid Hassan himself bought and endowed a house not far from al-Azhar, to be used for the purpose during his second visit to Cairo in May 1926 to attend the Caliphate Conference there.\textsuperscript{25}

The activities of al-Jam\=iyyah al-Khairiyah were not confined only to looking after the welfare of Malay students in Cairo, since as part of the scope of its activities, it also played a role in defending the reputation of Malay students there. Thus when Sayyid Alwi al-Hadi commented on what he believed was the mediocrity of al-Azhar graduates, his criticism was vehemently disputed by the association.\textsuperscript{26}

In addition to the parent organisation, al-Jam\=iyyah al-Khairiyah, the activities of Malay students in Cairo were also channelled through a number of subcommittees and affiliate associations including those with an academic orientation.\textsuperscript{27} The principal architect and innovator in the formation of a number of these associations was Mahmud Yunus.\textsuperscript{28}

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\textsuperscript{24} Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{25} Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 9, June 1926, p. 171. The house, which cost £10,000 and could accommodate between forty and fifty students, was to be used as a hostel by Malay students from Malaya and Arab students from Hadhramaut. 
\textsuperscript{26} The comment by Sayyid Alwi al-Hadi was made in the newspaper Saudara when he wrote that studying at al-Azhar was not really worthwhile since the time taken was too long and the knowledge acquired was not comprehensive enough to face the real challenge of the contemporary world. Its graduates, he added, were only qualified to become "ulamā' or religious teachers. His criticism was strongly objected to and deplored by al-Jam\=iyyah al-Khairiyah, which argued that those who went to al-Azhar did not only aim to become "ulamā', but most importantly to deepen their knowledge of Islam and thus promote a new image for their homeland. See Temasek, Vol. 1, No.7, 1 September 1930, pp. 134-136. A similar statement was also published by Majalah Guru, Vol. 9, No. 7, 1 September 1930, pp. 175-176. 
\textsuperscript{27} One of them was they Nādī al-Ṭalabah al-Indonesiyyīn, which was formed in September 1927 to promote the learning and speaking of Arabic among its members. The other was Majlis al-Ma\=farīf (Sìdang Pengetahuan) which was formed in January 1930, with the aim among others of spreading knowledge to Indonesia and Malaya by producing books and journals and creating contact with religious schools there. See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 3, No. 27, December 1927, p. 555 and Temasek, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1 Jun 1930, p. 63 respectively. 
\textsuperscript{28} Mahmud Yunus came from Minangkabau, went to al-Azhar in 1924 and was a contemporary of Djanan Taib. In 1925 he graduated with the Shahādah 'Alamiyyah and then enrolled the Dār al-"Ulūm. He was the first ever Malay to be accepted by the institution and completed his studies there in 1930 with a Diploma in Teaching. Mahmud Yunus was a prolific writer who while in Egypt wrote a number of 
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In 1932 an organisation, Persekutuan Putera-Putera Semenanjung (The Malayan Association) was formed. The association was established specially to look after the welfare of Malay students from British Malaya following an increase in the number of them facing financial difficulties, which resulted in the disruption or even total abandoning of their studies. Through donations for which it appealed to a cross-section of the Muslim community in Malaya, the association hoped it could assist these students to continue their education. In addition to giving assistance to needy students, the associations also played a role in cultivating a sense of awareness among its members. On one occasion, it called on them to strive hard to achieve progress, to work together in an organisation, and to unite to further their political and social causes.

The second most important and significant activity of Malay students in Cairo, however, was the publication of journals under the auspices of al-Jam'iyyah al-Khairiyah. The publication was directly influenced by the political journalism that flourished in Egypt in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was this influence which initially encouraged the publication of Ittihad in January 1913, this
being the first Malay journal published there.\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ittihad} was published fortnightly under the editorship of Muhammad Bisyuni Imran, Ahmad Fauzi and Abdul Wahid bin Abdullah with Fadlullah Muhammad as its chief editor.\textsuperscript{34} Being also the first ever Malay journal published outside Malaya, \textit{Ittihad} was a popular and widely distributed journal. Generally, its publication was warmly greeted, but the issues it raised were closely scrutinised by the Malay reading public in Malaya and even as far afield as Makkah.\textsuperscript{35} It is most likely that the journal did not survive beyond 1914 after about a year or so of publication and that its termination was due to lack of funds.\textsuperscript{36}

It is \textit{Seruan Azhar}, however, published by al-Jam\i`yyah al-Khairiyyah, which was by far the most important and the most significant journal published by Malay students in Cairo. \textit{Seruan Azhar} was published in October 1925 with Djanan Taib as its chief editor.\textsuperscript{37} Its director was Fathul Rahman Kafrawy and its editors were

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No 66, 1 January 1913, p. 4. Since no copies of \textit{Ittihad} have survived, it is difficult to determine exactly when it stopped publication. Information on the journal can only be gleaned from the journal \textit{Neracha} which received its first copy. On receiving it, apart from offering its good wishes, the editorial board of \textit{Neracha} also challenged Malay students who were studying in Europe to take a similar initiative to what was being done by Malay students in Cairo. (\textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No. 74, 26 February 1913).
\item \textsuperscript{34} \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No. 66, January 1913, p. 4.
\item \textsuperscript{35} For example when \textit{Ittihad} published an article entitled "A Meaningful Call" by one Abdul Wahid bin Abdul Rahman Taib suggesting that Malay parents should send their children to further their study in Egypt, a polemic erupted. The suggestion was disapproved by among others, K. Anang the editor of \textit{Neracha} itself, who argued that it should not necessarily be only Egypt but also Japan, France and Germany. In another instance, a debate also erupted on the issue of Malay attire, when \textit{Ittihad} stressed the need for Malays to stick to their own dress, rather than imitating others. The article, which it extracted from the journal \textit{al-Man\=ar}, received a barrage of criticism in Malaya and even attracted a response from Makkah. For the correspondence published by \textit{Neracha} on these polemics, see \textit{Neracha}, Vol. 3, No. 84, 7 May 1913; Vol. 3, No. 92, 2 July 1913; Vol. 3, No. 100, 27 August 1913; Vol. 3, No. 107, 15 October 1913; Vol. 3, No. 108, 22 October 1913; Vol. 4, No. 115, 24 December 1913; Vol. 4, No. 119, 20 January 1914. For correspondence from Malay students in Makkah on the polemics, see in \textit{Neracha}, No. 108, 22 October 1913 and No. 115, 24 December 1913.
\item \textsuperscript{36} See \textit{Pengasoh}, Vol. 8, No. 182, 1 November 1925, p. 19.
\item \textsuperscript{37} His picture appears in the first issue of the \textit{Seruan Azhar}. When the journal was first published, he was on a visit to Paris and his greeting of its publication only appeared in the following issue. Djanan Taib was born at Sarik Bukit Tinggi, about 1891. He went to Makkah in 1911 and enrolled at the University of al-Azhar in 1919. He gained the distinction of being the first Indonesian or Malay student to graduate with the \textit{Shah\=adah Alamiyyah} degree in 1924. He left Cairo in 1927 to live in Makkah and thereafter made only occasional visits to Egypt. He died in Makkah in the late 1930s. See \textit{Seruan Azhar}, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1925, p. 1.
\end{itemize}
Ilyas Ya'acob and Abdul Wahab Abdullah. Another of its editors was Mahmud Yunus who wrote its first editorials. The address of the journal was given as No. 8, Atfet al-Masri, al-Darrasah, Cairo and its subscription fee was $3.00 or 4 Rps per annum. Its administration was put under Haji Othman Abdullah, who funded its publication using money supplied by his father. In his editorial, Othman Abdullah wrote that the journal was named Seruan Azhar (Call of the Azhar) because its aim was to call for awareness and it was published by Malay students who were studying at al-Azhar University, a well-known institution attended by students from all over the world.

Seruan Azhar ceased publication in May 1928 after publishing altogether thirty one issues. No specific reason was mentioned for its sudden termination. Looking at the running of the journal, finance was the most likely reason for its discontinuation, since the journal depended totally on subscriptions for its operation. The financial constraint faced by the journal is obvious, since in almost every edition, particularly in the latter issues, it appealed to its readers to pay up their due subscriptions. The journal was so irritated with some of its subscribers who failed to come up with their payments that it even printed their names as a harsh reminder. This financial strain is also apparent in the last issue before it ceased publication, where its pleas for payment were related to support for the promotion of Malay progress. Again those subscribers who have failed to pay their subscriptions are threatened with the publication of their names.

38 William R. Roff, "The Life and Times", op.cit., p. 64.
40 The May 1928 issue of Seruan Azhar was its No. 32. This happened since its 23rd & 24th issues were a combined issue.
41 See Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 182, 1 November 1925, p. 8. William R. Roff, however, also suggests that its termination may have been contributed to by the split in its editorial board sparked by ideological differences concerning the extent to which the journal should openly promote radical political causes. These differences led to the desertion of a number of its pioneer editors who published a rival journal, Pilehan Timoer. See William R. Roff, "Indonesian and Malay Students", op.cit., p. 86.
Another likely reason for the ending of the publication of the journal was the shortage of manpower, as one after another of its pioneer editorial board completed their studies and returned home or applied for leave from their involvement because of other commitments. This reality had to be faced by the journal right from the start of its publication when six months after it first appeared its chief editor, Djanan Taib, had to leave the journal because he was taking up a new post in Makkah. His place was then taken over by Ilyas Ya’acob. Six months later at the beginning of its second year two more of its editors, Mahmud Yunus and Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi also asked for leave from the editorial board of the journal because of other commitments.44

In August 1927 Othman Abdullah went on leave to Paris. Subsequently he also left Seruan Azhar and his name did not appear thereafter as an administrator in following issues of the journal. At a meeting held on 2 September 1927, Mahmud Yunus was reinstated as the chief editor of the journal but again asked for leave in February 1928. From March 1928 Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi was appointed as its acting chief editor assisted by Abu Bakar Ashaari, Ahmad Ataullah and Abdul Kahar Muzakkir until the journal ceased publication in May 1928. During its two and half years of life, Seruan Azhar proved to be a popular and widely read journal, with subscribers and distributing agents found all over Malaya and in the Netherlands East Indies. Apart from being distributed by these

44 See the decision taken on 21 February 1926 in Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 6, March 1926, p. 103.
45 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 13, October 1926, p. 242. The meeting to appoint the new editorial board was held on 31 August 1926.
48 See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 3, No. 30, March 1928, pp. 593-594. Even though Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi was appointed acting chief editor at the meeting of the journal held on 17 February 1928, his name was printed as "chief editor" on the front page of Seruan Azhar.
49 See Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 182, 1 November 1925, p. 8. For a list of its distributing agents in Malaya, see Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, Nos. 23 & 24, August & September 1927.
agents, the journal was also requested by individuals as in the case of one reader who ordered one hundred copies of the journal's first issue.\(^{50}\)

In October 1927, *Seruan Azhar* was joined by another monthly journal, *Pilehan Timoer* (Choice of the East).\(^{51}\) *Pilehan Timoer* also had to stop publication a few months after *Seruan Azhar*.\(^{52}\) Roff believed that it ceased publication because of lack of funds.\(^{53}\) But in an announcement published in the journal *al-Ikhwan*, *Pilehan Timoer* was quoted in a statement released by Ilyas Ya'acob and Mukhtar Lutfi on 19 October 1928 as stating that it had to stop publication under a directive of the Egyptian government.\(^{54}\) The statement, however, did not elaborate why such a directive was given. Before it ceased publication, like *Seruan Azhar*, *Pilehan Timoer* was also a popular and a widely read journal with its distributing agents found in Sumatra, Java, Borneo and almost every state in Malaya.\(^{55}\)

Apart from publishing journals, certain Malay students in Cairo also established their own printing presses, encouraged by the availability of the facilities there. The first publisher ever established by Malay students in Cairo was al-Majba\(^{a}\)h al-Ittih\(\ddot{a}\)diyah, set up by Muhammad Fadlullah in 1914.\(^{56}\) The most

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\(^{50}\) See the letter of Tengku Abdul Kadir of Kota Bharu who wished to buy one hundred copies of the first issue of *Seruan Azhar* (*Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 1, No. 11, August 1926, p. 217). See also the acknowledgement of the receipt of the amount of $28/- by the editorial board of *Seruan Azhar* and the sending of one hundred copies of the reprint of the first issue of the journal as requested. (*Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 2, No. 13, October 1926, p. 255).

\(^{51}\) Apart from *Ittihad*, *Seruan Azhar* and *Pilehan Timoer*, there were two other journals believed to have been published by Malay students in Cairo. One was *Usaha Pemuda* edited by Abdullah Aidid and Ahmad Azhari which appeared for four issues. The other was *Merdeka* published by the International Student Club of Cairo and edited by Zainuddin Tahir. No information on the date and contents of the journals is available. See William R. Roff, *Malay and Indonesian Students*, op.cit., p. 86 (footnote 39).

\(^{52}\) Altogether there were only eight issues of the journal with the last issue appearing in October 1928.

\(^{53}\) William R. Roff, *"The Life and Times"*, op.cit., p. 64.

\(^{54}\) *Al-Ikhwan*, 16 December 1928, *"Pemberitahuan Dari Pejabat Pilehan Timoer Di Mesir al-Kaherah"*, pp. 126-127.

\(^{55}\) See *Pilehan Timoer*, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1927 (back page).

\(^{56}\) *Neracha*, Vol. 4, No. 124, 25 February 1914, p. 3. For the company constitution of the printing press, see *Neracha*, Vol. 4, No. 125, 4 March 1914, pp. 5-6. Muhammad Fadlullah bin Muhammad was born in Singapore in 1886. He went to al-Azhar in 1911 and graduated in 1914. Fadlullah was keen educationist who was instrumental in the establishment of a number of religious schools, including
successful Malay publisher, however, was al-Matba‘ah al-Marbawiyyah founded by Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi in 1927.\footnote{Abdullah al-Qari, Sejarah Hidup Tok Kenali, Kota Bharu: Pustaka Aman Press, 1967, p. 113.} In 1927, the Malay students in Cairo also established another publisher, Maţba‘ah al-Taqaddum, its pioneering work being the printing of the journal \textit{Pilehan Timoer}.\footnote{\textit{Pilehan Timoer}, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1927, p. 16.}

The 1920s and 1930s saw Malay students in Cairo bustling with activities, setting up organisations, publishing journals and establishing printing presses, apart from their principal occupation of acquiring religious knowledge. Despite the fact that their numbers were relatively small and that they totally depended on their parents for support, they proved to be a creative and progressive group of students. These students also proved that they were ahead of Malay students who had studied in Makkah and elsewhere in terms of creativity and motivation as a result of the conducive environment in Egypt. The knowledge and experience obtained by these students while in Cairo proved to be a meaningful asset when they returned home to continue their struggle to bring about social change in their society.

\section*{Authority and Social Ideals}

From the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, modern Egypt began to emerge as an important contributor to the development of the religious, social and political thought of Malay society, in addition to certain influences coming from Turkey and Hijaz. One of the earliest aspects of the its contribution which in fact came as a result of its modernisation, was the book-publishing industry. Since the late nineteenth century, a considerable number of religious books used in Islamic

Kuliyah al-\textit{Attás}, (1927) and Kuliyah Firdaus (1935) in Johor Bharu, Madrasah al-Ma‘arif (1936) and Madrasah al-Ridwān (1940) in Singapore and Madrasah al-Na‘im li al-Banāt (1942) in Kota Bharu. Fadlullah was also a prolific writer who wrote about thirty books and more than one hundred articles on various Islamic subjects and social issues. Fadlullah died in Singapore in September 1964. For his life, works and contributions, see \textit{Inspiration}, Souvenir Programme of the 50th Anniversary and Official opening of Madrasah al-Ma‘arif al-Islamiyyah, 15 March 1987, pp. 22-31; Ni‘mah Binti Haji Ismail, "The Life and Thoughts of Shaykh Muhammad Fadlullah Suhaimi", M. Lift., University of Edinburgh, 1994.
teaching all over the Malay World had been published there, and this enabled religious texts to be distributed to a wider audience, thus encouraging a better understanding of Islam.

One of the earliest and most active publishers to publish such religious books in Malay was Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, who founded his publishing house in 1859 near the al-Azhar Mosque. The publisher started this venture in the late nineteenth century through the efforts of Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fatani, who proof-read and annotated the Malay religious books it published to ensure their correctness and comprehensiveness. Another publisher which was also actively involved in a similar enterprise was Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyyah, owned by ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, the brother of Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī. Apart from these two publishers, there were other publishers, such as Maṭbaʿat al-Tarāqqī, Maṭbaʿat Mhd. ʿAlī ʿSubḥ, Maṭbaʿat al-Bahnaṣī and Maṭbaʿat al-Bishlawī which also provided a service for the publication of Malay works.

In this early stage, the prestige of Egypt in the eyes of the Malays as an Islamic centre was confined to religious books, which were published there not only because of the availability of the printing facilities, but also because they were looked upon as a symbol of religious authority. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the religious authority of Egypt was further extended to the role played by the University of al-Azhar as an important academic religious institution and the dynamism shown by its ʿulamāʾ, as opposed to the conservatism of the religious establishments in Hijaz on the one hand, and the westernisation of Turkey on the

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61 Ibid., p. 24. His contribution to Malay book publishing was highly acknowledged, and when he died on Wednesday 28 September 1927 an obituary together with his picture was published by Pilehan Timoer. See Pilehan Timoer, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 18.

other. To some, the appealing image of al-Azhar came also as a result of the influence of the reformist ideas of Muhammad Abduh on education at the university during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century, so that it became a symbol of Islamic modernism.63

Even though al-Azhar had produced graduates from Malaya since the early twentieth century, at this stage their numbers were too small to have a dominating impact on Islamic education in Malaya, particularly that based on the Egyptian model. Despite the fact they were not prominent, early Malay al-Azhar graduates still managed to promote religious education based on the model, as when Mohd. Salleh Masri established a madrasah in Penang in 1906, after completing his studies at the university.64 He named the madrasah he founded Madrasah Masriyyah to honour the name Egypt (Miṣr), since it was from there that the knowledge and curriculum of the madrasah was derived.65 To support the establishment and its running costs Haji Salleh based the madrasah on al-Azhar University by depending on Waqf properties endowed by local villagers, who did so through his encouragement. When the madrasah was opened on 17 March 1906, thirty pioneer male students were enrolled. As part of the model of modern Egyptian education advocated, the teaching at the madrasah was a complete departure from the old-style pondok system in that it taught subjects including mathematics, geography, Malay language, logic, and handicraft, apart from the core subjects, religious knowledge. Since the school curriculum was based on that of Egypt, and through the encouragement of its mudir, many of the madrasah's graduates then


64 Mohd. Salleh Masri who was born in 1875 was among the early generation of Malay students at al-Azhar. He went there in 1899 and completed his studies in 1905. His case, however, is considered unique since he was the first known Malay student to go directly to the university, rather than studying in Makkah first. Mohd. Salleh died in 1971 in Makkah. See Othman bin Bakar, "Haji Saleh Masri: Pengasas Al-Masriyyah", in Khoo Kay Kim, et.al, Islam di Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, pp. 62-66.

65 Ibid., p. 66.
continued their studies there. Madrasah Masriyyah exerted a strong influence in Penang and this led to the formation of more than twenty similar madrasahs in the area.

Another religious school which was established on a similar model and not long after the establishment of Madrasah al-Masriyyah was Madrasah al-Iqbal al-Islamiyah in Singapore, under the patronage of Raja Ali Kelana of Riau. To ensure that the madrasah implemented an Egyptian model of modern religious education, its governing body went even further, to the extent of employing an Egyptian, ‘Uthmān Effendi Rafat as its mudir. As in Madrasah Masriyyah, the subjects taught at the madrasah included among others, mathematics, geography, English and the Malay language, in addition to religious subjects and the Arabic language. These madrasahs which were modelled on modern schools in Egypt then became the forerunner of many other religious schools that were established later throughout Malaya.

Among the madrasahs which were established based on this model, with the principal aim of introducing modern religious education to the Malays, may be included Madrasah al-Hadi in Melaka and Madrasah al-Mashhor in Penang, both

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66 Among them were Shaykh Ahmad and Shaykh Haji Othman, who after completing their studies in Egypt, taught at the madrasah.

67 For the list of madrasahs formed in the vicinity of the area, see Othman bin Bakar, "Haji Saleh Masri", op.cit., p. 74.

68 The madrasah was announced as to be opened on 21 November 1907 by al-Imam (al-Imam, Vol. 2, No. 4, 8 October 1907, p. 122). Existing evidence, however, shows that the madrasah was only opened on 4 February 1908. See Mohd. Sarim Haji Mustajab, "Islam dan Perkembangannya Dalam Masyarakat Tanah Melayu, 1900-1940an", M.A. Thesis, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1975, p. 356; see also Al-Imam, Vol. 2, No. 8, 4 February 1908, p. 264.


70 Ibid., p. 196.
founded by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi. Another important madrasah which also followed this model of education was Madrasah Alwiyyah al-Diniyah in Perlis. When the madrasah was opened in 1937 it did not have a mudir and even Shaykh Mahmud Mohd. Saman, a Malay who had graduated from al-Azhar, did not qualify for the post and was only appointed as a senior supervisor until an Egyptian was appointed as its mudir. The medium of instruction in this madrasah was Arabic, apart from Malay and English, and the subjects taught included religious knowledge, geography, science, art and mathematics. In principle its curriculum and even the text books were obtained from Egypt.

In the second decade of the twentieth century, increasing numbers of al-Azhar graduates returned to Malaya imbued with the new spirit and a desire to disseminate knowledge acquired during their educational sojourn in Egypt. Among the prominent graduates of this group was Shaykh Junid Tola, a former student of Mohd. Salleh Masri. As his teacher, Shaykh Junid was also committed to the development of modern religious education in order to bring about a process of change in Malay society. He believed, however, that the process should go hand

71 Madrasah al-Hadi was founded in 1917. The madrasah failed to get a positive response from the public and subsequently had to be closed down. Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, however, was more successful when he established Madrasah al-Mashhor in Penang in 1919. For a brief history and development of the madrasah, see Rahim b. Osman, "Madrasah Masyhur al-Islamiyah", in Khoo Kay Kim, et al., Islam di Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, pp. 75-85.

72 It was only after World War II that Madrasah Alawiyyah Diniyah received its mudir when an Egyptian, Ustadh 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Mustafā al-Sisi al-Affendi (1945-1948) was appointed its first mudir. The second mudir was Ustadh 'Abd al-Ḥaqīq Ḥamdī al-Jīzārāh (1949-1952), the third was Ustadh Taqī al-Dīn al-Qandīl (1952-55), followed by Ustadh 'Abd al-Barq (1957-59), all of them Egyptians. See Saniyeh binti Abas, "Al-Madrasah al-Alwiyyah al-Madiniyyah, Arau, Perlis", in Khoo Kay Kim, et al., Islam di Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, pp. 134-135.


74 Shaykh Junid Tola was born in 1897 in East Sumatra. In his late teens he went to Malaya and ended up studying at Madrasah al-Masriyyah, Penang. In 1922 he married the daughter of a local ʿulamā in Padang Renggas, Perak and settled there. In the same year he went to Cairo with his brother-in-law, Haji Hussein Said and Haji Mohd Zain Haji Noh. He returned to Padang Renggas in 1927 after completing his studies. Even though Shaykh Junid spent most of his time in Padang Renggas, he also made frequent visits to Sumatra where he died on 10 March 1948. See Siti Hanifah Ahmad, "Sheikh Junid Tola. Sumbanganya Dalam Bidang Pendidikan, Ekonomi dan Politik, 1897-1948", B.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1988/89.
in hand with economic progress which could be achieved through the institution of Waqf. Waqf, however, had never been extensively practiced among Malays in the way that it had been among the Arabs or the Muslims of India.\textsuperscript{75} Influenced by the success story of al-Azhar University, whose survival was ensured by its Waqf properties, which were also used to support Dār al-ʿUlūm as well as several medical schools, hospitals, orphanage and mosques, Shaykh Junid preached the importance of this institution and even produced a booklet on its significance and the way to implement it.\textsuperscript{76} When he returned to Padang Rengas, Perak, he discoursed on the idea to the locals, and this led the establishment of a number of madrasahs which depended on the income from Waqf properties and other contributions for their running.\textsuperscript{77}

The second decade of the twentieth century also saw Egypt as an ideal model and its authority being extended to other aspects of Malay life. During this period literate Malays, as a products of both religious and vernacular educations, began to emerge in increasing numbers and were in dire need of something to fill their intellectual vacuum. Since the early decades of the twentieth century, westernisation in Egypt, which set the country on the road to a political, social and cultural renaissance, also resulted in the progress of its literary life. It was this progress that in turn gave a new spirit to the development of Malay literature.\textsuperscript{78}

An established connection with Egypt enabled an easier flow of this spirit to Malaya to fill the vacuum and the Malays were more receptive to influences originating from there. This would not have been the case if the influence had come directly from the West, which was viewed with suspicion. Furthermore, Egypt was


\textsuperscript{76} See Shaykh Junid Tola, \textit{Kifiat Mengadakan Wakaf}, Cairo: Matba`ah al-Marbawi, 1348AH/1929AD, pp. 2-4.


looked upon as a symbol of authority and a modern Muslim nation strong in its Islamic tradition. As a result, the influence of Egyptian literary life on Malay literature evolved in a relatively smooth way and began with the publication of the first popular Malay love story novel, *Hikayat Setia Asyik Kepada Masyuknya atau Hikayat Faridah Hanum* by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, which was influenced by the Egyptian novel, *Zainab* by Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal.79 According to Mana Sikana, the influence of the latter on the former was apparent, since there were similarities in theme and the issue of women's emancipation. The women characters in both novels, Faridah Hanum and Zainab were also facing a similar mental conflict.80 There are other similarities as well when the broken-hearted Ibrahim in *Zainab* and Shafik in *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* both go for military service in Sudan.81

The publication of the novel received a tremendous response and had a great impact on the Malay reading public, despite the fact that it deviated totally from the existing religious and traditional Malay literature. The response was attributed to the fact that it was the earliest Malay novel which was widely circulated and adopting a popular theme.82 It tremendous reception was also attributed to the

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79 As with *Hikayat Faridah Hanum*, the novel *Zainab* was the first Egyptian literary work which could be considered as a true novel, in the sense that it has a proper plot and characterisation. Moreover, it endeavours to depict Egyptian life in a realistic way instead of adapting some Western theme. See Hamdi Sakkut, *The Egyptian Novel and Its Main Trends From 1913 to 1952*, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1971, p. 11.


82 Despite the fact that *Hikayat Setia Asyik Kepada Masyuknya atau Hikayat Faridah Hanum* by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi was regarded by many as the first Malay novel, Roff believed it was not. According to him the first Malay novel was a detective story entitled *Cerita Kachurian Lima Million Ringgit* (Tale of the Theft of Five Million Dollars), published in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, in January 1922, by Muhammad bin Muhammad Said, and printed at the Majlis Ugama Islam Press. The characters found in this detective story are English and the background are London and New York. See William Roff, "The Mystery of the First Malay Novel (And Who was Rokambul)", *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde*, No. 130, 1974, p. 451. Even though Roff's findings may be correct, however, it is beyond doubt that *Hikayat Setia Asyik Kepada Masyuknya atau Hikayat Faridah Hanum* by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi was the first most popular and the most widely read Malay novel.
high regard of the Malays for Egypt, which formed the background of the novel. Its publication was also an important milestone in the development of modern Malay literature; not only did it represent a story in which the characters were living human beings and the background was a modern society, but what was equally important was that its characters were Egyptians. Indeed the background of the novel was Egypt and the plot was also adapted from an Egyptian model. The Egyptian background of the novel is clearly spelt out; the cities are Cairo and Alexandria and the names of the roads are al-Abbāsiyah, al-Zāhir and Bāb al-Ḥadīd. The characters include Hudā Hānum Sha'rāwī, Shīţa Nabāwī and Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbduḥ, apart from Faridah Hanum herself, Kassim Bey, Badaruddin Affendi and Shafik Affendi. In addition to this, Ta'fīt Bey, one of the protagonists in the novel, is portrayed as encouraging his son and daughter-in-law to read al-Manār, the journal published by Rashīd Riḍā.

Despite some opposition to the publication of such a romantic novel by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, which promoted a liberal life style and was contrary to Islamic norms, especially in view of his approaching old age and his stature as a respected ʿālim, the novel proved to be a popular one and had to be reprinted several times due to encouraging public demand. A new phenomenon even emerged in Malay society, where there was a growing trend of parents naming their newly born babies Faridah, Hanum, Shafik and Affendi, names taken from the

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83 Yahaya Ismail, "Ahmad Talu: Novelis Melayu Yang Pertama", Dewan Bahasa, Vol. 18, No. 12, December 1974, p. 616. In fact when Ahmad Talu published his first novel, Kawan Benar, with local background and characters, he informed his readers of his worries that it would not fascinate in the same way as Hikayat Faridah Hanum, which had an Egyptian background.


86 In the second reprint of the novel, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi even included in its pages several pictures such as a picture of Faridah Hanum in a sexy pose, Shafik meeting Faridah Hanum, Shafik kissing Faridah Hanum and a picture of them in an intimate pose which are clearly contrary to Malay and Islamic norms. See Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, Setia Asyik Kepada Masyuknya atau Shafik Affendi Dengan Faridah Hanum, (2nd Edition) Vol. 1, Penang: Jelutong Press, 1927/1928.
characters of al-Hadi’s novel. The profit obtained from the publication of the novel *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* was substantial and it is believed that it even permitted Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi to establish his own publishing house, the Jelutong Press in 1927.

The encouraging public interest in novels with an Egyptian background resulted in Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi becoming increasingly active in translating other Egyptian works to cope with the increasing demand from the reading public. In the news column of the journal *al-Ikhwan*, of which he was the editor, he wrote that he was waiting for the arrival of books from Egypt to be translated into Malay. It was this response that encouraged Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi to publish another novel, also with an Egyptian background, *Hikayat Taman Cinta Berahi atau Mahir Affandi Dengan Iqbal Hanum*. This love story novel was published in five volumes in 1928 and illustrated with pictures of beautiful Egyptian women. In addition, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi also adapted or translated *Cerita-Cerita Rokambul* (The Stories of Rokambul), the Egyptian series which was derived from a French original and published in *al-Ikhwan* and *Saudara*. Other Egyptian works he also adapted or

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89 *Al-Ikhwan*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 16 November 1926, p. 64.

90 See Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, *Taman Cerita Berahi atau Mahir Affandi Dengan Iqbal Hanum*, Penang: Jelutong Press, 1927/28. These modern Egyptian women were featured in green, purple and blue in different poses. Also included is a picture of Iqbal Hanum smoking a cigarette.

91 These detectives stories all belonged to a series known under the general name of *Cerita Rokambul*. Seven of the stories which were published in volume form before Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi’s death include *Cerita Rokambul Dalam Jail dan Di Paris* (398 pages), *Cerita Rokambul Dalam Siberia* (400 pages), *Cerita Rokambul Dengan Puteri Russian dan Asyik* (498 pages), *Cerita Rokambul Dengan Korban Hindi* (502 pages), *Cerita Rokambul Dengan Malian Kaum Nor* (508 pages), *Cerita Rokambul Dengan Taman Penglipur Lara* (298 pages) and *Cerita Rokambul Dengan Perbendaharaan Hindi* (509 pages). See Za’ba, "Modern Developments in Malay Literature", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, 1940, p. 154.
translated include *Hikayat Anak Dara Ghassan atau Hindun Dengan Hammad* (1928-29), *Hikayat Cermin Kehidupan* (1929) and *Hikayat Putri Nur ul-Ain* (1929).\(^2\)

Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi's motive in publishing these novels and other works from Egypt was not only to fill the vacuum in reading materials for the literate Malays. Behind these publications Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi also had a greater agenda of his own. In his novels, particularly in *Hikayat Faridah Hanum*, Sayyid Shaykh tried to inculcate the idea of social change in Malay society, particularly as related to women's emancipation and their role in society.\(^3\) Most of the questions concerning women in *Hikayat Faridah Hanum*, such as women's emancipation, the education of women, the responsibility of women toward family and nation and the education of children had indeed already been discussed by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi in the journal *al-Ikhwan* in his column *Alam Perempuan* (Women's World), being a summary of *Tahrir al-Mar'ah* by Qāsim Amīn.\(^4\) The column was then reproduced in a book entitled *Kitab Alam Perempuan* with even the suggestion that Malay women should emulate modern Egyptian women.\(^5\) The bold stance taken by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi on the issue of women's emancipation, which he disseminated through his journals and novels, was an important turning-point in shattering Malay myths and conservatism regarding the issue.\(^6\) By taking Egypt

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 154.

\(^3\) In fact this was the central theme of his magnum opus, *Hikayat Faridah Hanum*, where the rights of women were brought into prominence, for instance in the case of the brother of the unhappily married Faridah Hanum sending an open letter to the newspaper *al-Ahram* asking for a ruling from the Grand Mufti of Egypt over the validity of such a marriage. The latter gave the ruling that there were grounds for its nullification in a court of law. See Yahaya Ismail, "Syed Sheikh al-Hadi", op.cit., p. 553.

\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 569-570. See also *al-Ikhwan*, Vol. 1, No. 5, 16 January 1927, pp. 96-99. Qāsim Amīn was an ardent follower of 'Abduh. His work *Tahrir al-Mar'ah* was published in 1899. In 1900 he published another book, also on the issue of women's emancipation, *al-Mar'ah al-Jadidah*.


\(^6\) In his journal Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi published articles on the rights achieved by Egyptian women, such as the passing of a law which forbade men to marry more than one wife and the arbitrary exercise of divorce by men. On this issue, the journal even called on the Malay rulers who headed the religious councils of their respective states to do the same in order to protect the right of women. See *Al-Ikhwan*, Vol. 2, No. 8, 16 April 1928, pp. 237-241.
as a example, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi’s crusade, despite some opposition, managed to gather adherents, which would not have been the case if Western women had been taken as a model of emancipation.

Apart from the image of the emancipated women propagated in the Egypt-based novels and translations of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, the idea of social change in Malay society related to its approach to women’s emancipation and their role in society based that of Egypt may also be seen in the writings of columnists of the Malay press. Thus Seruan Azhar had a special column called Alam Isteri (The Wife’s Column) in its pages. As in al-Ikhwan, the principal theme of the column was to call upon parents to give a proper education to their daughters, since the journal was frustrated by the backwardness of Malay women. Since it was published in Egypt by those who were not ignorant of religious norms, it felt that it was in a better position even to point to the modern Middle Eastern woman as a model whom Malay women should follow.97 The initiative taken by Seruan Azhar was then emulated by other local journals, particularly Majalah Guru and Pengasoh and later al-Hikmah.98 When Pilehan Timoer was published it also followed its contemporary, the Seruan Azhar in championing the issue of women’s emancipation by introducing its own “Women’s Column" where the important role of women in bringing about a good family was detailed.99 In its first issue, it even published a picture of Joan of Arc who captured Orleans from the English in its front page. Her struggle was elaborated and her sacrifice for the survival of the nation was applauded.100 This was clearly intended to convey a message that women could play a vital role in nation-building, and even in a bloody military campaign.


98 See for example “The Women’s Section”, Pengasoh, Vol. 8, No. 182, p. 9-11 which it copied from Majalah Guru; see also a similar section in Pengasoh, Vol. 9, No. 204, 22 September 1926, pp. 8-10; al-Hikmah, Vol. 2, No. 52, 1 September 1936, p. 13.

99 See Pilehan Timoer, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1927, pp. 8-10.

100 Ibid., pp. 12-14.
To convince its readers of the role played by emancipated Egyptian women, their pictures were also published by Malay journals. One Egyptian woman who was regularly featured, on the first occasion by Seruan Azhar, with the thinly disguised suggestion that Malay women should emulate her, was Huda Hānum Shā'rawī, a feminist leader in Egypt. Apart from her, other pictures of Egyptian women, such as Safiyah Hānum Zaghlūl, the wife of the late Zaghlūl Pāshā and her struggle in support of her husband in order to achieve Egypt’s independence, was also featured by the journal. A picture of Munirah Thābit, an Egyptian woman who published a journal, was also printed with the suggestion that Malay women should emulate her achievement. Seruan Azhar’s move in publishing pictures of emancipated Egyptian women also stimulated other journals such as Medan Lelaki, al-Hikmah and al-Ikhwan to do the same.

101 See for example Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 9, June 1926, p. 175 and Vol. 2, No. 22, July 1927, pp. 432-433. She was also reported as having toured Europe and the United States explaining the progress achieved by Egyptian women. The journal felt that it would be in Malay women’s best interest if such a personality existed among themselves who would strive for the progress of the nation. To get its message across, the journal even printed a picture of Huda Hānum Shā’rawī on its front page (See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 3, No. 29, February 1928). Another journal which also reported on her and implied that Malay women should emulate her was Dunia Melayu. It was reported by the journal that she presented a demand to the Prime Minister for a law to be promulgated which would forbid girls getting married before the age of eighteen, and that equal treatment in all aspects should be granted to women. The journal, however, was not sure whether these demands would bring about progress for them. (See Dunia Melayu, 20 January 1929, p. 38). Huda Hānum Shā’rawī as a symbol of emancipated Egyptian women was also given attention by the journal al-Hikmah when it published a picture of her delivering a speech in the World Women’s Conference in Istanbul with an unveiled Turkish woman president on the stage. (See al-Hikmah, Vol. 2, No. 52, 1 September 1935, p. 13). Her picture was also published by another reformist journal, al-Ikhwan (Vol. 1, No. 3, 16 November 1926, p. 50 and Vol. 1, No. 5, 16 January 1927, p. 97) and Medan Lelaki, Vol. 1, No. 1, 4 October 1935, p. 41.


104 Despite its advocacy of the emancipation achieved by Egyptian women, which it demonstrated by publishing such pictures as the unveiled Hudā Hānum Shārawī, Medan Lelaki was sometimes quite cynical about the behaviour of some emancipated Egyptian women such as Aminah Shakib who posed while smoking a cigarette which it believed should not be followed by their Malay counterparts. The same remarks also accompanied the picture of Laṭifah Nādī, an Egyptian women pilot, and the picture of Zainab Shakib, an Egyptian prima donna (See Medan Lelaki, Vol. 1, No. 2, 4 October 1935). The journal al-Hikmah also published pictures of emancipated Egyptian women such as three successful female students who had passed their final year of a medical degree (See Al-Hikmah, Vol. 2, No. 79, 19 March 1936, p. 14). Likewise, the journal al-Ikhwan also published several pictures which depicted the achievements of Egyptian women, such as a picture of a group of girls in Western dress being...
Before the outbreak of World War II, in addition to the Malay interest in novels with an Egyptian background translated or adapted by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi and themes of the emancipation of Egyptian women, these was also a growing fascination in the community with Egyptian films, which demonstrated another aspect of the country's progress. It was reported that when these films were screened in Singapore the cinema had a full house. A further interest in these films was manifested when several books based on them were published as a result of the interest shown, so that a greater number of fans could enjoy the stories of the films. To satisfy their readers, these books tried to elaborate every aspect of the films; this enterprise was spearheaded by Mohamad bin Hamid and the publisher Jasa Sepakat.

The first book he published was based on the film Bint al-Basha al-Mudir or Anak Perempuan Pesuruhjaya (The Daughter of a Commissioner) translated by Ahmad bin Sagaf al-Sagoff and Muhammad Fadlullah. The book contained the dialogue and was accompanied by scenes from the film printed in white, green, red and black. By this means it was hoped that those who read it would feel as though as they were seeing the film. The success of this book led Mohamad bin Hamid to publish a number of other books based on Egyptian films. As in his earlier

sent to England by their government to specialise in teaching (Vol. 1, No. 2, 16 October 1926, p. 6), the picture of Firdaus Bisyünī, the first Egyptian woman to graduate from the University of Cambridge, specialising in English, History and Geography (Vol. 1, No 5, 16 January 1927, p. 98), the picture of Rūz al-Yūsuf, who studied film making and later edited a journal that propagated the spread of knowledge (Vol. 1, No. 5, 16 January 1927, p. 99) and the picture of Fāţimah Rushdī, an Egyptian actress who received recognition in her art and acted with an Italian actress (Vol. 3, No. 10, 16 June 1929, p. 324). Also related to the issue the journal published the picture of Qāsim Amīn, who championed the cause of women's emancipation (Vol. 1, No. 11, 16 July 1927, p. 212).

105 See introduction Mohamad bin Hamid, Yahya al-Hubb atau Kekallah Kekasih, Singapore: Jasa Sepakat, 6 November 1939.

106 See the introduction, Mohamad bin Hamid, Anak Perempuan Pesuruhjaya, Singapore: Jasa Sepakat, 1 November 1938.

107 In addition to the books Bint al-Basha al-Mudir atau Anak Perempuan Pesuruhjaya and Yahya al-Hubb atau Kekallah Kekasih (translated by Muhammad bin Umar al-Maqad) other books published by him and the publisher Jasa Sepakat include al-Ward al-Baidha atau Ros Putih di Neger Mesir, Singapore: 1 April 1939; Dumu' al-Hubb atau Airmata Percintaan, Singapore: 1941; Lail al-Kaherah atau Masa Malam di Kaherah, Singapore: 1 April 1940 (translated by Jamal bin Ahmad al-Junid and Muhammad bin Umar Maqad) and Lail al-Mumtir atau Malam Yang Berhujan, Singapore: 7 February 1941. Even though only six books were available for this study, which are all kept at the Oriental and India Office Collection of the British Library, another book Yaum Said was also advertised, but no copy is available.
books, colour pictures were also printed, together with the cast of actors and actresses and the sequence of scenes. One of the famous heroes in these films was Muḥammad "Abd al-Wahhāb, who was also a well-known singer, while the most depicted heroine was Laylā Murād. In addition to publishing these books, Jasa Sepakat also advertised the sale of postcards featuring famous Egyptian actors and actresses for interested readers.108 Despite the fact that these films were all romantic films with a middle-class setting, as in the case of al-Hadi’s novels, the Malays were generally receptive of their advent as part of Malay entertainment. The pioneering effort of translating the film into Malay in order to reach a wider audience was undertaken by none other than Muhammad Fadlullah, a well-known ʿālim educated at al-Azhar, which indicates at least that these films were sanctioned by certain sections of the religious circle.

Prior to the Wahhabi takeover of Hijaz, Makkah was normally looked to for a ruling when religious disputes arose in Malaya. In the 1930s, even though the religious influence of Makkah still persisted, Cairo and the authority of the ʿulamā’ of al-Azhar began to gain dominance. Apart from belonging to the same madhhab, the Shāfīʿi, their progressive views were sought for because they were more relevant to contemporary problems. This was the case in the early 1930s in Melaka, when there was a religious dispute over the use of a kind of wooden drum (ketuk-ketuk) to call to prayers.109 The stir was said to have been created following a visit to the state by Shaykh Hassan Yamani, former Mufti of Makkah.110 Following an

These books which are based on Egyptian films seem to have been popularly received since according to Md. Sidin, the Government Gazette shows that 3,000 copies of Bint al-Basha al-Mudir atau Anak Perempuan Pesuruhjaya and 2,000 copies of Yahya al-Hubb atau Kekallah Kekasih (figure for other books is not available) were printed. See Sidin Ahmad Ishak, "Malay Book Publishing", Vol. 2, op.cit., p. 122.

108 See Lail al-Mumtir atau Malam Yang Berhujan, Singapore: Jasa Sepakat, 7 February 1941. The address of the publisher where the postcards could be ordered was 150, Lorong Engku Aman, Singapore.

109 For a discussion on the use of drums to call to prayer at the mosque, see R.A. Blasdell, "The Use of the Drum For Mosque Services", The Moslem World, Vol. XXX, No. 1, January 1940, pp. 41-45.

intense controversy, on 17 September 1932, a gathering of ‘ulamā’ was organised to discuss the issue.111

One of the participants in the gathering, Haji Abdul Latif Tambi, gave his opinion that the use of ketuk-ketuk was permissible not forbidden, because it was entirely different from the naqus used by churches. His opinion, however, was not accepted by other members of the gathering. As a consensus, both parties agreed to refer the matter to the ‘ulamā’ of al-Azhar with a picture of the ketuk-ketuk enclosed, so that a fatwā (legal ruling) could be given and both parties should abide by it once it was given.112 It is not known whether the ‘ulamā’ of al-Azhar did deliver the fatwā or not, but the decision to refer the matter to Cairo at least managed to calm the tense situation.113

A similar fatwā from the Shaykh al-Azhar was also requested in Kelantan in the mid-1930s following a controversy over dog saliva, which was sparked by a Dalmatian hound kept domestically by Tengku Ibrahim, the Raja Kelantan, heir-apparent and younger brother of the Sultan of Kelantan.114 It centred around the questions on the status of a dog’s saliva upon contact with the human body.115

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112 Suara Benar, 20 September 1932, additional pages.

113 Interestingly, the dispute was solved when, while waiting for the reply, the nephew of Haji Abdul Latif Tambi stumbled across an article in an English newspaper which showed a picture of a Christian priest hitting a naqus in a church. The finding was made known to the community and based on this picture, it was concluded that the dispute was a non-issue since there was no similarity between the two. The finding put the controversy to rest and ketuk-ketuk continued to be used in the state without controversy. See Abdul Rahim Abdullah, "Haji Abdul Latif Haji Tambi - Penulis Buku-Buku Agama Sebelum Perang Dunia Kedua", Warisan Sastera Melaka, Melaka: Lembaga Bahasa Melayu Melaka, 1984, pp. 102-103.


115 The controversy started when following his return to Kota Bharu from a long educational sojourn in India and Makkah, Haji Nik Abdullah (1900-1935) the son of Hj. Wan Musa the former Mufti (1908-1916) was called by Tengku Ibrahim bin Sultan Muhammad IV to the palace (Istana Cemerlang). It was while discussing various religious issues that Haji Nik Abdullah was asked by Tengku Ibrahim about the permissibility of keeping a dog and what was the status of the human body if it was contaminated by its saliva. In answering the question, Haji Nik Abdullah said it was indeed permissible to keep a dog for household security. As for the second question, Haji Nik Abdullah gave his opinion according to the doctrine of Imam Shafi’i and Imam Malik by saying that according to the latter the
The opinion of Nik Abdullah on the issue was contested by several ‘ulamā’, including Hj. Ibrahim Hj. Yusoff (Mufti), Haji Ahmad Mahir b. Haji Ismail, Haji Abdullah Tahir Hj. Ahmad and Haji Ahmad Haji Abdul Manan, supported by Tengku Maharani, Tengku Ibrahim’s sister.116

The issue became a matter of public disputation in Kota Bharu, but Nik Abdullah shortly thereafter died suddenly. After his death his opinion was pursued by his father Hj. Wan Musa Wan Abdul Samad. To settle the issue, eventually Tengku Ibrahim called a public council of debate (Majlis Muzakarah) to discuss it. The Majlis Muzakarah was held in public at Istana Cemerlang in January 1937 and was attended by more than two thousand people, the largest public gathering known in Kelantan, according to reports. The result of the debate was inconclusive inasmuch as the two sides held firmly to their opinion, supported by argument and text (naṣṣ) from the Qur‘ān, Ḥadīth and commentators.117

Following the deadlock in the discussions, Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha wrote a book which contained the opinions given by the four major madhhabs on the issue.118 Haji Wan Musa also produced a hand-written work which contained both the opposing views (on the religious ruling of keeping dog and the status of its saliva), including the opinion given by Shaykh Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, the Shaykh al-Azhar.119 To ensure the validity of the opinion, the Sultan of Kelantan himself

body was not obliged to undergo special ritual cleansing in consequence of coming into contact with it, but it was according to the ruling of the former. Since there was a difference between the rulings, in his opinion it was up to the individuals to choose which one was preferable. In his view all the opinions from the four major madhhabs, Ḥanafī, Ḥanbalī, Mālikī and Shāfi‘ī could be practiced by the public, at least by the principle of talfīq, or combination of madhhabs. See Nik Abdul Aziz b. Haji Nik Hassan, "Perbahasan Tentang Jilatan Anjing: Suatu Perhatian", Jebat, No. 9, 1979/80, pp. 173-174.

Ibid., p. 174.

117 On the side of Tengku Ibrahim, the participants were Haji Wan Musa (ex-Mufti), Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha (the Chief Qāḍī of Singapore) and Burhanuddin bin Muhammad Nor (Secretary of ‘Ulāmā’ Council Singapore). Meanwhile on the side of Tengku Maharani were Haji Ibrahim b. Haji Yusoff (the Mufti of Kelantan), Haji Ahmad b. Ismail (Chief Qāḍī) and two other ‘ulamā’, Haji Ahmad b. Abdul Manan and Haji Abdullah Tahir b. Ahmad (members of Kelantan ‘Ulāmā’ Council). See William R. Roff, "Whence Cometh the Law?", op.cit., p. 325.


119 Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Hassan, "Perbahasan Tentang Jilatan Anjing", op.cit., p. 117.
decided to send questions on the matter to Shaykh Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī for a fatwā.120 The latter gave his fatwā on 1 April 1937, which was similar to that given by the late Haji Nik Abdullah. According to this fatwā, it was indeed permissible to keep a dog for household security and according to the doctrine of Imam Shāfīʻī the body was obliged to undergo special ritual cleansing in consequence of coming into contact with it, but not according to the ruling of Imam Mālik.121 These events proved that the views of the Shaykh al-Azhar were always taken seriously by the Malays in disputes over matters of religion.

The Malays’ special regard for Egypt clearly stemmed from its achievements as a Muslim nation which had undergone modernisation by adopting Western techniques, but had maintained the Islamic tradition. The social transformation that had taken place in the country as a result of this process was taken as an ideal model, and to a large majority the changes were relatively acceptable and they tried to emulate them. The new ideas from there, even though western-originated, adopted by Egyptian modernists, were taken up by Egyptian-influenced Malays as part of their own struggle, as in the case of women’s emancipation. The role played by the University of al-Azhar was also important in elevating Malay regard for Egypt, because its ‘ulamā‘, particularly the modernists, were looked upon as Muslim intellectuals whose opinions were taken as more relevant to the current doctrinal questions of Islam. Egypt as a model, however, was most important and lasting in its influence on the development of modern religious education in Malaya, since madrasahs based on it were established by al-Azhar graduates in their effort to spread both religious and modern knowledge which would suit contemporary needs.

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120 Al-Hikmah, Vol. 138, No. 4, 1 May 1937, p. 10; Quoted from Mohd. Sarim Hj. Mustajab, "Haji Wan Musa & Abdul Samad - Ulama Iṣlah di Kolel Bharu", Akademi vol. 12, January 1978, p. 22. Shaykh Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī (1881-1945) was a Chief Qāḍī in Sudan from 1908 to 1919 and in 1928 he was appointed successively as Chief Inspector of the Religious Court in Egypt, President of the Religious Court of First Instance, Member and then President of Religious High Court. From August 1928 to October 1929 and again from 1935 until his death in 1945 he was the Shaykh al-Azhar. See Elie Kedourie, "Egypt and the Caliphate 1915-1946", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1963, p. 209.

121 Nik Abd. Aziz Hj. Nik Hassan, "Perbahanan Tentang Jilatan Anjing", op.cit., p. 177. Apart from the works of Haji AbbasMohd. Taha and Haji Wan Musa, another work relating to the debate about keeping a dog and the status of its saliva when coming into contact with the human body which contained almost the same opinions was written by Fadlullah Muhammad. See Fadlullah Muhammad, Risalah Tanbih al-Tullab fi Aṭkām al-Killāb, Melaka: Latifiyah Press, 1937.
Reformists and Malay Journalism

The modern intellectual awakening in Egypt experienced a remarkably rapid progress with the advent of the printing press. The first printing press set up in Egypt was at Bulaq in 1822 at the request of Muḥammad ʿAlī as part of his modernisation programme. In the following decades, the Egyptian press experienced a rapid development and this also led to the flowering of newspaper publications. Parallel with this growth came the rise of political journalism, which provided new dimensions in the spreading of ideas, and strongly contributed to the moulding of public opinion throughout the Islamic World and in bringing about intellectual renaissance. Political journalism in Egypt started with a modest beginning when ʿAbd Allāh Effendi Abū al-Suʿūd, a student of Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī at the School of Languages, launched the bi-weekly Wādī al-Nīl in 1866. But it was not until 1877 that the growth of political journalism there really began to flourish with the publication of, among others, Abū Naẓẓāra Zarqāʾ, Miṣr, al-Waṭān, Miʿrāṭ al-Sharq in Cairo, and al-Tījārā and Miʿrāṭ al-Fatāt in Alexandria, which enjoyed different degrees of longevity and influence.

During this period, however, Malay journalism was too much in its infancy to be influenced by Egyptian political journalism. At this early stage, the

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123 By 1909, there were altogether eighty four daily newspapers published all over Egypt including thirty nūṭā in Arabic, thirty nine in European languages and six in other oriental languages. See George Swan, "The Muslim Press in Egypt", *The Muslim World*, Vol. 1, Part 2, April 1911, p. 149.


125 P.J. Vatikiotis, *The Modern History of Egypt*, op.cit., p. 169. The newspaper was financed by Khedive Ismail and served as a mouth-piece for his policies.


127 The first Malay newspaper only appeared in 1876 with the publication of Jawi Peranakan. This weekly newspaper appeared for about nineteen years before it ceased publication in April 1895. The newspaper was somewhat lacking in political comment and only provided a general and brief local and foreign news coverage for its readers. See William R. Roff, *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic Periodicals*, London: Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 3.
association of Malay journalism with Egypt was limited to translating news from Egyptian newspapers, particularly toward the end of the nineteenth century when there was growing interest in Malay and Islamic circles in the troubled affairs of the declining Ottoman Empire.\footnote{128} One of the journals which regularly reported news from the Middle East at length, translating passages from Egyptian and other newspapers, was 

*Chahaya Pulau Pinang*, first published in 1900.\footnote{129} With the emergence of a new Malay reading public educated in Egypt or fascinated with developments there, Egyptian newspapers began to find a wider audience in Malaya and slowly exerted a certain degree of influence over Malay literary life.\footnote{130}

The influence of Egyptian journalism on Malay thought, however, reached a new level when *al-Imam* was published. The appearance of *al-Imam*, as one researcher put it, came so suddenly that one could in fact say that it was anachronistic. There were no obvious indigenous movements or growing trends to suggest that it appearance might be imminent. In fact, the publication of the journal was almost an Egyptian transplant, as if the debates raging in Cairo had been suddenly moved to this region.\footnote{131} *Al-Imam* was directly influenced by the journal *al-Manār* (The Lighthouse) under the editorship of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who was greatly influenced by the ideas of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad

\footnote{128} Ibid., p. 5.


\footnote{130} Zainal Abidin b. Ahmad, "Malay Journalism in Malaya", *JMBRAS*, Vol. XIX, 1941, p. 245.

Abduh. Its publication could also be described as a manifestation of their modernist thought in Malay society.

One the most prominent Malays who subscribed to al-Manār right from the start of its publication, and who while in Egypt was befriended by Rashīd Riḍā, was Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin. It was due to Riḍā’s own effort as well as his association with Abduh that al-Manār managed to find readers throughout the Muslim World, including Malaya. The influence of Rashīd Riḍā and al-Manār led to the publication of al-Imam (The Leader/The Guide) initiated by Shaykh Tahir on 23 July 1906 (1 Jamada al-Akhir, 1324AH) in Jawi, which continued for thirty one issues, until it stopped publication in December 1908. The effort by Shaykh Tahir to publish al-Imam was supported by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi and Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha and financed by Shaykh Mohd. Salim al-Khalali, all of whom lived in Singapore. Later, in early March 1908, through the efforts of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, Sayyid Hassan bin Shahab and Sayyid Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya, other

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132 In actual fact, °Abduh was influenced by al-Afghāni. Both of them, however, influenced Rashīd Riḍā and this may be seen by looking at his writings in al-Manār. The core of the influence was Riḍā’s belief, shared with Afghāni and °Abduh, that Islam was political and social as well as spiritual. The religion if properly understood and obeyed would bring strength and success to the community in this world, as well as salvation to the individual in the next. To revive these qualities, they believed that Muslims should return to the true teaching of Islam as underlined by the Qur’ān and Sunnah (Tradition). Rashīd Riḍā was generally regarded as the successor of Muḥammad °Abduh. See Assad Nimer Busool, "Shaykh Muhammad Rashid Riḍa’s Relations with Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghāni and Muhammad °Abduh", The Muslim World, Vol. LXVI, No. 4, October 1976, p. 286. See also Salahuddin al-Munajjid, "The Principles of Ijtihad as Laid Down By Muhammad Rashid Ridá", Studies in Islam, Vol. X1, Nos. 1-2, January-April 1974, pp. 51-58.


134 See Emad Eldin Shahin, Through Muslim Eyes: M. Rashid Ridā and the West, Herndon, Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993, p. 10. Al-Manār was published in 1898 as a weekly, and after one year as a monthly journal. It was published regularly, except for a short period during World War I when it was irregular, due to paper shortage. Al-Manār only ceased publication when Rashid Riḍā died in 1935, after a span of thirty years under his editorship. See Sylvia G. Haim, "The Palestine Problem in al-Manār", in Amnon Cohen and Gabriel Baer (eds.), Egypt and Palestine. A Millennium of Association, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984, p. 299.

financial backers of *al-Imam*, a limited company, Al-Imam Printing Company, with a capital of $20,000, was formed to publish the journal.\(^{136}\)

Almost all those who were involved in the publication of *al-Imam* had been exposed to current developments in the Middle East and had a sentimental link with Egypt. They also subscribed to Egyptian modernist ideas and believed in the need to reform the Malay society.\(^{137}\) To achieve these aims the journal was named *al-Imam* in order "to remind those who are forgetful, to awaken those who are asleep and to lead those who have gone astray, and to communicate news of hope to them".\(^{138}\) The objective of *al-Imam* was similar of that of *al-Manâr* and the fact of the similarity become absolutely clear when it stated in its twelfth issue that, "*al-Imam* is a mortal enemy of all sorts of *bid'ah* (religious innovations), superstition, imitations and alien customs which intrude into the religion", an objective which was similar to that of the reformist journal published by Rashîd Riğa.\(^{139}\) Since the editors of *al-Imam* were strongly influenced by *al-Manâr* and the reformist ideas of Egypt, it is not surprising that one of its most important features was its strong inclination to imitate the latter. Many of the articles published in *al-Imam* were either an elaboration of or a translation of articles taken from *al-Manâr*.\(^{140}\)

\(^{136}\) *Al-Imam*, Vol. 2, No. 9, 5 May 1908, pp. 292-293.


\(^{139}\) Compare these objectives with that of *al-Manâr*, "... to promote social, religious and economic reforms; to prove the suitability of Islam as a religious system under present conditions, and the practicality of the Divine Law as an instrument of government; to remove superstition and beliefs that do not belong to Islam, and to counteract false teachings and interpretations of Muslim beliefs...; to promote general education, together with the reform of text-books and methods of education, and to encourage progress in the sciences and arts; and to arouse the Muslim nations to competition with other nations in all matters which are essential to national progress". See Charles C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, New York: Russell & Russell, 1968, p. 181.

\(^{140}\) Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, "Modern Muslim Thought in Egypt and its Impact on Islam in Malaya", PhD. Thesis, University of London, 1965, p. 384. Zaki, who had studied *al-Manâr*, is convinced that many of the issues published by *al-Imam* are actually articles translated from the former, although it was seldom acknowledged by the latter. Despite the fact that in certain cases Zaki was unable to trace the Arabic sources, he hesitated to assert that such articles were an original contribution (see p. 390).
In its first issue, one of the articles published by al-Imam was headed "The Proper Task". This article was probably an elaboration of a speech given by Muḥammad ʿAbduh at the Sultaniyah School in Beirut, in which among other things, he stated that the knowledge needed by the Muslims was the knowledge of religion.141 A parallel to and elaboration of this speech can also be seen when the writer of al-Imam exhorts Muslims to acquire skills in craftsmanship and agriculture and to defend the country from its enemies. It also stresses the importance of education in order to rescue the Muslims from apathy, and the need for unity. The total following of the teaching of Islam is regarded as the only remedy for all ills faced by the Ummah.142

Another typical instance of al-Manār's influence on al-Imam was the latter's attitude to ribā as conveyed in its eleventh issue, which was obviously a translation of what had been published in the former.143 From the third issue of the third volume, al-Imam also began to publish Muḥammad ʿAbduh's Tafsīr, taken directly from al-Manār. In addition, there was also a section on education (al-Tarbiyah Wa al-Ta'lim) which contained a great deal of translated material taken from the similar section of al-Manār.144 The close relation between al-Imam and al-Manār was not only due to Shaykh Tahir, but to Rashīd Riḍā himself who acknowledged the existence of such a relationship. In his obituary of Sayyid Muhammad bin ʿAqil bin Yahya, Rashīd Riḍā mentions that the Sayyid told him of his intention to publish the journal al-Imam with the aim of publicising the reformist aims of al-Manār in the Malay language, and that the articles published in it would rely chiefly on what they translated from the latter.145

141 Ibid., p. 388.
142 Ibid., p. 388.
143 HAMKA, Ajahku, op.cit., p. 94.
145 Al-Manār, Vol. XXX11, p. 239; Cited from Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, "Modern Muslim Thought", op.cit., p. 385. Sayyid Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya was a Hadhrami Arab with extensive business interests in the Malay World, India and the Middle East. He was also a contributor to the Egyptian newspaper
Al-Imam was a widely circulated journal with a print of 5,000 copies at its height, the highest number ever attained by a Malay journal before World War II. The journal was also widely read, with its distributing agents found in all over the Malay World. Al-Imam, however, was forced to suspend its publication at the end of 1908 due to financial problems. Zaki, who studied al-Imam, while aware of the financial difficulties faced by the journal, is however, of the opinion that its termination was also contributed to by ideological reasons. Rashid Riqa reported that after the collapse of the journal, Sayyid Muhammad visited Egypt and informed him of the closure. It was also reported that the ruler of Egypt, Abbas II made an offer to finance al-Imam so that it could be published again, but the offer did not materialise and no reason was specified.


147 For a list of its distributors found almost all over Malaya as well as in Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Thailand, see al-Imam, Vol. 1, No. 2, August 1906.

148 HAMKA, Ajahku, op.cit., p. 94. Zainon Ahmad believed that financial problems were the reason behind its closure. As a result of the failure of Raja Ali Kelana's venture in the Bantam Brickworks, his financial contributions to the journal, after the withdrawal of Arab support, dried up. See Zainon Ahmad, "The Life, Times and Thoughts", op.cit., p. 23.

149 See Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, "Modern Muslim Thought", op.cit., p. 387. Zaki links its termination with ideological causes, since following an attack by al-Manar on the 'Alawis, relations between Rashid Riq'a and Sayyid Muhammad deteriorated and led the latter and his Arab 'Alawi group to withdraw their financial support for al-Imam. Sayyid Muhammad was unhappy when it appeared that Rashid Riq'a was inclined to be more favourable to the Irshadis, who were closer to reformist ideas than the Arab 'Alawis of whom Sayyid Muhammad was one of the leaders. Even though there was an element of ideology which contributed to the termination of al-Imam, ultimately, however, it was financial problems which dealt the crucial blow that led to its closedown.

After al-Imam ceased publication, another journal, al-Munir (the Illuminating) was founded on 1 April 1911 by several 'ulamā' of Padang, West Sumatra.\footnote{HAMKA, Ajahku, op.cit., p. 95.} Under the editorship of Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933), the journal continued to be published until 1916. Like al-Imam, it was also an influential and widely circulated journal among Muslim intelligentsia in the Malay World and it too was strongly influenced by al-Manār.\footnote{See Wan Salim Wan Mohd. Noor, "A Study of the Development of Reformist Ijtihad and Some of its Applications in the Twentieth Century," PhD. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1988, p. 300.} Later, when Neracha was published in 1911 under the editorship of Haji Abbas Mohd Taha, who was also one of the founder members of al-Imam, it also published articles taken from al-Manār.\footnote{Mohd. Sarim Hj. Mustajab, "Neraca 1910 - Jun 1915. Penyambung Nafas Islah al-Imam", Jurnal Budaya Melayu, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1978, p. 97.} When al-Ikhwan was published in 1926, it bore a strong resemblance to al-Imam. Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, who was another founder-member of al-Imam, propagandised energetically in al-Ikhwan a variety of reformist ideas, which showed a strong influence from al-Manār.\footnote{William R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, op.cit., 165.}

The influence of al-Manār and Rashīd Riḍā in the Malay World, however, was not confined to the al-Imam circle. Even the English educated Za'ba subscribed to al-Manār and corresponded with Rashīd Riḍā from late 1918 until the latter's death in 1935.\footnote{Adnan Haji Mohd. Nawang, "Biografi Za'ba Dengan Rujukan Khas Kepada Perjuangannya": M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1982, pp. 124-126.} Another Malay who was also known to have subscribed to the journal and corresponded with Rashīd Riḍā was Haji Wan Musa Haji Abdul Samad, the Mufti of Kelantan (1908-1916).\footnote{Mohd. Kamil Hj. Abdul Majid, "Sejarah Dakwah Islam di Kelantan", Berita Harian, 5 October 1990. For the letter from Haji Wan Musa to Rashid Riḍā on the question of talqīn and the latter's reply, see Nik Abdul Aziz b. Haji Nik Hassan, Sejarah Perkembangan Ulama Kelantan, Kota Bharu: Pustaka Aman Press, Sdn. Bhd., 1977, Appendix 10, pp. 212-215.} The journal al-Manār was also popularly read, particularly by progressive 'ulamā' in Kelantan including Tok Kenali and Haji

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\footnote{HAMKA, Ajahku, op.cit., p. 95.}
\footnote{William R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, op.cit., 165.}
\footnote{Adnan Haji Mohd. Nawang, "Biografi Za'ba Dengan Rujukan Khas Kepada Perjuangannya": M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1982, pp. 124-126.}
\end{footnotesize}
Muhammad Said. Those who read al-Manâr, and corresponded with Rashîd Riḍâ, however, were not absolutely monolithic in their thought, which varies from one individual to another with regard to the latter’s ideas or to their own reactions. In general, most of them subscribed to his reformist thought, although the case of Haji Wan Musa differs from the others, since despite his advocacy of certain reformist ideas, he also taught tasawwuf and accepted the institutional role of the tariqah. He rejected an imitative role in learning and taqlid, but wished to preserve the content of Sufi doctrine, stressing in his instruction the role of intellect, intuition and emotion.158

The journal al-Manâr also proved to be a popular and widely read Arabic journal in the Malay World. The Malay subscribers were among its readers who were active in reacting to the issues it raised. On one hand, al-Manâr was equally positive in its reaction to the questions put forward by its Malay correspondents. When one reader, Muhammad Bisyuni Imran, contributed a letter to the journal addressed to Amîr Shâkîb Arsalân, which questioned the current state of Muslim degradation, including the Malays, and the spectacular progress achieved by Europe, United States of America and Japan, the journal responded by publishing a series of Arsalân’s answers in articles entitled “Our Decline and its Causes”.159 Throughout its period of publication, al-Manâr (1898-1936) provided a forum for its Malay readers, who addressed some 134 requests for legal opinions and 126 communications to the journal, such as letters commenting on previous articles it


159 See Amir Shakib Arsalan, Our Decline and its Causes (trans. by M.A. Shakoor), Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1962, pp. 1X & X.
published, and letters requesting and furnishing advice and information on specific questions.\(^{160}\)

The influence of *al-Manār* on the Malays was not only confined to the reformist thought and the idea of progress it advocated, but also extended to other issues it propagandised. One issue on which the journal was the earliest and the most articulate, was the issue of Palestine and how it affected the Muslims outside the region.\(^{161}\) The plight of the Palestinian Arabs, championed by *al-Manār* was viewed with sympathy by Malay reformists who read the journal and were aware of developments there. One of them was Shaykh Junid Tola, who while in Egypt was involved with the al-Jam'iyyah al-Khairiyyah and was influenced by Rījā's thought. His commitment to the Palestinian cause was shown when while in Padang Rengas he was actively involved in collecting donations for the cause.\(^{162}\)

The flourishing state of Egyptian political journalism also led to other journals published there in addition to *al-Manār* being subscribed to by Malays. Among these journals were *al-Ahram*, *al-Muṣawwar* and *al-Hilāl*, which were subscribed to more as a means to keep up to date with current developments.\(^{163}\) Others also read these journals for their literary interest.\(^{164}\) Comparatively, however, these journals


\(^{162}\) See Siti Hanifah Ahmad, "Shaykh Junid Tola", op. cit., p. 107. Receipts for donations found later in his house in Padang Rengas proved the active role played by Shaykh Junid in supporting the cause.

\(^{163}\) In Kelantan the honorary editor of the journal *Pengasoh*, Tok Kenali, in order to keep himself abreast of events also read Egyptian journals such as *al-Ahram*, *Kull Shayr* and *al-Muqaffam*, which contained news on worldly affairs. Being an "ālim who gave lectures in Kota Bharu, he also encouraged his pupils to do likewise. See Khoo Kay Kim, "Malay Society, 1870-1920s", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. V, No. 2, September 1984, p. 187. The journal *al-Hilāl* was also known to have been subscribed to by Za'ba. See Adnan Haji Mohd. Nawang, "Biografi Za'ba", op. cit., pp. 125-126.

\(^{164}\) In Trengganu a prominent writer and literary figure, Mohd. Salleh Haji Awang, popularly known as MISBAHA, admitted that his interest in writing during his student days was greatly influenced by Egyptian newspapers like *al-Ahram*, *al-Muṣawwar*, *al-Dunya*, and *al-Hilāl*, which were subscribed to by the teachers of Madrasah Sultan Zainal Abidin. See Rahmat bin Saripan, "Kegiatan Misbaha Dalam Persuratan dan Sejarah Dari Tahun 1930-an Hingga 1950-an: Satu Penilaian", in Khoo Kay Kim (ed),
were not as influential as al-Manār, even though they created some sort of interest for Egypt as an example of a modern Muslim country with progressive Islamic thought. In the late 1920s and 1930s this attention was widened to interest in its social and economic progress, and one journal, Semangat Islam even had its representative in Cairo, who regularly reported on developments there.\textsuperscript{165}

The new interest in Egypt during the period also generated a new phenomenon, whereby articles on and pictures of the country were regularly featured by a number of Malay journals.\textsuperscript{166} When the journal Dunia Akhirat was first published, most of the pictures it published were of Egypt.\textsuperscript{167} Despite this Malay interest in Egypt, not much was written on its history. One of the earliest Malay-language histories of the country concerned its ancient past, and was published in serial form in Seruan Azhar by Abdul Wahab Abdullah, a student at King Fārūq al-Thānawiyah, Cairo.\textsuperscript{168} The entire work was subsequently published


\textsuperscript{166} Among the journals were Seruan Azhar, which published pictures of King Fu’ād (Vol. 1, No. 3, December 1926), Shaykh *Abd Allah al-Sharqāwī (Vol. 1, No. 5, February 1927), Shaykh Muḥammad Abu Fadl al-Jūzāwī (Vol. 2, No. 23 & 24, August & September 1927), Sa’d Zaghlūl (Vol. 3, No. 25, October 1927), Ibrāhīm Pāshā together with his life and struggle (Vol. 3, No. 30, March 1928, Ibrāhīm Pāshā (Vol. 3, No. 31, April 1928) and a picture of the University of al-Azhar (Vol. 3, No. 32, May 1928); Al-Hikmah published a picture of King Fārūq and his Prime Minister, ‘Alī Māhir in a carriage on its front page (Vol. 3, No. 34, 2 July 1936). The journal Medan Leilāki which claimed to be the first Islamic illustrated weekly journal in Malaya, published in its first issue (Vol. 1, No. 1, 27 September 1935) a picture of the late Sa’d Zaghlūl, the leader of the Wafd Party in its front page. In the same issue a picture of Na’Tmah *Aliyah al-Ayyūbī, the first woman lawyer of Egypt (p. 10), Muṣṭafā Kāmil, leader of the Nationalist Party, Muṣṭafā Naḥḥās Pāshā, the leader of the Wafd Party (p. 15), Hüriyyah al-Idırīs (p. 17) who won the beauty contest in Summer 1934 and Prince Fārūq, the heir to the throne (p. 23). Other pictures printed by the journal were of al-Shaykh al-Ḥamdī al-Tawāhīrī, Shaykh al-Azhār together with *Abd al-Majīd Sa‘īd, the Muftī of Egypt (Vol. 1, No. 1, 4 October 1935, p. 141). When al-Shaykh Muḥammād al-Bakhīl, the Muftī of Egypt, passed away on 18 October 1935, the journal printed his picture in the front page accompanied by an elaboration of his life. (Vol. 1, No. 9, 22 November 1935).

\textsuperscript{167} See Dunia Akhirat, Vol. 1, No. 1, 25 July 1936. These pictures include a building constructed by waqf donations and seven pictures depicting various events during the celebration of the Prophet’s birthday.

\textsuperscript{168} The first section of the history was published in Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1925, pp. 16-17. The following sections appeared irregularly with the tenth and the final section appearing in Vol. 2, No. 14, November 1926, pp. 273-274 of the journal. Later Majalah Guru published two articles on the history of the Arabs with the second instalment dedicated to the ancient history of Egypt (see Majalah
as a book entitled *Tarikh Orang Mesir Yang Purbakala* (History of Ancient Egypt), in the introduction to which the author expressed his hope that the contents "would stir its readers to the quest for knowledge and encourage the involvement of Malay sons in organisation and trade for their well-being".  

The single most significant influence of Egyptian journalism on Malay society was the spread of reformist thought through the role played by *al-Manār* and Rashīd Riḍā. This thought, however, managed to reach a wider audience when *al-Imam* was published with the aim of awakening and spreading these ideas to the Malays. Even though *al-Imam* was short-lived, the ideas it promoted continued to live and pursued by other journals, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s. The kind of journalism pioneered by *al-Imam*, which called for social and religious awareness, also created a Malay interest in Egypt as a source for inspiration from which they believed this awareness could be obtained.

**Social Change and Political Awareness**

From the early years of the twentieth century, Egypt had been a breeding ground for nationalist movements with an Islamic flavour, initiated by the growth of the reformist movement spearheaded by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī a few decades earlier. Afghānī's ideas, which also led to the growth of Pan-Islamism, were initiated by al-Afghānī, see for example Jamal Mohammed Ahmed, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism*, London: Oxford University Press, 1960, pp. 27-29; Nikki R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Afghānī. A Political Biography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972; Jacques Jomier,
dominant in Egypt until the early years of the twentieth century and were more important at that stage than Arab or Egyptian nationalism.\textsuperscript{171} Afghānī's Pan-Islamic appeal, however, did not receive any remarkable response in Malaya as compared to the Arab World or the Indian sub-continent.\textsuperscript{172}

It was, however, his reformist thought which called Muslims to carry out necessary internal reforms, and deeply influenced the two Arab thinkers Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905) and Rashīd Riḍā (1865-1935), who actually managed to exert a certain degree of influence in Malaya.\textsuperscript{173} Through contacts between them and Malay religious intellectuals while they were studying in Egypt, the influential Islamic modernist doctrines being promoted at al-Azhar University by the reform group which came to be known as the Manār group after its journal al-Manār, spread among the Malays. In Malaya this group also came to be labelled as Kaum Muda (Young Faction) because it so happened that most of its activists were relatively young. Another possible reason for such a derogatory label being given by their adversaries was to associate them with the Young Turks of Turkey, whose policies were viewed as deviating from the true teaching of Islam. This labelling according to Sidek Haji Fadzil was also intended to undermine the struggle of Kaum Muda, despite the fact that their objective was to call for the return to the divine path of Islam.\textsuperscript{174}


\textsuperscript{172} The life and struggle of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī was published by Seruan Azhar. See \textit{Seruan Azhar}, Vol. 1, No. 9, June 1926.

\textsuperscript{173} Apart from internal reforms, these Arab thinkers also called on Muslims to emulate Western progress and to cultivate modern scientific and philosophical knowledge which would enable them to achieve regeneration and strength. For a discussion on the need of reforms in Muslim society, see for example Fazlur Rahman, "Revival and Reform in Islam", in P.M. Holt, A.K.S. Lambton and Bernard Lewis (eds.), \textit{The Cambridge History of Islam}, Vol. 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 642; Nikki R. Keddie, \textit{Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Afghānī}. op.cit., p. 141. The life and struggle of Muḥammad ʿAbduh was published by a number of Malay journals. See for example \textit{Seruan Azhar}, Vol. 2, No. 13, October 1926 and \textit{Dunia Melayu}, Vol. 2, No. 8, 20 July 1930, pp. 400-401.

Their more conservative ideological and theological opponents who strongly opposed their religious doctrines were called Kaum Tua (Old Faction). As a better established group, the Kaum Tua together with the Malay aristocracy and administrative backing, whenever required from the British, managed to check the activity of Kaum Muda. Denied any access to the religious establishments, the Kaum Muda opened modern religious schools and published journals in order to spread their doctrines. It was through these channels that they disseminated their reformist thought to the general public in their effort to bring about social change in the society. Their pioneering effort in spreading this thought was championed by the journal al-Imam, which right from its first issue had taken upon itself the task of exhorting Malays to wake up and work for progress, following the true path of Islam.

The cause espoused by the journal becomes most evident when we look at it in detail, particularly the writings of one of its most prominent ideologues, Shaykh Tahir Jalaludin, who was also one of the pioneers in spreading reformist thought in Malaya. His thought is shown most clearly in his writings in the journal, where he called upon Malays to purify their religious practices and build a community


177 This activity also was not without hindrance since Section 9b of the Mohammedan Law Enactment 1904, Amending Enactment 1925, provided that any person printing or publishing literature concerning Islam without the express permission of His Highness the Sultan in council should be liable to a fine of $200 or to imprisonment. This provision was used both to provide a prior check on local publications within the states and in some cases to proscribe publications or force withdrawal. It was in the face of this hostility that the Kaum Muda propagandists were forced to withdraw most of their publishing activity to the Straits Settlements, which as British Colonial Possessions, had no Councils of Religions. See William R. Roff, "Kauf Muda - Kaum Tua", op.cit., pp. 178-179. Even though their publishing activity was based in the Straits Settlements, there were still attempts to deny its distribution in some of the Malay states; thus in the case of Kelantan there were efforts to stop the reformist journals al-Ikhwan and Saudara entering the state. See al-Ikhwan, Vol. 3, No. 7, 16 March 1929, p. 215.


based on true Islamic teaching. In addition to its role in championing reformist thought, *al-Imam* was also important in the development of Malay socio-political awareness, since it was the first Malay journal which contained ideas of social change and elements of politics. This element could be seen from its pages when it dealt with issues of political importance and informed its readers about Middle Eastern news and affairs, despite declaring its main interest to be the reform of society.

The aims and efforts of the reformists to awaken the Malays' social and political consciousness, however, progressed rather slowly and it took several decades before a relatively significant impact could be felt. Even during the tense years prior to and immediately after World War 1, Malaya was relatively free from serious political troubles. This Malay apathy is partly explained by the failure of the reformists to continue the momentum of their socio-political programmes to inculcate the awareness that they pioneered. The *Kaum Muda* also never succeeded in elaborating, either organisationally or programmatically, a political nationalism which was capable of mass support. Moreover, they were also confronted with an uphill task in trying to arouse a radical change in the Malay political impassivity through outside influence, particularly from Egypt which had influenced them in their struggle.

Egypt only emerged as a potential political nucleus for Muslims, including those in Malaya, when the issue of the leadership of the *ummah* was championed by the *ulama'* of al-Azhar, who on 25 March 1924 met and adopted a series of resolutions concerning the Caliphate, and tried to organise a general Muslim

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conference following its abolition by Kemal.\textsuperscript{184} Despite the fact that discussions on organising the conference to decide the future of the institution were held almost immediately after its abolition, the Universal Caliphate Congress, as it was then known, was only held from 13 to 20 May 1926 in Cairo, two years later.\textsuperscript{185} To give authority to the proceedings, invitations to attend the Congress were dispatched in the name the \textit{Shaykh al-Azhar}, Shaykh Muḥammad Abū Faql, to hundreds of individuals and organisations throughout the Muslim World.\textsuperscript{186} The Malays were also invited to discuss the issue when invitations together with a circular outlining its aims and principles were sent to Sayyid Hassan al-\textsuperscript{5}Attas, a prominent Muslim leader who had close connections with the al-Azhar circle, to be extended to the Malay rulers.\textsuperscript{187}

The Sultan of Johore, Sultan Ibrahim, expressed his delight at being invited and asked the state \textit{mufti} to translate the Arabic brochure of the Congress into Malay.\textsuperscript{188} The Sultan of Pahang also showed a keen interest in the subject and


\textsuperscript{185} The justification given on 25 January 1925 by the Azhar Caliphate Committee for the postponement was the unsettled circumstances in Egypt where parliamentary elections were scheduled to take place. Another reason given was the external complication resulting from the Sa'udi-Sharifian war in the Hijaz (see ibid., p. 60). The convening of the Congress and the reasons for its postponement were also reported by \textit{Idaran Zaman} (see \textit{Idaran Zaman}, No. 8, 5 March 1925 and No. 17, 7 May 1925). In addition to publishing the procedures and the reasons for postponing the Congress, \textit{Idaran Zaman} also published the decision taken by the Caliphate Committee during the meeting held on 10 April 1925, which among others condemned British and Italian intervention in Tripolitania, and deplored the action taken by the Thai government in suppressing the Muslims in that country (see \textit{Idaran Zaman}, No. 12, 14 May 1925).

\textsuperscript{186} James Gershoni and James P. Jankowski (eds.), \textit{Egypt, Islam and the Arabs}, op.cit., p. 59.

\textsuperscript{187} Sultan Pahang 76/1925, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch). Letter from Sayyid Hassan al-\textsuperscript{5}Attas to the Sultan of Pahang, 9 January 1925. See also CO 537/931, Marriott (Governor’s Deputy) to Amery, 1 April 1925; enclosure \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No. 28, April 1925.

\textsuperscript{188} See Pej, Agama 180/241, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch). Translation of the letter of the proposed Congress by the President of Johore Religious Council.
asked for a translation. ¹⁸⁹ When the Congress was approaching, Sultan Ibrahim conveyed his regret that he was unable to attend. He sent a message which expressed his blessing on its convening, and said that he was sending Sayyid Hassan al-ʿAttas as a representative on his behalf. ¹⁹⁰ The Congress was attended by about forty individuals from fourteen different countries who were recognised as formal participants by the organisers of the meeting. ¹⁹¹ The convening of the Congress also attracted Malay interest and was widely reported by a number of Malay journals. ¹⁹²

Right from the start, the Congress was plagued with confusion and doomed to failure. It was not well received by Muslims all over the world, and as a result, none of the prominent leaders of Muslim countries attended it. ¹⁹³ Before the Congress convened it was confused by a secular line promoted by ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq, a judge in the Religious Court and the brother of Mahmūd Pāshā ʿAbd al-Rāziq (one of the Liberal Constitutionalist leaders). In 1925 he published a book al-Islām Wa Uṣūl al-Ḥukm (Islam and the Foundations of Authority), which argued that Islam did not involve any particular set of political principles. The whole notion of the Caliphate as generally understood, he believed, rested on a misconception and

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¹⁸⁹ Sultan Pahang 78/1925, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch). Letter from Sultan of Pahang to Sayyid Hassan al-ʿAttas, 21 January 1925.

¹⁹⁰ See Pej. Agama 180/241, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch). Letter from Sultan Ibrahim to the President of the Universal Caliphate Congress of Cairo, Egypt, 21 March & 17 April 1926, and letter from the Sultan’s Private Secretary also to the President of the Congress, 21 March 1926. See also Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 8, May 1926, p. 15, which reported that Sayyid Hassan arrived in Cairo on 9 May 1926.

¹⁹¹ Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski (eds.), Egypt, Islam and the Arabs, op.cit., p. 65. Indonesia was represented in the Congress by Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah and Haji Abdullah Ahmad. See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 8, May 1926, p. 149 which reported their arrival in Cairo on 1 May 1926. See also HAMKA, Ajahku, op.cit., pp. 140-141.

¹⁹² See for example the announcement made by Pengasoh (Vol. 8, No. 188, 28 January 1926, p. 10) a few months before the Congress was due to take place. When the Congress was convened, the full list of its participants including from Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies was published by Idaran Zaman (see Idaran Zaman, 17 June 1926).

¹⁹³ Among important Muslim lands not represented in the Congress were Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. See Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski (eds.), Egypt, Islam and the Arabs, op.cit., p. 65.
therefore the establishment of such an institution was not part of religious duty.\textsuperscript{194} His secular ideas caused much controversy and were rejected by the \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{2}}ulam\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}} of al-Azhar. The Malay students in Cairo who were also drawn into the discussion, equally rejected the ideas of Al\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{3}}}\'Abd al-R\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{3}}}iq and subscribed to the arguments put forward by the \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{2}}ulam\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}} of al-Azhar.\textsuperscript{195}

The Congress, which was supposed to come up with a concrete proposal for the Caliphate question, came in fact to the conclusion that a Caliphate in accordance with the Qur\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{4}}}anic tradition was impossible of realisation in the present state of the Islamic World, and that the appointment of a Caliph would only complicate matters.\textsuperscript{196} The issue hatched in Egypt, which was supposed to have far-reaching repercussions, including the Muslims in Malaya, failed to generate any remarkable post-war Malay political activism. Although the early Malay political consciousness which developed in earnest in the middle of the 1920s originated in Egypt, the impetus did not come from the Caliphate issue, but rather from the conducive political environment it provided and the role played by Malay students who were studying there.

The favourable political atmosphere in Egypt had led to the politicisation of the Malay students, and it attracted an increasing number of them to study there, particularly those who wished to acquire something extra, other than the stereotyped religious education found in Makkah. According to Haji Othman Abdullah, one of the Malay students who decided to proceed to Cairo, rather than continue his religious studies in Makkah, his decision was influenced by the fact that


\textsuperscript{195} \textit{Seruan Azhar}, Vol. 1, No. 2, November 1925, pp. 24-26. For a discussion and critique of \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{2}}Ali \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{3}}\'Abd al-R\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{3}}}iq's ideas, see also Leonard Binder, "Ali \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{3}}\'Abd al-R\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{3}}}iq and Islamic Liberalism", \textit{Asian and African Studies}, Vol. 16, March 1982, pp. 31-57.

in the Holy City one could only learn religion, in Egypt politics as well.\textsuperscript{197} Another Malay, Harun Nasution, who was also among the early Malay intellectuals educated at al-Azhar, shared his opinions and further believed that those who chose to go to Egypt were usually more modernist than those who decided to study in Makkah. To him, Cairo was also a centre of political activities and he himself was one of the prominent student activists, who contacted different political leaders of Egypt, from the Wafd Party, (Liberal) to Miṣr al-Fatāt (the National Socialists) as well as al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn (Muslim Brothers).\textsuperscript{198} To others, Cairo was also the main choice to further their religious education as opposed to Makkah, since at that time Cairo was regarded as a centre of knowledge and civilisation, while Saudi Arabia was still poor and used to receive food from the Egyptians.\textsuperscript{199}

Even though political activism among Malay students in Cairo was most noticeable in the middle of 1920s, initial signs of their political consciousness could be traced much earlier, gleaned through the journal \textit{Neracha}. Being the most popular existing journal which was the torch-bearer of the reformists after the demise of \textit{al-Imam}, the journal was used by a number of Malay students in Cairo who wrote in its correspondence column, calling for Malays to strive for the betterment and the survival of the homeland.\textsuperscript{200} A clearer sign of their political consciousness, however, was when they published the journal \textit{Ittihad}, where their political views were made known, for example when it sympathised with popular movements in Indonesia by expressing its approval of the establishment of

\textsuperscript{197} William R. Roff, "The Life and Times", op.cit., p. 63. Haji Othman Abdullah was born on 21 December 1905 in Kuala Lumpur. In 1920 he went to Makkah to perform the Hajj and continued to live there to further his religious studies before he went to Cairo in 1925. He died in February 1968.


\textsuperscript{199} Ibid., p. 8. In his speech on the occasion of the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty in 1936, similar sentiments were also expressed by Sayyid Ibrahīm Omar al-Sagoff, a local Muslim leader who described Cairo as "the Mecca of Islamic culture in general and Arabic culture in particular". See "Local Commemoration of Anglo-Egyptian Treaty", \textit{Genuine Islam}, Vol. 1, No. 10, October 1936, p. 30.

organisations, such as Sarekat Islam and Budi Utoemo in the Netherlands East Indies.\textsuperscript{201}

Despite this early political awareness and the presence of a conducive political environment, the politicisation of Malay students in Cairo only advanced remarkably after the formation of the association, al-Jam\textsuperscript{i}yyah al-Khairiyyah in 1923.\textsuperscript{202} The political foundations of its formation were stressed by its first President, Djanan Taib, who whilst in Makkah said that its aim was to unite the Malays in friendship so as to better them to work for their ultimate freedom.\textsuperscript{203} The Malay students' political thinking in Cairo, however, was further nurtured when the journal \textit{Seruan Azhar} was published in 1925.\textsuperscript{204} Its publication was assisted by better established publishing houses in Cairo and the comparatively greater political freedom in Egypt, which allowed them to voice their views freely on the forbidden topics of nationalism and politics.\textsuperscript{205}

As a mouth-piece of al-Jam\textsuperscript{i}yyah al-Khairiyyah, \textit{Seruan Azhar} was used by the Malay students in Cairo to express their political and social doctrines and to try to spread them to Malaya and Indonesia.\textsuperscript{206} To these students, the essential ingredient for progress was political freedom, and like \textit{al-Imam}, it exhorted the 'ulam\={a} to play a leading role in the society in order to inculcate political consciousness. The 'ulam\={a} were also singled out to carry out the task, and those


\textsuperscript{202} The first organisation established by Malay students in Cairo, however, was Jam\textsuperscript{i}yyah Setia Pelajar (Student Association) formed in 1913 under the leadership of Shaykh Ismail, a Minangkabau 'ālim from Padang. The association was short-lived, as it suffered a profound crisis after a student from Palembang killed two other students there. See ibid., p. 140.

\textsuperscript{203} FO 371/11698 & CO 273/534/16, \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No. 38, April 1926.

\textsuperscript{204} To a lesser extent this role was also played by the short-lived journal \textit{Pilehan Timoer} (October 1927 to October 1928).


\textsuperscript{206} According to Sidek Fadzil the journal was also an important medium that spread the reformist thought of Muhammad 'Abduh in Malaya and Indonesia. See Sidek Fadzil, "Ash-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh", op.cit., p. 358.
of them who did not bother to learn about political matters were condemned as traitors to the homeland and religion.\textsuperscript{207} The backwardness of the Malays, as one of the contributors of the journal pointed out, was due to the loss of their political freedom which resulted in the fact that their "eyes were blinded and minds were closed" by the colonialists who robbed them of their freedom. These colonial powers on the other hand enjoyed free minds and unhindered progress.\textsuperscript{208} The colonialists were blamed for suppressing the freedom of the Malays and jeopardising their interests.\textsuperscript{209} They were also resented for exploiting Malaya and Indonesia for their products and natural resources.\textsuperscript{210}

As part of the political programme for achieving freedom, the journal urged the Malays to cooperate and establish themselves in an organisation.\textsuperscript{211} Despite the fact that the Malay lands were divided due to the conspiracy by the colonialists, it still believed that they could cooperate among themselves because they were united by a common language and religion. An independent Malay World, it suggested, should be created with the regions maintaining certain autonomous powers. In summing up, it went on to argue that this political objective could only be achieved by first freeing the region from the colonial powers, who were the main obstacles to its achievement.\textsuperscript{212} The call for a united independent Malay World by

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\item[208] T. Abdullah, "Apakah Faedah Merdekeka" (What is the Benefit of Independence), Seruan Azhar, Vol. 3, No. 25, October 1927, pp. 408-409 (sic 492).
\item[212] Ibid., p. 387. The issue of the need for Malaya and Indonesia to free themselves from the colonialists was also emphasised by the October 1927 issue of Seruan Azhar. In this issue, it highlighted the importance of achieving independence in which the people could live in peace and the nation could progress. Egypt as an example of a free nation was detailed, together with an elaboration on the life of Sa\textsuperscript{d} Zaghlul, the father of Egyptian independence and his struggle to free Egypt from the British. In addition to the issue of independence, the benefit enjoyed by those who had already achieved it was also examined. The case of Holland going to war with the French in order to preserve her independence was cited as an example by Seruan Azhar. In another example, it refers to the incident when Kemal visited an Ottoman palace, but the public was prevented by the guards from entering it. Kemal, however, did not accept the action and ordered the public be given the opportunity to enter the palace with him. Seruan Azhar commented that this could only happen if the country was administered
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Seruan Azhar did not go unheeded, since the ideas of this journal, which was widely read in Kelantan, were also subscribed to by Pangasoh, which apart from welcoming its publication, also discussed an independent Malay World which was also politically unified.213

The Malay students in Cairo believed that freedom and independence could only be achieved through unity among the Malays and Seruan Azhar stressed its significance as a prerequisite for success. Realising its importance, right from the start, unity was the motto emphasised by the journal, on behalf of which it consistently appealed to its readers. In the introductory editorial, Mahmud Yunus wrote that all the people of Java, Sumatra, Borneo and the Malay Peninsular must unite with one heart and share a common purpose and agreement to strive for progress and prosperity, seek the best ways of doing this, and on no account allow themselves to split into separate parties.214 The slogan, "In loyalty Victory, in Divisiveness Danger", was displayed on the front cover of Seruan Azhar, including a drawing of a globe with Southeast Asia in the centre and the territories of the Netherlands East Indies and British Malaya shaded in black. Alongside them was written "The united world of our beloved people". With unity, it stressed, the nation could be defended and the seeds of nationalism could be sown; the Malay and Indonesian students in Cairo who were to champion that cause were also engaged in the process of acquiring knowledge and organising themselves to achieve its aims.215

Despite the high aspirations of their call for an independent Indonesia and Malaya, these students were aware of their limitations, since they were powerless to achieve it either through negotiation or by force. It could be achieved, however,
as part of the struggle for independence by first acquiring knowledge. The importance for Malays of acquiring knowledge was also stressed by the journal right from the start of its publication and in fact the first article it published dealt with this issue. On the front page of the second issue a Sha'ir, which called the Malays to acquire knowledge was published. To impress its readers with its importance, the journal elaborated the past achievements of Muslims in various fields, which were achieved through the triumph of knowledge and compared them with the backwardness of the Malays. It attributed their backwardness to their apathy toward education.

In the editorial which reviewed the events of the year 1925, the positive changes that had taken place in some of the Muslim countries, such as the rise of Reza Shah and Ibn Sa'ūd, which promised a better future for the respective nations were cited as examples. The journal, however, felt despondent that no change had taken place among Malays and they were still lagging behind, including in the pursuit of knowledge. The cry by Seruan Azhar for Malays to acquire knowledge was also supported by a number of its readers, who expressed their opinion in support of its call. In order for Malays to progress, Seruan Azhar also called on parents to encourage their children to acquire knowledge and the rich to give donations to build schools. The Malay rulers were requested to finance students to further their studies in Egypt and Europe, and in its effort to get the message across, the journal published a picture of Muḥammad ʿAlī together with his life history and his contribution to the development of Egypt for them to emulate.


219 Ibid., pp. 27-31.


222 Seruan Azhar, Vol 1, No. 1, October 1925, pp. 4-5.
It regretted, however, that such awareness did not exist among the Malay rulers.\(^{223}\)

On another occasion, it also published a picture of the Muḥammad ʻAlī Mosque on the front page. In the text accompanying the picture it remarked that his contribution was not limited to building mosques, but included introducing Western knowledge to Egypt.\(^{224}\) Equally important in the role of Egyptian modernisation, in the view of the journal, was King Fu‘ād 1, whose picture was also published. He was portrayed as a caring ruler who displayed special interest in the development of education, established schools and sent students to Europe to further their studies. Every Egyptian ruler since Muḥammad ʻAlī, the journal went on to relate, stressed the importance of education. *Seruan Azhar* believed that if the same commitment were displayed by Malay rulers, the Malays would progress significantly, as had the Egyptians.\(^{225}\)

In addition to the call made to the Malay rulers, a group of Malay students who identified themselves as the sons of Johore also requested the government to build schools to train judges, doctors and engineers; otherwise bright Malay students should be sent to the United Kingdom, Germany, France, the United States and elsewhere to acquire various kinds of knowledge, as was being done by Egypt, which every year sent its students to Europe.\(^{226}\) Apart from calling on the authorities to help in promoting Malay progress, the people themselves were also requested to struggle for it. In a similar appeal to all Malays, the journal *Pilehan Timoer* called on them to cooperate among themselves by forming an organisation at every level and stated that these organisations, which would be affiliated with a national body, should coordinate their efforts for their betterment in various fields.\(^{227}\)

\(^{223}\) *Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 1, No. 11, August 1926, pp. 201-204.


\(^{227}\) See *Pilehan Timoer*, Vol. 1, No. 5, February 1928, pp. 81-83.
The Malay students' political activism in Cairo was not only limited to voicing their political doctrines through *Seruan Azhar* and *Pilehan Timoer*. Through their parent organisation, the al-Jamā'iyah al-Khairiyah, they manifested their political consciousness for example by sending Djanan Taib as a delegate to the *Mu'tamar Islāmī*, called by Ibn Sa'ūd in Makkah during the Hajj season of 1926.228 He was representing a committee in the al-Jamā'iyah al-Khairiyah called *al-Dīlā' al-Waṭanī*, formed in 1926 under the leadership of Mukhtar Lutfī.229 When there was bloodshed and political upheaval in Jerusalem following the conflict between the Jewish immigrants and the local Arabs, the journal *Semangat Islam* reported that a commission, The League of Nations Burāq al-Sharīf Commission, had been formed to avoid a confrontation leading to religious war. When the committee reached Palestine both the warring factions, including various Muslim groups came to present their opinions about the defence of the Holy Place.230 These included Malay students in Cairo, who were represented by the President of the al-Jamā'iyah al-Khairiyah, Haji Abu Bakar Ashaari and Abdul Kahar Muzakkir.231 In 1931, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, the Mufti of Jerusalem, called the General Islamic Conference with the aim of uniting Muslim opinion in the world behind the Palestinian call for the preservation of the Arab-Islamic character of Palestine.232 During the conference Abdul Kahar was appointed as secretary for the newly form organisation, *Mu'tamar c'Alam Islāmī*.233

228 *Seruan Azhar*, Vol. 1, No. 11, August 1926, p. 211.


231 Pictures of both representatives were then published on the front page of the journal *Semangat Islam* (Vol. 1, No. 12, 1930). Roff was not quite accurate when he stated that both of them were representatives to a later Caliphate Conference held in Jerusalem. See William R. Roff, "The Life and Times", op.cit., p. 64.


The politicisation of Malay students in Cairo was also nurtured through their close links with Egyptian political circles. Of particular importance was the fact that the al-Jam'iyah al-Khairiyah fostered a close link with al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī (Nationalist Party), the party of Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874-1908) and Muḥammad Faḍl (1868-1919), one of the most important political parties which carried the standard of popular opposition to the British occupation of Egypt. The students' intimate relation with this party was illustrated when they actively participated in its activities, such as attending the gathering to commemorate the death of Muṣṭafā Kāmil and Muḥammad Faḍl held on 30 December 1926. This close relation was also contributed to by the fact that Malay students were indebted to the leadership of the party, who concerned themselves with their welfare in Cairo. When ʿAlī Fāhmī, the leader of al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī died, representatives of Malay students in Cairo were present at the funeral as a mark of respect, and his life and struggle were elaborated by Seruan Azhar.

The close relationship between Malay students in Cairo and Egyptian political circles was also built up through constant contacts and exchanges of ideas between them. Through these contacts, Malay students received new political inputs, for example during a meeting with Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jāwīsh, an important al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī activist, well-known among Malay students for the kind help he rendered to them. Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz showed his keen interest in the political development of Malaya and Indonesia and suggested that Malay students should acquire knowledge and struggle against the colonial occupation of their

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236 Ibid., pp. 325-326.

237 Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jāwīsh (1876-1929) was a son of a Tunisian immigrant who settled in Alexandria. He was trained at al-Azhar and Borough Road Teacher’s Training College, London. He was appointed an inspector of religious instruction in the Ministry of Education and was later the editor of al-Liwā', the official organ of al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī. In terms of thought Shaykh Jāwīsh was more a Pan-Islamist than an Egyptian nationalist. See Arthur Goldschmidt, Jr., "The Egyptian Nationalist Party", op.cit., p. 323.
Apart from their close relation with the Ḥizb al-Waṭanī political activists, Malay students in Cairo also fostered a close relation with other circles, political as well as religious, such as having a good working relation with Saʿd Zaghlūl, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Affendi Suhaimi, Shaykh al-Mājid al-Bān and others.\footnote{Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 22, July 1927, pp. 434-435.}

The atmosphere of political consciousness in Cairo also led to their concern with the development of Malaya and the political survival of the Malays. When there were demands made by the non-Malays for their stake in the country to be increased further, Malay students in Cairo were alarmed by these demands and sent a telegram appealing to the Straits Settlements Legislative Council not to entertain such a request. As for the Malays, they called them to strive hard in order to improve their political and social standing.\footnote{See Pengasah, Vol. 7, No. 159, 27 November 1924, p. 3.} They also believed that Malay backwardness was equally contributed to by the fact that they were not united in struggling for their cause and that they did not follow the true path of Islam as outlined by the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth.\footnote{See Majalah Guru, Vol. 7, No. 4, April 1930, p. 73; Semangat Islam, Vol. 1, No. 6, April 1930, p. 101.}

When some Malay states tried to ban the reformist journals from entering their respective states, the move was deplored by these students.\footnote{Majalah Guru, Vol. 10, 1 September 1933, pp. 344-345.}

The experiences gained by Malay students in Cairo through the activities of the al-Jamʿiyyah al-Khairiyah and the publication of Seruan Azhar proved to be a useful asset when they returned home after finishing their studies. In Malaya and Indonesia, these former students in Cairo played an important role in the development of modern religious education and in inculcating socio-political awareness in their communities. Ilias Yaʿacob and Mokhtar Lutfi returned to Indonesia in 1929, and upon their return became the leadership of Persatuan

\footnote{Semangat Islam, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1 April 1930, p. 101.}
Muslimin Indonesia, known first as PMI and later as PERMI. Othman Abdullah returned to Malaya in 1929 and in 1931 became manager of and part-time writer for the Malay bi-weekly newspaper *Majlis*, which began publication in December that year. In 1938, he was among a group of Malays who played a role in the founding of Persatuan Melayu Selangor (PMS). The aims and objects of the organisation were to make a political representation to the government on matters affecting Malay interests and other Malay concerns. As a active committee of PMS, Haji Othman was instrumental in the formation of its first *mukim* (parishes) in Petaling at the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur in late August 1938. When the radical Kesatuan Melayu Muda (KMM) was formed in 1939, he was appointed as its first treasurer.

Abdul Wahab Abdullah upon returning to Malaya in 1930 worked for some time as assistant editor of *Saudara* and was for a while the editor of *Bumiputera*, before he went to Perlis where he worked with the Co-operative Societies Department, and later became Inspector of Schools and member of the *Zakat* and *Fitrah* Committee. Abu Bakar Ashaari upon returning to Malaya became assistant editor of *Bahtra* and *Saudara* for a time before going to Perlis where he became imam of the State Mosque. Among the Malayan students, only

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246 Ibid., p. 146.

247 William R. Roff, "Malay and Indonesian Students", op.cit, p. 76 (footnote).

248 Ibid., p. 75. Haji Abu Bakar Ashaari died on 6 April 1970.
Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi continued to live in Cairo for quite some time where he owned a printing press, Matba'aah Marbawiyah.249

Since the turn of the century, developments in Egypt were also among the Malays' main interests, and they were regularly highlighted by the journals of that time. The political struggle of Egypt and the effort of its nationalist leaders, particularly Muṣṭafā Kāmil, to free the nation from British occupation was frequently featured and enthusiastically read by the Malays.250 Muṣṭafā Kāmil was known by the Malays from the early years of the twentieth century and his speech "Egypt and Islam" was published in three consecutive issues by Chahaya Pulau Pinang.251 When news of his death in February 1908 broke out in Singapore, it was received with disbelief. The teachers of the Madrasah al-Iqbal preferred to send a telegram to Egypt for a confirmation before believing it. Al-Imam expressed its condolence on receiving the news and promised to publish articles on his life and struggle once it received them from Egypt.252 As a charismatic nationalist leader, he was idolised by among others, Haji Wan Musa, a prominent ʿālim and the former mufti

249 Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi was born on 1 November 1895 in Masfalah Village, Makkah. At the age of ten he followed his parents on their return to Malaya and settled in Kampung Lubuk Merbau, Kuala Kangsar, Perak. Apart from receiving his early education from his father, Muhammad Idris's early education was also obtained from the Malay School in his village. After completing his elementary education there he then continued his studies in Madrasah Khairiyah, Pokok Sena, Seberang Prai, before going to Madrasah al-Masriyah, Bukit Mertajam, Penang. His quest for religious knowledge brought him to Kelantan where he studied under a prominent ʿālim, Tok Kenali. After completing his studies there, Muhammad Idris returned to his village where he gave religious lectures and taught Qurʾānic lessons to the locals. In late 1923, he followed his father to Makkah and in the following year he went to Cairo to further his studies at the University of al-Azhar. Thereafter, Muhammad Idris continued to live in Egypt and returned to Malaysia in 1980 where he died on 13 October 1989. Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi was a prolific writer who wrote more than twenty books. His most famous book was Qamus al-Marbawi which he wrote in 1925. For an elaboration of his life and list of his books, see Mahani Mokhtar, "Syekh Muhammad Idris bin Abdul Rauf al-Marbawi. Sejarah dan Sumbangannya Di Dalam Bidang Penulisan", B.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1989/80.

250 See for example the case of Seruan Azhar which published his picture together with his life and struggle (Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 7, April 1926, pp. 122-126). His picture was again published by the journal together with other party leaders, Muḥammad Bey Fārīd and ʿAlī Bey Kāmil. (See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 17, February 1927, 322, 333 & 334).

251 See Chahaya Pulau Pinang, Vol. 1, No. 9 (8 December 1900), No. 10 (15 December 1900) & No. 11 (22 December 1900) on his speech "Darihal Mesir dan Islam" (About Egypt and Islam).

of Kelantan. As a champion of nationalism in Egypt, his struggle was also well studied in modernist schools in the Minangkabau region during the second decade of this century.

With the rapid development of Malay newspapers in the 1920s and 1930s, events in Egypt also attracted special interest, particularly as regards its political progress. A weekly newspaper, the Idaran Zaman published in Penang in 1925, which showed a special concern with politics, for example regularly carried extracts from the Egyptian nationalist press in its columns. Another journal which also took a special interest in Egypt and frequently reported news from there was Genuine Islam. When Egypt applied for full membership of the League of Nations, the journal even published the full text of the letter of Ahmad Ḥusayn of the Young Egypt Society to the Secretary-General of the organisation. In support its cause, it argued that since Egypt was an independent state and had fulfilled the conditions prescribed by its Covenant, she should be immediately admitted as a member of the organisation.

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255 See for example the front page of Suara Malayu, 19 July 1927 on the report of the progress of Egyptian independence. It was the journal al-ikhwan which showed a particular interest in the political development of Egypt and regularly charted its progress in its pages. See for example, the visit of King Fu‘ṣd and his Prime Minister to London to discuss Egypt’s independence (Vol. 2, No. 2, 16 October 1927, pp. 50-53); Naḥḥas Pāšā appointed as leader of Wafd (Vol. 2, No. 2, 16 October 1927, pp. 53-54); the life and struggle of Sa’ed Zaghūl together with his picture and the picture of his successor, Muṣṭafā Naḥḥas Pāšā (Vol. 2, No. 7, 16 March 1928, pp. 215-217); news on latest development in Egypt together with pictures of Muḥammad Maḥmūd Pāšā, ‘Adī Pāšā and Muṣṭafā Naḥḥas Pāšā (Vol. 3, No. 12, 16 August 1929, pp. 386-387); the relation between Egypt and the British (Vol. 4, No. 2, 16 October 1929, pp. 58-60); picture of Egyptian delegation in London headed by Naḥḥas Pāšā to negotiate with the British (Vol. 4, No. 11, 16 July 1930, p. 288). Al-ikhwan also published a picture of ‘Abd al-Khāliq Thawrāt Pāšā (Vol. 2, No. 2, 16 October 1927, p. 53) and when he died his obituary was written by Za’ba (see Saudara, Vol. 1, No. 2, 6 October 1928, front page).

256 CO 273/534, Marriott to Amery, 30 June 1926; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 39, May 1926.

The political progress in Egypt in relation to the British was also enthusiastically monitored in Malaya.²⁵⁸ When the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was finally signed on 26 August 1936, the occasion was commemorated with a tea party held on 3 October in Singapore attended by about 400 people of all nationalities, hosted by Sayyid Ibrahim Omar al-Sagoff, the proprietor of the journal *Genuine Islam*. In his speech on the occasion, he extended his congratulations to both the British and the Egyptians on the conclusion of the treaty, whose signing he hoped would be a strong factor in perpetuating peace in the Near East. He also hoped that it would have an important repercussion on world peace, since Egypt occupied a leading role in the Islamic World, and was also the seat of ancient learning and had enjoyed a long history of civilisation.²⁵⁹

Egypt had been a source of influence in Malay society which began with the advent of reformist thought. In the 1920s and 1930s, it also embraced socio-political thought which had influenced Malay students who studied Cairo. The conducive environment there allowed the politicisation of these students who conveyed their views through the journals they published, which echoed their call for economic and political freedom to Malaya and Indonesia. These students were also the first to visualise the political future of their homeland with their aspiration to unite the Malay World within a single entity. The role of promoting the Egyptian influence in Malay society, apart from the role played by Malay students in Cairo, who conveyed their ideas through *Seruan Azhar* and *Pilehan Timoer*, was also played by the newspapers and journals published locally. In 1930s, some of these newspapers and journals were edited by former student activists in Cairo, while others by those who had a sentimental link with the country. In addition to the role played by these

²⁵⁸ See *Genuine Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 9, September 1936. In this issue, four pages were allocated to pictures related to Egyptian political progress, which culminated with the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 in London. These pictures included a full page picture of the Egyptian delegation, a picture of leaders of the mission and a crowd gathering at the port cheering the delegation. In its October issue, a picture of a jubilant Naftas Pasha, was also featured (see *Genuine Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 10, October 1936). The signing of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty was also a subject of interest for the journal *Persahabatan* which published two pictures; the signing of the treaty and Egyptian delegation headed by Mustafa Naftas Pasha welcomed by Sir Anthony Eden at Victoria Station. *Persahabatan* also congratulated Egypt for achieving the status of an independent nation (see *Persahabatan*, Vol. 1, No. 10, 19 October, 1936, pp. 20-23).

newspapers and journals, a significant role on broadening the Egyptian influence in Malay society, particularly its reformist thought, was also played by the madrasahs, which were established by these reformist-minded Malays in their effort to advance their cause effectively.
In a talk given on 14 March 1934, Laurence Guillemard expressed his pleasure at the level of progress achieved by Malaya. He believed that taken as a whole for many years the country could be regarded as "the happiest country in the world". A few years earlier, the political stability achieved by Malaya was also hailed by another British officer who even pronounced that the country was "a political paradise". Certainly there were truths in these remarks, but it is rather simplistic to assume that the people of Malaya, and the Malays in particular, were entirely untouched by the political events that had swept the world since the outbreak of World War 1 and were all along absolutely satisfied with British rule.

Despite the fact that Malaya was relatively calm during the crucial years of World War 1 and its aftermath, this was not regarded by certain British officials as a sign of political naivety of the whole population, given that approval for the creation of the Criminal Intelligence Department was asked in 1916. Approval for the creation was immediately given and when it was inaugurated in 1918, G.G. Seth was appointed as its Director.

3 CO 273/441, Arthur Young to A. Bonar Law, 4 May 1916.
was a direct response to political activism among the immigrants, particularly the Indians, by the early 1920s the British had sensed that there were some changes taking place within the Malay community.

These changes were felt by Guillemard himself, who while in office in 1920 sought approval for the creation of a Secretaryship for Malay Affairs from the Colonial Office which would advise on matters affecting the Malays, their interests and their relations with the British government.\(^5\) In his letter seeking approval, Guillemard stressed that the Malays had progressed tremendously in recent years, were better educated, and were occasionally voicing their discontent toward the British administration in their vernacular press. He warned the British that they should not be too complacent over the support given by the Malay Rulers during the war because the current situation had changed dramatically. In the despatch, Guillemard also pointed out that the effect of the widespread social and economic unrest affecting the Muslim World was a matter of profound interest to the Malays and suggested that the proposed officer in charge of the office whose approval he asked for must gave his priority to watching such tendencies and their influence on the Malays.\(^6\) Though approval for the secretaryship was not granted, what was clear was that the need for it was recognised.

In early 1922 the Criminal Intelligence Department was changed to the Political Intelligence Bureau.\(^7\) Under the bureau, the British political surveillance in Malaya was all-embracing and a considerable attention was also given to a growing Malay political activism. Looking at the journal it published, *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, which reflected the official perceptions of the British colonial security policy, we can clearly see that they were increasingly concerned by the rising intensity of political awareness among Malays. One particularly important aspect of their concern was the political influence which had its origin from the Middle East, and had the potential of influencing the Malays.

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\(^5\) CO 717/5, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Viscount Milner, 8 November 1920.

\(^6\) Ibid.

\(^7\) CO 273/515, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Winston Churchill, 24 February 1922. In 1933 the Criminal Intelligence Department became the Special Branch.
Religious and Political Influence of Hijaz

The conduct of the Hajj had been the subject of considerable interest among orientalists and early European travellers who in their travel accounts and personal diaries wrote in detail of the legendary novelties experienced during the "sacred" journey and what they believed to be the "mysteries" surrounding the exclusiveness of Makkah.8 The first European to visit Makkah and record his impressions was Ludovico Bertema of Rome, who visited the Holy City in 1503.9 The nineteenth century saw numerous European visitors to Hijaz who did so in disguise, from Badia Leblich in 1807 to J.C. Gervais-Courtellemont in 1894. For students of Southeast Asia the most important of these clandestine sojourners was Christian Snouck Hurgronje, whose six months' stay in Makkah resulted in a work on the city and its inhabitants.10

Even though accounts of their early journeys to Makkah are scanty, Malays had been going there to accomplish the fifth pillar of Islam since they became Muslim. This religious tenet also functioned as an important form of foreign interaction and a bond which tied them to the wider Muslim World. Following the advent of colonialism the religious obligation was an object of suspicion, particularly to the Dutch who showed their distrust of what was thought to be the subversive social and political influences exercised by returning Hajjis after being


exposed to current developments in the Muslim World, while congregating in Hijaz.\textsuperscript{11} This suspicion led to their policy of attempting to discourage their subjects from fulfilling the religious tenet by imposing restrictive regulations requiring a means test before departure and an examination upon return.\textsuperscript{12} Although the official Dutch attitude toward the conduct of the Hijj began to change after 1889 on the advice of Christian Snouck Hurgronje, it was not until 1902 that the restrictive policy was finally abandoned.\textsuperscript{13}

On the other hand, the British Malaya government, as opposed to the Dutch, pursued a policy of non-interference in the Malay conduct of the Hijj in the sense that no stiff restriction as such was introduced. Despite this, a suspicion of the returning Haji did exist and they were even regarded as a nuisance by Christian missionary groups, one of them being the London Missionary Society. C.H. Thomsen of the society, who worked among the Malays, concluded that the prospects of his missionary activities among them were being frustrated due to the

\textsuperscript{11} Because of these restrictions, the great majority of the Netherlands East Indies Muslims took their passage to Makkah from and back to Singapore. Apart from these restrictions, other reasons for them doing this included the availability of facilities and the less severe British travelling requirements.

\textsuperscript{12} The Dutch apprehension of the returning Haji was due to the fact that a number of revolts against their authority had been led by them. Apart from that, they also learnt a lesson from the experience of Minangkabau in the 1820s and 1830s, when three leading Haji spread their reformist zeal upon their return from Makkah about 1804. This suspicion led the Dutch to attempt to limit the performance of the Hijj by taking several restrictive measures. In 1825, the pilgrims from Java had to pay f110 to obtain a pilgrimage travel permit. In 1831, another regulation which stipulated that on failure to payment of f110 before departure, the pilgrim concerned had to pay double upon his return. This regulation was withdrawn in 1852, but another ordinance was promulgated in 1859 which stipulated that the pilgrims had to show proof of their financial ability, not only for the Hijj itself, but also to maintain their families, who were ordinarily under their care at home. In addition to this, the amount of f500 must be shown to the Regent in their home town or to the official concerned on board ship. The same ordinance also stipulated that the returning Haji had to be examined upon return to their respective areas on their knowledge of Makkah and Islam. Only when they passed the examination were they given the right to use the title of Haji. The ordinance was withdrawn only in 1902, while the stipulation that every pilgrim had to show his f500 was abolished in 1905. For a discussion of the Netherlands East Indies government restrictions on the Muslims performing the Hijj, see Deliar Noer, Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 25-26. See also W.J.A Kernkamp, "The Government and Islam in the Netherlands East Indies", The Moslem World, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, January 1945, pp. 12 & 18.

role played by the *Hajis*. They were his principal enemies, and not only refused to receive Christian tracts, but also prevented others from receiving them.\(^{14}\)

Even though a similar distrust was shared by some British Colonial Officers, their suspicions of them were confined to views which regarded the returning *Hajis* as a "holy lot" who "lived like leeches on the toil of their fellow men".\(^{15}\) Nevertheless, their distrust of them was much less serious compared to that of the Dutch, who blamed the *Hajis* for being the source of a number of serious outbreaks of unrest. Despite this, these British officers also suspected the involvement of the *Hajis* when several dissensions erupted during the British forward movement in the Malay states. The Kelantan rebellion of 1915 (29 April to 15 May 1915) was led by Tok Janggut or Haji Mat Hassan, who sported a long white beard which he had kept ever since returning from the Haj.\(^{16}\) In Trengganu, the uprisings in the 1920s were suspected of being led by the *Hajis*, apart from the role played by certain sections of the Arab community.\(^{17}\) These prominent *Hajis* who instigated and led the Trengganu uprisings were Haji Musa bin Abdul Ghani and Haji Abdul Rahman bin Abdul Hamid, better known as Haji Abdul Rahman Limbong.\(^{18}\)

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Even though the British were aware that these revolts were led by Hajis or that they were somehow involved in the process, there was no evidence to suggest that the British regarded their exposure to outside influence while in Hijaz as one of the principal reasons for the outbreak of these events. The absence of any major troubles thought to have been created by the Hajis was probably the reason why the British adopted a comparatively tolerant policy toward the Malay conduct of the Hajj and in fact in some areas, instead of restricting it, did their best to facilitate it. Even though their anxiety that the Malay pilgrims might be influenced by "undesirable elements" while in Hijaz continued to persist, their policies did not reflect such feelings and it appears that they preferred to avoid creating unnecessary prejudice, which would be counter-productive to their administration in the Malay States.

Beginning from the 1890s, as part of their effort to assist the Malay performance of the Hajj, the British introduced several pieces of legislations or regulations in the Straits Settlements and the Malay States concerning shipping conditions and the welfare of the pilgrims.¹⁹ These steps were taken in order to improve and further facilitate the Hajj and also intended to ensure that their welfare was well looked after and that they were shielded from extortion and prevented from being attacked by epidemics.²⁰ Even though considerations of general welfare and health care were the main British concerns in their early involvement in the administration of the Malay conduct of the Hajj, other interests were not absent. The conduct of the Hajj was a lucrative business, and the British tried to guarantee that it continued to be a profitable venture.²¹ In addition to that,

¹⁹ William R. Roff, "The Conduct of the Hajj From Malaya", op.cit, p. 84.

²⁰ The early British considerations on the Hajj were concerned with the question of public health and epidemiology. As a first step towards the understanding of these questions, Assistant Surgeon Abdul Razzack of the Bengal Medical Service was deputed to perform the Hajj in 1878, specially to enquire into public health. As a result of his lengthy report which contained, in addition, a variety of recommendations of a more general kind for pilgrim welfare, the Government of India gained Foreign Office approval for his appointment as Vice-Consul at Jeddah in 1882. See ibid., p. 82.

²¹ Moshe Yegar, Islam and Islamic Institutions in British Malaya. Policies and Implementation, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1979, p. 230. The Hajj industry proved to have generated a lucrative business venture for the British-owned shipping companies. In 1900, nearly 14,000 pilgrims who left from Singapore, or more than 70 percent of the total pilgrims, sailed in British ships. In 1890, the percentage had been only 45. Disturbances in Yemen in 1905 reduced the number to 7,846, but
considerations of security during the Hajj were also regarded as important by the British authorities. While the British did not show any open suspicion about this, they were anxious to see that various aspects of Malay conduct of the Hajj would not jeopardise their imperial interest.\(^{22}\)

To the Malays, the annual conduct of the Hajj was extremely important, and realising its significance and the Malays' sensitivity to the slightest disruption caused by any interference on their part, the British tried their best to ensure that it was carried out smoothly in every season. This realisation also led the British to pursue an official policies which were marked with caution, as when the war with Turkey was at its height and travelling to Hijaz was dangerous. Fearful of any political backlash, instead of stopping it, the British administration only advised would-be pilgrims of the danger and suggested that they should wait until the war had ended before making the trip. They also made it clear that there was no intention whatsoever on their part to stop them from proceeding to Hijaz and that their advice was for their own interest.\(^{23}\) Such a delicate policy on the Malay conduct of the Hajj was pursued by the British because they viewed it as important for governing the population, and it was always their priority to protect, as far as the protection lay within their power, the interests, religious and material, of those of their subjects who wanted to perform the religious obligation.\(^{24}\)

Apart from being tactful and accommodative, the British also pursued a policy of encouraging the Hajj by providing facilities for the pilgrims in Singapore and Penang, and tried to provide the needed facilities while the pilgrims were in transit in Jeddah, before continuing their journey to Makkah or returning home

\(^{22}\) William R. Roff, "The Conduc of the Hajj From Malaya", op.cit., pp. 82-83. To protect their political interests, the British Ambassador at Constantinople even remarked in the early 1880s that there was a good case for having a secret paid agent who would reside at Makkah and for the appointment of a Vice-Consul who could function as an agent.

\(^{23}\) CO 273/518, Laurence Nunns Guilemard to Duke of Devonshire; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 10, December 1922.

\(^{24}\) Ibid.
after the season had ended.\textsuperscript{25} These British policies were part of a far-reaching propaganda strategy to gain the hearts and minds of the Muslims for their administration. By pursuing a tolerant policy and providing assistance for the conduct of the Hajj, the British hoped to prove to the Malays that they were not anti-Islam, and wished to be in return duly rewarded when the need arose. This was the case during their difficult years when confronting Turkey in World War 1 when the British expected that their good record in the Hajj administration would make Muslims realise that their rule and protection were comparatively better than that of the Turks.\textsuperscript{26}

After World War 1 the British realisation of the importance of the conduct of the Hajj to their administration was further enhanced by the political uncertainty that enveloped the Muslim World and its potential effect on the Malays. While not showing their hostilities openly as did the Dutch toward the returning Hajis, in the early 1920s when Islam was regarded as being "on the march", the British also regarded them as a potential threat.\textsuperscript{27} Together with the Penghulus, Imams, school teachers, government pensioners and others who were all found in the ranks of local society, the Hajis were also regarded by the British authorities as a likely focus should disaffection, sedition or a definite religious uprising spring up. To have up-to-date information on their movements, the District Offices were directed to keep a close watch on their activities.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{25} This included a proposal made in 1918 by the British Agent in Jeddah for the establishment there of a pilgrim hostel with the cost partly borne by the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States. The plan, however, was dropped toward the end of the 1920 owing to the opposition of Sharif Husayn and the political situation in Hijaz that rendered it necessary for the British Government to avoid even the slightest appearance of interference in its political affairs. See CO 273/516, Braddeley to Winston Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 1, March 1922. See also CO 273/505, Acting High Commissioner to Earl Curzon of Kedleston of Colonial Office, 25 August 1920; enclosure Captain Nasiruddin Ahmed to British Agent Jeddah, 5 August 1920.

\textsuperscript{26} FO 371/5236, British Consulate General Batavia to Earl Curzon of Kedleston with copies sent to the Governor, Singapore and to the General Officer Commanding the Troops, Singapore, 16 March 1920.

\textsuperscript{27} CO 273/518, Laurence Nunns Guilemard to Duke of Devonshire, 25 November 1922; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 9, November 1922.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
The British recognition of the importance of the Hajj and the need for them to involve themselves in its administration, and the wisdom of doing so, particularly after World War 1, however, came as a result of a long and persuasive memorandum prepared in 1920 by R.J. Farrer and W.H. Lee Warner.29 The memorandum highlighted the significance of the conduct of the Hajj to the British interest, since its success would add to their prestige as a leading Muslim power of the world. Since the conduct was regarded as "a" most important, if not "the" most important propaganda means for Islam at "His Majesty's" disposal, the memorandum recommended that it should be made as simple, efficient and economical as possible.30 The memorandum also included a number of recommendations on what they understood to be the principal needs of Malay pilgrims, among others the establishment of hospital services in Hijaz by the Malayan government, the improvement of the quarantine facilities conducted by the Blue Funnel line, the reduction of passage monies, and (as with the Netherlands Indies line) providing the pilgrims with food en route.31

The memorandum was concluded by a proposal on the importance of intelligence surveillance during the Hajj for British security interests. To carry out the task, it was suggested that the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States governments should grant free passage annually to perform the Hajj to a certain number of poor Muslims, who while on board and at Makkah would act as "Eyes" for "His Majesty's" and the local Governments. These men would be able to discuss matters with the pilgrims on board and at Makkah, and could furnish valuable information, among other things as to what was said and felt by pilgrims regarding the British Government and the Shari'ian regime.32

29 R.J. Farrer was a Malayan Civil Service Officer with considerable experience of Muslim matters while W.H. Lee-Warner was the Head of the Far Eastern Section of the British Secret Intelligence Service, originally seconded from the Arab Bureau.

30 FO 371/5094, (16311/38/44) Laurence Nunns Guillermond (Governor of the Straits Settlements) to Viscount Milner (Colonial Office); enclosure to the Straits Settlements Confidential Despatch, 24 November 1920.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.
Realising the importance of some of the proposals made by R.J. Farrer and W.H. Lee Warner, the British authorities responded positively to a number of the suggestions and as a first step toward its implementation a decision was made to send a representative to Hijaz. Abdul Majid Zainuddin who was then the Malay Inspector of Schools in Lower Perak was regarded as the right candidate and he was approached by the head of the Criminal Investigation Branch of the Federated Malay States Police to carry out the mission, "as the Government wanted someone trustworthy to do something for them". He was supplied with $1000 which included passage money and sailed from Singapore in early January 1923. During his stay in Hijaz, apart of his official duty of looking after the welfare of Malay pilgrims, Abdul Majid was also required to report to the British authorities on suspicious political activities thought detrimental to the British interests.

During his first year's assignment, Abdul Majid did provide useful observations on the Malays' conduct of the Hajj to the British authorities. His administrative comments and recommendations in that year are not recorded, but extracts from the political section of his report which were credited to an unnamed intelligent Malay were included in the November 1923 issue of the *Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*. Abdul Majid was reported to have mixed freely with people of all classes during the whole of his journey, both by sea and by land, and he stated that had there been anything really important afoot at any stage of his travels it was felt that he would have been aware of it. He also reported that none of the pilgrims seemed eager to discuss or criticise national affairs, or to talk about politics, all of them being thoroughly engrossed in the adventure of the Hajj itself and in memorising the ritual required by its performance on the various

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34 Ibid., p. 94.
35 CO 537/919, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire, 9 November 1923; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 18, November 1923.
stages of the journey inland. This ritual, he stated, though easy enough for educated persons, appeared to present great difficulties to ordinary people.36

Abdul Majid reported that while in Makkah in May 1923, he was sure that in the city itself there was no attempt to spread political propaganda to the masses either from outside or by local influence. He also found no literature of this kind be seen anywhere, and indeed very little literature of any kind appeared to have been permitted to enter Makkah by Sharif Ḥusayn, who exercised a strict censorship on all written matter entering the country.37 The negative nature of the report was applauded by the Bulletin as the real truth of the Malays’ conduct of the Hajj and Abdul Majid was appointed the Malay Pilgrimage Officer at Jeddah, when the creation of the post was approved in 1924.38 During his stay in Hijaz, apart from his security-related report on the Malay pilgrims, Abdul Majid was also found to have reported to the British authorities on the activities of the Netherlands East Indies Malays, such as his report on their proposal to organise a congress of Jamī‘iyah Ansar al-Ḥaramayn, whose objectives included throwing off the Dutch yoke.39

Even though the welfare of the Malay pilgrims was portrayed by the British authorities as at the fore-front of their post-World War 1 administration of the Hajj, political considerations were also given priority, particularly in view of the political turmoil in Hijaz as a result of the power struggle between Sharīf Ḥusayn and Ibn Sa‘ūd. The British were anxious that the political implications of the struggle would affect the Muslim population of Malaya. Apart from relying on the reports provided

36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 William R. Roff, "The Conduct of the Hajj From Malaya", op.cit., p. 95. To make the Malays who intended to perform the Hajj fully aware of the assignment of Abdul Majid in Jeddah, his appointment and functions as a Pilgrimage Officer was published by the office of the Menteri Besar of Kelantan. Among other things the pilgrims were advised to register and deposit their return tickets with him when they reached Jeddah, to look to him for assistance and to note that he was responsible for returning the belongings of deceased pilgrims to their next-to-kin. See Pengasoh, No. 188, Vol. 8, 28 January 1926.
39 See L/PS/10/632 (Oriental and India Office Collection), F.H.W. Stonehewer-Bird (Under Secretary of State for India) to Foreign Office, 9 April 1928 & 1 June 1928.
by Abdul Majid, the monitoring of security matters related to the Malays in Hijaz was seemingly undertaken by the British Consul in Jeddah himself, as when it was reported in Sharif Husayn’s propaganda organ, al-Qiblah that the latter’s claim to the title of Caliph following the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate by Kemal had been recognised by “a learned deputation representing five million Muslim inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula”.\(^4\) The British Consul, who was alarmed by the claim, questioned the grounds of Sharif Husayn for making such a declaration, and he described the so-called deputation as only a group of students of not more than twenty years of age, who were connected with an Arab school in Melaka. He further added that their claim to represent five million Muslims rested upon nothing more solid than ordinary letters of recommendation from people in Melaka to their relatives in Makkah.\(^4\) The claim was also discounted by the British Consul because to his knowledge the deputation had been supposed to meet Sharif Husayn as a symbol of friendship and to request his favour in giving assistance to promote Arabic as a language of religion among the Malays. The need was considered acute since many schools had been opened in the Malay Peninsula and were experiencing a shortage of Arabic teachers.\(^4\)

When the power struggle between Husayn and Sa‘ūd was approaching its decisive stage, the development was closely watched by the British authorities, since they were aware that the Wahhabi challenge had naturally been the subject

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\(^4\) L/PS/10/1111 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection), E3934/1752/44 From R.W. Bullard H.B.M. Agent and Consul of British Agency in Jeddah to His Britannic Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State For Foreign Affairs, 16 April 1924. The deputation consisted of, Shaykh Zubir bin Haji Ahmad of 160, Kampong Java Road Penang, Shaykh Ahmad bin Mohamed Mansuri and Ali bin Mohamed Mansuri both of 25 Nyahboo Lane, Penang, Shaykh Ishak bin Mohamed Aziddin of 10, Jelutong Road, Penang, Shaykh Abdul Majid Salem bin Haji Hussein of 177, Nyahboo Lane, Penang. See also CO 537/924, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to James Henry Thomas, 30 June 1924; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 21, June 1924.

\(^4\) Ibid. The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence which also reported on the deputation, however, gave little importance to the so-called Malayan delegation which it regarded only as schoolboys from Penang, despite the fact that they claimed to represent the five million Muslims of the Malay Peninsula.

\(^4\) L/PS/10/1111 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection), E4375/1752/44 From R.W. Bullard H.B.M. Agent and Consul of British Agency in Jeddah to His Britannic Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State For Foreign Affairs, 22 April 1924.
of considerable anxiety to Muslims in Malaya. In August 1924, just after the Hajj season ended, Ibn Sa'ūd's Ikhwān followers successfully took the southern town of Taif and Malay pilgrims were among those caught in the middle of the military struggle. The British were, however, relieved when they heard the news that all pilgrims of their nationality had left Jeddah on the evening of 15 October 1924.

Following the uncertainties caused by the political upheaval, the British authorities issued warnings about the possible dangers to personal safety to intending pilgrims for the Hajj season of 1925. The British, however, were anxious not to be seen as openly forbidding or discouraging the Hajj, as this would be likely to involve accusations of being anti-Islam and taking sides in Hijazi politics.

To avoid being implicated in the complex Hijazi political conflict, the British hinted to such bodies as the Muslim Advisory Board in the Straits Settlements and to the Residents and Advisers of the Malay States that it was not advisable for the Malay pilgrims to proceed to Hijaz, because of the dangerous situation. In addition, the British also felt that all Qāgis, Penghulu, Police and other bodies in Malaya should get in touch with people intending to perform the Hajj and try to deter their intention in view of the current political conditions. In October 1925 Ḥusayn abdicated in favour of his son ʿAlī, and Makkah itself fell. The abdication of Sharīf Ḥusayn was reported by the British as being generally hailed with joy by the Malays and returning Malayan pilgrims were reported not to favour him as

43 CO 537/926, Marriott (Governor's Deputy) to Amery; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 23, November 1924.

44 Ibid.

45 CO 537/929, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to Amery, 19 February 1925; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 26, February 1925.

46 Ibid.

47 CO 371/11698, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to Amery, 28 November 1925; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 33, October/November 1925.
Caliph. His son ʿAlī was regarded as weak and irresolute and likely soon to be ousted.

Ibn Saʿūd's troops finally entered Jeddah on 9 December 1925. Following the abdication of ʿAlī on 19 December 1925, a provisional government was formed which officially surrendered to Ibn Saʿūd on 21 December. The process of transition from ʿAlī to Ibn Saʿūd was swift, and on 8 January 1926 in the Masjid al-Ḥarām Ibn Saʿūd was proclaimed King of the Hijaz and Sultan of Nejd and its dependencies. The rise of Ibn Saʿūd and the Wahhabis obviously created anxiety not only to devout Muslims who were concerned about the future of the Hajj, but also to the British who were worried about the effect it would have on the 100 million Muslims under their rule. The British apprehension over the direction taken by the new government, however, proved unfounded when Ibn Saʿūd thanked the British Government for their support and reaffirmed his commitment to hold sacred the close bonds of friendship, and the treaty existing between Nejd and the government of Great Britain.

After the ascension of Ibn Saʿūd the situation rapidly returned to normal. By the time the Hajj season of 1926 was approaching, the whole of Hijaz was in his hands and the season was expected to go on as usual. Since the situation was becoming more conducive, the British administration in Malaya decided to permit the 1926 Hajj season to take place through Jeddah as usual. At first the British authorities were doubtful whether the number of pilgrims from Malaya would be as

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49 CO 537/927, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to Amery, 31 December 1924; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 24, December 1924.


53 GA 58/26, P.I.B. 1132, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), A.W. Hamilton to the Secretary to the High Commissioner, 19 January 1926 (A.W. Hamilton was the Acting Director of the Political Intelligence Bureau).
large as usual owing to the fact that no early arrangements were made, since it had been thought extremely improbable that the Hajj season would take place at all. This forecast, however, proved erroneous. Muslims from the Netherlands East Indies and British Malaya at that time were financially better off due to the boom in rubber prices and a larger number of them, who had been disappointed in their hopes of performing the Hajj in the previous year, decided to do so this year.54

The first pilgrim ship for the 1926 Hajj season left Singapore for Jeddah on 4 February. The ship, S.S. "Bellerophon" of the Ocean Steamship Company left Singapore with 729 passengers and a further 54 from Penang. It was then followed on 12 February by the S.S. "Armanestan" of H.M.H. Namazie & Co. with 313 pilgrims on board.55 Even though there were some doubts over the safety of the pilgrims while they were in Hijaz, the fear was immediately removed following the assurance given by Ibn Sa'ūd through the British Consul at Jeddah.56 A similar assurance was also conveyed to Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff in Singapore, in which Ibn Sa'ūd also proclaimed the freedom of religious worship to all Muslim madhhabs and permission to visit the holy shrines as usual. These assurances were conveyed by telegrams and were published in the local newspapers. Their publication did a great deal to encourage local Malays to proceed with the Hajj, and to allay their fears as to the safety of the route and any probable interference in their religious rites by the Wahhabis.57

During the 1926 pilgrimage, Ibn Sa'ūd called the Mu'tamar Islāmi (Islamic Congress) from 7 June to 6 July 1926, which was attended by fifty-nine delegates from the Muslim World including several Indonesians, but no delegates from

55 CO 273/534/6, H. Marriott to L.C.M.S Amery, 18 March 1926; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 36, February 1926.
56 Ibid. In his telegram of 19 February to H.B.M. the Acting Consul at Jeddah, Ibn Sa'ūd requested him to inform the British administration that he would guarantee the safety and comfort of all pilgrims visiting Hijaz.
57 CO 273/534/6, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 36, February 1926.
Malaya took part. Even though the Congress was called by Ibn Saʻūd in order to consider questions relating to the governance of the Hajj and the Holy places in general, it seems that it was organised not as part of an effort to deal with the issue, but rather, at least the British believed, as part of his effort to legitimise his rule over Hijaz and to counterblast the Cairo Caliphate Conference, which was held in May.

Before the Congress took place, on 9 April 1926, Omar Said Tjokroaminoto of the Sarekat Islam stopped on his way to the Caliphate Conference in Cairo at Makkah where he discoursed at a feast attended by 150 guests on the desirability of combining all Malayan territories and the Hijaz under a Muslim rule. In his address, Tjokroaminoto touched on the need for a new Muslim political entity which would be directed by a real Khalifah with his seat in the Hijaz, free from foreign influence and interference. The name of Ibn Saʻūd was also mentioned as the possible Caliph. Since the meeting took place within the precincts of his fort, the British suspected that it was held with the sanction of Ibn Saʻūd himself.

Apart from this call, Tjokroaminoto also declared that it was his duty to meet all Malays and explain to them the necessity of expelling the White races from the East. Even though the British anticipated that a number of Sumatran Malays would visit Malaya after the Hajj season in order to stir up anti-British feeling amongst Malays, there was no evidence to suggest that there was such an orchestrated activity, as an immediate outcome of Tjokroaminoto's call. Sarekat Islam's anti-Colonial stand had been long known to the British and the organisation

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58 CO 273/534. *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 37, March 1926. The most important Indonesian Muslim leaders who attended the Congress were Haji Omar Said Tjokroaminoto of Sarekat Islam and Kiyayi Haji Mas Mansur of Muhammadiyah.

59 FO 371/11698 & CO 273/534/20, Marriott (Deputy Governor) to Amery, 25 September 1926; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 41, July 1926.


61 Ibid.
was regarded as a fanatical hater of European control which desired complete self-government.62

Despite the fact that the British were anxious about the potential danger of a possible spill-over of the conflict in the Hijaz to its Muslim population in Malaya, this proved not to happen. Furthermore, it also proved that Ibn Sa"ūd and the Wahhabis were not extremely enthusiastic to spread their doctrine outside the Arabian Peninsula or even to the Muslims who performed the Hajj. Instead, their major preoccupation was to enforce uncompromising adherence to certain strict Wahhabi doctrines while pilgrims were in Hijaz, no matter whether they subscribed to them or not. The British perceptions that the Malays were least influenced by events in Hijaz and Ibn Sa"ūd's assurance that there would be no interruption in the conduct of the Hajj, relieved the colonial authorities in Malaya.

Ever since they had involved in the administration of the Hajj, the British policy and particularly their willingness to intervene when the situation needed them to do so was consistent all along. Thus during the 1920 Hajj season they helped to house thousands of the transients in public schools when Singapore was crowded with pilgrims from the Netherlands East Indies and Malaya, and lodgings were lacking.63 The 1938/39 season was the last successful season before the outbreak of World War II, and about 11,000 pilgrims sailed from Singapore. The following season began with the embarkation of 600 pilgrims before hostilities began. However, 399 pilgrims who left Singapore on 24 August 1939 were turned back on the instruction of the Naval Authorities when they reached Colombo.64 Despite the atmosphere of uncertainty, the British administration still tried to make the season as successful as usual and several proposals were debated to enable the pilgrims to proceed with their journey. Among the proposals made was that they travel through India with the necessary shipping arrangements being made

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62 L/PS/10/629 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection), British Consulate General, Batavia to Viscount Grey of Falloden (Confidential), No. 250, 21 September 1916.


64 MB 332/40, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch), J.D. Dalley (Superintendent Special Branch) to the Colonial Secretary, 31 May 1940; enclosure *Annual Report On The Malayan Pilgrimage For The Season 1939-1940 A.D. or 1358-1359 A.H., 28 March 1940.
available. The British Government agreed to meet part of the higher costs of passage, so that inter alia, poorer pilgrims could travel. The worsening level of hostilities, however, scotched the idea.  

**War With Turkey and the Caliphate Agitation**

Although the British were not as concerned as the Dutch about the political role of Islam, they were, however, apprehensive of the Turks because of what they viewed as their role in championing the cause of the Muslims. This suspicion became apparent early on when Turkey wished to appoint as Consul-General Sayyid Junayd Omar al-Junayd, who was at that time discharging the duties of Vice-Consul after the death of his brother Sayyid Abdullah bin Omar al-Junayd in late 1881, who had been the Consul-General in Singapore.  

Despite the fact that approval for his appointment was not granted by the Governor, Sayyid Junayd Omar al-Junayd continued to perform the duties of the position from May 1882 and regarded himself as the appointed Turkish Consul-General in Singapore. While attempting to carry out his duties, Sayyid Junayd made several attempts to be given the exequatur, but his efforts were frustrated by official opposition, including that of British Consul-General in Singapore who argued that his appointment should be stopped, since he claimed that there was no Turkish interest existing in the island.

In 1884, Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff, whom the British recognised as a "gentleman of position and influence", also attempted to fill the post of Turkish

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66 CO 273/131, Dufferin to Foreign Office, 12 June 1884.

67 CO 273/131, Foreign Office, 20 October 1884; See also CO 273/130, Governor of the Straits Settlements to the Foreign Office, 29 December 1884.

68 CO 273/118, W.H. Read (Consul-General) to Foreign Office, 20 July 1882.
Consul-General in Singapore.\(^69\) To boost his campaign, Sayyid Mohamad on one of his European tours also planned to stop at Istanbul in order to obtain the blessing of Sultan Abdul Hamid for his full appointment to the post.\(^70\) As in the case of Sayyid Junayd, the British objected to this appointment, also claimed on the ground that there were no Turkish subjects or Turkish business interests in Singapore. Furthermore, there was a strong feeling on the part of the British authorities that the duties of the Consul could be carried out by an European merchant, since they believed that no native of the East was fitted by education or civilisation for such a pre-eminent position.\(^71\)

In 1899, Kiamil Bey, the Turkish Consul-General in Batavia, applied to became the Consul-General in Singapore. His appointment was also opposed by the British authorities to the extent of regarding even his presence in Singapore as extremely undesirable.\(^72\) This persistent British opposition to the appointment of a Turkish Consul-General in Singapore stemmed from their concern at what was viewed as the Turkish role in the spreading of Pan-Islamic influence, of which Turkey was considered to be the centre. In order to be well-informed of the possible spread of this influence, there was correspondence from time to time, between Singapore and Batavia and consultation between the Foreign Office and the British Ambassador in Constantinople on this issue, which was deemed to be important to their interest.\(^73\)

The British Malaya Government's outlook on its relations with Turkey took a dramatic leap from suspicion to confrontation in the first week of November 1914 when Great Britain declared war on the Ottomans, after the empire abandoned its

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\(^69\) CO 273/246, Granville to Foreign Office, 6 January 1899.

\(^70\) CO 273/126, Letter from W.H. Read to Frederick Weld, Governor of the Straits Settlements, 27 February 1884.

\(^71\) Ibid.

\(^72\) CO 273/246, Mitchell (Governor) to Chamberlain (Colonial Office), 6 January 1899.

In its effort to retain the loyalty of its Muslim population, Britain issued a declaration regretting that the Ottoman government had taken such a deliberate step by declaring war without any provocation and stating that it had been ill-advised to do so. In Malaya, after war with Turkey was declared, the British authorities issued a statement detailing the chronological events which had led to hostilities. Copies in Jawi and a Romanised version of the statement were despatched and widely distributed all over the Malay States and North Borneo. In Pahang alone 1,000 copies of the statement were distributed throughout the state. Apart from this statement, copies of the Aga Khan's message to Muslims in general were also sent to the Malay Sultans for information of the Muslims in Malaya. Even though to the Malays the Aga Khan was not a well-known Muslim leader, his message was sufficient to make it appear that the Turkish decision was unjustifiable in the eyes of certain notable Muslim dignitaries.

To mobilise the Malays' public opinion in favour of their cause, the British were aware that it was a matter of importance to appease the Malay Sultans.


76 HC 1723/1924, Colonial Secretary Office to Under Secretary F.M.S, General Adviser Johore, Government Secretary Jesselton, Adviser Kelantan, British Agent Trengganu, Adviser Perak, 6 November 1914; GA 742/1914, National Archive, Malaysia (Johor Bahru Branch, 6 November 1914).

77 Sultan Pahang 138/1914, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch), 30 November 1914.

78 Sultan Pahang 138/1914. National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch), n.d.; HC 1723/1914; enclosure Straits Settlements Government Gazette. Extraordinary, Vol. XLIX, No. 113, Thursday 5 November 1914. The Aga Khan was in London on the day Britain declared war on Turkey. Immediately after the declaration, he cabled to his followers commanding them to be loyal to the King-Emperor in the face of what was termed a grave and deliberate provocation on the part of Turkey. He condemned the act of Turkey and called upon Muslims to pray for the victory of Great Britain and her allies. See Stephen van Rensselaer Trowbridge & Selim Effendi Abd-ul-Ahad, "The Moslem Press and the War", The Moslem World, Vol. V, No. 4, October 1915, p. 418.
Since the Malays had a strong feeling for the Sultans, their attitude would be influential in determining the stand of the general Malay population toward the conflict. Their anticipation yielded an immediate result when at the meeting of the Federal Council held in Kuala Kangsar on 4 November 1914, three of the four Sultans of the Federated Malay States who attended it issued a joint assurance of their allegiance to the British Empire.\textsuperscript{79} The Sultan of Perak in order to express his unequivocal support for the British also sent a telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies pronouncing that "as long as the sun and the stars shine in the heavens he will look to no other country but adhere to England". He also offered assurance that there would be no trouble as a result of the British state of war with Turkey, and said that after consulting with other rulers a joint statement would be issued on their supportive stand for the British cause in dealing with the conflict.\textsuperscript{80}

The Sultan of Selangor who was absent from the meeting held in Kuala Kangsar because of illness also declared his unwavering allegiance to the British Empire. His address was translated and enclosed in a despatch to the Colonial Office and read with much satisfaction by King George V.\textsuperscript{81} In another communications, the Sultan of Selangor also expressed his regret over the action taken by Turkey in siding with the enemies of the British, Russians and French. He gave his assurance that, even though the Sultan of Turkey was his brother in religion, he was in no relation whatsoever with his government. The Sultan also called his chiefs and all his subjects not to entertain any evil intention against the British government. With pleasure, the Sultan expressed his gratitude by thanking


\textsuperscript{80} HC 1702/14, Arthur Young (High Commissioner) to Lewis Harcourt (Colonial Office); enclosure Telegram sent to the Secretary of States, 5 November 1914.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., pp. 37-38.
God for the prosperity and peace enjoyed by his state under British protection, and prayed they would be victorious in the war.\textsuperscript{82}

After consultations amongst the Federated Malay State rulers, a joint statement was issued and proclaimed that in no way would the order transgressed, which forbade any of the inhabitants of their respective states to interfere or render any form of assistance to Turkey and to raise or be influenced by any agitation in favour of participation on its side.\textsuperscript{83} Despite the fact of its straightforwardness, the Sultan of Pahang felt that the joint statement was not sufficiently forceful and issued a separate statement, which explicitly deplored Turkey's action and stated his belief that his state and its people would live in peace and prosperity under the British.\textsuperscript{84} In addition to supporting the joint statement issued by other Federated Malay State rulers which forbade any of their subjects to help Turkey in any form whatsoever or to instigate any action which might be viewed as siding with her, the statement by the Sultan of Pahang also added that he would view with seriousness of any form of transgression by his subjects.\textsuperscript{85}

The rulers of the Unfederated Malay States were also equally unequivocal in their support of the British. The Sultan of Kelantan in his telegraphic despatch expressed his and his people's loyalty, and assured the British that there would be no disturbance in the state as the result of the war.\textsuperscript{86} In a letter expressing his great pleasure, the Sultan of Kelantan informed the British Adviser that after consultation with his royal house, community and religious leaders, had made a

\textsuperscript{82} HCO 1805A/1914. Arthur Young (High Commissioner) to Lewis Harcourt (Colonial Office), 3 December 1914; enclosure Translation of Letter From Sultan of Selangor to the High Commissioner 19 November 1914. See also CO 273/413; enclosure.

\textsuperscript{83} HCO 1806A/1914, Under Secretary F.M.S. to the Secretary to the High Commissioner, 25 November 1914; enclosure the proclamation, 5 November 1914.

\textsuperscript{84} Sultan Pahang, 138/1914, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch), 9 November 1914; HCO 1806A/1914, op.cit; enclosure Proclamation by the Sultan Pahang.

\textsuperscript{85} Sultan Pahang 138/1914, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch), 30 November 1914.

\textsuperscript{86} B.A. Kelantan, 1729/1914. Arthur Young (Governor) to Lewis Harcourt (Colonial Office), 12 November 1914; enclosure Copy of Telegram From Adviser Kelantan to Colonial Secretary, 10 November 1914.
proclamation to his subjects in the state concerning the war between Britain and Turkey. Among other matters, the proclamation read that the war was regarded as doing nothing but harm to the Muslim religion and the Sultan pointed out that there was no reason why the Muslims of the state should have any sympathy with, or concern for Turkey, since after all the war was in no way brought about by the British Government. On behalf of the Muslims in Kelantán, the Sultan also acknowledged his delight on learning that the places of concern to Muslims such as Jeddah, Makkah and Medinah were being protected by the British Government. As a mark of gratitude, the Sultan issued an order that special prayers be said in the mosques every Friday for the victory of the British Government in the war and its rapid termination in its favour.87

The Sultan of Trengganu on receiving the news of the outbreak of the war, immediately issued a statement disapproving of the action taken by Turkey in siding with the Germans, and expressed his loyalty to and sympathy for the British, and at the same time prayed for their victory.88 The Sultan of Johore in his expression of support, also conveyed a message of his willingness to put his military forces at the disposal of the British for the defence of the colony, which was received with much pleasure.89 These assurances and a series of exchanges of correspondence with the Malay Sultans undoubtedly banished any lingering doubts on the part of the British administration in Malaya as to any immediate danger following their declaration of war with Turkey.

The declaration of war led the Turks to issue a fatwā, Jihād-i Ekber, Fard-i Āyn on 11 November. The fatwā, which was signed by the Shaykh al-Islam, Khayrī Effendi was promulgated on 14 November, justified hostilities and declared

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88 HCO 1941/1914, Translation of Letter From the Sultan of Trengganu to the High Commissioner, 4 December 1914.

89 HCO 1803/1914, Sultan of Johore to Arthur Young (High Commissioner), 21 November 1914.
jihād against Great Britain, France, Russia and its allies.\textsuperscript{90} The proclamation alarmed the British government because of its possible grave and disastrous effects on the public opinion of its Muslim populations if they openly subscribed to the Ottoman jihād. The British were aware that to a certain extent her Muslim population owed the Sultan of Turkey spiritual allegiance as a rightful Caliph of Islam and guardian of the Muslim holy places.\textsuperscript{91}

In order to avoid the confrontation from spilling over into Malaya and the Malays being drawn into the conflict, the British took an immediate step to avert the war of propaganda by Turkey and its attempts to win Muslim support. The most drastic step taken for the purpose was the imposing of a news blackout regarding the war, which might have aroused conflict and threatened their interests. Through the Federated Malay States Government Gazettes of 1914, an enactment on publication of news of the war was announced on 21 November.\textsuperscript{92} In the enactment, the British authorities in Malaya were given the power to censor news reports of the war with Turkey, so that stories concerning it intended for publication were restricted only to accounts favourable to Britain. Early in the hostilities, Reuter's telegrams to the local press were stopped if they contained any reference to the future of Istanbul. The news agency was also invited not to telegraph opinions on the future of the city, so as to guard against the possibility of inflaming local Muslim feeling.\textsuperscript{93}

The moves taken by the British authorities proved to have a devastating effect on the popular Malay newspapers, particularly Neracha, which supported the cause of Turkey and had made the news of its war on the European front its main attraction. Even when the war was at its height, the newspaper had already

\textsuperscript{90} Geoffrey Lewis, "The Ottoman Proclamation of Jihad 1914", \textit{The Islamic Quarterly}, Vol. XIX, Nos. 3 & 4, July-December 1975, p. 157. For the translation of the proclamation, see pp. 157-163.

\textsuperscript{91} L/PS/10/524 (Oriental and India Office Collection), "Memorandum on Indian Moslems", Mark Sykes to A.H. Grant, Secretary to the Government of India in Foreign and Political Department, Simla, 1912, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{92} Federated Malay States Enactment 1914 in \textit{Government Gazette}, 21 November 1914.

\textsuperscript{93} CO 273/421, Arthur Young (Governor of the Straits Settlements) to the Secretary of States For the Colonies, received by the Colonial Office on 12 March 1915.
drastically reduced its reports on the events, due to the enactment and the difficulty in getting the latest news. This reduction led to a drop in its popularity and ultimately it had to cease publication in the middle of 1915 due to declining readership.94

Other steps were also taken by Britain designed to justify its state of war with Turkey and to avoid the inflammation of Muslim feelings. This comprised proclamations which were ready for despatch all over the world even before the two countries declared war on each other, including the guarantee of protection for Muslim Holy Places and Shrines in the Middle East. Such places as the port of Jeddah were declared immune from molestation, a declaration which the British considered necessary in response to false reports of their bombardment by British ships.95 These steps were also taken by the British to counter the propaganda they suspected of being spearheaded by the Germans, who distributed pamphlets in British Malaya inciting the Muslims to overthrow the infidel and obey the Caliph of Istanbul.96

Even though World War 1 was an anxious period for the British administration in Malaya, it was clear that if few felt any imperial allegiance, the majority of the population were not actively opposed to their rule. The expression of loyalty voiced by Malay rulers and leaders of Malaya's several communities heartened the British administration, which at the outset viewed with some confidence the possibility of internal peace. Still if the surface was calm at the end of 1914, events soon after were to indicate the presence of a troubled undercurrent.97 The presence to a certain extent of feelings of disapproval within


95 Alun Jones, "Internal Security", op.cit., p. 36.


97 Ibid., pp. 39-40.
a section of the community over some events of the war was proven when the Singapore Mutiny broke out on 15 February 1915. The inquiries into the cause of the mutiny revealed that there was a strong feeling among the mutineers against being sent to fight directly against Turkey. The existence of such feelings was also admitted by the Governor in his Annual Report for 1915, where he recognised that the entry of Turkey into the war had "stirred deeply" the feelings of the local community, and that, although a vast majority remained loyal, a few fanatics "preached an extreme doctrine of religious hate". One of the central figures behind the mutiny was Kassim Ismail Mansur, a Gujarati Muslim from Surai, who was a supporter of the Pan-Islamic propaganda in Singapore. He was convicted and hanged for possession of a copy of a letter expressing willingness to collude with the Turks to fight the British during the war.

The tension caused by the Singapore Mutiny proved to be brief, and by the second week of March 1915 the situation was rapidly returning to normal. Except for the feelings of discontent showed by some Indians and Arabs, the British authorities believed that there was no reason not to trust the sincere loyalty voiced by prominent Muslim leaders. As for the Malays, even though their

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98 The Mutiny which involved the Fifth Light Infantry of the Malay States Guides was sparked off rather spontaneously and almost took control of Singapore Island. The Malay States Guides was formed as part of the Treaty of Federation of July 1895. At the outbreak of World War 1, it consisted of five hundred and fifty six Sikhs, ninety Punjabi Muslims, two hundred and ten Pathans, three Hindus and one Malay. The regiment was predominantly infantry, with a small artillery battery. At that time there was a concentration of Indian troops in Singapore, awaiting possible despatch overseas to engage in the current war and anti-British documents were found distributed among the Guides, in which Indian revolutionaries were suspected.


101 This letter, which was intercepted in December 1914, was sent to Kassim's son for personal delivery to the Honorary Turkish Consul in Rangoon. The letter asked for a Turkish warship to be dispatched to Singapore to take the Malay States Guides to any place where they could come into conflict with British troops. The regiment was also held ready to mutiny and to fight for the Turks. See Alun Jones, "Internal Security", op.cit., p. 56.

102 CO 273/421. Arthur Young (Governor) to Lewis Harcourt (Secretary of State) 11 March 1915.
involvement in the event was discounted, the potential danger that it would influence them also worried the British authorities. Pressurised by this belief, they decided to banish K. Anang, the assistant editor of the newspaper Neracha and also a prominent Malay writer, who was known for his pro-Turkish sentiments.103

The British authorities' anxiety over the possible danger that the Malays were in some degree influenced by the events proved to be not unfounded when the Kelantan Uprising broke out at the end of April.104 In an interview in Singapore with Arthur Young after its suppression, the representatives of the Sultan of Kelantan maintained that they had heard nothing to suggest that the disturbances were directed against the Europeans, or that the war with Turkey had influenced events.105 This conviction, however, was not shared by William George Maxwell, the Acting Colonial Secretary to the Government of the Straits Settlements. His enquiries let him to believe that there was cause for concern on the part of the colonial authorities, which gave the British prestige a tremendous blow. Maxwell's belief was based on the mood of the people of Kelantan some months before the uprising, since they were convinced that Great Britain was being defeated in the European war. When the Singapore Mutiny broke out, wild stories spread throughout the state of the massacres of Europeans and the successes of the mutineers. It was commonly accepted in the state that all the European troops and all the British battleships had left the East for Europe.106

Even though at large the Malays' allegiance to the British was unquestionable during the war years, it was clear that the colonial administrators were still extremely anxious to ensure that their loyalty would not in whatever


104 For a discussion on the Kelantan uprising, particularly from the British sources, see J. de vere Allen, "The Kelantan Uprising of 1915", op.cit., pp. 241-257.

105 CO 273/426, Arthur Young (Governor) to Bonar Law (Confidential), 2 June 1915.

106 Ibid., It was also reported that so firmly did the Kelantan Malays believe in British impotence in the Straits Settlements that when the British Adviser made it known that British troops and a British man-of-war were on their way to Kelantan, the news was received with incredulity even at the highest level. When Colonel Brownlow's force and H.M.S. Cadmus arrived it created a feeling almost approaching bewilderment.
circumstances waver during these difficult times. The British were indeed successful in ensuring that the Malay public opinion during this period was in their favour by persuading the Sultans to give their undivided allegiance, which their subjects were obliged to concur with. In addition to their undivided support for the British administration, the Malay sympathy for them also generated commiseration when following a request, the Federated Malay States rulers were pleased to approve a contribution of fifteen million dollars for the British War Relief Fund. In giving his accord for the request, the Sultan of Pahang expressed the view that even though they were under British protection, it was also the responsibility of the Malay States to share their protector’s burden when the need arose.108 Except for the brief troubles caused by the Singapore Mutiny and the Kelantan Uprising, the British did not encounter any other serious internal threats during the war years, and even the Ottoman declaration of *jihād* received no positive response.

When the Turks were defeated in World War 1, the British were again anxious over the possible hostile local response to the outcome. The undivided allegiance given by the Malay Sultans, however, again was a relief for them, and the Sultan of Pahang on receiving the news of the Allies victory, even ordered his religious officials to conduct special thanks-giving prayers to mark the occasion.109 Despite the allegiance granted, generally the feeling of the Malays on the defeat of the Turks, like that of most Muslims elsewhere, was one of anxiety, principally related to religion, since they feared that the destruction of the Ottoman hegemony would also lead to the destruction of the Islamic principles.110 To keep in touch with these latest post-war feelings, the British kept a close watch on related affairs in the Middle East, India and the Netherlands East Indies, particularly when developments in these places were likely to

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107 See Sultan Pahang 79/1916, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch); enclosure Federal Council Minutes, 28 March 1916, p. 6.

108 Sultan Pahang, 449/16, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch) 11 March 1916. For the Malay version of the Enactment of the War Relief Fund, see Sultan Pahang 38/1916.

109 Sultan Pahang 100/1918, National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch), 4 November 1918.

110 L/PS/10/524 (Oriental and India Office Collection), op.cit., p. 2.
influence Muslims in Malaya. Intelligence officers based in these territories and in Singapore were directed to submit detailed analyses of Islamic movements to the Colonial and Foreign Offices and to the Government of the Straits Settlements.111

Even though no alarming security-related problems surfaced in Malaya after the war had ended and the defeat suffered by the Turks, the movement to revive an effective Caliphate, popularly known as the Caliphate movement, that gripped the Muslim World also had the potential of gaining appeal in Malaya.112 The movement which was religious as well as political in nature had managed to gain much sympathy throughout the Muslim World, particularly in India.113 Since the political consciousness among the Indians in Malaya was associated with their motherland, the Indian Caliphate movement also had much influence among the their community in British Malaya. Significantly, when the movement was initiated in Singapore in 1919, it was dominated by and confined almost entirely to the Indian Muslim community. It started with the launching of a fund in 1919 by two

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111 See for example CO 537/900 and CO 273/505 for the typical reports of these kinds, which were more frequent in connection with the Arabs in the Hadhramaut, the Netherlands East Indies and Malaya, and with the Caliphate movement in Sumatra. When the Caliphate movement began to gain momentum in the Netherlands East Indies, the Straits Settlements authorities suggested the despatch to Sumatra of a Malay secret agent for the purpose of enquiring into the extent of the influence of the movement there and the importance which it had assumed. See L/PS/10/630 (Oriental and India Office Collection), Crosby to Earl Curzon of Kedleston, 14 October 1920.

112 The Caliphate had its origin in India and was spread by a small body of individuals well-known for their Pan-Islamic sympathies. In India, concern for the Caliphate was most obvious in the months following the end of the war (November 1918) when it became increasingly clear that contrary to erstwhile promises, the British (and their allies) were averse to giving Turkey a fair deal or a "just peace". More tragically, the Greeks had launched (May 1919) an unprovoked invasion of defeated Turkey with British blessing. Indian Muslim anxiety over the future of the Muslim leadership finally led to the setting up of an All-India Caliphate Committee at Bombay with branches all over the country. At its instance, a Caliphate Day was organised on 17 October 1919, and the countrywide response to the Caliphate appeal led to the convoking of the first Caliphate Conference. Held in Delhi on 23 November, under Fazlul Haq's (1873-1962) presidency, the Conference decided to set up an organisation for securing justice for Turkey and for the Caliph. See Sharif al Munajid, "The Khilafat Movement", Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. XXV1, part 1V, October 1978, pp. 279-280; Shafique Ali Khan, "The Khilafat Movement", op.cit., p. 43.

113 L/PS/10/524 (Oriental and India Office Collection), op.cit., p. 3. The Indian Muslims' advocacy of the Caliphate movement was due to the fact that they were the minority. A Caliphate would be an ideal authority to look for protection and to provide a rallying point to mobilise their defence of the united forces of the Islamic world. See Gopal Krishna, "The Khilafat Movement In India: The First Phase", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. 1 & 2, 1968, p. 37.
Indian brothers who were regarded as "having a good education" and whose names were given as Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali.\footnote{114} It was then followed by the formation of Caliphate committee by Mahbub Hassan, an Indian who was connected with the Caliphate and Angora organisation in India.\footnote{115}

The Caliphate movement in Singapore, however, received a substantial impetus when Khwaja Kamaluddin of the mosque at Woking in England visited the island in March 1921.\footnote{116} Khwaja Kamaluddin was a prominent Muslim leader who played an important role in nurturing the Caliphate cause in its embryonic stage, and his Muslim Mission in Woking was used to serve its aspirations.\footnote{117} Following his visit to Singapore, a Muslim Association, Anjuman I-Islam, was formed and was registered on 19 August 1921, as a branch of the Muslim Mission of Woking.\footnote{118} Even though the organisation stated that it would not deal with politics, the British administration was extremely suspicious of it, since some of its founding committees were regarded as ardent supporters of the Caliphate movement, as with the case of Bashir Ahmad, who was its secretary. After its inauguration, the association tried to canvass support from other Muslim clubs throughout Malaya under the slogan "Unity is strength and will lead to a great

\footnote{114}{\textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, April 1922. The two men were very active in India. In April, 1919 they sent a memorandum to the Viceroy urging the British to support the Caliphate and by doing so retain the loyalty of the millions of Muslims in the Empire. See Gopal Krishna, "The Khilafat Movement", op.cit., pp. 39-43.}

\footnote{115}{CO 537/908, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No. 11, January 1923.}

\footnote{116}{Khwaja Kamaluddin was born in Lahore, present-day Pakistan in 1870. He passed his Bachelor of Arts in 1893, followed by the L.L.B. in 1897, and at one time served as professor of History and Economics at Islamic College, Lahore. He went to England in 1912, and in 1913 edited a journal \textit{The Islamic Review} and established the Muslim Mission in Woking. Khwaja Kamaluddin died in 1932. For a brief discussion of Khwaja Kamaluddin, see Adnan Haji Mohd. Nawang, "Za’ba dan Ajaran Khwaja Kamaluddin", in Khoo Kay Kim & Fadhil Othman (eds.), \textit{Pendidikan Di Malaysia. Dahulu dan Sekarang}, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, p. 20 (footnote 1).}


\footnote{118}{Adnan Haji Mohd. Nawang, "Za’ba dan Ajaran Khwaja Kamaluddin", op.cit., p. 74; CO 273/518, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire; enclosure \textit{The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence}, No, 10, December 1922.}

315
brotherhood of all Muslims in Malaya". As an organ for the association, the journal *The Muslim* was published in English by Anjuman I-Islam from January 1922 in Singapore.\textsuperscript{119}

Despite the fact that Anjuman I-Islam and *The Muslim* were more attractive to the Indian Muslim community and only managed to enlist limited Malay support, a number of educated Malays also joined the association, among whom was Zain ul-Abidin.\textsuperscript{120} Despite this, attempts to bolster its cause among Malays was made by Mas Abdul Hamid or K. Anang, who in order gain their sympathy and to solicit funds, was actively in correspondence with his old friends throughout Malaya including Kedah, Penang, Perak, Singapore, Trengganu, British North Borneo and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{121} The British suspected that his activities were directed toward the laying of a foundation for a United Islam comprising Malaya, the Netherlands East Indies, Borneo and British India. Even though his efforts appeared to be widely spread the British, however, seem not to worry much to his activities since they believed that the Caliphate movement was itself inchoate at the moment.\textsuperscript{122}

In addition, the minority of Malays who sympathised with the Caliphate cause confined their activities merely to subscribing to anti-British propaganda literature in the form of seditious publications. These publications included *The Muhammadan*, an anti-British journal published in Madras, and among the recipients was a Malay teacher at Malay College, Kuala Kangsar.\textsuperscript{123} Another

\textsuperscript{119} Although *The Muslim* continued to be published until 1925, its readership was confined only to the more educated Muslims. The British administration, however, was very critical of the issues published by the journal and hence any issue that appeared controversial to their eyes were closely analysed. See CO 537/908, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 11, January 1923.


\textsuperscript{121} K. Anang was a close associate of Bashir Ahmad and the only Malay who was banished from Singapore after the mutiny of 1915.

\textsuperscript{122} CO 537/912, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire, 16 May 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 14, May 1923.

\textsuperscript{123} CO 273/516, Braddeley to Winston Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 1, March 1922. The teacher was warned by the authorities in May 1921 not to continue receiving this journal. Even though the *Bulletin* did not mention who the Malay teacher was,
journal subscribed to by these Caliphate adherents was *The Muslim Standard*, an anti-British journal published in London, which was sent to a number of English-educated Muslims in Penang. Even though the journal was subscribed to by few, the British were determined to prevent the spread of the influence of these journals and after they were proscribed they were stopped wherever possible by postmasters in the Straits Settlements.\(^{124}\) Apart from this measure, in Kuala Kangsar, the District Officer was also directed to find out whether the journals and other journals of the same type were circulated among the educated Malays of the district after it had been proscribed by the government.\(^{125}\)

Even though the Caliphate cause only managed to garner limited Malay sympathy, Bashir in particular made several dedicated efforts to widen its support in Malaya, including an attempt of starting a Malay newspaper, so that the community could fully understand the Caliphate activities and be drawn to support the cause.\(^{126}\) Even though the publication of a newspaper never materialised, his endeavours were not entirely futile. A number of Malays including Zain ul-Abidin (teacher at Malay College Kuala Kangsar), Zainal Abidin of the Free School in Penang, Mohamed Zain, a Malay Inspector of Schools in Penang and Abdul Majid Zainuddin, Malay Inspector of Schools in Lower Perak sympathised with the movement and were praised by Bashir for their support of the Caliphate cause.\(^{127}\)

Zain ul-Abidin in particular, who sympathised with the movement, was also the British prime suspect and was regarded as "a clever religious fanatic" and a moving spirit in trying to establish throughout Malaya a strong feeling for Muslim unity and Muslim Empire, and endeavouring to introduce among the younger and

\(^{124}\) Ibid.

\(^{125}\) CO 537/908, Laurence Nunns Guillemand (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 11, January 1923.


\(^{127}\) Ibid.
more educated Malays a new spirit of adverse criticism toward the British government. Apart from being a Caliphate adherent, Zain ul-Abidin was also identified by the British authorities as a supporter of the movement, who still received the journal *Muslim Standard* even after it was proscribed. Using another journal, *The Light*, as a cover, Zain ul-Abidin was accused of conducting a concealed correspondence between himself and Mohamed Kassim of Kelang, who was regarded as an extreme follower of the Caliphate movement. In addition to his suspicious conduct, Zain ul-Abidin was also accused of corrupting or endeavouring to corrupt the minds of some of his pupils at the Malay College. He was also found to be in communication with an ex-pupil who held an official rank in Negeri Sembilan, to whom he was imparting his anti-British views.

Even though the British were not much perturbed by the possibility that the Caliphate agitation would gain much Malay sympathy, at least as shown by their rather low-profile action, they were quite irritated when out of nowhere some individuals propagated its cause, such as the activities of a well-known ʿalim in Perak, Haji Wan Ahmad bin Wan Ngah. Haji Wan Ahmad travelled widely and gave Islamic lectures not only in Perak, but also in neighbouring states and commanded a great deal of influence and respect. The Sultan of Perak at that time, Sultan Alang Iskandar invited him to give lectures once a month at the Ubudiyah Mosque near the royal palace in Kuala Kangsar, and among Perak

128 CO 537/919, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire, 9 November 1923; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 18, November 1923.

129 His firm R.E. Mohamed Kassim of Kelang and Singapore was regarded by the British as notorious on this account. The Singapore branch manager had been already warned by the Straits Settlements Authorities and also the manager of Selangor Branch by the Selangor Government.

130 CO 537/908, Laurence Nunns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 11, January 1923; see also The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 15, June 1923.

131 Haji Wan Ahmad bin Wan Ngah was an ʿalim from Kelantan. He came to Temoh, a small village 40 kilometres south of Ipoh at the invitation of the influential village head, Haji Abdullah Endut, who wished him to teach and settle in the village. He was known as an ʿalim who belonged to the Kaum Muda faction. He died at the age of 55 before the Japanese occupation.

Malays Haji Wan Ahmad had the reputation of being an excellent religious teacher. Haji Wan Ahmad came to be considered extreme in his Islamic viewpoint when in early 1923 he questioned Toh Muda Yahya, the Malay Magistrate and Assistant District Officer at Lenggong in Upper Perak in public about the English Law he administered, which he argued was not in accordance with the Qur’an.

Haji Wan Ahmad was also regarded by the British as pro-Turkish and anti-British, and preached that Muslims should combine together with Turkey. He believed that in Malaya Turkish administration was more suitable than the British administration, and urged the Malays to use the occasion of the Hajj in Makkah as an opportunity for meeting Turks and strengthening the bonds of all Muslims. While the British were displeased with Wan Ahmad, however, there is no evidence that he was warned by the police or that he was approached directly by other colonial officials to put a stop to his activities. Haji Wan Ahmad's interest in what was viewed as Pan-islamic, as far it proved possible to ascertain, had no connection with the Indian Caliphate agitators based in the Straits Settlements. Even though his activities irritated them, the British authorities seemed not to have been alarmed about the possibility of his movement becoming widespread or well supported, because of their belief in the Malay apathy and their opinion that his activities were more of a nuisance than a danger.

Despite the fact that there were a number of Malays suspected of sympathising with the Caliphate cause, from what being reported by their intelligence journal, it appears that the British were not too ruffled by the Malays' involvement, since it was believed that they only represented a small minority of

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135 Ibid.
137 Ibid., p. 159.
educated people and drastic action was unnecessary. This British impression was based on the intelligence reports they gathered during a tour of all the Malay States by their agents and also drawn from the opinions sought from the District and Police Officers. From the opinions provided, the British administration also came to a conclusion that on the whole the Malays were found rather indifferent to what was happening in the Muslim World.\textsuperscript{138}

This British opinion on the Malay apathy, according to the intelligence report was due, with a few exceptions, to their not being very zealous followers of the Prophet and comparatively unmoved by the Caliphate agitation and the political aims of the Turks.\textsuperscript{139} A similar opinion as to the Malays' indifference to the issue of the Turkish Caliphate was also expressed by the Malay Mail, which reported on the abolition of the institution by Kemal on 3 March 1924. According to the newspaper, the event was not of special interest to the Malays, since it believed that the Turkish Caliph was not accepted by all Muslims in Malaya and it did not cause much excitement among its Muslim population.\textsuperscript{140} Even though the abolition of the Caliphate and the declaration of the Turkish Republic had caused great interest in India, in Malaya the British believed that it had little impact.\textsuperscript{141} Undoubtedly, the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 had significantly undermined the Caliphate movement, which received a further blow when on 25 March the Chief 'Ulamā' of Egypt made a statement to the effect that the Caliphate of Abdul Majid was not a legal Caliphate, since the Islamic religion did not recognise a

\textsuperscript{138} CO 273/518, Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire 18 November 1922; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 8, October 1922.

\textsuperscript{139} CO 273/518, Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire 18 November 1922; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 8, October 1922.

\textsuperscript{140} The Malay Mail, 7 March 1924.

\textsuperscript{141} The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, CO 537/931, April 1925; CO 537/923, 31 March 1924; and CO 537/924, 30 June 1924.
Caliphate in the terms laid down for him by the Turkish government and which he accepted.\textsuperscript{142}

Although there was no serious concern on the part of the British authorities over the Malay response to the Caliphate issue, there were also times when they were disturbed by the unfolding of certain developments in the community, such as during the Trengganu Disturbances of 1928. Although this issue did not surface significantly in the state during the earlier period, it caused some concern to the British authorities when the enquiry into the disturbances, which were led by Haji Abdul Rahman Limbong, revealed the existence of a letter which had at the head in red ink "Syed Sagaf Ibni Syed Abdul Rahman is the Khalifah and Haji Draman Limbong from this World till the next".\textsuperscript{143} The letter which was purported to have come from Haji Abdul Rahman Limbong urged all Muslims who belonged to the organisation of Sharikat Islam to gather at Kuala Brang to raise the "Bendera Stambul" or the flag of Istanbul.\textsuperscript{144} The reference to Khalifah and Istanbul attracted British attention to the direction of the uprisings which appeared to indicate a sympathy toward the Caliphate cause, at least among the leaders and the Sharikat Islam movement in Trengganu.\textsuperscript{145}

The Caliphate movement proved not to be as menacing to the British administration as earlier believed. It failure to garner support was contributed to by the fact that it failed to broaden its base among the Malay masses, and its appeal to the Malay Sultans was in vain. In November 1922, the Turkish Grand National Assembly deposed Sultan-Caliph Muhammad Vahiduddin V1 and in his place elected Abdul Majid (1868-1944) as Caliph not as Sultan. The British reported that, even though the new Sultan was still prayed for in the \textit{Jum\textsuperscript{f}ah


\textsuperscript{143} CO 717/61, File 52432: H.W. Thompson to the Chief Secretary to Government, 30 June 1928, Exhibit R.

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.

prayers, there was an atmosphere of confusion among Muslims as to what should be their stand toward the new Turkish Republic. When the Caliphate was abolished in March 1924, the Malays were as confused as Muslims elsewhere and this led to the fading away of what had once appeared to be an embryonic Pan-Islamic movement. The confusion about the Caliphate movement was also contributed to by the inconsistencies of its professed aims, which ran directly counter to the nationalistic aspirations of the Arabs and the Turks.

**Politicisation of the Arabs**

Since the establishment of their administration in Singapore and Penang, the British treated the Arabs, like the Chinese, as partners in their economic ventures because of their hard work and entrepreneurship. Despite this, the British were relatively more suspicious of the Arabs, and this prejudice was contributed to by the religious and political influence they were capable of exerting among the indigenous Malays, which was viewed as a potential threat to their administration. This approach, positive to the Chinese and rather cautious when dealing with the Arabs, was that pursued by Francis Light in the early days of Penang where they were treated as "good friends and dangerous enemies".

In the early days of Singapore, where Arabs were among the pioneer entrepreneurs, Stamford Raffles had also a preconceived opinion of the Arabs, but compared to Light his prejudice against them was deep-rooted. His detestation of the Arabs stemmed from their religious influence, as revealed by his remark:

"Arabs are mere drones, useless and idle customers of the produce of the ground, affecting to be descendents of the Prophet, and the

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146 CO 537/924, Laurence Nunns Guillemand to James Henry Thomas, 30 June 1924; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 21, June 1924.

147 Khoo Kay Kim, "Islam in Malaysia", op.cit., p. 18.

most eminent of his followers, when in reality they are nothing more than manumitted slaves; they worm themselves into the favour of the Malay chiefs, and often procure the highest offices in the Malay states. They hold like robbers and offices they obtain as sycophants, and cover all with the sanctimonious veil of religious hypocrisy. Under the pretext of instructing the Malays in the principles of the Mohammedan religion, they inculcate the most intolerant bigotry and render them incapable of receiving any species of useful knowledge".149

Despite such prejudicial feelings among the British colonialists, when they extended their influence in the Malay states, the Arabs proved not to be monolithic in their response to the intervention. In Negeri Sembilan, the Arabs played a significant role in collaborating with the British, which led to the introduction of the Residential System in the state.150 On the other hand, in Pahang the Arabs were among those actively involved during the disturbance of 1891-95 in opposing the British intervention. Their opposition was noted by the Dato' Menteri of Johore, who in July 1892 informed Cecil Clementi Smith, the Governor of the Straits Settlements, of its existence. According to his information, the agitators included certain Arab Sayyids, who toured Pahang and Negeri Sembilan trying to get signatures from local chiefs to a document asking for the assistance of the Sultan of Turkey to remove the British from the Malay States.151 Despite this opposition, however, not all Arabs in Pahang opposed the British intervention or fomented sedition against them during the disturbance. An Arab, Sayyid Hussein,


150 For a discussion on the role played by certain Arabs which led to the British intervention in Negeri Sembilan, see pp. 98-100 of this work.

151 CO 273/181, Cecil Clementi Smith to Edward Fairfield, 6 July 1892, in Governor Smith to the Secretary of State; minute and enclosure, 29 June 1892.
collaborated with the British and worked with Hugh Clifford in the latter's effort to suppress the rebellion.152

In late nineteenth and early twentieth century Singapore, certain Arabs, particularly Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff, had an intimate relation with the Turks. Even though he did not openly oppose British rule, the British administration was extremely suspicious of his activities because they viewed him as trying to further Turkish influence in the region. Despite this, because of their wealth and influence, the British were aware of the important role the Arabs in the island were capable of playing, particularly the al-Sagoffs, when they faced difficulties in their administration. When the Singapore Mutiny broke out in February 1915, a certain degree of tension was generated in the city-port. To calm the situation Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff, the nephew of Mohammad al-Sagoff, who was the principal Arab leader there with Sayyid Muhammad Aqil, offered R.J. Wilkinson, the Colonial Secretary, their cooperation in holding meetings to explain actions taken by the British administration and to dispel rumours.153

On 6 March, a large meeting was held at Victoria Hall attended by some three thousand people. During its course, unequivocal loyalty to the British was expressed by several community leaders, with Arabs representing the Muslims of the island. In an expression of fealty, one Arab speaker in order to convince his fellow brethren of the need to give their undivided loyalty, compared the British rule with that of the Mamluks. He described the later Sultans of the dynasty as harsh oppressors, while the British brought the Egyptians a higher level of life and civilisation.154 At the gathering a resolution was passed, and as the head of the Muslim community in Singapore, Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff was mandated to convey

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154 Ibid., enclosure "Extract From Malaya Tribune, Monday, 8 March 1915.
the text of the declaration to the British authorities, to be respectfully laid before His Majesty King George V that:

"The Loyalty and Fealty of the Mohammedans of Singapore has in no whit altered from what it was before the war until the present".\(^{155}\)

Before the middle of March the excitement caused by the outbreak of the Mutiny was dying down, and undoubtedly the Arabs, particularly Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff, had played a significant role on the part of the Muslim community in rapidly bringing the situation back to normal.

Sayyid Omar's support for the British cause, however, came just before the Mutiny broke out and did not happen by coincidence; instead it came about through the effort of Brigadier-General Dudley Ridout, the General Officer Commanding the Troops, Straits Settlements, who brought to his attention what he described as the misrule of Turkey and its domination by Germany. In actual fact, when World War 1 broke out Sayyid Omar sympathised with the Turks, but having been convinced by Ridout's persuasions, Sayyid Omar was among the first leading Arabs to disown Turkey, and even switched his support to the cause of Sharif Husayn, who was pro-British.\(^ {156}\) Sayyid Omar's new stand was viewed with much optimism by the British administration, who believed that it would have a significant impact on Muslim opinion, owing to his position as a prominent Muslim leader.\(^ {157}\) In his gesture of support for the cause of the British, Sayyid Omar decided to offer the use of certain of his residential properties in Jeddah, which were fully and handsomely furnished, to be used by British officials visiting or resident in Jeddah.\(^ {158}\)

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\(^{156}\) L/PS/10/599 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection), Brigadier-General Dudley Ridout, General Officer Commanding the Troops, Straits Settlements to The Secretary, War Office, London, 15 August 1916.

\(^{157}\) Ibid.

\(^{158}\) L/PS/10/599 (Oriental and India Office Collection) Arthur Young to Bonar Law, 28 August 1916.

325
When Sharīf Ḥusayn revolted against Ottoman rule in Hijaz, it was a blessing to the British, who were at war with the Turks. In order to boost the revolt and to weaken Ottoman military concentrations, and to give them a military advantage, the Foreign Office was strongly urged by Henry MacMahon, the High Commissioner in Egypt, to give whatever immediate material assistance was needed to the Sharīf in his struggle. At the height of the revolt, this British policy also had some bearing on Malaya, since the Arab community there was divided between those who supported Turkey and were anti-British, and those who supported Sharīf Ḥusayn and were pro-British. To keep abreast of developments and Muslim reactions toward the revolt, MacMahon, who was personally involved with the uprising, was directed by the Foreign Office to supply from time to time, news of its developments to the Governor in Singapore, which was repeated to Batavia.

During the revolt, Sharīf Ḥusayn in order to expedite the cause of his struggle, published the newspaper al-Qiblah in Makkah. The British regarded the newspaper as a important source of information which fed the Arab community with the perspectives they believed were to their advantage. In order that the newspaper could be distributed as early as possible after being published, four hundred copies were requested by the General Officer Commanding Troops in Singapore for distribution to selected Arabs. This step was taken because the British felt that other newspapers that were supplied and distributed failed to carry

159 L/PS/10/524 (Oriental and India Office Collection), Telegram of Henry MacMahon (Cairo) to Foreign Office, 5 December 1912.

160 L/PS/10/629 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection), Cipher Telegram to H. MacMahon (Ramleh). Foreign Office 2 September 1916, 7 P.M. No. 714.

161 Throughout its publication, al-Qiblah was characterised by two major objectives. The first and the main objective was to promote Arab ascendancy in every possible way, and, as essential to this, the cause of Sharīf Ḥusayn. The second, more or less consequent upon the former, was a definite opposition to the Committee of Union and Progress and its whole policy, especially its alliance with the Central Powers. See M. Reeves Palmer, "The Kibla: A Mecca Newspaper", The Moslem World, Vol. VII, No. 2, April 1917, pp. 185-186.
out the necessary conviction to undermine the Turks, this being only convincingly possessed by *al-Qiblah*.162

Even though there were Arabs who sympatised with Turkey during World War 1, nothing alarming surfaced during what was viewed by the British administration as a tense period. When the war ended, however, there was some degree of apprehension toward certain Arabs in Java whose activities were viewed as detrimental to the British interest. Even though their activities were based in Java, the presence of influential and wealthy Arabs in Singapore, which was regarded as a nerve centre situated at a strategic location between Java and India, also concerned the British authorities.163 This was especially so considering the fact that Arabs had a known potential to exert an enormous influence over fifty million fellow-Muslims in Java and Malaya, which they had already proven by their ability to support Hadhramaut with its material needs.164

The British apprehensions about the activities of these Arabs led to a closer communication between Batavia, the Governor of the Federated Malay States, the General Officer Commanding Troops, Singapore, the Director of the Arab Bureau in Cairo and the Political Resident in Aden, in tracking down the activities of the undesirable elements within the community.165 The existence of this suspected activity which was regarded as a threat to the British interest made the British even considered the establishment of an intelligence service to control their movements from Hadhramaut.166

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162 L/PS/10/629 (Oriental and Indian Office Collection) Decipher, Mr. Becket (Batavia via Singapore) 23 June 1917, Received 26 June 1917.

163 See FO 371/5236, Lee Warner to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, Downing Street, 15 July 1920; enclosure Memorandum B, p. 2.

164 FO 371/5236, Lee Warner to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, Downing Street, 15 July 1920.

165 See for example FO 371/5236, communication between British Consulate General Batavia to Earl Curzon of Kedleston on Shaykh Mohammad bin Ambarak, member of the Al-Irshād Society, who were extremely anti-British and anti al-Kathīrī, 20 March 1920.

166 See FO 273/5236, Letters from the Secretary of State of the Foreign Office to Field Marshall Viscount Allenby, 5 August 1920.
Not long after World War 1 had ended, the British authorities were alarmed when it was reported in Java that a meeting had been held at the house of Shaykh Saeid bin Salim Mashabi and attended among others by the Turkish Consul, Muhammad Refat Bey and Shaykh Omar Manggoesj, a rich and influential Arab in Java. At the meeting it was decided that anti-British propaganda would be carried out in the British colonies through one Ali bin Awad bin Sunkar. Ali was said to have visited Penang in July 1919 with Sayyid Abdullah bin Salim al-Attas and Shaykh Taliff where they were making enquiries regarding the possibilities of establishing an Arab school there. This Arab school referred to was no doubt Madrasah al-Mashhor, which was founded at about this time by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, one of the leading Kaum Muda proponents in Malaya at the time.

The British were also alarmed by the efforts of certain Arabs who pursued the Pan-Islamic cause for an effective Caliphate, especially when it was reported in Singapore that Shaykh Omar Manggoesj and Robaya bin Talib of Surabaya who propagated the movement were extremely anti-British, and imbued with German and Turkish propaganda. The British were also suspicious of the activities of an Arab, Shaykh Muhammad bin Oemar Alamudi, who was regarded as extremely anti-British. In order to kept track of his whereabouts, the British Consulate

167 CO 273/505, FO to CO 22 October 1920; enclosure Consul-General, Batavia to Lord Curzon, 26 August 1920; CO 273/505, FO to CO 15 October 1920, see Minute by Sir George Grindle, 22 October 1920. Ali bin Awad bin Sungkar of Pekalongan, Java, was closely associated with certain Arabs in Makkah who had previously been active in the Young Turk Party.

168 Ibid.

169 L/PS/10/630 (Oriental and India Office Collection) War Office to Foreign Office, 22 December 1919. The British were worried by the activities of Sayyid Abdullah al-Attas and Ali bin Sunkar and closely watched their movements.


171 FO 371/5236, Dunn, Consul of British Consulate General, Batavia to Earl Curzon of Kedleston, 7 June 1920.

328
General in Batavia requested the General Officer Commanding Troops, Singapore to telegraph the military authorities in Aden to watch his movements.\textsuperscript{172}

The British also closely watched the movements of Shaykh Ṣaʻd al-Ṣabān bin Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Sabān who arrived in Singapore on a visit on 26 November 1919 from Aden, and stayed with his cousin Shaykh Ḥusayn bin Ḥassan Sabān.\textsuperscript{173} The British suspected that Shaykh Ṣaʻd al-Rauf’s visit was politically motivated, since he was believed to have in his possession two open letters from a trader in Makkah named Shaykh Ghazālī Muḥammad Khayyāṭ.\textsuperscript{174} These letters were addressed to two Arabs, both of whom were known to hold anti-British sentiments.\textsuperscript{175} The British were equally suspicious of the motives of his cousin Shaykh Ḥusayn, who was reported to have brought with him about two thousand dollars worth of religious books of which he hoped to dispose, even though he stated that he was merely a teacher in the High School in Makkah and that his visit to Singapore was basically for health reasons.\textsuperscript{176}

Apart from their suspicion of the activities of certain individual Arabs, the British were also apprehensive of the activities of the non-Sayyid Arabs, in the organisation Jamā‘īyyat al-Irshād (Society of the Followers of the Right Way) in Java, which was regarded as working against the British interest.\textsuperscript{177} The British suspicion toward the society deepened due to its anti-European stand, and its condemnation of Sha‘īf Ḥusayn’s collaboration with the British and the French for

\textsuperscript{172} FO 371/5236, Dunn, Consul of British Consulate General, Batavia to Earl Curzon of Kedleston, 29 April 1920 and 7 May 1920.

\textsuperscript{173} FO 371/5236, Foreign Office to Field Marshall Viscount Allenby, 24 June 1920 and enclosure "Extract from Straits Settlements Secret Abstract of Intelligence", F1053/6/23.

\textsuperscript{174} Shaykh Ghazālī Muḥammad Khayyāṭ was at one time the Shaykh al-Islam of Kedah.

\textsuperscript{175} FO 371/5236, Foreign Office to Field Marshall Viscount Allenby, 24 June 1920 and enclosure "Extract from Straits Settlements Secret Abstract of Intelligence", F1053/6/23.

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{177} Jamā‘īyyat al-Islāh wal-Irshād al-ʿArabī, also known as al-Irshād, was formed and legally recognised by the Netherlands East Indies government in 1913. Even though it was not a political organisation, it was strongly anti-Sayyid and extremely critical of the Arabs who were pro-British.
colluding in the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in the Arab World during the Arab Revolt.\textsuperscript{178}

Jam\textsuperscript{a}niyyat al-Irshād, however, was opposed by some Arabs who belonged to the Sayyid group, especially those who were pro-British and supported the cause of Sharīf Ḥusayn and his allies.\textsuperscript{179} One of those who were opposed to Jam\textsuperscript{a}niyyat al-Irshād was Sultan Gḥālib bin ʿAwad al-Quʿaytī of Hadhramaut, who accused the society of being Bolshevik and its struggle of being a threat not only to Mukalla and the Netherlands East Indies, but also to the British Empire.\textsuperscript{180} To discredit the society, the Sultan produced a circular on the proclamation denouncing the society, and requested the Political Resident in Aden, James Stewart, to sent the circular to the Governor of Singapore to be published.\textsuperscript{181} Since the denunciation favoured the British, the circular was recommended for publication and it was published in the Arabic journal \textit{al-Iqba\textup{a}} with the deletion of the references to the "Resident in Aden" and "my friend Britannia", which appeared in the original text, as requested.\textsuperscript{182} Apart from this denunciation, the Sultan also made a personal request to the Governor of Singapore and the

\textsuperscript{178} FO 371/5236, Dunn, the Consul of the British Consulate General, Batavia to Earl Curzon of Kedleston, 7 June 1920; enclosure Translation of Extracts from Arab newspaper Assalam, Issue No. 1, 29 April 1920. In the article, Assalam also was very critical of some Sayyids who were more concerned about the worthiness of a Shaykh to marry a Sharifah while the British were encroaching on their homeland, Hadhramaut.

\textsuperscript{179} The conflict between Sayyid and non-Sayyid Arabs came into the open after the latter left Jam\textsuperscript{a}niyyat al-Khair (founded in 1905) to form their own society, Jam\textsuperscript{a}niyyah al-Irshād. To oppose the formation of Jam\textsuperscript{a}niyyah al-Irshād, the Sayyid group formed al-Rābiṭah al-Ḥalawīyyah in 1927. Both organisations then became involved in a bitter conflict which became known as the "Alawi-Irshādi conflict, and both sides had their own respective organs such as the journals \textit{al-Iqba\textup{a}} and \textit{al-Irshād}. See Safie Ibrahim, "Islamic Religious Thought in Malaya, 1930-40", PhD. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1987, p. 147; For a discussion of the "Alawi-Irshādi conflict, see also A.S. Bujra, "Political Conflict and Stratification in Hadhramaut - 1", \textit{Middle Eastern Studies}, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1967, pp. 356-363; "Notes on the Al-Irshād and the Sarikat Islam", in Khoo Kay Kim (ed), \textit{The History of South-East, South and East Asia. Essays and Documents}, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 136-142.

\textsuperscript{180} FO 371/5236, Major-General James Stewart, Political Resident Aden to British Consulate-General, Batavia, 20 May 1920; enclosure His Highness Sultan Sir Ghalib bin Awadh al-Kaiti to Major-General James Stewart, Political Resident Aden, 12 April 1920.

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid. For the circular, see enclosure Mokalla, 22 April 1920.

\textsuperscript{182} FO 371/5236 Crosby, Acting British Consulate General, Batavia to Sir James Stewart, Political Resident Aden, 6 July 1920.
Consul-General in Batavia to play their part in discrediting the organisation, in order "to disperse their unity and disable their thorn".\(^{183}\)

The presence of certain elements in the Arab community who were viewed as working against the British interest led the British to embark on an effort to gain a detailed knowledge of them. The gathering of this information on behalf of the British owed much to the role played by Sayyid Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya, who was regarded as a knowledgeable man with wide contacts throughout the Middle East.\(^{184}\) Sayyid Muhammad was also a trusted confidante of R.J. Wilkinson, the Colonial Secretary and the Officer Administering the Government of the Straits Settlements, to whom he supplied the required information on Muslim affairs.\(^{185}\) Because of his close relation with the British, Sayyid Muhammad and another Arab, Shaykh Awad Saidan were both accused by their critics of abusing the respect extended to them and of obtaining illicit wealth from the government, in reward for their success in helping Britain to destroy the unity of the Muslims and the Ottoman Empire. Shaykh Awad Saidan, who was also accused of collecting false utterances alleged to have been said by the Prophet, translating them into Malay and issuing a circular which claimed that the Caliphate should be

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\(^{183}\) FO 371/5236, The Sultan of Shehr and Mokalla to Captain Lee Warner, No Date.

\(^{184}\) Sayyid Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya was born in Masila in Hadhramaut. He came to Singapore at the age of fifteen and resided there most of the time. He read an enormous number of religious works and works of general reference, and thus while young obtained a considerable knowledge of international affairs. As a young man he corresponded with Aḥmad Fāris Shidyāq (from Lebanon), the editor of the Istanbul Arab pioneer paper al-Jawā'il. Sayyid Muhammad knew Ḥūsain al-'Umar Tusun Pāshā and Khadīvī Ḥāfīẓ well. He met the latter when he was in Cairo often in 1903 and again ten years later. Sayyid Muhammad also knew Aḥmad Mukhtār Pāshā, previously Governor of Yemen, and was a close confidante of Ḥāfiz Yaḥyā, the ruler of Yemen. When Turkey fought Italy in Tripoli, Sayyid Muhammad collected money for the cause of Islam. He had many Syrian acquaintances and knew many Egyptian newspapermen. He met Sharīf Ḥūsain in Makkah in 1914 and they became friends because the Mutāf of Makkah, Sayyid ʿAbdullāh al-Zawāwī was once in Singapore and on intimate terms with Sayyid Muhammad, who accompanied him to Japan in 1898/9. Al-Zawāwī and Sharīf Ḥūsain were at the same school in Makkah and later went together to Istanbul. When Ḥūsain became king he was rather annoyed with Sayyid Muhammad after he refused his pressing invitation to come and live in Makkah. For his life, see FO 371/5236, Lee Warner to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, Downing Street, 15 July 1920; enclosure Memorandum A, pp. 3-4.

\(^{185}\) FO 371/5236, Lee Warner to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, Downing State, 15 July 1920; enclosure Memorandum (A), p. 2.
held by an Arab, was condemned for his conduct. The circular was said to have been even posted on the walls of the Singapore Grand Mosque.\textsuperscript{186}

In the early 1920s, the Arab community in Singapore were also bitterly divided between those who were pro-British and supported Sharif Ḥusayn, and their opponents, over the issue of the Caliphate. The pro-British Arabs who sympathised with the cause of Sharif Ḥusayn were subjected to condemnation by anti-British Arabs, and those who collaborated with the British were accused of being the tools of the Allies and trying to create a new Caliphate based on Arab descent. They were also blamed "for selling Makkah and Medinah to the non-Muslim nations and selling Hadhramaut to Great Britain". Sharif Ḥusayn, who championed the Arab Caliphate, was denounced for what was described as creating a stain on the history of Islam and breaking up Muslim solidarity with the help of his masters, Britain, France and Italy.\textsuperscript{187}

The controversial issue of the Caliphate question continued to dominate the Arab community in Singapore for a number of years. Several attempts were made by various factions to stir up sympathy for the cause, including a request by a certain Akhbar, a Caliphate adherent in India, who cabled, among others, to Sayyid Ibrahim al-Sagoff, asking him to inform all the local Muslims of the victories achieved by the Turks in Asia Minor, and suggesting that prayers of thanksgiving should be offered in the mosques.\textsuperscript{188} Even when the Caliphate was abolished in 1924, sympathy for the cause continued to exist, including an attempt to resurrect it, which was enthusiastically pursued by a respected Arab leader, Sayyid Hassan al-Attas. He was reported to have distributed two issues of a monthly magazine on the development of the Caliphate movement in Egypt to the

\textsuperscript{186} FO 371/5236, Dunn, Consul, British Consulate General, Batavia to Earl of Kedleston, 18 May 1920, p. 2; enclosure Translation of "Islam Bergerak", No. 11 dated 10 April 1920. The article was suspected by the British authorities of having been written by the Secretary of the Turkish Consul-General in Batavia.

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid., pp. 2-4.

\textsuperscript{188} CO 273/518, Laurence Nunns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire, 25 November 1922; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 9, November 1922. Sayyid Ibrahim at that time was in Jeddah managing his father's pilgrim office. His father Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff, however, refused to receive the telegram.
Muslims in Malaya, which in its October issue contained an appeal exhorting Muslims, especially the Arabs, to give their whole-hearted support to finding a solution to the Caliphate problem.189

Apart from these magazines, Sayyid Hassan also issued a pamphlet in Arabic on the subject of the Caliphate. The pamphlets were addressed to some Malay Rulers and prominent Muslims in Malaya. Despite Sayyid Hassan’s efforts, the British authorities were not worried about any of their possible consequences, since they believed that the cause had no real appeal. Furthermore, they believed that the Malays’ attitude toward the issue was one of indifference, since what they desired most was a fair treatment for their pilgrims.190 When the Conference to discuss the future of the Caliphate was held in Cairo from 14 to 20 May 1926, Sayyid Hassan al-Attas together with Sayyid Abu Bakar al-Attas attended it as representatives of the Sultan of Johore.191 Another representative from Malaya who also attended the conference was Sayyid Muhammad Aqil.192 Sayyid Muhammad was accompanied at the conference by his nephew Sayyid Ahmad bin Omar and Sayyid Ahmad’s two sons Sayyid Muhammad Ali and Sayyid Abdullah.193

Despite the fact that a greater number of Arabs were pro-British than otherwise, it appears that the long-standing British suspicion of them continued to linger even into the 1930s, and was not only confined to Arabs in Singapore. Long after the abolition of the Caliphate, and the failure of the Makkah and Cairo

189 Ibid.
190 Ibid.
191 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 9, June 1926 p. 171. See FO 371/11698, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 34, May 1926. Sayyid Hassan al-Attas arrived in Jeddah on 5 May by the S.S. *Ixion* on his way to attend the Caliphate Conference.
192 FO 371/11698, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 37, March 1926. He sailed for Egypt to attend the Caliphate Conference by the ship S.S. Venezia on 5 April 1926.
193 A photograph of Sayyid Muhammad Aqil who represented Singapore at the Conference and photographs of Sayyid Ahmad bin Omar and his two sons, Sayyid Muhammad Ali and Sayyid Abdullah who were described "comprehensively as the representatives of Malayan lands" appeared in an illustrated newspaper, the *al-Musawwar* of Cairo, 21 May 1926. See FO 371/11698, The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 34, May 1926.
Caliphate Conferences to come out with any notable results, the British still viewed some Arabs with distrust. In 1936, an organisation called the Muslim Missionary Society, under the leadership of a prominent Arab in Singapore, Sayyid Ibrahim Omar al-Sagoff, was accused by the British of being responsible for revitalising the Pan-Islamic movement.\textsuperscript{194} The accusation levelled by the British, however, was probably due to the pro-Arab stand taken by the journal \textit{Genuine Islam}, in which Sayyid Ibrahim was the prime mover, over the current Palestinian conflict.\textsuperscript{195}

In Penang, the British were concerned about the activity of Shaykh Abdullah Maghribi, including his active involvement in PASPAM.\textsuperscript{196} Following the famine that struck Medinah, Shaykh Abdullah al-Maghribi published an article in the newspaper \textit{Saudara} in 1935 about the disaster, and appealed for Muslims in Malaya to alleviate the suffering of its population by contributing toward a fund he set up, assisted by a number of prominent personalities.\textsuperscript{197} The British were

\textsuperscript{194} CO 273/630, Shenton Thomas to Ormsby-Gore, 21 October 1937; enclosure S.S. Police Special Branch Political Intelligence Journal, 9 February, 1937. Sayyid Ibrahim, the second son of Sayyid Omar al-Sagoff was born in Makkah on 28 April 1899. He was and influential Muslim leader, who during the reign of Sharif Husayn was made a member of the Legislative Assembly. He was also made a member of the Legislative Assembly in Makkah during the reign of King \textsuperscript{Abd al-}Aziz ibn Sa\textsuperscript{u}d. Upon his return to Singapore he was appointed President of the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society in 1932. He was also the President of the Arabic Social and Literary Club, a member of the Muslim Advisory Board, a Rotarian and the Patron of the Western Islamic Association of London. See Syed Mohsen Alsagoff, \textit{The Alsagoff Family in Malaysia}, op.cit., p. 29; \textit{Sunday Times}, 9 February 1936; \textit{Genuine Islam}, Vol. 1, No. 2, February 1936; \textit{Genuine Islam}, Vol. 1, No. 8, August 1936, p. 41.


\textsuperscript{197} See "Kepapao Yang Bermaharajalela di Negeri Madinah al-Musharafah", \textit{Saudara}, Vol. 7, No. 514, 1 June 1935. Shaykh Abdullah Maghribi was assisted in the campaign by Sayyid Alwi al-Hadi, T.M. Shaykh Mohamed, Sayyid Salieh al-Sagoff, Dr. Ariff, Sayyid Omar Mahzar (all from Penang) and Encik Hussein Assistant District Officer Kuala Pilah.

334
alarmed by the initiatives taken by Shaykh Abdullah whose influence, they worried, would stir up anti-British sentiments in Malaya. From then on the British kept a close watch on his activities until eventually he was forced to return to Makkah.198

Even though there was a certain degree of suspicion on the part of the British administration toward the Arabs because of the influence they exerted among the Malays and their international connections, it turned out that their role in inculcating pre-war Malay political awareness was not sufficiently significant to produce any remarkable outcome. In addition, the majority of the Arabs themselves were not so zealous in reacting to political developments in the Muslim World as to cause problems to the British administration. Even during the tense years of World War 1, except for the minority who sympathised with Turkey, most influential Arabs were loyal to the British and even gave them moral and material supports.

Political Influence of Egypt

Looking at the pre-war British correspondence and communications, we see that issues regarding the Malay conduct of the Hajj and the importance of Hijaz, the significance of the Turks to the development of early Malay Islamic political consciousness and the role of the Arabs in influencing the religious and political process of Malaya were among their major concerns. They appear, however, to have been less concerned with Egyptian influence on Malay society. Several reasons may be offered to explain why Egyptian influence in Malaya was not on their main agenda; among other things Egypt only came onto Malay political scene relatively recently, in the middle of the 1920s. After the suppression of the ʿUrabi Pāshā Revolt and the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, it was not until 1919 that political activism there began to gain a rapid momentum. Early Malay students who studied in Egypt such as Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin, Mohd. Saleh Masri and

Muhammad bin Muhammad Said were least politicised during their academic sojourn there, and as a result of their exposure, upon returning to Malaya the greater part of their efforts was channelled into inculcating modernist religious thought and promoting modern religious education.199

In the late 1920s and 1930s, even with the return home of the "politicised" Malay students who had been actively involved in al-Jam'iyyah al-Khairiyyah and Seruan Azhar, the British seem not to have been extremely alarmed by their activities in Malaya because there was little evidence to suggest that they were anti-British. Furthermore, by this period the British had already firmly put the Malay Sultans under their administrative control, which allowed them to exercise their authority to put a stop to any activities by their subjects, viewed as detrimental to the colonial interests. Student activists in Cairo, such as Abu Bakar Ashaari, Abdul Wahhab Abdullah and Othman Abdullah, upon their return to Malaya were more occupied in propagating reformist and progressive thought through the newspapers which they edited, rather than in indulging in activities which might cause alarm to the British administration.

Even though this was the true situation of the Malay students who had returned from Egypt, the perceptions of them were entirely different when they left Malaya for Cairo in the middle of 1920s. At that time, their departure was beset by suspicion emanating from certain quarters. The growing trend of an increasing number of young Malays of good standing applying for passports or nationality-certificates to enable them to proceed in order to pursue a course of religious education in Cairo concerned the British authorities in Malaya. This concern stemmed from their perceptions of Cairo as a hot-bed of anti-colonial and anti-non-Muslim propaganda, and they tried to find way of slowing it down. In this they were, however, faced with difficulties in finding a viable alternative solution, since

199 An exception seem to be the case of Fadlullah Muhammad who after returning from Egypt in 1914 went to Java in 1918 and lived there for seven years. It was suggested that his migration to Java was undertaken to avoid punishment from the British allegedly because of his activities while in Cairo, where he had taken sides with Turkey, a British enemy in World War 1. See Ni'mah Bint Haji Ismail, "The Life and Thoughts of Shaykh Muhammad Fadlullah Suhaimi", M.Litt., Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994, p. 19.
there was a great demand for qualified religious teachers, especially following the opening of more madrasahs in Malaya.  

Even though they were anxious about this trend, the British were aware that a policy of preventing young Malays from proceeding to Cairo was impossible in the long run. Quiet discouragement had been attempted, but could not continue indefinitely. In order to ease the problem two solutions were proposed. The first was the establishment of an Islamic College in Malaya under government supervision, where students could further their religious studies rather than going to Egypt. This proposal, however, received a mixed reception from the British administrators themselves. Those officials who were against the proposal argued on the basis of the expense involved. Furthermore, it was argued, the success of such a college would depend entirely on obtaining religious scholars of the necessary reputation, who could also be relied upon to remain loyal to the British government. On the other hand, the British officials who favoured the establishment of the college argued that, if it was successfully staffed, it would solve the anxiety now being experienced. These officials also believed that the establishment of such a college would probably be zealously supported by the rulers and by leading Malays in Malaya.

The second proposal recommended by the British administrators was to encourage by means of pecuniary assistance Malay students to proceed to Gordon College, Khartoum, which was a religious institution where the British had relatively firm control. The college offered specialised instruction in Muslim Religious Sciences in the Qāḍī Training School which formed part of the college, in which Malay students could enrol. Even though the proposal was considered, it was regarded as not practical by the British officials, although no specific reasons were mentioned.

200 CO 537/936, Mariott (Deputy Officer Administering the Government) to Amery, 10 October 1925; enclosure The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence, No. 32, August/September 1925.
201 Ibid.
202 Ibid.
203 Ibid.
Concern at the increasing number of young Malays going to Cairo was also expressed by the Malay rulers. At the Durbar of Rulers held in Kuala Kangsar in 1927, the Sultan of Selangor voiced his disapproval of sending Malay boys to study in Egypt, and as an alternative he too proposed the setting up of a college of higher Islamic education locally. In voicing his objection, he drew attention to his fears that these students while in Egypt were being exposed to undesirable elements, which he believed served them no good. This unfavourable view of sending Malay students to Cairo to further their studies continued to be held by the Sultan of Selangor, and at the November 1935 meeting of rulers in Kuala Lumpur (not styled a Durbar), he again voiced his concerns that the Malay students while in Cairo would associate with other nationalities, which would led to undesirable behaviour on their part while undergoing religious education there. Similarly, the Sultan of Perak also voiced his concerns over the effects this influence would have on the students while they were in Egypt, and the consequences when these students returned to Malaya. He envisaged that these students would bring back views which were not desirable from the point of view of the government.

The apprehensions expressed by the Malay rulers and the British about the activities and influences to which the Malay students in Cairo would potentially be exposed to was not without basis. The most alarming was their association with certain political circles in Cairo and the role played by al-Jam‘iyyah al-Khairiyah and its mouthpiece, Seruan Azhar. Through this journal in which their political views were expressed, Malay students in Cairo sometimes irritated the British and the Malay rulers. In its call for Malays to strive hard to acquire knowledge, Seruan Azhar praised Muḥammad ‘Alī for his contribution to the development of education in Egypt, but voiced their regret that such a conscience did not exist among the

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204 See Minutes of Durbar; enclosure in file 1927 Pejabat Sultan Pahang. National Archive, Malaysia (Kuala Trengganu Branch).

Malay rulers. In another instance, when it was reported that Palestine had been forced to borrow four million Egyptian pounds in order to build its infrastructure, Seruan Azhar was quick to equate it with what happening in Malaya where two million pounds had been given to the British by the Malay States to build a defence infrastructure.

Despite of its criticism of certain issues relating to Malaya, Seruan Azhar was viewed as a greater danger by the Dutch, as compared to the British. After several years of publication, the Dutch authorities came to a conclusion that Seruan Azhar was politically inclined and was a source of potential danger to their administration. As a result, in 1928, on the advice of the Dutch Consul-General in Cairo, the Governor-General banned the journal from entering the Netherlands East Indies. Even though Seruan Azhar had only three hundred subscribers there, compared to seven hundred in Malaya, the ban retarded the progress of the journal and sent a shock wave through the Malay students in Cairo. In addition to banning the journal from entering Indonesia, the Dutch also influenced the Egyptian government to take stern measures toward its publication. Under their pressure, in April 1928 the Egyptian Government decided to deliver a strong warning to Seruan Azhar over its political inclination, and in order to calm the situation the new editor of the journal under Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi agreed to let the Dutch Consul to censor its manuscripts before being published.

When Pilehan Timoer was published in October 1927, it was banned right away in the Netherlands East Indies. The publication of the journal, which caused much anxiety to the Dutch, led their Consul in Cairo to warn the British High

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206 See Seruan Azhar, Vol. 1, No. 11, August 1926, pp. 201-204.

207 Seruan Azhar, Vol. 2, No. 16, January 1927, p. 317. Disapproval of the decision taken by the rulers of the Federated Malay States to loan the British the money was also voiced by Shaykh Tahir, who believed that the money could be better spent in giving higher education to the Malays. See also Abdul Majid Zainuddin (By One of Them), The Malays in Malaya, Singapore: Malaya Publishing House Ltd., 1928, pp. 99-100.


209 Ibid., pp. 147-148.
Commissioner in Egypt about its "revolutionary character" and to advise them that it should be banned in Egypt and also Malaya. In April 1928, the British yielded to Dutch pressure and at the suggestion of the British High Commissioner, the Egyptian government decided to ban the publication of *Pilehan Timoer* on its soil.

Even though there was a certain degree of apprehension over the political activism emanating from Egypt which had the potential of spreading to Malaya, in the colony itself the British appear not to have over-reacted, as did the Dutch. Despite the fact that *Seruan Azhar* and *Pilehan Timoer* were banned in the Netherlands East Indies, they were freely available in Malaya. This open-minded British policy persisted throughout even when the journal *Semangat Islam* published in its pages issues which had a strong anti-European overtones. In the early 1930s, *Semangat Islam* first published an article by Nasaruddin Taha, its representative in Cairo, entitled "The Twentieth Century Crusade", which made a scathing attack on the French, accusing them of trying to force the Muslims of Morocco to become Christian. Taking what was happening in Morocco as an example, even though it did not explicitly mention the British or the Dutch, it urged the Malays to be wary of the colonial activities in their homeland where similar activities had also occurred.

Taking the French aggression in Morocco as an issue, *Semangat Islam* also tried to inflame Malay awareness of Western encroachment. It reported that as a result of the aggression, the "ulamā‘" and the people of Egypt under the auspices of the organisation al-Shubbān al-Muslimūn (Young Muslim Association), its President ʼAbd al-Ḥamīd Saʿīd Beg together with Muḥammad Rasḥīd Riḍā, Shaykh al-Ṭanṭawī al-Jauhari, al-Shaykh Abū al-ʻUyūn and other "ulamā‘" of Egypt had organised a meeting to discuss ways and means for Muslims all over the world to respond to it. The effort was also supported by Malay students in Cairo.

210 Ibid., p. 149.

211 Ibid., p. 149. See also "Pemberitahuan Dari Pejabat Pilehan Timoer Di Mesir al-Kaherah", *Al-ikhwan*, 16 December 1928.

who were represented at the meeting by Mahmud Yunus. One of the decisions made during the meeting was to produce leaflets calling for Muslims all over the world and their leaders to protest against the French action. As for the Malays, the responsibility was given to Mahmud Yunus who was assigned the task of translating the leaflets into the Malay language.213

To demonstrate its commitment to the cause of the Muslims in Morocco, *Semangat Islam* made an emotional appeal to the Muslim associations in Malaya and Indonesia to send their protest telegrams against the French aggression.214 The Muslims in Malaya were asked to emulate the actions taken by Muslims in Egypt under the auspices of al-Shubbān al-Muslimūn, and to send their protests to the French Consuls and the French Government.215 To impress its readers, the journal stated that Muslims elsewhere had also done so, and it was reported that the protest telegrams had inundated the French Consul in Egypt to a point where the Consulate had to issue a communiqué, in order to calm the situation and to allay the Muslims’ fear.216

Despite these assurances, *Semangat Islam* still believed that the French hidden agenda of trying to Christianise the Muslims of Morocco continued to exist.217 Under these circumstances, Muslims in Malaya were requested to sacrifice a few dollars by sending protest telegrams to the French Government. Even though *Semangat Islam* was waging a bitter campaign against an European power, there is no evidence to suggest that the British authorities in Malaya were alarmed by its actions. Instead, *Semangat Islam* even praised the British for their open-minded policy and voiced its relief that Malaya was under their administration

213 Ibid., p. 228.
214 Ibid., p. 228.
216 Ibid., p. 249.
217 Ibid., p. 249.
in which Islam was given fair treatment, compared to what was being experienced by Muslims in Morocco.\textsuperscript{218}

Despite the fact that the British policy appears not to have been much concerned by political influences emanating from Egypt, in 1939 in view of what were believed by the British Embassy in Cairo to the Egyptian Caliphal pretensions and the support given to these by the Shaykh al-Azhar in his contacts with Islamic countries in the East, the advice of the Governor was sought as to whether to allow that contact to go on, particularly with regard to the contact made with Madrasah al-Mashhor in Penang.\textsuperscript{219} Even though there appears to have been a little British anxiety about the possible political influence from Egypt, they do not seem to have worried much about this potential threat. When the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested information about Madrasah al-Mashhor and its political inclinations, the Governor was pleased to provide the facts needed and frankly admitted that he had no suspicions of the madrasah or its involvement in any form of political propaganda.\textsuperscript{220}

\textsuperscript{218} Ibid., p. 250.

\textsuperscript{219} CO 273/652/6, Miles W. Lampson of the British Embassy, Cairo to Viscount Halifax of Colonial Office, 2 June 1939.

CONCLUSION

The Malay World is an area unique to itself whose inhabitants, despite its remoteness from the Muslim heartland of the Arab World, constitutes one of the largest Muslim populations in the world today. Even though the Islamisation of the Malays en masse as shown by the existing evidence only took place several centuries after it was propagated in the Arabian Peninsula, when it spread to this region, the religion was well-received and has been the driving force which has influenced almost every aspect of the peoples' life. Its influence was so strong that it was recognised as all-pervasive and it came to obscure the older traditions. It can be said that, despite some substratum of indigenous or Indian influence, the real Malay civilisation began with their conversion to Islam.

The immediate effect of the Malay's conversion to Islam was the beginning of a lasting and inseparable bond between them and the Middle East. This at its outset was due to the fact that the first obligation for a Muslim was the confession of the tenet of existence of only one God, and that the Prophet Muhammad whose grave was situated in Medinah was the Messenger of God. Five times a day they had to say their daily prayers facing the Ka'bah in Makkah and once in their life time those who had the wherewithal were required to travel to Hijaz to undertake the religious duty of the performance of the Hajj. In another words, Islam made the bond between the Malays and the Middle East obligatory, in addition to attaching them to their fellow-faithful of that region and other parts of the world.

The process of Islamisation of the Malays took place by a peaceful means, through the effort of traders and missionaries who introduced the religion to them. Despite the fact that their conversion was through a process of persuasion, the Malay commitment to the faith was remarkable and after being converted to Islam, contrary to the case with earlier religions, Islam was taken seriously and attempts to change the status quo were met with unyielding opposition. When the Portuguese invaded Melaka in 1511 and attempted to destroy the Muslim
hegemony in this region, and sever any form of relation with the Middle East, their effort met intense resistance from the Malays.

The presence of the Portuguese in Melaka had made the sixteenth century Straits of Melaka, which had been for centuries a relatively peaceful trading route, into a chaotic spot as a result of relentless Malay opposition toward the Portuguese presence. Contrary to earlier elements who arrived in the Malay World, the Indians, Chinese, Arabs and Persians, the Portuguese established their presence by military might and aimed to procure wealth and to spread the Gospel by force. Despite their power and determination, after more than a century of their presence there the Portuguese failed to make any remarkable inroad in spreading Christianity beyond the fort of Melaka. In other parts of the Malay Peninsular during this period, Islam continued to flourish and remained almost intact despite the Portuguese challenge; had the Portuguese succeeded in their mission the Malay relation with the Middle East would have been entirely different.

The most fierce reaction toward the Portuguese presence in the waters of the Malay World was mounted by the Malay kingdom of Acheh which took the character of a *jihād* (holy war). The Achehnese confrontation with the Portuguese also led the Malays for the first time to look to a Muslim power in the Middle East, the Turks, for assistance. As a great and powerful Muslim empire, the Ottomans felt obliged to meet the request for support made by a Muslim kingdom when it came under threat from a *kafir* (infidel) power. The concern showed by the Turks toward the plight of the Malays gave the latter the confidence of being the client of a powerful Muslim empire during a time of difficulty. Even though the Turkish assistance was unsuccessful in driving the Portuguese out of Melaka, the latter's presence, however, had indirectly paved the way for a closer relation between a Malay kingdom and a Muslim empire in the Middle East. The Portuguese occupation of Melaka was finally ended when a Dutch-Malay coalition managed to drive them out in 1641. Even though the Dutch occupied Melaka after the demise of the Portuguese, their presence there was less significant since they were more interested in expanding their influence in the East Indies. After the administration of Melaka was transferred to the British in 1821, Malaya as a whole in effect came into the British sphere of influence.

In their forward movement in Malaya, the British, contrary to the approach of the Portuguese, pursued a policy of political accommodation, through
negotiation rather than force, which finally put the whole country under their protection. Under the treaties the British signed with the Malay rulers which put the Malay states under their administration, the British pledged that there would be no interference in Malay custom and religion. The understanding accepted was also generally believed to imply that Christian missionary activities were forbidden among Malays. The British administration which strictly pursued the understanding as a policy, however, did not do so out of compassion or sympathy to the cause of the Malays or Islam. Rather it was done for political expediency in order to ensure that their economic interests would not be jeopardised as a result of the creation of unnecessary religious antagonism in the community.

Despite the strict restrictions imposed by the British administration on Christian missionary work among Malays, some efforts were attempted. The burning determination of some Christian missionary organisations to evangelise the Malays was encouraged by their belief that their mission was supported by enthusiasm and funds, contrary to what they believed to have happened in the earlier process of Islamisation which was assisted neither by fund nor organisation. Their effort to evangelise the Malays was futile and the belief of Christian missionaries that the Malays would be receptive to their mission to bring "light and hope", proved erroneous. The failure of Christian missionary work among the Malays was contributed to by the fact that by the time of the British arrival, Islam had already put down deep roots in the community. Apart from this factor, intense Malay opposition and the British administrative response almost completely curtailed any form of evangelical activities among the Malays. The failure of Christianity to make any successful inroad among the Malays also meant that their relation with the Middle East continued to prevail.

A significant role in the establishment of Islam in the Malay community was played by Arabs. The Arabs, particularly the Hadhramis, had a long history of presence in the Malay World and they assimilated themselves well in the community. Arab religious scholars were a common figure in Malay village life and their role in deepening the religious understanding of the Malays was paramount. Apart from the religious role, the Arabs also played a significant part in the Malay states' politics. Their claimed origin as descendents of the Prophet made them widely accepted in the Malay royal courts. Before the British intervention, and to a certain extent even after British administration was established, the Arabs'
political influence was felt in almost every Malay state, and in Perlis, the Sultanate, which is of Arab descent, has survived until to the present day.

From the late nineteenth century, the Arabs also played an important role in economic development, and from their accumulated wealth, several of them endowed properties for the establishment of religious schools, burial grounds and other benefactions for the Muslim community. The Arabs also played a significant role in encouraging a closer relation between the Middle East and Malaya as a representative of the Muslims of this region. Several prominent Arabs were recognised internationally, for example Sayyid Mohamad al-Sagoff, who was a familiar figure at the Ottoman court, Sayyid Hassan al-Attas, a well-known ʿālim among Egyptian political and al-Azhar circles, and Sayyid Ibrahim al-Sagoff, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly in Hijaz during the reign of Sharīf Ḥusayn and ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Ibn Saʿūd.

Even though Arabs had played a significant role in bringing social change of the Malay society and linked them with the wider Muslim World, their growing exclusiveness, and their tendency to abandon the cause of the Malays for their own interests, created an atmosphere of distrust between the two communities. The Malays' dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the Arabs, however, did not led to any untoward incidents but instead led to a consciousness of their need to struggle on their own for their survival. This awareness, at its earliest stage led to the establishment of the Singapore Malays' Association (KMS) in 1926, which among other things, aimed to press forward the long neglected interest of the Malays in the island. Another significant outcome of the growing Malay consciousness of the need to have their interests heard was the dramatic birth in 1939 of the newspaper Utusan Melayu, which was financed and edited by Malays, unlike earlier newspapers which had mostly been financed by Arabs.

The Malays' lasting and emotional interaction with the Middle East was undoubtedly largely due to their travels to the area as a result of the religious obligation of the conduct of the Hajj and the quest for religious knowledge. The Malays had been travelling to Hijaz ever since they became Muslim and this annual event was enthusiastically undertaken even though it was attended by severe difficulties. The undertaking of the "sacred journey" involved life-long saving and sometimes turned out to be a extremely dangerous affair due to hazardous travelling conditions and the threat of epidemics. Given the difficulties of the
journey and the degree of commitment required, surely there was more than just the wish to be called Haji upon return which motivated the Malays to perform the religious duty. To the Malays the conduct of the Hajj was a manifestation of their true devotion to Islam and a means to fulfill their spiritual needs as true believers. The dedication to fulfilling this religious obligation also was not restricted to a small minority, since statistics demonstrate that until World War II the proportion of Malays making the annual pilgrimage to Makkah was among the largest.

Even though the conduct of the Hajj was a means of Malay exposure to the outside world, which was viewed as a source of influence detrimental to the colonial interest, the British administration in Malaya was rather less suspicious of it, in contrast to what is demonstrated by early Dutch policy. The British intervention in Malaya in fact indirectly provided an impetus for the enhancement of the Malay conduct of the Hajj, since as a result of the economic boom following the increase in rubber prices more Malays were able to travel to Hijaz to perform the religious duty. The establishment of political order and the introduction of a capitalist economy encouraged the provision of infrastructures, and the introduction of steamships and better port facilities also assisted travelling to the Holy Land.

In the early days of their intervention in Malaya, the British involvement in the Hajj administration was not that extensive. The official British policy, however, changed in the early 1920s when it was realised that their involvement was necessary to provide better welfare for the pilgrims and to remedy long-standing shortcomings, and that the best thing to do would be to facilitate it. Apart from these concerns, the British were also aware that the religious obligation was an important contributing outside force in conditioning the Malay response to colonialism. To make sure that the Malay conduct of the Hajj would not jeopardise the colonial interest, the British also felt that it was necessary to carry out a low-profile surveillance of it while the Malay pilgrims were in Hajaz.

In 1923 Abdul Majid Zainuddin was posted by the British administration in Malaya as the first Malay Pilgrimage Officer in Hijaz. His duties, apart from looking after the welfare of Malay pilgrims, were also to report to the British authorities on any undesirable activities among them. Reports by Abdul Majid and other intelligence sources concerning the Malays while they were in Hijaz and the political situation there were conveyed to British colonial administrators and published in their intelligence report, *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence.*
Looking at the contents of the *Bulletin* we note that there was a certain degree of British concern about the Malay conduct of the Hajj, and in fact in its first issue of March 1922 several matters relating to pilgrims from Malaya were treated as "number one" items. From its inception, from time to time, issues related to pilgrims from Malaya, and the political and doctrinal developments in Hijaz continued to be major concerns of the *Bulletin*.

Apart from the conduct of the Hajj, a link that bound the Malays with the Middle East was also constituted by their scholars' travel and long sojourn there to acquire religious knowledge. Even though Malays had been going to educational centres in the Middle East since the sixteenth century, increasing numbers of them did so in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The most important educational centre where Malay students studied for several years, and sometimes several decades, before returning home was Masjid al-Ḥarām. Upon returning home these Makkah-educated religious scholars started their own religious institutions in order to spread the religious knowledge they had acquired to their fellow villagers. From the early 1920s a significant number of Malay students also went to the University of al-Azhar to further their studies. Makkah and Cairo were not only important for providing religious intellectual input to the Malays, but equally important was the fact that from these centres also came printed books which were distributed all over the Malay World and thus assisted in the deepening of the Malay understanding of Islam.

Even though the Malays had a direct contact with Hijaz through the conduct of the Hajj and the academic sojourn, before the Egyptian influence came onto the scene in the 1920s, the early influence which nurtured their sense of Islamic political awareness was related to the Turks. Following the British intervention in the Malay states, there was also to a certain degree a sense of expectation that the Ottoman Empire as the only surviving Muslim power could assist them in expelling European colonialism. More importantly, however, during this period, through the role played by the Arabs, Turkey was also better known in the Malay World and likewise the Turks were also well-informed about this region. It was by this means that at least a tinge of the ideas of Pan-Islamism came to be known by the Malays.

The Pan-Islamic ideas that flourished among the Malays, however, were only limited to the fascination with what was believed to be the supremacy of the
Turks and to sympathy for their cause when they were confronted by Western powers on the European front. The role of championing the cause of Turkey, which may a way be viewed as augmenting Pan-Islamic feelings, was played by the Malay vernacular press, particularly Chahaya Pulau Pinang, al-Imam, Neracha and Tunas Melayu. Through the role they played, especially that of Neracha which highlighted events of the Turkish conflict with the Italians in Libya and the war in the Balkans, the Malays came to sympathise with the Turks, as was manifested by their response to the appeals for donations in order to assist the victims of European aggression in Tripoli and the Balkans. Their sympathy for the Turks was also demonstrated when they organised congregations and offered prayers for the success of the Turks. The Malays’ fascination by and sympathy for the Turks was also shown by their enthusiasm for keeping pictures of Turkish war heroes and events of the war, which they regarded as part of their support in the struggle of a Muslim power against a Western challenge.

Even though what was viewed as Pan-Islamic influence also concerned the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century British administration of Malaya, the idea that this was a serious threat proved to be completely without basis. The actual fact was that the militant force of Pan-Islamism as a threat to Christendom was conjured up to justify European aggression. A careful study of early twentieth century Islamic consciousness would convince us of the absurdness of the idea of Pan-Islamism which was entertained in Europe and by European colonial administrations, including the British who were suspicious of the Malay sympathy toward the cause of Turkey during their confrontation with European powers. This Malay sympathy for the cause of the Turks was natural for Muslims when faced with the situation when fellow-Muslims came under threat from infidel powers.

When World War 1 broke out much confusion enveloped the Malay community and events in the Middle East threw what they perceived as established norms into a state of total disarray. The Malay Sultans instead of supporting the Muslim Turks voiced their unequivocal support for the British. In Makkah, Sharif Ḥusayn cooperated with the infidel British against the Muslim Turks, and in the aftermath of the war, he was overthrown by Ibn Saʿūd. In Turkey, Kemal abolished the Caliphate and proclaimed the establishment of a republic. Among these events, however, the Malays were most seriously
concerned at the triumph of the Wahhabis and Ibn Sa'ūd in Hijaz. Their apprehensions over the Wahhabi hegemony were caused by the latter’s puritanical inclinations which might change the role of Makkah as a religious destination. Despite this anxiety, Hijaz under Sa'ūd proved to have maintained its earlier status quo and in fact the Malays were more receptive to his leadership due to his efforts to provide better facilities for the conduct of the Hajj, compared to what was provided during the Sharifian administration.

The rise of Kemal and Ibn Sa'ūd and the creation of their respective states led the Malays to look upon them as leaders who could bring about a new dawn for Muslim revival. Even though neither of them had any pretensions to dominate the Islamic World, in an era when Muslim political existence was in question, the Malays clearly showed that they were in search of charismatic leaders, and Kemal and Sa'ūd were looked upon as men in whom they could lay their hope. The success of Kemal and Ibn Sa'ūd was lauded by a wide cross section of Malay society. Kemal was respected as a leader who had modernised the country by abandoning its backward past. Ibn Sa'ūd on the other hand was praised as a leader who had purified the religious practices in order to bring progress to the Muslims. The approaches taken by these two Muslim leaders were viewed as an important means by which the Malays could achieve success and which they should emulate.

By the early twentieth century the Malay vernacular press experienced a rapid growth, and by means of newspapers and journals developments in the Middle East were effectively conveyed to the Malay masses. Apart from Chahaya Pulau Pinang, al-Imam, Neracha and Tunas Melayu, others which were vibrant and popular among the Malays included Pongasoh, Majalah Guru and al-Hikmah, and the Egyptian al-Manār which exposed several major contemporary Middle Eastern issues to the Malays. Some of these journals such as Neracha and Tunas Melayu were not only popular locally, but were also widely read by Malay students in Makkah and Cairo. In addition to the journals produced locally, from Egypt came Seruan Azhar and Pilehan Timoer published by Malay students in Cairo, which promoted radical thought and also championed the idea of the "Greater Malay World", a unified and independent Malaya and Indonesia.

Beginning with the publication of al-Imam in 1906, newspapers and journals also played an important role in spreading reformist thought in Malay society which
had its origin from Egypt. As in Egypt, in Malaya reformist ideas also played a significant part in shaping the early development of Malay political consciousness. The reformists believed that the Malays could achieve progress when the interpretation of Islam had been broadened to make it adaptable to the needs of this age. Under these circumstances Egypt as a modern state was a source of inspiration looked upon by Malays as a model Muslim state par excellence. Egyptian political figures and the political development that took place there prior to the signing of Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 was a subject of interest highlighted by several journals which provided the Malays with some degree of political awareness.

Apart from reformist and political thought another aspect of Egyptian influence in Malay society was its modernism. The Malays were seemingly receptive to the modern values originating from Egypt and through the role played by the reformist journals they encouraged Malays to emulate Egyptian progress. One of the most important aspects of Egyptian progress which the Malays were urged to follow was the emancipation of women. With the intensification of Malay progressive thought in the 1920s and 1930s the issue was vehemently pursued by several Malays who were exposed to the Middle Eastern milieu, particularly Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi. Al-Hadi’s efforts were disseminated by the journal al-Ikhwan which he was the editor, and he also published several books and novels where the issue of the emancipation of women was seriously pursued. Apart from al-Ikhwan, the issue of the need for a more emancipated Malay woman for the progress of the society was also pursued by Seruan Azhar and Pilehan Timoer.

Beginning from the middle of the 1920s, an increasing number of Malay students went to further their studies in Cairo, in addition to Makkah. The education conducted in Egypt had a greater resemblance to the modern setting which was better suited to the increasing number of Malay students who had undergone a formal education in Malaya. The modern education based on that of Egypt, however, was pioneered in Malaya in the early twentieth century following the establishment of Madrasah al-Iqbal Islamiyah in Singapore and Madrasah Misriyah in Penang. Following the return home of an increasing number of al-Azhar-educated Malays more madrasahs were established in Malaya and they were comparable to modern western-type schools. In the madrasahs, apart from the teaching of Islamic subjects, the curriculum often included secular subjects
such as science, mathematics and the Malay and English languages, in addition to Arabic. In the second decade of the twentieth century an increasing number of al-Azhar graduates inspired the establishment of numerous madrasahs throughout Malaya. The popular ones included Madrasah al-Mashhor in Penang and Madrasah al-Diniah in Perak and the smaller but equally successful establishments found in Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu. Over the years, these educational institutions further cemented religious reformism and indirectly played a role in inculcating a sense of political awareness in the society.

The Malay interaction with the Middle East had been the contributing factor which influenced and determined their piety, prestige, sense of belonging, emotions, and ideological and political actions. The conduct of the Hajj elevated the religious status of Malays among fellow believers and the Middle Eastern-educated Malays were respected as knowledgeable scholars in the society. The close relation with the Middle East also gave the Malays a sense of belonging to a Muslim community and a sense of authority in their religious life. To the Malays, the religious roles of Masjid al-Haram and al-Azhar were also paramount and the opinions of their "ulamā' were taken as a source of legitimacy in the arbitration of disputes.

Even though the Malays had been interacting with the Middle East since early times, with the exception of the Turks following the Portuguese invasion of Melaka, the region did not significantly influence political events that took place in Malaya which changed the course of its history. Even before World War 1, when there was significant interest shown by Malays in developments taking place there, the possibility of it endangering the British interest was remote since at that time anti-British fervour among the Malays was insignificant and Malay political organisation was non-existent. Despite the fact that a certain degree of political awareness was inculcated by the reformists, they were preoccupied by their efforts to exhort their fellow Muslims to practice Islam based on the Qur'an and Hadith, which was neither a threat nor regarded as alarming by the British administration.

Even during the crucial years of World War 1, the possibility of the critical developments in the Middle East influencing the Malays was most unlikely, since the Malay loyalty to the British was undivided and echoed by a wide cross-section of the society. After World War 1 the Malays' interaction with the Middle East intensified, but the influences from there did not led to the appearance of an
organised political movement. Even when several contentious issues in the Middle East involved the British, such as their policy toward the post-war Ottoman Empire and their pro-Jewish policy in Palestine, the Malays' loyalty toward the British continued to prevail.

A new era of political periodisation in Malaya began with the Japanese invasion. The British occupation destroyed the belief in the invincibility of the European colonial powers and significantly altered the political mentality of the Malays. The Japanese hegemony which popularised the slogan "Asia for Asia", provided the Malays with a new political awareness which encouraged them to break free from the British yoke. After the Japanese surrender the development of Malay political consciousness was divided between the left who were influenced by Indonesian Nationalists and the Communists, and the right who were dominated by the English educated Malays. The Islamists, however, only managed to make a brief appearance, with the foundation of the Hizbul Muslimin in March 1948, since together with the leftists they were banned by the British a few months later. On the other hand, following the political vacuum the rightists managed to gain the initiative and later emerged triumphant. Despite the fact that the later development of Malay nationalism was dominated by these groups, the Middle Eastern and Islamic elements had played an important role in the nurturing of early political consciousness and the development of religious thought in the Malay society, even though they failed to emerge as a dominant force in the development of post-World War II Malay nationalism.
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411


414
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