

EGYPTIAN INFLUENCES ON MALAYA'S MUSLIM KAUM MUDA (YOUNG FACTION) BEFORE WORLD WAR II

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Abstract

The Kaum Muda (Young Faction) traced its origin from the reformist thought of Rashīd Riḍā who published the journal al-Manār in Egypt. To disseminate their reformist thought, the Young Faction published al-Imām on 23 July 1906, a journal which was directly influenced by al-Manār. Apart from publishing the journal, the Kaum Muda also published books and novels with reformist themes, particularly on the emancipation of woman. Together with the printed media, the Kaum Muda also used the madrasah for modern religious instruction, which was associated with the reformist thought, to spread their ideas and bring progress to Malay society.

Introduction

The Middle Eastern-originated source of influence, which was particularly important and had a significant impact on the Malays since the beginning of the twentieth century, was from Egypt. The Egyptian influence spread in Malaya through the journals published and the religious schools established by the reformist group, who were better known as *Kaum Muda* (The Young Faction). At the beginning, the thought propagated by the *Kaum Muda* was not well received by the Malays because, in general, they were rather progressive in their thinking with regard to the practice of Islam. To the conservative section of the Malay society, the *Kaum Tua* (The Old Faction), the idea propagated by their rival was considered alien to their daily religious practices and had to be stopped from spreading in the Malay community.

The progressive thought propagated by the *Kaum Muda* caused conflict which generally involved debates and arguments centred on the validity of the everyday practices of Islam. Even though there were instances where the conflict turned rough, particularly with the laymen, among the religious scholars and the more educated ones, this conflict was an important episode in the development of the Malay society, since it encouraged intellectual discourses involving both factions. The impact of the conflict was also far reaching when in their effort to propagate the reformist thought, the *Kaum Muda* published journals and opened religious schools. With this effort, the *Kaum Muda*'s ideas managed to spread all over Malaya and laid the foundation for the early development of Malay consciousness on religion, education and politics before the Second World War.

***Al-Manār* and the Origins of *Kaum Muda*'s Thought**

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 Muhammad 'Ali as part of his modernisation programme.¹ In the following decades, the Egyptian press experienced a rapid growth and this also led to the flowering of newspaper publications.² Parallel to this growth came the rise of political and religious journalism, which provided new dimensions in the spreading of ideas. The development also strongly contributed to the moulding of public opinion throughout the Islamic World and in bringing about an intellectual renaissance.³

During this period, however, Malay journalism was too much in its infancy to be influenced by Egyptian political and religious

¹ See P. J. Vatikiotis, *The Modern History of Egypt* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), 94-95.

² By 1909, there were altogether eighty four daily newspapers published all over Egypt, including thirty nine in Arabic, thirty nine in European languages and six in oriental languages. See George Swan, "The Muslim Press in Egypt", *The Muslim World* 1, 2 (1911): 149.

³ Ali Merad, "Reform in Modern Islam", *Culture* 1 (1977): 114.

journalism.⁴ At this early stage, Egyptian influences in Malay journalism 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.⁵ 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.⁶

In the early years of the twentieth century, Egypt had emerged as a breeding ground for nationalist movements with an Islamic flavour, initiated by the growth of the reformist movement spearheaded by Jamal al-Dīn al-Afghānī a few decades earlier.⁷ Afghānī's ideas, which also led to the growth of Pan-Islamism, were

⁴ The first truly Malay newspaper was only published 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 comments and only provided a general and brief news on local and foreign coverage for its readers. See William R. Roff, *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic Periodicals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶ Zainal Abidin b. Ahmad, "Malay Journalism in Malaya", *JMBRAS* XI (1941): 245.

⁷ Jamal al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839-97) whose origins are still shrouded in obscurity and who lived in exile for the last thirty years of his life, stayed in Egypt for eight years (1881-89). He then went to Paris in 1883, where he again met one of his disciples, Muḥammad 'Abduh, with whom he published a journal, *al-Urwah al-Wuthqā* (The Indissoluble Bond). The first issue of the journal appeared on 5 Jumādā al-ūlā 1301/13 March 1884. The eighteen numbers that they jointly published until October 1884 managed to stir Muslim consciousness as perhaps no other journal had done before or since. See Jamal Mohammed Ahmed, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 27-29; Nikki R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghai. A Political Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); M. M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1983), 1484-1489; Hafiz Zakariya, "Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin and Syed Shaykh al-Hadi's Adaptation of the Salafiyya Ideas into Colonial Malaya", in *Muhammad Abduh dan Masyarakat Melayu*, ed. Farid Mat Zain and Ismail Bakar (Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2007), 192-193. *Seruan Azhar* also published an article related to the life and struggle of al-Afghani. See *Seruan Azhar*, 1, 9, 1926, 161-162.

dominant in Egypt until the early years of the twentieth century and were more important at that stage than Arab or Egyptian nationalism.⁸

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, even though indirectly there were some limited reactions shown by Malays over the struggle of the Turks against the West.⁹ 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.¹⁰

Through contacts between these thinkers and Malay religious intellectuals, the influential Islamic reformist doctrines being promoted by the reform group which came to be known as the *Manār* group after its journal *al-Manār*, spread in Malaya.¹¹ In Malaya this group also came to be labeled as *Kaum Muda* (Young Faction) because most of its activists were relatively young. Another

⁸ Ankush B. Sawant, "Nationalism and National Interest in Egypt", *International Studies* 22, 2 (1985): 136-137.

⁹ For a discussion on the Pan-Islamic appeal with regard to the struggle of the Turks, see Mohammad Redzuan Othman, "Pan-Islamic Appeal and Political Partonage: The Malay Perspective and the Ottoman Response", *Sejarah* 4 (1996): 97-108. For the latest work on Malay sympathy toward Turks during its struggle against the West, see Ermy Azziaty Rozali, "Turki Uthmaniyah: Persepsi dan Pengaruh Dalam Masyarakat Melayu, 1876-1942" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Malaya, 2010), 346-401.

¹⁰ Rashīd Riḍā was generally regarded as the successor of Muhammad ʿAbduh. For more information on Rashīd Riḍā's thought, see Salahuddin al-Munajjid, "The Principles of Ijtihad as Laid Down By Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā", *Studies in Islam* XI, 1-2 (1974): 51-58; Assad Nimer Busool, "Shaykh Muhammad Rashid Rida's Relations with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad ʿAbduh", *The Muslim World* LXVI, 4 (1976): 286.

¹¹ *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 the First World War when it was irregular, due to paper shortage. *Al-Manār* only ceased publication when Rashīd Riḍā died in 1935, after a span of thirty years under his editorship. See Sylvia G. Haim, "The Palestine Problem in *al-Manar*", in *Egypt and Palestine: A Millennium of Association*, ed. Amnon Cohen and Gabriel Baer (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 299.

possible reason for such a “derogatory label” was to associate them with the Young Turks of Turkey whose policies were viewed in Malaya as deviating from the true teachings of Islam. This labeling, according to a scholar, Sidek 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.¹²

The more conservative ideological and theological opponents of *Kaum Muda* who strongly opposed their religious doctrines were called *Kaum Tua* (Old Faction).¹³ 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*.¹⁴ Denied any access to the religious establishments, the *Kaum Muda* opened modern religious schools and published journals in order to spread their doctrines. This activity was carried out 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 permission of His Highness the Sultan in council was liable to a fine of \$200 or 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.¹⁵

¹² See Sidek Haji Fadzil, “Ash-Shaykh Muhammad ‘Abduh - Suatu Tinjauan Kritis Terhadap Pemikirannya dan Rumusan Mengenai Pengaruhnya Dalam Masyarakat Melayu” (M. Litt., Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1977/78), 398-401.

¹³ For a varying interpretation of the labels *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua*, see William R. Roff, “Kaum Muda - Kaum Tua: Innovation and Reaction Amongst the Malays, 1900-1941”, in *Papers on Malayan History*, ed. K. G. Tregonning (Singapore: Journal of South-East Asian History, 1962), 162-165.

¹⁴ Cheah Boon Kheng, “The Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941-45: Ibrahim Yaacob and the Struggle For Indonesia Raya”, *Indonesia* 28 (1979): 86.

¹⁵ See William R. Roff, “Kaum Muda - Kaum Tua”, 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

It was through these channels, that is, by aggressively publishing journals, that the *Kaum Muda* disseminated their reformist thought to the general public in their effort to bring about social change in society. The first journal published by the *Kaum Muda* in their effort to spread their reformist thought was *al-Imām*. The appearance of *al-Imām* in Malaya, 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 its appearance was 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.¹⁶ Its publication could also be described as a manifestation of their modernist thought in Malay society.¹⁷

The journal *al-Imām* was directly influenced by *al-Manār* (The Lighthouse) under the editorship of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā. One of 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. Shaykh Tahir was also one of the most prominent ideologues and one of the pioneers in spreading reformist thought in Malaya.¹⁸ He initiated the publication of *al-Imām* (The Leader/The Guide) on 23 July 1906 (1 Jumādā al-Akhīr, 1324 AH) in *Jawi*, which continued for thirty one issues, until it stopped publication in December 1908.¹⁹

The close relation between *al-Imām* and *al-Manār* was not only due to Shaykh Tahir, but to Rashīd Riḍā himself who acknowledged of such a relationship. In his obituary of Sayyid Muhammad bin ʿAqil bin Yahya, Rashīd Riḍā mentions that the

there were efforts to stop the reformist journals *al-Ikhwān* and *Saudara* entering the state. See *al-Ikhwān*, 3, 7, 16 March 1929, 215.

¹⁶ Zainon Ahmad, "The Life, Times and Thoughts of Sayyid Shaykh Ahmad al-Hadi" (M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1974), 10-11.

¹⁷ Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, "Gerakan Ansarul Sunnah Dalam Kegiatan Kaum Muda Melaka" (B.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1972/73), 18.

¹⁸ HAMKA, *Pengaruh Muhammad ʿAbduh Di Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Tintamas, 1961) 15-19. See also, Hafiz Zakaria, "The Life and Times of Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin", *Sejarah* 14 (2006): 89-116.

¹⁹ HAMKA, *Ajahku. Riwayat Hidup Dr. Abdul Karim Amrullah dan Perjuangannya Kaum Agama Di Sumatera* (Djakarta: Penerbit Djajamurni, 1967), 233.

Sayyid told him of his intention to publish the journal *al-Imām*.²⁰ Its publication was to disseminate 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 newspaper.²¹ In fact, the publication of *al-Imām* was introduced to *al-Manār* readers in the eleventh volume, stressing that its publication of the journal was undertaken by several people, with Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha as its editor.²²

The effort by Shaykh Tahir and Haji Abbas to publish *al-Imām* was supported by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi and financed by Shaykh Mohd. Salim al-Khalali, all of whom lived in Singapore. Later, in early March 1908, through the efforts of Sayyid Shakh al-Hadi, Sayyid Hassan bin Shahab and Sayyid Muhammad bin °Aqil bin Yahya, other financial backers of *al-Imām*, a limited company, Al-Imam Printed Company, with a capital of \$20,000, was formed to publish the journal.²³

Right from the first issue, the thinking of *Kaum Muda* was clearly highlighted by the journal *al-Imām* when it placed upon itself the task of exhorting to wake people up and work for progress, following the true path of Islam.²⁴ The reformist cause espoused by the journal becomes most evident when we look at it in detail, particularly the writings of Shaykh Tahir Jalaludin, who clearly in his writings in the journal called upon Malays to purify their

²⁰ Sayyid Muhammad bin °Aqil (1863-1931) was a merchant and famous °*alim* in Singapore. He was born in Hadhramawt and learned Islamic knowledge from his uncle, Sayyid Abu Bakar bin Abdul Rahman bin Shihab. When the Al-Imam Printing Company Limited was established, Sayyid Muhammad was appointed as its Managing Director. See Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk, *Al-āthār al-Kāmilah li Majallah al-Manār °an Janūb Sharq āsiyyā, 1898-1935* (Kuala Lumpur: IIUM, 2006), 11-12; Abu Bakar Hamzah, *Al-Imam: Its Role in Malay Society, 1906-1908* (Kuala Lumpur: Media Cendekiawan Sdn. Bhd., 1981), 123-124. 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, 3-4.

²¹ *Al-Manār*, 32, 3, March 1932, 239.

²² *Al-Manār*, 11, 7, 28 August 1908, 506.

²³ *Al-Imām*, 2, 9, 5 March 1908, 292-293.

²⁴ Mohd. Taib Osman, *Modern Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1964) 5.

religious practices and build a community based on true Islamic teaching.²⁵

In addition to its role in championing reformist thought *al-Imām* 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.²⁶ 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 reform society.²⁷ This is clearly contrary to the observations by Roff on *al-Imām*, where he wrote, “It must be stressed that *al-Imām*’s first concern was with religion and not directly with social, even less political, change”.²⁸

Almost all those who were involved in the publication of *al-Imām* had been exposed to current developments in the Middle East and had a sentimental link with Egypt. They also subscribed to Egyptian reformist ideas and believed in the need to reform Malay

²⁵ Mohd. Sarim Mustajab, “Syeikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaludin al-Falaki: Pelopor Gerakan Islah Islamiyyah di Tanah Melayu”, *Malaysia in History* 20, 2 (1977): 9.

²⁶ Radin Soenarno, “Malay Nationalism, 1896-1941”, *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 1, 1 (1996): 6. See also, Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, *Politik al-Imam* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2001), Chapter 6 and 7, 183-299.

²⁷ For a discussion on the political orientation of *al-Imām*, see Abu Bakar Hamzah, “*Al-Imam* and Politics”, in *Islamika II*, ed. Lutpi Ibrahim (Kuala Lumpur: Sarjana Enterprise, 1982), 131-143.

²⁸ William R. Roff, “Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua”, 166. A few years later when the same article was published (see Chapter Three, “Kaum Muda-Kaum Tua: Innovation and Reaction” of his book, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 1980), 57), the words “It must be stressed that” were omitted. The omission, however, did not seem to have drastically altered the author’s opinion on the issue. For a detailed critique of Roff’s analysis of *al-Imām*, see Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, “*Al-Imam* Sepintas Lalu”, *Jurnal Sejarah XI* (1972/73): 29-40. For a discussion on the religious, social and political thought of *al-Imām*, see also Abdul Aziz Mat Ton, “Gerakan Ansarul Sunnah”, 17-33. The subject was also discussed at length by Abu Bakar Hamzah in his book, *Al-Imam*. 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”, 131-143.

society.²⁹ To achieve these aims, the journal published was named *al-Imām* 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”.³⁰

The objective of *al-Imām* was similar of that of *al-Manār* and the similarity becomes absolutely clear when it states in its twelfth issue that, “*al-Imām* is a mortal enemy of all sorts of *bid'ah* (religious innovations), superstition, imitations and alien customs which intrude into religion”.³¹ This objective is similar to that of *al-Manār* which stated its aims was, “...to remove the superstitious elements in Muslim beliefs which do not belong to the true teachings of Islam”.³² Since the editor of *al-Imām* were strongly influenced by *al-Manār* 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-Imām* were either an elaboration of or a translation of articles taken from *al-Manār*.³³ In its first issue, one of the articles published by *al-Imām* was headed “The Proper Task”.³⁴ This articles was probably an elaboration of a speech given by Muḥammad ‘Abduh at the Sultaniyyah School in Beirut, in which among other things, he stated that the knowledge needed by Muslims was the knowledge of religion.³⁵

Apart from that, a parallel to and elaboration of this speech can also be seen when the writer of *al-Imām* exhorts Muslims to acquire skills in craftsmanship and agriculture and to defend the country from its enemies. It also stressed the importance of education in order to rescue the Muslims from apathy, and the need for unity. The total following of the teachings of Islam is regarded as

²⁹ Abdullah Haji Jaafar, “*Al-Imam*”, in *Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Moden*, ed. Khoo Kay Kim (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, 1984), 85.

³⁰ *Al-Imām*, 1, 1, 23 July 1906, 8.

³¹ *Al-Imām*, 2, 12, 1 June 1908, 390.

³² *Al-Manār*, 1, 1, 16 March 1898, 11-12.

³³ Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, “Modern Muslim Thought in Egypt and Its Impact on Islam in Malaya” (Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1965), 384.

³⁴ *Al-Imām*, 1, 1, 23 July 1906, 16.

³⁵ Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, “Modern Muslim Thought”, 388.

the only remedy for all ills faced by the *ummah* (community).³⁶ Another typical instance of *al-Manār*'s influence on *al-Imām* was the latter's attitude to *riba* as conveyed in its twelfth issue, which was obviously a translation of what had been published in the former.³⁷ Similarly, in the case of the elaboration on the *tarīqah* (mystical order) *Ahmādiyyah*, commonly known as *Rashīdiyyah* in Malay, which was translated from *al-Manār*.³⁸ *Al-Imām* also published Muḥammad ^cAbduh's *fatwā* (legal opinion) in *al-Manār* which allows Muslims to eat slaughtered animals of *Ahl al-Kitāb* (Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians who are regarded as the people of the Holy Books).³⁹ From the third issue of the third volume, *al-Imām* began to publish Muḥammad ^cAbduh's *Tafsīr* (explanation of the *al-Qur'ān*) taken directly from *al-Manār*.⁴⁰ In the fifth issue of the same volume, *al-Imām* also published the *tafsīr* for the *sūrah* (chapter of *al-Qur'ān*) *al-Fātihah* which was a direct translation from *al-Manār*.⁴¹ In addition, there was also a section on education (*al-Tarbiyyah wa al-Ta'lim*) which contained a great deal of translated materials taken from the same section of *al-Manār*.⁴²

³⁶ *Al-Imām*, 1, 1, 23 July 1906, 17.

³⁷ *Al-Imām*, 2, 12, 1 June 1908, 383-286. The article was translated directly from *al-Manār*, 9, 8, 19 September 1906, 540-541.

³⁸ *Al-Imām*, 2, 8, 4 February 1908, 257-260. See also *al-Imām*, 2, 9, 5 March 1908, 271-279. For original article in *al-Manār*, see *al-Manār*, 9, 4, 24 May 1906, 289-296.

³⁹ *Al-Imām*, 3, 5, 27 October 1908, 196. See original article in *al-Manār*, 8, 7, 4 June 1905, 254-256.

⁴⁰ *Al-Imām*, 3, 3, 29 August 1908, 87-92; *al-Imām*, 3, 4, 27 September 1908, 107-118. See original article in *al-Manār*, 3, 16, 7 August 1900, 371-374.

⁴¹ *Al-Imām*, 3, 5, 27 October 1908, 147-154; *al-Imām*, 3, 6, 25 November 1908, 199-208. See original articles in *al-Manār*, 3, 17, 17 August 1900, 400-404; *al-Manār*, 3, 18, 27 August 1900, 422-424; *al-Manār*, 3, 19, 7 September 1900: 446-450; *al-Manār*, 3, 20, 16 September 1900, 469-473; *al-Manār*, 3, 23, 15 October 1900, 534-537; *al-Manār*, 3, 24, 25 October 1900, 561-566; *al-Manār*, 3, 25, 4 November 1900, 589-594.

⁴² For example, *al-Imām* published an article about methods to teaching children under the title "Pelajaran" in the first issue. See *al-Imām*, 1, 1, 23 July 1906, 21-26. The article was translated from the original articles in *al-Manār* under the title, "*al-Tarbiyyah wa al-Ta'lim*". See *al-Manār*, 2, 6, 15 April 1899, 90-92; *al-Manār*, 2, 7, 29 April 1899, 107-109.

Close relationship between *al-Manār* and *al-Imām* can also be seen in the case of the *al-Imām* reader who asked for an opinion from *al-Manār*, although the same question had been answered by the former. This was regarding the practice of the *Tarīqah Naqshābandiyyah* which *al-Manār* opined the full compliance to the directive of the Shaykh was prohibited because this was never practiced by Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions.⁴³ Moreover, none from the text of the *al-Qur'ān* and *al-Hadīth* (record of the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad) could be found which supported the practice.⁴⁴ *Al-Manār* concluded that their practices were not considered part of the true teachings of Islam.⁴⁵ On this issue, *al-Imām*, like *al-Manār*, agrees that the practice of the *Tarīqah Naqshābandiyyah* followers was not part of the true teachings of Islam as stipulated by the *al-Qur'ān* and *al-Hadīth*.⁴⁶

Al-Imām was a widely circulated journal with a print of 5,000 copies at the height of its publication.⁴⁷ That was the highest number ever attained by a Malay journal before the Second World War.⁴⁸ The journal was also widely read, with its distributing agents found all over the Malay World.⁴⁹ *Al-Imām*, however, was forced to suspend its publication at the end of 1908 due to financial problems.⁵⁰ Zaki, who was one of the pioneers in the study of *al-Imām*, while aware of the financial difficulties faced by the journal, was however, of the opinion that its ideological reasons also contributed to its termination.⁵¹ Rashīd Riḍā reported that after the

⁴³ *Al-Manār*, 11, 7, 28 August 1908, 504.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 506. See original article in *al-Imām*, 3, 2, 30 July 1908, 47-49.

⁴⁵ *Al-Manār*, 11, 7, 28 August 1908, 515.

⁴⁶ *Al-Manār*, 12, 2, 22 March 1909, 104.

⁴⁷ CO 276/54, *Straits Settlements Government Gazette*, 26 October 1906, 2660.

⁴⁸ See I. Proudfoot, "Pre-War Malay Periodicals: Notes on Roff's Bibliography Drawn Government Gazettes", *Kekal Abadi* 4 (1985): 5.

⁴⁹ For a list of its distributors found almost all over Malaya as well as in Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Thailand, see *al-Imām*, 1, 1, 23 July 1906, back cover.

⁵⁰ HAMKA, *Ajahku*, 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", 23.

⁵¹ See Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, "Modern Muslim Thought in Egypt", 387.

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-Imām* so that it could be published again, but the offer did not materialize and no reason was specified.⁵²

Even though *al-Imām* was short-lived, the ideas it promoted continued to live and pursued by other journals.⁵³ In April 1911, a journal *al-Munir* (the Illuminating) was founded by several *‘ālim* (the learned of Islam) of Padang, West Sumatra.⁵⁴ Under the editorship of Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1873-1933), 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*.⁵⁵ Later, when *Neracha* was published in 1911 in Singapore under the editorship of Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha, who was also one of the founder member of *al-Imām*, it also published articles taken from *al-Manār*.⁵⁶ When *al-Ikhwān* was published in 1926, it bore a strong resemblance to *al-Imām*. Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, who was another founder-member of *al-Imām*, propagandized energetically in *al-Ikhwān* a variety of reformist ideas of the *Kaum Muda*, which showed a strong influence from *al-Manār*.⁵⁷

⁵² Muhammad Rashid Rida, *Tārīkh al-Ustāz al-Imām al-Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abduh*, Vol. 1 (Cairo: Matba‘ah al-Manār, 1350/1931), 600.

⁵³ For example, two of the Arabic newspapers published in Singapore, *al-Isḫāh* and *al-Husām*, after the demise of *al-Imām*, promotes the reformist thought which clearly showed the latter’s influence. See Michael Francis Laffan, *The Makings of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 187.

⁵⁴ HAMKA, *Ajahku*, 95. For more information about publication of *al-Munir*, see Syamsuri Ali, “*Al-Munir* dan Wacana Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam, 1911-1915” (M.A. Thesis, Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Imam Bonjol, 1997), 21-140.

⁵⁵ See Wan Salim Wan Mohd. Noor, “A Study of the Development of Reformist Ijtihad and Some of its Applications in the Twentieth Century” (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1988), 300.

⁵⁶ There are articles about conversations between Muslims and Christians on the fundamentals of Christian doctrine which was translated directly from *al-Manār*. See *Neracha*, 2, 43, 24 July 1912, 1-2. *Neracha* also published an article from *al-Manār* on the story of a priest in Russia who tried to convert a Muslim boy to Christianity. See *Neracha*, 2, 47, 21 August 1912, 1.

⁵⁷ William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, 165.

The influence of *al-Manār* and Rashīd Riḍā in the spreading of the reformist thought in Malaya, however, was not confined to the *al-Imām* 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 1935.⁵⁸ Another Malay who was also known to have subscribed to the journal and corresponded with Rashīd Riḍā was a progressive *‘ālim*, Haji Wan Musa Haji Abdul Samad, who was Mufti (Islamic legal authority) of Kelantan (1908-1916).⁵⁹ The journal *al-Manār* was also popularly read, particularly by the influential *‘ālim* in Kelantan, including Tok Kenali and Haji Muhammad Said.⁶⁰

As a popular and widely read Arabic journal in the Malay World, *al-Manār* was very positive in its reaction to the questions put forward by its Malay correspondents. When one reader, Muhammad Bisunyi Imran contributed a letter to the journal addressed to Amir Shakib Arsalan, which questions the current state of Muslim degradation, including the Malays, and the spectacular progress achieved by Europe, United State of America and Japan, the journal responded by publishing a series of Arsalan's answers in articles entitled "Our Decline and Its Causes".⁶¹ Throughout its publication, *al-Manār* (1898-1936)

⁵⁸ Adnan Haji Mohd. Nawang, "Biografi Za'ba Dengan Rujukan Khas Kepada Perjuangannya" (M.A. Thesis, University of Malaya, 1982), 124-126.

⁵⁹ Mohd. Kamil Hj. Abdul Majid, "Sejarah Dakwah Islam di Kelantan", *Berita Harian*, 5 October 1990, 10. For the letter from Haji Wan Musa to Rashid Rida on the question of *talqin* (prayer for the death) and the latter's reply, see Nik Abdul Aziz Haji Nik Hassan, *Sejarah Perkembangan Ulama Kelantan* (Kota Bharu: Pustaka Aman Press Sdn. Bhd., 1977), Appendix 10, 212-215.

⁶⁰ Wan Yahaya Wan Ahmad, "The Early Development of Islamic Education in Kelantan", in *Islamika III*, ed. Lutpi Ibrahim (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, 1985), 217. Other prominent *‘ālim* known to have subscribed to the journal include Tok Guru Haji Abbas and Tok Guru Wan Abdul Latif of Besut, Terengganu. See Mohamad Abu Bakar, "Ulama dan Siasah: Penglibatan Guru Pondok Dalam Politik Kependidikan di Negeri Terengganu", in *Terengganu Dahulu dan Sekarang*, ed. Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, 1984), 97-98.

⁶¹ See Amir Shakib Arsalan, *Our Decline and its Causes*, Trans. M. A. Shakoob (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1962), IX & X. See *al-Manār*, 31, 7, 18 Feb. 1931, 529-549. On Muhammad Bisunyi Imran's letters, see *al-Manār*, 31, 5, 20

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 published and letters requesting and furnishing advice and information on specific questions.⁶²

It is clear that the early development of the reformist thought propagated by the *Kaum Muda* owed greatly to *al-Manār*. From the journal, the *Kaum Muda* obtained the idea of reforms that was needed to bring about progressive change in society. At the beginning, the role of spreading the reformist thought was played by the graduates of al-Azhar University or those who were exposed to the religious and political development that took place in Egypt. At this stage, the medium of spreading the idea was confined primarily to either the journals published by the reformists or *al-Manār* by Rashīd Riḍā. The main theme of the struggle of *Kaum Muda* at this stage was to exhort the Malays to change in order to achieve progress.

Egyptian Influence on the Idea of Progress

The second decade of the twentieth century saw Egypt as an ideal model that was to be emulated that was used by the reformists to bring progress in Malay society. During this period literate Malays, as a product 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 and used by the reformists to further the cause of their struggle.⁶³ An established connection with Egypt enabled an easier flow of this

December 1930, 353-354; *al-Manār*, 31, 6, 19 January 1931, 439-464.

⁶² Jutta E. Bluhm, "A Preliminary Statement on the Dialogue Established between the Reform Magazine *al-Manar* and the Malayo-Indonesian World", *Indonesian Circle* 11, 32 (1983): 35.

⁶³ R. O. Winstedt, "Malaysia", in *Islam Today*, ed. A. J. Arberry and Rom Landau (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1942), 224.

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 looked upon as a symbol of authority and a modern Muslim nation strong in its Islamic tradition. Aware of these perceptions, the reformists took full advantage of these ideological views to promote progress in the Malay society.

The influence of Egyptian literary life led to the publication of the first popular Malay love story novel, *Hikayat Setia Asyik Kepada Masyuknya atau Hikayat Faridah Hanum*, by a *Kaum Muda* activist, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi.⁶⁴ This novel was heavily influenced by the Egyptian novel, *Zaynab*, by Muḥammad Husayn Haykal.⁶⁵ 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 *Zaynab*, were also facing a similar mental conflict.⁶⁶ There are other similarities as well; for instance,

⁶⁴ Sayyid Shaykh bin Ahmad bin Hasan bin Saqaf al-Hadi (1867-1934) was born in Melaka. He underwent his early education in the local Malay school and received religious knowledge from his father. While in Pulau Penyengat, Sayyid Shaykh accompanied the ruler of Riau-Lingga on his trip to Makkah to perform the Hajj and take this opportunity to deepen his religious knowledge there. He also visited Egypt on a number of occasions. Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi was one of the editors of *al-Imām* which was published in Singapore. In Penang, Sayyid Shaykh published *al-Ikhwān* and *Saudara* and also produced religious books and novels. See Zainon Ahmad, "The Life, Times"; Syed Alwi al-Hady, "The Life of My Father", in *The Real Cry of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hady*, ed. Alijah Gordon (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 1999); Talib Samat, *Syed Syeikh al-Hadi. Sasterawan Progresif Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1992).

⁶⁵ As with *Hikayat Faridah Hanum*, the novel *Zaynab* was the first Egyptian literary work which could be considered as a true novel, in the sense that it has a proper plot and character development. 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), 11. See also Muḥammad Husayn Haykal, *Zaynab: Manāzīr wa Akhlāq Rifīyyah* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1999).

⁶⁶ Mana Sikana, *Kritikan Sastera: Pendekatan dan Kaedah* (Petaling Jaya: Penerbit

when the broken-hearted Ibrāhīm in *Zaynab* and Shafik in *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* both go for military service in Sudan.⁶⁷

The publication of the novel received tremendous response from the public and had a great impact on the struggle for progress by *Kaum Muda* with regard to women emancipation. Actually on women's issues, Rashīd Riḍā was never as progressive as was Muḥammad 'Abduh, which had helped the Egyptian feminist Qāsim Amīn to write his famous *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah* (The Emancipation of Women).⁶⁸ In this book, Amīn called for monogamy, the abolition of seclusion, full education for women and restriction on divorce and the abolition of the veil. Riḍā, for this part, advocated the use of the veil, but he was against the practice of seclusion. He believed that Islamic law allows women to pray in the mosque and perform the *Hajj* with their faces and hands uncovered. He also advocated women's right to buy and sell, and to learn from and teach men, arguing that they were rights derived from Islamic law.⁶⁹ While Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin stayed away from this controversial issue, Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi accepted Qāsim Amīn's idea positively. Moreover, Sayyid Shaykh became one of the first exponents of the emancipation of women in Malay society.⁷⁰

Sayyid Shaykh involved in this controversial issue upon realising the importance of providing greater liberty for women in society. He called on the urgent need to provide educational opportunities for women and their liberation from customary and religious restrictions as practiced in traditional Malay society. Sayyid Shaykh also demonstrated scripturally and rationally the significance of women's contributions to their community, society

Fajar Bakti Sdn. Bhd. 1986), 226; Muḥammad Husayn Haykal, *Zaynab*, 117.

⁶⁷ See Yahaya Ismail, "Syed Sheikh al-Hadi: Pembuka Zaman Baru Dalam Bidang Novel", *Dewan Bahasa*, 18, 11, November 1974, 557; Hamdi Sakkut, *The Egyptian Novel*, 13; Muḥammad Husayn Haykal, *Zaynab*, 281.

⁶⁸ Peter R. Knauss, *The Persistence of Patriarchy: Class, Gender, and Ideology in Twentieth Century Algeria* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1987), 44.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Hafiz Zakariya, "Islamic Reform in Colonial Malaya: Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin and Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, 2006), 231-232.

and country. In his struggle, Sayyid Shaykh also rejected the popular Muslim practice, which considered women as inferior to men in terms of their rational abilities and temperament. He believed that men and women have the same capabilities and have the same purpose in life, that is, to know God and to obey God's commandments.⁷¹

Despite the fact that *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* deviated totally from the existing religious and traditional Malay literature and was strongly protested by the *Kaum Tua*, the publication of the novel was considered a successful one. The tremendous response given by the Malays was attributed to the fact that it was the earliest Malay novel which was widely circulated and adopted a popular theme.⁷² Its tremendous reception was also attributed to the high regard of the Malays for Egypt as a progressive and advanced Muslim country, which formed the background of the novel.⁷³

The publication of *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* 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

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² 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 *Ceritera Kechurian 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 backgrounds 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* 130, 4 (1974): 451. See also, William R. Roff, *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2009), 234-248. 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.

⁷³ Yahaya Ismail, "Ahmad Talu: Novelis Melayu Yang Pertama", *Dewan Bahasa*, 18, 12, 1974, 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.

society, but equally important was that its characters were Egyptians and the background was Egypt.⁷⁴ The Egyptian background of the novel is clearly spelt out; the cities are Cairo and Alexandria and the names of the roads are *al-Abbāsī*, *al-Zahīr* and *Bāb al-Ḥadīd*. The characters include Hudā Hānum Sha^crawī, Shizā Nabawī and Shaykh Muḥammad ^cAbduh, apart from Faridah Hanum herself, Kassim Bey, Badaruddin Affendi and Shafik Affendi. In addition to this, Tal^cat 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 Riḍā.⁷⁵

Despite some opposition to the publication by the *Kaum Tua* of such a romantic novel with revealing pictures of women 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 ^c*ālim*, the novel proved to be a popular one and had to be reprinted several times due to encouraging public demand.⁷⁶ Despite the publication of these pictures clearly contrary to the Malay norms and the practice of Islam, Sayyid Shaykh believed that it was a symbol of progress by women who had experienced emancipation.⁷⁷ It is clear that Sayyid Shaykh himself had embarked on an aggressive approach by following the footstep of Egyptian reformers like Muḥammad ^cAbduh and Qāsim Amīn with regard to women's emancipation. The constraints that he faced in society which was still rigid on this

⁷⁴ Mohd. Taib Osman, *Modern Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1964), 5-6.

⁷⁵ Yahaya Ismail, "Syed Sheikh al-Hadi", 573.

⁷⁶ 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 ed. (Penang: Jelutong Press, 1927/1928).

⁷⁷ Mohammad Redzuan Othman, "Idea Kemajuan Dalam Pemikiran dan Perjuangan Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi", in *Sejarah Pembinaan Negara Bangsa*, ed. Mohammad Redzuan Othman et al. (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 2006), 135.

issue led Sayyid Shaykh to adopt controversial approaches in his struggle.⁷⁸

A new phenomenon even emerged in Malay society, where there was a growing trend of parents who subscribed to the progressive thought of the *Kaum Muda* naming their newly born babies Faridah, Hanum, Shafik and Affendi, names taken from the characters of al-Hadi's novel.⁷⁹ 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, which he effectively utilized to publish reformist materials in order to disseminate his *Kaum Muda* thought.⁸⁰

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-Ikhwān*, of which he was the editor, he wrote that he was waiting for the arrival of books from Egypt to be translated into Malay.⁸¹ 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.⁸² 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-Ikhwān* and *Saudara*.⁸³ Other Egyptian

⁷⁸ Ibid., 138.

⁷⁹ Talib Samat, *Syed Syekh al-Hadi*, 23.

⁸⁰ Mrs. S. H. Tan (Linda Chen), "The Life and Times of Sayyid Shaykh Al-Hadi" (B.A. Thesis, University Malaya, Singapore, 1961), 26. Cited from Yahaya Ismail, "Syed Sheikh al-Hadi", 552.

⁸¹ *Al-Ikhwān*, 1, 3, 16 November 1926, 64.

⁸² 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.

⁸³ These detectives stories all belonged to a series known under the general name of

works he also adapted or translated include *Hikayat Anak Dara Ghassan atau Hindun Dengan Hammad* (1928-29), *Hikayat Cermin Kehidupan* (1929) and *Hikayat Putri Nur ul-Ain* (1929).⁸⁴

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 promote *Kaum Muda* ideologies by inculcating the idea of social change in Malay society, particularly as related to women's emancipation and their role in society.⁸⁵ 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-Ikhwān* in his column *Alam Perempuan* (Women's World), being a summary of *Tahrīr al-Mar'ah* by a prominent Egyptian reformist, Qāsim Amīn.⁸⁶ The column was then reproduced in a book entitled *Kitab Alam Perempuan* (Book on

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 Maliun 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* XVIII, 3 (1940): 154.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁸⁵ 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-Ahrām* 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", 553.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 569-570. See also *al-Ikhwān*, 1, 5, 16 January 1927, 96-99. Qāsim Amīn was an ardent follower of °Abduh. His work *Tahrīr 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-Jadīdah*.

Women's World) with even the suggestion that Malay women should emulate modern and emancipated Egyptian women.⁸⁷

The issue of progress related to women emancipation had been one of the issues in the struggle of *Kaum Muda*, particularly Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi who viewed that the backwardness of the Malay society was also due to discrimination toward women. The bold stance taken by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi on this issue, which he disseminated through his journals and novels, was an important turning-point in shattering Malay myths and conservatism regarding the issue. 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 rights of women.⁸⁸ By taking Egypt as an 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.

The *Kaum Muda* idea of social change and progress in Malay society related to its approach to women's emancipation by depicting the image of the emancipated women propagated in the Egypt-based novels by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi was not without success. The struggle that he initiated was fast taken up by other Malay journals as seen in the writings of columnists of the Malay press. One of the journals which took up the issue of women's emancipation was *Seruan Azhar*, a journal published by Malay students in Cairo.⁸⁹ In the journal a special column called *Alam*

⁸⁷ See Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi, *Kitab Alam Perempuan* (Penang: Jelutong Press, 1928), 6. In this book Sayyid Shaykh also printed pictures of modern Egyptian women, such as Zakiyyah 'Abd al-Hamid Sulaiman, Shizā Nabawī, Firdaus Bisyūnī and Hudā Sha'rawī.

⁸⁸ See *al-Ikhwān*, 2, 8, 16 April 1928, 237-241.

⁸⁹ For a discussion on the publication of *Seruan Azhar* and the activities of the Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920s, see William R. Roff, "Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920's", *Indonesia* 9 (1970): 73-88; Mohammad Redzuan Othman, "Call of the Azhar: The Malay Students Sojourn in Cairo Before World War II", *Sejarah* 3 (1994/1995): 95-110; Abu Hanifah

Isteri (The Wife's Column) was included in its pages. As in *al-Ikhwān*, 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 modern Middle Eastern women as a model that Malay women should follow.⁹⁰

The initiative taken by *Seruan Azhar* on the issue of women's emancipation was then emulated by other local journals, particularly *Majalah Guru* and *Pengasoh* and later *al-Hikmah*.⁹¹ When *Pilehan Timoer*, another journal by Malay students in Cairo was published, it also followed its contemporary, the *Seruan Azhar* in championing the issue of women's emancipation. The journal introduced its "Women's Column" where the important role of women in bringing about a good family was detailed.⁹²

In its first issue, *Pilehan Timoer* even published a picture of Joan of Arc who captured Orleans from the English on its front page. Her struggle was elaborated and her sacrifice for the survival of the nation was applauded.⁹³ This publication clearly showed the idea of progress promoted by the reformists who intended to convey a message that women could play a vital role in nation-building, and even in a bloody military campaign. As the emancipated Egyptian women were taken as models, their pictures

Haris and Mohammad Redzuan Othman, "*Seruan Azhar* dan Idea Perpaduan Serumpun Antara Penduduk Tanah Melayu dan Indonesia di Kaherah", (Paper Presented at Persidangan Antarabangsa Hubungan Malaysia-Indonesia, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya, 12-14 July, 2011), 1-24.

⁹⁰ See the discussion on this issue in *Seruan Azhar*, 2, 13, October 1926, 249-252; *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 25, October 1927, 498-499; *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 26, November 1927, 117-118; *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 27, December 1927, 534-540; *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 29, February 1928, 571-572; *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 30, March 1928, 595-596 and *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 32, May 1928, 633-636.

⁹¹ See for example, "The Women's Section", *Pengasoh*, 8, 182, 2 November 1925, 9-11 which it copied from *Majalah Guru*. See also a similar section in *Pengasoh*, 9, 204, 22 September 1926, 8-10; *al-Hikmah*, 2, 52, 1 September 1936, 13.

⁹² See *Pilehan Timoer*, 1, 1, October 1927, 8-10.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 12-14.

were also published regularly by Malay journals to demonstrate to the readers the successes they brought to the society. 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 Hudā Hānum Sha^crawī, a feminist leader in Egypt.⁹⁴ *Seruan Azhar's* move in publishing pictures of emancipated Egyptian women also stimulated other journals such as *Medan Lelaki*, *al-Hikmah* and *al-Ikhwān* to do the same.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ See for example *Seruan Azhar*, 1, 9, June 1926, 175 and *Seruan Azhar*, 2, 22, July 1927, 432-433. Hudā Hānum Sha^crawī 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 the best interest of Malay women that 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 her on its front page (See *Seruan Azhar*, 3, 29, February 1928, front page). 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, 38). Hudā Hānum Sha^crawī 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*, 2, 52, 1 September 1935, 13. Her picture was also published by another reformist journal, *al-Ikhwān* (1, 3, 16 November 1926, 50; 1, 5, 16 January 1927, 97) and *Medan Lelaki* (1, 1, 4 October 1935, 41).

⁹⁵ Despite its advocacy of the emancipation achieved by Egyptian women, which it demonstrated by publishing such pictures as the unveiled Hanim Huda Sha^crawī, *Medan Lelaki* was sometimes quite cynical about the behaviour of some emancipated Egyptian women such as Amīnah Shakīb 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 Laṭīfah Nādī, an Egyptian women pilot, and the picture of Zaynab Shakīb, an Egyptian prima donna (See *Medan Lelaki*, 1, 1, 4 October 1935, 41, 48, 56). 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*, 2, 79, 19 March 1936, 14). Likewise, the journal *al-Ikhwān* also published several pictures which depicted the achievements of Egyptian women, such as a picture of a group of girls in Western dress being sent to England by their government to specialise in teaching (see *al-Ikhwān*, 1, 2, 16 October 1926, 6); the picture of Firdaus Bisyūnī, the first Egyptian woman to graduate from the

Egyptian and *Kaum Muda* Influence on Madrasah Education

Apart from using printed media to convey their messages, the *Kaum Muda* also used modern religious education known as *madrasah* education, which was associated with the reformist thought to spread their ideas and bring progress to society. One the earliest *madrasahs* established and associated with the reformist thought was madrasah al-Masriyah established by Mohd. Salleh Masri in Penang in 1906. He established the *madrasah* and became its *mudir* (principal) after completing his studies at the al-Azhar University.⁹⁶ He named the *madrasah* he founded Madrasah al-Masriyyah to honour the name Egypt (Misr), since it was from there that the knowledge and curriculum of the *madrasah* was derived.⁹⁷

When Madrasah al-Masriyyah was opened on 17 March 1906, thirty 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 subject, 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 continued their studies there.⁹⁸ Madrasah al-Masriyyah exerted

University of Cambridge, specialising in English, History and Geography (see *al-Ikhwān*, 1, 5, 16 January 1927, 98); the picture of Rūz al-Yūsuf, who studied film making and later edited a journal that propagated the spread of knowledge (see *al-Ikhwān*, 1, 5, 16 January 1927, 99) and the picture of Faṭimah Rushdī, an Egyptian actress who received recognition in her art and acted with an Italian actress (see *al-Ikhwān*, 3, 10, 16 June 1929, 324). Also related to the issue the journal published the picture of Qāsim Amīn, who championed the cause of women's emancipation (see *al-Ikhwān*, 1, 11, 16 July 1927, 212).

⁹⁶ Mohd. Salleh Masri who was born in 1875 was among the early generation of Malay students who studied at al-Azhar University. 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 to Makkah first. Mohd. Salleh died in 1971 in Makkah. See Othman Bakar, "Haji Saleh Masri: Pengasas Al-Masriyyah", in *Islam di Malaysia*, ed. Khoo Kay Kim et al. (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980), 62-66.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁹⁸ Among them were Shaykh Ahmad and Shaykh Haji Othman, who after completing their studies in Egypt, taught at the *madrasah*.

a strong influence in Penang and this led to the formation of more than twenty similar *madrasahs* in the area.⁹⁹ The establishment of Madrasah al-Masriyyah and other *madrasahs* of similar orientation enabled the spread of *Kaum Muda*'s thought in Malay society, particularly in Penang.

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-Islamiyyah in Singapore, under the patronage of Raja Ali Kelana of Riau.¹⁰⁰ To ensure that the *madrasah* implemented an Egyptian model of modern religious education with reformist thought, its governing body went even further, to the extent of employing an Egyptian, ʿUthmān Effendī Rafaʿat as its *mudīr* (principal).¹⁰¹ As in Madrasah al-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.¹⁰²

Madrasah al-Masriyyah and *Madrasah al-Iqbal*, which were modeled on modern schools in Egypt, then became the forerunner of many other religious schools that were established later throughout

⁹⁹ For the list of *madrasahs* formed in the vicinity of the area, see Othman Bakar, "Haji Saleh Masri", 74.

¹⁰⁰ The *madrasah* was announced as to be opened on 21 Nov. 1907 by *al-Imām* (*al-Imām*, 2, 4, 8 October 1907, 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), 356. See also *al-Imām*, 2, 8, 4 February 1908, 264. For a brief history of the other *madrasahs* in Singapore, see Mona Abaza, "Islamic Educational Networks Between Singapore and the Middle East", *Internationales Asien Forum* 23, 3-4 (1992): 289-298. For more information regarding *madrasah* education in Singapore after the the Second World War, see Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied, *Colonialism, Violence and Muslims in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 2009), 114-119.

¹⁰¹ Abdullah Alwi Haji Hassan, "The Development of Islamic Education in Kelantan", in *Tamadun Islam Di Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980), 196. According to *al-Imām*, ʿUthmān Effendī Rafaʿat arrived in Singapore to take the post on 9 September 1907 (*al-Imām*, 2, 3, 9 September 1907, 104).

¹⁰² *al-Imām*, 2, 3, 9 September 1907, 104.

Malaya.¹⁰³ 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 founded by Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi.¹⁰⁴ Another important *madrasah* which also followed this model of education was *Madrasah Alwiyyah al-Diniyah* in Perlis. The medium of instruction in these *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.¹⁰⁵

In the second decade of the twentieth century, increasing numbers of al-Azhar graduates with progressive thought returned to Malaya. They were 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.¹⁰⁶ When he returned to Padang Rengas, Perak after completing his studies at University al-Azhar, he opened *Madrasah al-Diniah*, the first

¹⁰³ Ibid., 196.

¹⁰⁴ *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 Osman, "Madrasah Masyhur al-Islamiyah", in Khoo Kay Kim et al., eds., *Islam di Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980), 75-85.

¹⁰⁵ Khoo Kay Kim, "Perkembangan Pelajaran Agama Islam", in *Pendidikan Ke Arah Perpaduan: Sebuah Perspektif Sejarah*, ed. Awang Had Salleh (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Fajar Bakti Sdn. Bhd., 1980), 13.

¹⁰⁶ 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 *‘alim* in Padang Rengas, 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 Rengas in 1927 after completing his studies. Eventhough Shaykh Junid spent most of his time in Padang Rengas, 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).

reformist religious school established in the state of Perak. In the madrasah, academic subjects were taught alongside with entrepreneurial skills such the making of soya sauce, soap, ointments and sewing lessons for women. Madrasah al-Diniyah was not only able to instill the spirit of change to its students but also to the people at its vicinity. To the inhabitants of Padang Rengas at that time, Madrasah al-Diniyah was looked upon as the agent of change that influenced their attitude and worldview.¹⁰⁷

As his teacher and mentor Mohd. Salleh Masri, Shaykh Junid was also influenced by the reformist thought and 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 in hand with economic progress which could be achieved through the institution of *waqf* (endowment). Shaykh Junid preached the importance of this institution and even produced a booklet on its significance and the way to implement it.¹⁰⁸ While in Padang Rengas, he discoursed on the idea to the locals, and this led to the establishment of a number of *madrasahs* which depended on the income from *waqf* properties and other contributions for their running.¹⁰⁹ These *madrasahs* included *Madrasah al-Falahiyyah*, Kampung Boyan; *Madrasah al-Ijtihadiyyah*, Kampung Gapis; *Madrasah al-Iqtisadiyyah*, Kampung Keruh Hulu; *Madrasah al-Masriyyah*, Padang Rengas and *Madrasah al-Hadi*, Kampung Pauh. The establishment of these *madrasahs* encouraged the spread of reformist thought in the area.¹¹⁰

Egyptian Influence and the Dynamics of Religious Polemics

In the years between the 1920s to the end of the 1930s, another important aspect in the development of Malay society was the

¹⁰⁷ Ismail Sudin, "Beberapa Aspek Sejarah Sosial Kuala Kangsar", *Jurnal Sejarah* X (1971/72): 45-46.

¹⁰⁸ See Shaykh Junid Tola, *Kifiat Mengadakan Wakaf* (Cairo: Matba'ah al-Marbawi, 1348/1929), 2-4.

¹⁰⁹ Ismail Sudin, "Beberapa Aspek Sejarah Sosial", 45-46.

¹¹⁰ See Mohd. Sarim Hj. Mustajab, "Gerakan Islah Islamiyyah Di Tanah Melayu 1906 Hingga 1948", in *Malaysia: Sejarah dan Proses Pembangunan* (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1982), 193-194.

religious conflict between the *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua* pertaining to the everyday practices of Islam. All over Malaya, in the village where there were *madrasahs*, *suraus* (minor mosques), mosques and public gatherings the issues related to the principle held by both factions were widely discussed. In several villages public consultations (*majlis muzakarah*) were regularly held to solve the differences between the conflicting opinions. This development, however, showed a certain degree of intellectual progress in Malay society where debates also involved both parties putting forward their arguments based on works written by various *‘ālim* and religious scholars.

Eventhough to some the polemics between *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua* provided a platform for an intellectual discourse, there were occasions when debate went out of hand. In a number of instances, there were occasion when trivial issues were hotly debated and caused major split in the society. For example, in Melaka in the early 1930s, there was a religious dispute over the permissibility of the use of a kind of wooden drum (*ketuk-ketuk*) to call to prayers.¹¹¹ The stir was said to have been created following a visit to the state by Shaykh Hassan Yamani, the former *Mufti* of Makkah.¹¹² Shaykh Hassan Yamani, himself a *Kaum Muda* leader gave the opinion that the use of *ketuk-ketuk* was not permissible, since it resemble the bell used by the Church of the Christians. Following an intense controversy between the *Kaum Tua* and the *Kaum Muda* over the issue, on 17 September 1932, a gathering of *‘ālim* was organised to discuss the controversy.¹¹³ One of the participants in the gathering, Haji Abdul Latiff Tambi, a *Kaum Tua* leader, 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,

¹¹¹ 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* XXX, 1 (1940): 41-45.

¹¹² *Suara Benar*, 1, 11, 11 November 1932, 2.

¹¹³ Mohd. Raus Md. Sam, "Suara Benar - Akhbar Melayu Pertama di Melaka (1932)", in *Warisan Sastera Melaka* (Melaka: Lembaga Bahasa Melayu Melaka, 1984), 87.

however, was not accepted by other members of the gathering, particularly those with *Kaum Muda* tendency.¹¹⁴

In order to ease the tension and as a consensus, both parties agreed to refer the matter to the *‘ālim* of al-Azhar with a picture of the *ketuk-ketuk* enclosed. This was done so that a *fatwā* (legal ruling) could be given and both parties should abide by it once it was given.¹¹⁵ It is not known whether the *‘ālim* 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. Interestingly, however, 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.¹¹⁶ The controversy of the use of *ketuk-ketuk* had shown that how a small issue could lead to a split in society, and it also showed how intense was the debate on such a trivial issue between the two opposing doctrinal groups. Another interesting aspect that emerged from this controversy was how Egypt was looked upon as a final and respected arbitrator when religious issues aroused in the community

Another case of intense ideological controversy between the *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua* factions happened in Kelantan in the mid-1930s. The controversy was created and sparked by a Dalmatian hound kept domestically by Tengku Ibrahim, the Raja Kelantan, heir-apparent and younger brother of the Sultan of Kelantan.¹¹⁷ It centred on the questions on the status of a dog's saliva upon contact with the human body. The controversy started when

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *Suara Benar*, 1, 6, 20 September 1932, additional pages.

¹¹⁶ See Abdul Rahim Abdullah, "Haji Abdul Latif Haji Tambi - Penulis Buku-Buku Agama Sebelum Perang Dunia Kedua", in *Warisan Sastera Melaka* (Melaka: Lembaga Bahasa Melayu Melaka, 1984), 102-103.

¹¹⁷ William R. Roff, "Whence Cometh the Law? Dog Saliva in Kelantan", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 25, 2 (1983): 324.

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), a reformist, 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.¹¹⁸

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 Shafii and Imam Malik by saying that according to the latter the body was not obliged to undergo special ritual cleansing in consequence of coming into contact with it, but not 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 Sunni *madhhab*, Ḥanafī, Ḥanbalī, Mālikī and Shāfiʿī could be practiced by the public, at least by the principle of *talfīq* or a combination of *madhhabs*.¹¹⁹ The opinion of Nik Abdullah on the issue was contested by several *ʿālim*, including Hj. Ibrahim Hj. Yusoff (*Mufti*), Haji Ahmad Mahir Haji Ismail, Haji Abdullah Tahir Hj. Ahmad and Haji Ahmad Haji Abdul Manan. In their opinion the principle of *talfīq* could not be applied, since the Malays were Shāfiʿī and had to stick to the *madhhab* when dealing with all religious issues. The opinion by these conservative *ʿālim* was also supported by Tengku Maharani, Tengku Ibrahim's sister.¹²⁰

The issue of permissibility of keeping a dog and the status of the human body if it was contaminated by its saliva 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, Haji Wan Musa Wan Abdul Samad. To settle the issue,

¹¹⁸ See Nik Abdul Aziz Haji Nik Hassan, "Perbahasan Tentang Jilatan Anjing: Suatu Perhatian", *Jebat* 9 (1979/80): 173-174.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 174.

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. The debate was participated on the side of Tengku Ibrahim by Haji Wan Musa (ex-*Muftī*), Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha (the Chief *Qāḍī* of Singapore) and Burhanuddin Muhammad Nor (Secretary of *‘ālim* Council Singapore). Meanwhile, on the side of Tengku Maharani were Haji Ibrahim Haji Yusoff (*Muftī* of Kelantan), Haji Ahmad Ismail (Chief *Qāḍī*) and two other *‘ālim*, Haji Ahmad Abdul Manan and Haji Abdullah Tahir Ahmad (members of Kelantan *‘ālim* Council).¹²¹ The gathering caused enthusiasm in Kota Bharu and was attended by more than two thousand people, the largest public gathering known in Kelantan, according to reports. The result of the debate, however, was inconclusive inasmuch as the two sides held firmly to their opinion, supported by argument and *nas* (text) from the *al-Qur’ān*, *al-Hadīth* and commentators.¹²²

Following the deadlock in the discussions, Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha wrote a book which contained the opinions given by the four major *madhhab* on the issue.¹²³ Haji Wan Musa also produced a hand-written work which contained both the opposing views (on the religious ruling of keeping a dog and the status of its saliva), including the opinion given by Shaykh Mustafā al-Marāghī, the *Shaykh al-Azhar*.¹²⁴ To ensure the validity of the opinion, the Sultan of Kelantan himself decided to send questions on the matter to Shaykh Mustafā al-Marāghī for a *fatwā*.¹²⁵ The latter gave his *fatwā*

¹²¹ See William R. Roff, “Whence Cometh the Law?”, 325.

¹²² Ibid. The picture of Haji Abbas Mohd. Taha sitting holding a dog was published as the front cover of the book. See William R. Roff, *Studies on Islam and Society in Southeast Asia*, front cover.

¹²³ See Abbas Mohd. Taha, *Risalah Penting Pada Masalah Jilat Anjing Di Atas Empat Mazhab* (Muar: Muhammadiyah Press, 1937).

¹²⁴ Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Hassan, “Perbahasan Tentang Jilatan Anjing”, 117.

¹²⁵ *Al-Hikmah*, 138, 4, 1 May 1937, 10. Shaykh Mustafā 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 the 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

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. In addition to that, according to the doctrine of Imām Shāfi‘ī, the body was obliged to undergo special ritual cleansing in consequence of coming into contact with it, but not according to the ruling of Imām Mālik.¹²⁶ These events had shown that the views of a prominent ‘*ālim* such the *Shaykh al-Azhar* had to be sought to solve local religious dispute pertaining to the conflicting opinions of the *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua*.

Beginning from the 1930’s, the influence of Egypt in Malay society was widespread and began to be deep-rooted. Apart from the role played by the students who had graduated from Egypt, the high respect accorded to the country was also due to high regard to its *ulamā*. Looking at Egypt, particularly the *ulamā* of al-Azhar for opinions when religious controversies arose in the community, clearly showed the new dynamics that developed in the society which needed opposing group searching for an amicable solution. This controversy was triggered by the *Kaum Muda* and challenged by the *Kaum Tua*.

Conclusion

The aims and efforts of the *Kaum Muda* with the reformist thought to awaken Malay 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 the First World War, 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 programmers to inculcate the

Caliphate 1915-1946”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3/4 (1963): 209.

¹²⁶ Nik Abd. Aziz Nik Hassan, ”Perbahasan Tentang Jilatan Anjing”, 177. Apart from the works of Haji Abbas Mohd. 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, *Risālah Tanbih al-Tullāb fi Ahkām al-Kilāb* (Melaka: Latifiyah Press, 1937).

awareness that they pioneered. Until the outbreak of the Second World War, the *Kaum Muda* also not succeeded in elaborating, either organizationally or programmatically, a political nationalism which was capable of mass support that could threaten the establishment of colonial rule in Malaya. 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.

Despite the fact that *Kaum Muda* was not able to lead a drastic political change in Malay society, they managed to instill a progressive thought through journals published and *madrasahs* opened. After the Second World War, the movement that unites the Malays against the British, particularly against the Malayan Union, was prominently led by Malays with English and Malay education. With the exception of a short-lived Islamic Party (*Hizbul Muslimin*) formed in Gunung Semanggol, Perak in 1948 whose aim was to form the Islamic state of Malaya with a strong *Kaum Muda* connection; however, the *Kaum Muda* movement was not able to position itself in the mainstream politics that led Malaya to independence.

In the struggle for independence, the British favoured Malays with English and Malay education to lead the country and with their blessings, Malaya achieved independence in 1957 without the involvement of any of the prominent *Kaum Muda* activists. Even though *Kaum Muda* was not directly part of the leadership that led Malaya to independence, they played a significant role in inculcating the progressive and reformist thought that contributed to the early development of Malay religious and political consciousness. Their contribution can be felt until today from the *madrasahs* that they established — many still exist providing religious education to the community. Equally important is the progressive thought that they struggled with which is widely accepted by the Malays, and in fact became one of the contributing factors for Islamic resurgence in Malaysia in the 1970's.