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A Brief Survey of the Anjuman-i Islam in Colonial Malaya

Suatu Tinjauan Ringkas Mengenai Anjuman-i Islam di Malaya

Hafiz Zakariya*

Abstract

The Anjuman-i-Islam was established in 1921, following the visit of Khwaja Kamaluddin to Singapore and other states in the Peninsula. This study discusses the establishment of the Anjuman-i-Islam during the early twentieth century, as a response to the British growing influence in Malaya. The British administrators were cautious in their treatment of the Muslim matters, which were and still are regarded as very sensitive issues. At the same time, they were suspicious of any activity, which could potentially undermine their position in Malaya. After covering the history of the foundation of the Anjuman-i-Islam, the paper describes the major activities of this association especially in printing. Moreover, it analyses the major achievements as well as challenges facing this Islamic association. It also examines the membership and leadership structure of the Anjuman-i-Islam. Finally, it analyses the attitude of the Anjuman-I-Islam towards the issue of the Caliphate. This study adopts the method of content analysis by investigating the archival materials (such as diplomatic and official memoirs and diaries, British official records, contemporary newspapers, magazines and periodicals). These primary sources are obtained from the National Archives in Kuala Lumpur and its branches, the Library of University Malaya, the Za'ba Memorial Library, the National Archives of United Kingdom, and the British Library.

Keywords: Anjuman-I Islam, Malay-Muslims, Indian-Muslims, British and Caliphate.

Abstrak

Anjuman-i-Islam telah ditubuhkan pada tahun 1921, ekoran lawatan Khwaja Kamaluddin ke Singapura dan negeri-negeri di Semenanjung Tanah Melayu. Makalah ini membincangkan penubuhan Anjuman-i-Islam pada awal kurun ke-20 sebagai satu tindak balas dalam menghadapi kekuasaan Inggeris yang semakin kuat di Malaya. Para pentadbir Inggeris amat berhati-hati berurusan dalam hal ehwal berkenaan Muslim kerana urusan ini dianggap sangat sensitif. Dalam masa yang sama, pentadbir Inggeris

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curiga terhadap sebarang aktiviti yang boleh menjejaskan kedudukan mereka di Malaya. Selepas membincangkan sejarah penubuhan Anjuman, artikel ini menghuraikan aktiviti-aktiviti utama persatuan ini terutamanya di bidang penerbitan. Ia juga menganalisis pencapaian dan cabaran yang dihadapi persatuan ini. Ia turut menyentuh tentang keahlian dan struktur kepimpinan Anjuman-i-Islam. Akhirnya ia membincangkan sikap Anjuman terhadap isu Khilafah. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah analisis kandungan dengan meneliti data arkib (seperti perjanjian, memoir dan diari, dokumen rasmi Britain, suratkhbar dan jurnal). Data ini diperolehi daripada Arkib Negara di Kuala Lumpur dan cawangan-cawangannya; Perpustakaan Univerisiti Malaya, Perpustakaan Memorial Za'ba, Arkib Negara Britain dan Perpustakaan Britain.

Kata Kunci: Anjuman-i Islam, Melayu-Muslim, India-Muslim, British dan Khilafah.

Introduction

The early 20th century witnessed the completion of British control in the Malay Peninsula. The British had control of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States; but five other states, Johore, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, and Trengganu, remained independent of British control. With the conclusion of the Bangkok Treaty between the British and Siam in 1909, the four northern states, Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan, and Trengganu, came under British control. British control of the whole Malay Peninsula was completed in 1914 when Johore agreed to accept a British Resident. Johore and the northern states were not brought under federal administration and became the Unfederated Malay States (UMS). During this period there were four groups who took intellectual interest in Islam: West Asian educated Muslim scholars, Indian-origin scholars; English-educated and Malay-educated scholars. This article examines the emergence and growth of a Muslim organization associated with scholars of Indian origin, known as the *Anjuman-I Islam*. This article provides the historical background behind the establishment of this organization, its growth, scope and activities. Moreover, it discusses the attitude of the *Anjuman* towards the Caliphate issue.

The Establishment of *Anjuman-I Islam*

The *Anjuman-I Islam* was the brainchild of Khwaja Kamaluddin. He was born in Lahore, Pakistan in 1870. He finished his Bachelor Degree in Arts in 1893 and completed another degree in Law in 1897. He served as a professor of History and Economics at the Islamic College of Lahore. He then travelled to England in 1912, and in the subsequent year, he published an Islamic based journal: the *Islamic Review* and concurrently founded a Muslim Mission based in Woking, England. He passed

away in 1932. Indeed, the presence of Khwaja Kamaluddin in Singapore, had motivated the foundation of this association. *Anjuman-I Islam*, was considered as a branch of Khwaja Kamaluddin's own organization, Muslim Mission of Woking, England.¹ Moreover, the prominent local Muslims in Malaya had pledged their support to the *Anjuman-I-Islam*. The initial goals of the *Anjuman* were to help the Muslim Mission in Woking (England) to circulate the *Islamic Review* the (official organ of the Mission) free of charge to the non-Muslims.² The *Anjuman-I-Islam* would publish writings in English along with two major languages spoken by the locals, namely Malay and Tamil. The content of the publications would focus on issues concerning Islam at large (its contents also included the translation of some articles published in the *Islamic Review*). The Straits Government under the Societies Ordinance approved the establishment of the *Anjuman*. Khwaja Kamaluddin himself held the directorship of the *Anjuman-I-Islam*. The other main positions included President (Mr. N. Mamat), Vice-President (Mr. Malim Sahib), Honorary Secretary (Mr. Bashir Ahmad), Honorary Treasurer (Mr. Syed Qudrat Shah) and Honorary Auditor (Mr. K. Mohamed Sheriff).

The organizing committees of the *Anjuman* comprised of the following individuals, namely Messrs. R. Mahmood Sahib, L. Mohammed Ghouse Maricar, O. Sheikh Mohamed, S. Hajee Mohamed, K. Sinatamby Maricar, Habib Ahmad, Y. Abdur Rahim, Dr. S.I.M Ibrahim and Abdul Basith. Muslims who were interested to become members may do so by communicating with the Secretary of the *Anjuman*.³ In addition, an official organ of the *Anjuman*, *The Muslim* stated that on 2nd April 1922, the formal opening meeting of the *Anjuman* was held. News on that meeting was disseminated through newspapers, including information pertaining to the accommodation of the members. Notable members from Penang also attended the meeting and were provided with accommodation. The key members of the *Anjuman* arrived earlier than the time arranged for the meeting so that they could facilitate the meeting accordingly. With

¹ Mohamad Redzuan, "The Middle Eastern Influence on the Development of Religious and Political Thought in Malay Society 1880-1940" (PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1994), 315-316.

² *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, August 17, 1921, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/singfreepressb19210817-1.2.24> (accessed April 20, 2018).

³ *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, August 17, 1921, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/singfreepressb19210817-1.2.24> (accessed April 20, 2018).

the presence of Mr. M. Kader Sultan, the chairman of the event, the meeting began. Mr. Bashir Ahmad, then Secretary of the *Anjuman*, spoke to the audience about the brief history of the foundation of the *Anjuman*. With the support of the enthusiastic members, they were able to go through those obstacles. The *Anjuman* already had, at this juncture, its own building. He further mentioned that the idea for forming the *Anjuman* came from Messrs. O. Sheikh Mohammad and M. Malim Sahib when Khwaja Kamaluddin was still in Singapore.⁴ Bashir Ahmad further remarked that it seemed to him that it was uncertain whether the *Anjuman* would be able to stand on its own feet or not. Nevertheless, it did manage to survive and accomplish something for the sake of Islamic religion.⁵

Objectives and activities

All organizations exist to achieve certain goals. To achieve these goals, having clear objectives is pivotal. This principle was also applicable to the *Anjuman*. Among the objectives of the *Anjuman* were (1) “to circulate Islamic literature of purely religious nature among non-Muslims and others and spread the Islamic teaching”; (2) “to help the Muslim Mission, Working, in furthering its cause; and (3) “to open a Muslim reading room. Its building was located at No. 52, Kerbau Road, Singapore.⁶ Though the *Anjuman-I Islam* claimed to be apolitical, the British authority was very suspicious of its activities, because its founding members, including its honorary secretary, Bashir Ahmad, were ardent supporters of the Caliphate Movement.

According to the colonial records, the *Anjuman* had worked continually to rally support from other Muslims’ organizations and societies throughout Malaya under the slogan, “Unity is strength and will lead to a great brotherhood of all Muslims in Malaya”.⁷ It seemed little doubt that *Anjuman* was able to attract a substantial number of Indian Muslim sup-

⁴ Syed Qudrat Shah, “*The Muslim*,” May, 1922.

⁵ Syed Qudrat Shah, “*The Muslim*,” 77.

⁶ Adnan Nawang, “Za’ba dan Ajaran Khwaja,” in *Pendidikan di Malaysia Dahulu dan Sekarang*, eds. Khoo Kay Kim, Mohd Fadzil Othman and Jazamuddin bin Baharuddin (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980), 70-72; and Syed Qudrat Shah, “*The Muslim*,” January, 1922.

⁷ CO. 537/908, Laurence Nuns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no.11, January 1923; CO. 273/518, Laurence Nuns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 11, December 1922; and Mohammad Redzuan, “The Middle Eastern,” 315.

porters and a handful number of educated Malays including Zain ul-Abidin, more famously known as Za'ba, and Abdul Majid Zainuddin. An article in *The Muslim*, entitled 'Our Policy' reiterated the underlying reason for its foundation, which was to spread and defend Islam in its truest sense and *The Muslim*, the official organ of the *Anjuman* was created towards fulfilling that noble mission.

The editor further asserted that unity amongst all Muslims is one of the main objectives of the *Anjuman*. Realizing the fact that the Muslims at this point of time were steadily disintegrated, the idea of unity proved to be a tying knot that would make the Muslims stand united in voice, thought and action. In addition, the *Anjuman*, reaffirmed its firm conviction upon the principles of Islamic religion, possibly due to various attacks on them, especially regarding the rumour that linked the *Anjuman* with the Ahmadiyya movement.⁸

This association had its own official publication, called *The Muslim*. It was first published in January 1922 and lasted for more than 5 years. *The Muslim* was published not to generate profit but to disseminate the message of Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The annual subscription (post free) to Muslims who were not *Anjuman* members was \$4.00.⁹ It was edited alternately between Bashir Ahmad and Syed Qudrat Shah. In terms of regularity of publication, the paper mentioned that during its earlier years, *The Muslim* had been published regularly, but later, it started to experience difficulty for it to be published regularly, which was to be expected during that time as other Malayan press were also experiencing. It stopped publication in September 1927. Nevertheless, efforts had been done to reissue it, yet it was to no avail. Following on a certain meeting held by the *Anjuman*, serious efforts had been considered by the members of the *Anjuman* to revive it, and the members voiced their hopes that the present management committee would see it through. The paper mentioned that the feelings and mood amongst the members were that "a journal, no matter whether it is a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly, which can be used as a medium for

⁸ Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," July-August, 1925.

⁹ *Malaya Tribune*, October 6, 1927,

<http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19271006-1.2.64> (accessed April 20, 2018); and *Malaya Tribune*, October 18, 1929,

<http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19291018-1.2.9> (accessed April 20, 2018).

voicing and presenting views and opinion of local Muslim populace, besides religious issues, is a necessity for the Muslims at large".¹⁰

It was initially intended to be a quarterly magazine, which would deal with the *Anjuman's* objectives and activities. This effort had materialized following the publication of its first issue in January 1922 and it was officially known as *The Muslim*. Bashir Ahmad further mentioned that considering the fact that it had been well received by readers, it was desirable to issue it on a monthly basis. The March issue was the first monthly publication and it was distributed to members and many others. He asserted that *The Muslim* had been carrying out the other main objective of the paper, namely the circulation of the *Islamic Review* and Muslim Mission of Working faithfully.¹¹

The colonial report stated that the *Anjuman's* attempt to campaign for the support and interest of the Malays was carried out by K. Anang, whose real name was Mas Abdul Hamid. He had been in touch with his fellow acquaintances throughout Malaya such as in Kedah, Penang, Perak, Terengganu, British North Borneo and other locations in the country in order to enlist their support towards the Caliphate's cause. Britain believed that K. Anang was involved in activities calling for the creation of a United Muslim Union comprising Malaya, Netherlands East Indies, North Borneo and India. Britain firmly believed that the Caliphate's cause could not garner strong support from the Muslims in Malaya.¹²

According to the *Malaya Tribune*, the *Anjuman*, came into existence in 1921 for the following purposes; (1) to propagate Islam, (2) to remove misconceptions about the doctrines of Islamic faith, (3) to issue books, pamphlets, and papers on religious subjects, (4) to open up a free library and a reading room etc.¹³ The paper also reported that this asso-

¹⁰*Malaya Tribune*, October 18, 1929,

, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19291018-1.2.9> (accessed April 20, 2018).

¹¹ Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," May, 1922.

¹² Mohammad Redzuan, "The Middle Eastern," 316; CO. 537/908, Laurence Nuns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 11, January 1923; Khoo Kay Kim. "Islam in Malaysia: The Pre-1941 Scenario." Paper presented in the *Seminar on Islam in Malaysia*, Marina Mandarin Hotel, Singapore, *February/March 1989*, 18; CO. 573/912, Laurence Nuns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 14, May 1923; and CO. 273/516, Braddelley to Winston Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 1, March 1922.

¹³*Malaya Tribune*, October 18, 1929,

ciation started with a small number of members, but as news spread pertaining to the foundation of the *Anjuman*, a significant number of individuals applied for its membership not only from Singapore but also from the Malay states. Within a short period of time, its membership reached more than 500.¹⁴ Interestingly, the director of the *Anjuman* was Khwaja Kamaluddin and this showed that the *Anjuman* and Muslim Mission of Woking were working collaboratively and shared the same ideals. The *Anjuman's* early members consisted of 124 people and as time went on, the membership increased. In terms of the geographical location of its members, they were mostly from Singapore and some were from the Malay States.

After Khwaja visited Singapore, he continued his journey to a number of Malay States. Za'ba mentioned that Khwaja departed from Singapore on 29th March 1921 together with Hakim Abdul Karim Baksh (Hafiz) to Taiping.¹⁵ When Khwaja arrived in Kuala Kangsar, Za'ba together with his fellow friends met Khwaja at the train station. During this meeting, one student from MCKK tagged along with Za'ba, where he painted a portrait of Khwaja during their meeting. When in Taiping, Khwaja was welcomed by Abdul Majid Zainuddin (Majid Matang), Dr. Mohd Ghaus, Tuan Syed Abu al-Hasan, Tuan Nawabuddin, and Tuan Amir Bad Syah at the railway station. Afterwards, Khwaja stayed at the house of Abdul Majid Zainuddin throughout his stay in Taiping. On 30th March 1921, after Maghrib prayers, Khwaja delivered his speech on '*Keluasan Pengajaran-pengajaran dan Amalan-Amalan dalam Islam*' at the Town Hall of Taiping.¹⁶

While on 31st March 1921, Khwaja together with Abdul Majid, Dr. Ghaus and Nawabuddin went to Za'ba's house and they had lunch. In the evening, they went back to Taiping. On 2nd April 1921, Khwaja departed for Pulau Pinang. He was welcomed by Muhamad Yusuf Sultan Mydin, Syed Salleh and Dr. Mohd Arif at the Prai' Railway Station with the presence of a few commoners. In Pulau Pinang, he delivered a speech, first at the premises of the cloth merchants of Pulau Pinang, attended by 150 people. On the third day, Khwaja delivered his speech at the Town Hall, attended by 2,000 people. It was mentioned that Khwaja

<http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19291018-1.2.9> (accessed April 20, 2018).

¹⁴ Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," January-November, 1922; and Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," May-June, 1923.

¹⁵ Adnan Nawang, "Za'ba dan Ajaran Khwaja," 74-77.

¹⁶ Nawang, "Za'ba dan Ajaran Khwaja," 78.

stayed in Pulau Pinang for more than two weeks, and on 17th April 1921, in his speech at the Bengali Mosque, which was attended by around 400-500 people, Khwaja clarified, in Hindustani language, that his faith is *Ahl Sunnah wal-Jamaah*.

While in Pulau Pinang, Khwaja mentioned that he would depart for Rangoon after Pulau Pinang and he would continue his journey to Bengal and Lahore so as to fetch his wife and children. Later, they would return to England.¹⁷ During his visit to Pulau Pinang, there were a number of individuals who had facilitated Khwaja's visits, namely Tuan Syed Ali al-Qudri (Air Itam), Encik Osman, Syed Alwi al-Hadi, Encik Said, Encik Puteh, Dr. Mohd Arif, Tuan Nor Mohd Hashim, Tuan Mohd Ghaus, Tuan Mohd Husain Marican, Encik Nordin and Tuan S. Abdul Hamid.

Leadership Structure

The Muslim mentioned that the following individuals were elected as office-bearers for one-year term (1922-1923), namely;

List of Office-Bearer, 1922-1923

No.	Position	Office bearer
1	Patron	Mr. H.G. Sarwar
2	President	Mr. N. Mamat
3	Vice-Presidents	Mr. H. Manjoor Sahib Mr. Haji Mohamed
4	Honorary Secretary	Mr. Bashir Ahmad
5	Honorary Treasurer	Mr. A.W. Mahmood
6	Honorary Auditor	MR. M. Malimasahib
7	Honorary Asst. Secretary	Mr. T.A. Chunchie

The line-up of its management committee were as follows: Messrs. R. Mahmood Sahib, L. Mohamed Ghouse Maricar, O. Shaik Mohamed, Sinnatemby Maricar, Akisa Malim, Hakim Karim Buksh and P. Shaik Sahib Maricar. Honorary Editor of *The Muslim*, S. Qudrat Shah; editorial committee, Mr. Mahmood Sahib, Mr. N. Mamat, Mr. Malimsahib, Mr.

¹⁷ Adnan Nawang, "Za'ba dan Ajaran Khwaja," 78-29.

T.A. Chunchie and Mr. Sodullah Khan. The Honorary secretary sat in all its meetings. The paper also stated that there were two Hong Kong merchants who joined the *Anjuman* as members, as a result of efforts done by Mr. S. Bahadur Hussain from Madras. Those two were Mr. A.F. Uttanwalla, and Mr. L. Abbasoy c/o Karim Bhoy Office. Both were willing to act as campaigners for the *Anjuman* in the Far Eastern countries.¹⁸

The Malayan papers had also reported news pertaining to the structure of the leadership of the *Anjuman* in May 1922 as follows: Mr. Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar (Patron; Malayan Civil Service); President, Mr. N. Mamat (President, reelected); Mr. Haji Manjoor Sahib and Mr. S. Haji Mohamed (Vice-Presidents); Mr. S. Bashir Ahmad (Honorary Secretary, re-elected); Sub-Inspector A.W. Mahmud (Honorary Treasurer); Mr. Malimsahib (Honorary Auditor); and Mr. T.A. Chunchie (Honorary Librarian and Assistant Secretary). Meanwhile for committees of the *Anjuman* were as follows: Messrs. R. Mahmood Sahib, L. Mohamed Ghouse Maricar, O. Shaik Mohamed, Sinatamby Maricar, Akisa Malim Maricar, Hakim Karim Buksh and P. Shaik Sahib Maricar.

In addition, the Managing Committee for publishing *The Muslim*, the organ of the *Anjuman*, composed of the honorary editor, Mr. S. Qudrat Shah and its committee standings comprised of Messrs. R. Mahmood Sahib, M. Malim Sahib, N. Mamat, Sadullah Khan and T.A. Chunchie. The secretary sat in all its meetings. Furthermore, the paper also pointed out that the Annual General Meeting of the *Anjuman* was held in its own building on Saturday, 12th July. The meeting passed the report and accounts ending 30th April 1924. The following gentlemen elected as office-bearers for the period ending 30 April 1925 were as follows:

¹⁸ Syed Qudrat Shah, "The Muslim," June-July, 1922.

List of Office-Bearer, 1924-1925

No.	Position	Office bearer
1	Patron	Mr. H.G. Sarwar Mr. Kadir Sultan
2	President	Mr. Ismail
3	Vice-Presidents	Mr. R. Mahmood Sahib Mr. L. Mohamed Ghouse Maricar
4	Honorary Secretary	S. Qudrat Shah
5	Honorary Treasurer	Mr. M. Ismail
6	Honorary Auditor	MR. M. Sadullah Khan

For the main committee of the *Anjuman*, the following individuals were elected, namely O. Sheik Mohamed, Y.A. Rahim, M. Malim Sahib, M. Abdul Aziz Sahib, Shaik Sahib Maricar, Sinnatamby Maricar, H. Ahmad, T.S. Maricar, and M. Akisa Malim Maricar. For the editor of *The Muslim*, the task was given to Syed Qudrat Shah.

The honorary secretary mentioned in his opening remark during the Annual General Meeting that, the ideals of the *Anjuman* is the *presentation* of the beauty of Islam as what had been reflected in the contents of *The Muslim*.¹⁹ Meanwhile, for the 1925-26 period, this issue mentioned about the line-up for the *Anjuman* where it stated that the management committee of the *Anjuman* for the period ending 30th April 1926 were as follows:

List of Office-Bearer, 1925-1926

No.	Position	Office bearer
1	Patron	Mr. H.G. Sarwar Mr. Kadir Sultan
2	President	Mr. Ismail
3	Vice-Presidents	Mr. L. Mohamed Ghouse Maricar Mr. R. Mahmood Sahib
4	Honorary Secretary	Mr. Bashir Ahmad
5	Honorary Asst. Secretary	Mr. N. Mamat
6	Honorary Treasurer	Al-Haj, M.K. Yahya Maricar
7	Honorary Auditor	MR. M. Sadullah Khan

¹⁹ Syed Qudrat Shah, "The Muslim," July-August, 1924,

Achievements and Challenges

The editor of *The Muslim* had informed its readers about the financial deficit it had accumulated. The editor asserted that it could be further improved if the Muslim masses supported it financially and intellectually. Thus, the *Anjuman* started a fund called 'The Muslim Fund' so as to collect donations from the Muslims. He remarked in this regard that those "who have the welfare of Islam at heart, will, we have no doubt, subscribe literally. The honour of Islam is at stake".²⁰ The editor spread news pertaining to the financial difficulties faced by the *Anjuman* where its debts surpassed the revenue acquired.

Therefore, there was an urgent need to remedy the financial deficit faced by the *Anjuman* through a number of possible means such as fund-raising or donation. *The Muslim*, being part and parcel of the *Anjuman*, faced difficulties as far as charges and circulation were concerned. Syed Qudrat Shah went on to note, in a pleading tone that no one should be blamed over this current situation and pointed out to the Muslim readers in particular that it was their decision to decide whether or not the *Anjuman* and its activities would "sink or swim after it carried out its work for the last two years".²¹ The editor had also mentioned a crisis, which had affected the *Anjuman*. Nevertheless, in a positive tone, Syed Qudrat Shah treated it as a blessing in disguise where the people (the members and supporters) stood united in facing the obstacle.

As a result, the position and bond within the association became stronger and the number of people who got to know the existence of the *Anjuman* grew. Besides, the *Anjuman*, as the editor noted, would have its own building soon. As the *Anjuman* was a socio-religious based association, not many paid attention to it as some people were too concerned with their own affairs. Thus, attention and support were very minimal. In addition, religious issues were heated when the traditionalists and modernists met, not to mention other kind of practices or influences or movements.²² On the progress and activities of *Anjuman-I Islam*, apart from pursuing the three objectives mentioned in the earlier discussions, the *Anjuman* was also involved in welfare-based activities.

A news report on 24 August 1924, stated that the *Anjuman* had approved a proposal to create a fund called 'The Muslim Students' Aid Fund' to help Muslim students. In order to facilitate the foundation of

²⁰ Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," May-June, 1923.

²¹ Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," June-July, 1922.

²² Syed Qudrat Shah, "*The Muslim*," June-July, 1922.

this fund, a sub-committee was set up to oversee the project. Mr. L. Mohammad Ghouse Maricar, one of the Vice-Presidents, promised a yearly donation of \$720 as an initial fund for this purpose, which was gratefully accepted by the Committee. This fund was created mainly to cater to the needs of Muslim students who wished to further their studies. Normally, needy students who had passed the Standard VII could not continue their studies chiefly due to financial constraints.²³

Moreover, the other English press had also reported news relating to an endeavor to reorganize and revitalize the *Anjuman-I Islam*. A meeting convened and its main agenda was to seek a solution for the ongoing weakening state of the *Anjuman*. During the opening of the meeting, Bashir Ahmad, had informed the members of the unsatisfactory condition of the *Anjuman*. He further mentioned that the members should work out a plan so that the association would be revitalized and could be of service to the community. If not so, it is better to put it to an end. A discussion subsequently was carried out to discuss and deliberate the matter. As a result, the committee unanimously agreed that the *Anjuman* should be reorganized and strengthened in its foundation and activities. A special meeting was to be called later to further deliberate the matter.

There was also a suggestion that a club-house that would be attached to the *Anjuman* would seem useful and beneficial for the *Anjuman* and its guests who came from various countries. One of the crucial breakthroughs during this meeting was that it was decided to re-issue 'The Muslim' which stopped its publication a few months prior to the meeting. The English version of the *Anjuman's* rules and regulations were to be translated into Tamil so as to enlist the sympathy and support from Tamil-Speaking Muslims.²⁴ Another news pertaining to the *Anjuman-I Islam* was the proposal of the amalgamation of the *Anjuman* with the Moslem Association. It was reported that a special meeting of the Moslem Association was held on Sunday (1929) to discuss and deliberate the amalgamation of those two associations.

The resolution was that the Moslem Association should not be affiliated with the *Anjuman*. In hindsight, there were a few members of the

²³ *Malaya Tribune*, August 25, 1924, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19240825-1.2.56?ST=1&AT=search&k=The%20Muslim%20Students%E2%80%99%20Aid%20Fund&QT=the,muslim,students,aid,fund&oref=article> (accessed April 20, 2018).

²⁴ *Malaya Tribune*, October 18, 1929, <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19291018-1.2.9> (accessed April 20, 2018).

Moslem Association who were also office bearers and members of the *Anjuman*. In addition, there was also a suggestion put forward by a Muslim correspondent on the need to organize Muslim associations so as to effectively work towards betterment of the Muslim society.²⁵ *The Muslim* reported that in the year 1926 the Moslem Association had decided to affiliate with the *Anjuman-I Islam*. The editor mentioned this decision was pleasing news to him and the rest. The link between both associations would certainly strengthen the foundation and position of both parties.

The editor went on to argue that he recognized the necessity of establishing clubs and associations so as to meet the current demands and trends, yet it would be of no benefit if the people just simply created those clubs and associations for the sake of national cause, religious cause or educational purposes. For him, we are all Muslims and thus the unity amongst the Muslims at large was very desirable.²⁶

Malay Nationalism and Anjuman-I-Islam and the Caliphate Movement

Before proceeding to the Anjuman-I-Islam's attitude towards the Caliphate movement, it may be useful to have a brief overview of anti-colonial attitude in Malaya. It has been argued that the political inclination within the Malay society to fight for independence did not appear before 1941. It is argued that the Malays were relatively comfortable living under the British protection until the Japanese rule of Malaya. It was said that the Malay consciousness before the Japanese rule was chiefly concentrated on the needs to promote economic and social advancement and thus, did not show any elements or inclination for seeking liberation from the British.²⁷

One certain Malay scholar observed that there were three major stages of Malay nationalism: the first one was the religious period (1906-25), secondly, the socio-economic stage and lastly, the political era (1938 onwards). These three epochs were marked by the existence of *Al-Imam*, the Malay Union of Singapore and the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda*. It was

²⁵ *Malaya Tribune*, February 23, 1927,

<http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/maltribune19270223-1.2.80> (accessed April 20, 2018).

²⁶ Bashir Ahmad, "The Muslim," October-November-December, 1926.

²⁷ Azmi Arifin, "Local Historians and the Historiography of Malay Nationalism 1945-57: The British, The United Malays National Organization and the Malay Left," *Kajian Malaya* 32, no. 1 (2014): 1-35; and Ramlah Adam,

observed that the Malay political development had actually started to appear in the 1920s, however this consciousness was not yet fully developed.

Interestingly, the development of Malay political awareness had experienced a lethargic movement, however the modernization plans engineered by the British had catalyzed this consciousness. Anyhow, these modernization programmes did not considerably alter the mentality of the Malays.²⁸ Rather the emergence of Malay political nationalism was more of "...an attempt by a feudal society to adapt to the new world of democracy and socialism" as compared to the rise of worldwide uprising among the populace to realize political freedom from the clutch of foreign powers.

One prominent scholar contends that "the Malays were too naïve pertaining to the anti-colonial consciousness until the Second World War". The foundation of a few Malay associations in the 1930s, showed that they were chiefly state-based and their pursuit of championing the Malays were only "...chauvinist or ethnicist rather than politically nationalist...professed complete loyalty to the traditional Malay establishments..."²⁹ The non-Malays at this point of time began to voice out their views that the British government should treat them equally as they did to the Malays. In short, all of these researches recognized that the Malay political consciousness was not yet fully developed before the 1900s.

The Japanese rule of Malaya in the 1940s was a turning point where it propelled the birth of Malay political consciousness. This was due to the fact that the Japanese occupation contributed to the emergence of political awareness amongst the Malays and concurrently they gradually become more conscious of their political and national rights.³⁰ Ma-

²⁸ Azmi Arifin, "Local Historians," 4; and Raden Soenarno, "Malay Nationalism, 1900–1945," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 1 (1960): 1–33.

²⁹ Azmi Arifin, "Local Historians," 4-5; Raden Soenarno, "Malay Nationalism," 29; and Roff, *The Origins*, 324.

³⁰ Azmi Arifin, "Local Historians," 1-6. Cited from Ungku Aziz and T. H. Silcock, "Malayan Nationalism," in *Asian Nationalism and the West*, ed. W. L. Holland (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 269-345; Sidhu, J. S., "Nasionalisme Melayu Sebelum Perang Dunia Kedua," in *Nasionalisme: Satu Tinjauan Sejarah*, ed. R. Suntharalingam and Abdul Rahman Haji Ismail (Petaling Jaya: Penerbit Fajar Bakti, 1985), 64–79; Khong, K. H, *Merdeka! British Rule and The Struggle for Independence in Malaya, 1945–57* (Petaling Jaya: Strategic Information and Research Development Center (SIRD), 1984), 1-220; Cheah, B. K, "The Erosion of Ideological Hegemony and Royal Power and the Rise of Postwar Malay Nationalism 1945–46" *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 19, no. 1 (1988): 1–26; Ariffin Omar, *Bangsa Melayu: Malay Concepts of Democracy and*

laysian national historian, Khoo Kay Kim observed the conditions of the Indian-Muslims during the late 19th and early 20th centuries Malay as follows:

But Indian Muslims were, above all, distressed by the cumulative effect of the rapid loss of Turkey's authority. The troubles were the subject of constant conversation and unceasing lament in the Muslim society and Muslim press. To the Sunni Muslims-this sect claimed the majority of Indian Muslims-the Sultan was the khalifa, the successor to the successors of the Prophet. On him fallen the holy mantle. He was the living voice of Islam and invoke Allah's blessings on him. For the millions of Indian Muslims, the word khalifa bore special significance. Its mere mention brought on stimulus of affection for Turkey and its cause'.³¹

This situation showed that the Muslims in India were very much concerned with the fate of the Ottoman Caliphate, which had steadily deteriorated (this was evident when they had organized themselves through the creation of the Indian Khilafat movement in 1910s). In one way or another, the sentiment felt by the Muslims in India was spread to the Muslims in Malaya especially the Indian Muslims and Arabs. In retrospect, generally the Malays were quite apathetic, yet there were also a number of influential Malays who were in support of the Ottoman Caliphate. For instance, it was reported that mentioned that one of the first anti-British papers sent out to Malaya was sent to an Indian in Pahang.³²

It comprised of a list of England's mistreatment committed against Turkey, namely: "(1) Britain made a number of promises to Turkey at the beginning of the Balkan War and none of them were fulfilled, (2) The British Foreign Office adopted various measures to wrest the Islamic, especially the Turkish possessions out of the hand of Islam, and (3) England's detention of Turkey's battleships towards which the Turkish people had contributed with their own blood, forced Turkey to join the war on a territory (Egypt) which was its own and which the English

Community, 1945-50 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993), 1-267; and Ramlah Adam, *Gerakan Radikalisme di Malaysia 1938-1965* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2004a), 1-500.

³¹ Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginning of Political Extremism in Malaya 1915-1935," (PhD dissertation, University of Malaya, 1974), 4.

³² CO. 273/431, F.O to C.O, 26 July 1915, enclosure Consul-General Batavia to S. of S. of foreign affairs, 2 July 1915). See also Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginning," 4.

had taken possession of".³³ The Criminal Intelligence Department finally came into being at the end of 1918. In 1922, it was re-branded and called the Bureau of Political Intelligence, chiefly due to the increasing intensity of its work and coverage.³⁴

There is little doubt that the Indian Khilafat movement and the Muslim-Hindu union had indeed affected and influenced the political attitudes of the Malayan Indians as well. In this respect, by the early 1920s, the local response upon such developments in India became apparent. Nevertheless, there was no political conflict in Malaya involving the Indians at large. Rather, in the beginning, the interest and sympathy towards the Indian nationalist objectives were seen in the forms of open subscription to political funds, which the British colonial government did not wait long to stop them. Yet, this did not stop the Indians because they chose to collect funds from one house to another. It was found that it was Gandhi who 'put' this nationalist spirit in the local Malayan Indians, though the intelligence report mentioned that local Muslims had not yet subscribed to the Khilafat movement considerably.³⁵

According to the colonial records, by the 1920s, the 'mood' had changed significantly. Though there was still no hostile agitation but nationalism was running high among the populace. *The Bureau of Political Intelligence* commented that "it has been abundantly demonstrated during the past few months that there are foci of disorder and sedition which would be likely to become active in the events for instance of a recrudescence of trouble in India...the Muhammedans traders are thoroughly disloyal Indian hawkers of seditious, or even revolutionary tendencies are constantly visiting Malaya".³⁶ According to the reports of the Malayan Intelligence Bureau, the merchant groups were found to be most active in stimulating these nationalist sentiments, and within this group, the Muslims were considered to be the most active ones.³⁷

³³ CO. 273/431, F.O to C.O, 26 July 1915, enclosure Consul-General Batavia to S. of S. of foreign affairs, 2 July 1915). See also Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginning," 4.

³⁴ CO. 273/515, Guillemard to Winston Churchill, 24 February 1922. See also Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginning," 35.

³⁵ CO. 273/516, F.M. Baddley to Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure Ag. Director of Criminal Intelligence, S.S. to Inspector General of Police, S.S., 13 January 1922. See also Kim, "The Beginning," 37.

³⁶ CO. 273/516, Baddley to Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 1, March 1922.

³⁷ CO. 273/516, Baddley to Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure *Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 7, September 1922, Item 37 (a). See also Kim, "The Beginning," 40.

There were a few more seditious pamphlets, which were written by Indian Muslims made available in Malaya, mainly through passengers on their way to visit Malaya from India. In this regard, Khoo (1974), citing colonial records, asserted there were two papers which were mentioned by reports of the Intelligence Bureau namely *Indian Muslims and Swaraj*. A well-known seditious pamphleteer called Sayid Miran Mohideen firstly distributed this pamphlet in Madras. The pamphlet comprised words of direct calling for *Jihad*. It addressed the readers (Muslims) to perform *jihad* against the enemies of the Khilafat by incorporating quotations from Qur'an and words from Prophets as backing. The second pamphlet was written in Urdu and called *Guldasta-i-Razakar* (A banquet of volunteers). The contents of the pamphlets, however, were not disclosed.³⁸

A few prominent Muslims figures in Singapore, such as Dr. H.S. Moonshi, Ibrahim Khan secunder, 103, Rochone Road, and Munshi Sahib Ali had been helping the Pan-Islamic based association such as the *Khilafat-I Uthmania* when it came to visit Singapore. It was believed that Munshi Sahib Ali was the central figure amongst the Khilafat activists. In hindsight, these individuals were members of the *Anjuman-I Islam* in Singapore and it seemed that they felt sympathetic towards the Caliphate by helping the *Khilafat-I Uthmania* while it was in Singapore. Munshi Sahib Ali was also reported to have received a number of influential guests who were very much interested in the Indian National and Khilafat movement, and one example was Musa Mall.³⁹

Moreover, it revealed that the British authority was very suspicious of the *Anjuman's* intention and activities, due to the fact that its founding committees were ardent supporters of the Caliphate movement including its honorary secretary, Bashir Ahmad. Colonial records stated the *Anjuman's* campaign to augment the support and interest of the Malays was carried out by K. Anang. He was reported to have been in contact with his fellow friends throughout Malaya such as in Kedah, Penang, Perak, Terengganu, British North Borneo and a few other places in Malaya so as to recruit their support towards the Caliphate's cause. The British authority also believed that K. Anang had been involved in activities which among others called for the establishment of a United Muslim Un-

³⁸ CO. 273/518, Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire, 18 Nov 1922, *enclosure Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 8, 6 October 1922. See also Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginning," 41.

³⁹ Khoo Kay Kim, "The Beginning," 55.

ion comprising of Malaya, Netherlands East Indies, North Borneo and India. Yet, the British authority still believed that the Caliphate factor was an unsuccessful scheme to gain a substantial foothold and support amongst the Muslim populace in Malaya.⁴⁰

In retrospect, there is little doubt, which could deny the existence of relations between the Anjuman and the pro-Caliphate movement in Malaya. Thus, there is a need to further examine these figures' thoughts, activities and involvement in such initiative. In this respect, colonial records revealed that Bashir had made several attempts to widen local support for the Caliphate's cause in Malaya, and one of those efforts was to initiate a newspaper so that the Malay community could fully comprehend the idea of the Caliphate to support its cause, yet the creation of this paper was never materialized.

Moreover, in relation to that, there were a number of Malays who were said to have entertained the idea of the Caliphate and supported its activities, namely Zain ul-Abidin who worked as a teacher at Malay College of Kuala Kangsar, second was Zainal Abidin who was attached to Penang Free School, third was Mohamed Zain, an Inspector of Malay Schools in Penang and fourth was Majid Zainuddin, an Inspector of Malay Schools in Lower Perak. Out of these individuals, the British authority for instance, had regarded Zain ul-Abidin (a Malay teacher at Malay College of Kuala Kangsar) who essentially sympathized with the Caliphate's cause, as their prime suspect. The British believed that he was very instrumental in trying to spread the idea of Muslim unity and Muslim Empire, and called his fellow young and educated Malays to be more critical of the British administration.⁴¹

⁴⁰ CO. 537/908, Laurence Nuns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 11, January 1923; CO. 573/912, Laurence Nuns Guillemard to Duke of Devonshire; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 14, May 1923; CO. 273/516, Braddeley to Winston Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 1, March 1922. See also Mohammad Redzuan, "The Middle Influence," 316; and Khoo Kay Kim. "Islam in Malaysia: The Pre-1941 Scenario." Paper presented in the *Seminar on Islam in Malaysia*, Marina Mandarin Hotel, Singapore, *February/March 1989*, 18.

⁴¹ CO. 273/516, Braddeley to Winston Churchill, 29 July 1922; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 1, March 1922; CO. 537/908, Laurence Nuns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 11, January 1923. See also Mohammad Redzuan, "The Middle Eastern," 316-317.

In this respect, Khoo Kay Kim reaffirmed the claim made by Redzuan Othman that the person who Britain had suspected was Za'ba and that was one of the main reasons why Za'ba was then transferred to SITC, Tanjung Malim. Moreover, Zain ul-Abidin used to get access to an anti-British journal published in Madras, called *The Muhammadan*. Another similar nature of journal which he subscribed to was *The Muslim Standard*, which was published in London. Moreover, Za'ba had also tried to introduce and incite the young educated Malays with a new spirit and feeling of hostile criticism towards the British authority in Malaya. Judging from the attitude of the British authority upon Zain ul-Abidin's inclination and activity, it was rather unsurprising that Zain ul-Abidin had been identified by the British authority as a supporter of the Caliphate Movement who still received the journal *Muslim Standard* even after it was banned.⁴²

In addition, colonial records also asserted that Zain ul-Abidin was accused of leading a cloaked correspondence between himself and Mohamed Kassim of Kelang, who was at that point of time considered as an aggressive devotee of the Caliphate movement. There was another instance where he had also been suspected of trying to influence the minds of some of his students at the Malay College. For instance, he was found to have been in communication with his former student who was then in position of authority in Negri Sembilan.⁴³ To add, a certain Malay individual, named K. Anang, was also active in supporting the Caliphate's cause. However, there was little information known about him. According to the Malayan intelligence report, he was the editor of the anti-establishment paper known as *Islam Bergerak* (Islam Astir).

This paper was published in Java and it had been said to publish news pertaining to the Caliphate's cause. Moreover, *Islam Bergerak* was said to have been the official organ of Sarekat Islam which was established in 1917. The authors asserted that journals and newspapers published (including *Islam Bergerak*) in the 1920s and 1930s had a special column where fatwas were incorporated into it. This column allowed readers to send questions to the editors to get answers and explanations. Questions normally ranged from issues relating to religious practices up to a number of sophisticated subjects of theology and philosophy. Be-

⁴² Khoo Kay Kim, e-mail message to Mohamad Firdaus Mansor, March 14, 2018.

⁴³ CO. 537/908, Laurence Nuns Guillemard (Governor) to Duke of Devonshire, 12 January 1923; enclosure *The Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 11, January 1923; *Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, no. 15, June 1923. See also Mohammad Redzuan, "The Middle Eastern," 317-318.

sides that, K. Anang was also said to be a close friend of Bashir Ahmad. This paper was published by Hadji Misbach (a leading leftist Muslim activist of the Sarekat Islam). Haji Misbach, also known as the “red haji of Solo” was in favour of communism as a measure to confront the Dutch colonial authority in the Netherlands East Indies.⁴⁴

K. Anang was also said to have befriended Muhammad Refat Bey, the Turkish Consul in Batavia. In Singapore, apart from being the assistant editor of *Neracha*, K. Anang also held the post of editor of the journal *Majalah al-Islam* in 1914.⁴⁵ As a matter of fact, *Majalah al-Islam* was considered to be the earliest religious magazine in Malaya. Previously, he was also the editor of other Malayan publications such as *Tunas Melayu* (Malaya) and *Islamic Review* which was based in Indonesia. It was published by Abdul Kadir Yunus, on behalf of the printing house named al-Ikhwan Press in Singapore on 30th January 1914. It had been said that this *Majalah al-Islam* had its roots in the magazine called *Al-Deen* which was published in India. The Al-Ikhwan Printing Press was based at No. 76 & 77, Arab Street, Kampung Gelam, Singapore.

A family business under Munsyi Muhammad Ali b. Ghulam Al-Hindi with Syed Muhammad Abdul Kadir al-Hindi and his brother, Syed Alwee b. Abdul Kadir al-Hindi, owned it.⁴⁶ It should be noted that following the Singapore Mutiny in 1915-1917, K. Anang was the only Malay who was banished from Singapore apart from a few Indians who were involved in the Mutiny. K. Anang had been in close contact with some members of the Anjuman and this showed that the pro-Caliphate and anti-British appeals were rather quite apparent within some members of the *Anjuman-I Islam*.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that Khwaja Kamaluddin had significantly galvanized the establishment of the Anjuman-I Islam. Moreover, this association shared a lot of ideals and goals of the Muslim Mission of Woking where Khawaja Kamaluddin was its key figure. The

⁴⁴ Azyumardi Azra, Kees van Dijk, and Nico J.G. Kaptein, eds., *Varieties of Religious Authority: Changes and Challenges in 20th Century Indonesian Islam* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), 55-56.

⁴⁵ CO. 273/516, F.M. Braddeley 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 Mohamad Redzuan, “The Middle Eastern,” 202.

⁴⁶ Hamedī Adnan, “Penerbitan *Majalah Agama* Sebelum Perang Dunia Kedua: Antara Tanggungjawab Sosial Dengan Perniagaan,” *SEJARAH* 18 (2010): 87-100.

Anjuman-I-Islam had primarily attracted the local Indian Muslims and few educated Malay-Muslims. The *Anjuman* made it explicitly known through its journal, *The Muslim*, to the British and the public that it was basically a non-political association.

While there was no explicit relationship between the *Anjuman* and the Caliphate Movement, indirect relation between the two movements existed. This can be clearly seen through the activities and inclination of the members of the *Anjuman* (such as Bashir Ahmad, Munshi Sahib Ali and Za'ba) towards the movement. Despite that the action of these individuals could not directly indicate the official stance of the association.

A probable cause preventing from closer collaboration between the two parties was due to the close and tight surveillance from the British authority that would not allow any activity, which could pose a threat to their very position in Malaya. Furthermore, the core section of the Muslim community in Malaya that are the Malays, were still closely attached to the Malay Courts. Given this fact, the British played this 'card' quite well thus preventing the overwhelming majority of the Malays from supporting the Caliphate movement.

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