A STUDY OF SAYYID SHAYKH AL-HADI'S (1867-1934) AND ABDULLAH AHMAD'S (1878-1933) CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISLAMIC REFORM IN THE MALAY WORLD

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study has three central purposes. Firstly, it compares the careers and educational activities of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi (1867-1934) and Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933), ardent representatives of the Islamic reformist movement in the Malay world in the early twentieth century. Secondly, it also examines the fundamental similarities and differences between the aim and content of their socio-religious reforms in addition to their methodological approach to the socio-religious problems in the Malay world. Finally, it explores the main social and religious contributions of these two reformists to the Islamic reformist movement in the Malay world. The historical-analytical method is employed in the thesis. The study is based on the examination of articles and books written by al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah. They were significant representatives of the urban-based intellectual and religious movement that emerged in the Malay world in the early twentieth century who came from the wealthy and intellectual families. While al-Hadi was a descendant of a Malay-Hadhrami family, Haji Abdullah was a member of a local Minangkabau family. They played a pivotal role in the introduction and modernization of the madrasahs in the Malay world. Whereas al-Hadi's madrasahs were short-lived because of the financial constraints and the absence of the Malay parents' interest in his madrasahs, Haji Abdullah's madrasahs were long-lived owing to the Minangkabau parents' positive attitudes towards his educational activities, and his associations like the Syarikat Usaha Adabiah supported the sustainable administration and maintenance of the educational institutions. As for the socio-religious reforms of both reformists, there are remarkable similarities between their methodological approach to the socio-religious problems in the Malay world. Impressed by the Cairo-centred reformist discourse led by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad 'Abduh, they campaigned for a return to the pristine teachings of Islam, namely the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth, because they considered that the main cause of the "backwardness" of the Malay world was due to "corrupted" religious rituals and practices. Therefore, they condemned the rooted religious ceremonies in society. In brief, the study focuses on the similarities and differences between the background, educational activities and socio-religious ideas of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah.

خلاصة البحث

هذا البحث ثلاثة أهداف رئيسة؛ أولها مقارنة النشاطات المهنية والتعليمية بين كل من السيد شيخ الهادي (1867–1934) وعبد الله أحمد (1878–1933) المتحمسين للحركة الإصلاحية الإسلامية في عالم الملايو في أوائل القرن العشرين، وثانيها البحث في حالات التشابه والاختلاف الأساس فيما يتعلق بهدف إصلاحاتهما الاجتماعية والدينية ومضمونها، ومقاربتهما المنهجية للمشاكل الاجتماعية والدينية لدى الملايو، وثالثها استكشاف الإسهامات الاجتماعية والدينية الرئيسة لهذين الإصلاحيين في الحركة الإصلاحية الإسلامية، وقد استخدم الباحث الطريقة التاريخية التحليلية، واعتمد على فحص المقالات والكتب التي كتبها الهادي وأحمد؛ وبيَّن أنهما كانا الممثلين الرئيسين للحركة الفكرية والدينية التي انطلقت من المناطق الحضرية في عالم الملايو في أوائل القرن العشرين، وأنهما ينتسبان إلى أسرتين عُرفتا بالثراء المادي والفكري، فالهادي سليل أسرة ملايوية ذات أصول حضرمية، وأحمد سليل أسرة ميننغباو المحلية الأصل، ولكليهما دورًا محوريًا في إنشاء المدارس الدينية في عالم الملايو وتحديثها، ولكن؛ لم تستمرَّ مدراس الهادي طويلاً بسبب الصعوبات المالية، وغياب اهتمام والديه بمدارسه، بينما استمرَّت مدارس أحمد طويلاً بسبب المواقف الإيجابية لوالديه تجاه نشاطاته التعليمية؛ كما دعمت جمعيات – من مثل "شركة الأسرة الأدبية" – نفقات إدارة هذه المؤسسات التعليمية وصيانتها، أما الإصلاحات الاجتماعية والدينية للإصلاحيين الهادي وأحمد، فبينها تشابهات ملحوظة من حيث نهجيهما في التعامل مع المشاكل الاجتماعية والدينية في عالم الملايو، فقد أُعجبَ الشيخان بالخطاب الإصلاحي المتمركز في القاهرة آنذاك بقيادة جمال الدين الأفغاني ومحمد عبده، وقاما بحملات تدعو إلى العودة إلى تعاليم الإسلام الأصيلة؛ أي القرآن والحديث؛ إذ رأيا أن السبب الرئيس للتخلف في عالم الملايو هو الطقوس والممارسات الدينية الفاسدة؛ لذا أدانا الاحتفالات الدينية الفاسدة المتأصلة في المجتمع.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

……………………………..
Hafiz Zakariya
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

……………………………..
Dr. Fauziah Fathil
Examiner

This dissertation was submitted to the Department of History and Civilization and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

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Mohd. Helmi bin Mohd Sobri
Head, Department of History and Civilization

This dissertation was submitted to the Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and is accepted as a fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Human Sciences in History and Civilization.

……………………………..
Shukran Abd. Rahman
Dean, Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Tayfun Akgun

Signature ....   Date ....

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION OF FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH

A STUDY OF SAYYID SHAYKH AL-HADI'S (1867-1934) AND 'HAJİ ABDULLAH'S (1878-1933) CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISLAMIC REFORM IN THE MALAY WORLD

This thesis is dedicated to my precious parents, who have always encouraged me to seek knowledge throughout my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BKI	Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land-en Volkenkunde
FMS	Federated Malay States
GES	Government English Schools
ID	Intellectual Discourse
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSEAH	Journal of Southeast Asian History
JSEAS	Journal of Southeast Asian Studies
MES	Mission English Schools
UMS	Unfederated Malay States

TRANSLITERATION NOTES

The study includes a variety of the Arabic, Malay and Indonesian names, and technical terms. This leads to some problems of the transliteration of Arabic names into English. In this study, the Arabic names, technical terms and titles of books are spelled according to the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies transliteration system. Technical terms like *ḥajj* and *sharī'ah* and journal names *al-Manār* are italicized. However, names of institutions are not italicized. For instance:

Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī

Muḥammad 'Abduh

ijtihād

I employ the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies transliteration system for Arabic names in the local languages, except for Sayyid Shayk al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah Ahmad. For example:

Shaykh Ṭāhir Jalāluddīn

Shaykh Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb

Sayyid Shaykh Ahmad al-Hadi and not Sayyid Aḥmad al-Hādī

Haji Abdullah Ahmad and not Haji 'Abdullah Aḥmad

I employ the modern Malay spelling system. I prefer to adopt the common usage for names, city names and names of organizations. For example:

Malacca not Melaka

Madrasah al-Iqbal al-Islamiyyah

In this study, I use the modern Indonesian spelling system introduced in 1972 for the Indonesian names, and city names. For instance:

Shaykh Jamil Jambik and not Sjejh Djamil Djambek

Padang Panjang and not Padang Pandjang

Well-known technical terms like pondok and names of organizations like Normal Islam are not italicized. However, terms like *buka kitab* and *hafaz* are italicized

I do not adopt the modern spelling system for titles of the books and names of authors. For example:

Ilmoe Sedjati

Titian Kejorga

Tamar Djaja

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Muslim thinkers and elites have sought to explain the socio-economic, political, and intellectual reasons for the perceived "Muslim backwardness" manifest in the intensive impact of Western dominance and colonization of most Muslim countries, as well as a series of internal factors, specifically political and military weaknesses and intellectual stagnation since the nineteenth century. They have suggested a variety of solutions and prescriptions to enhance the political and military power of Muslim countries against colonizers. One of these road maps was the modernist reformism that emerged from Egypt, spearheaded by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1838-1897), Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) and Rashīd Riḍā (1865-1935),[1] which became an important role model for Islamic reformist movements in other Muslim countries, especially within the Ottoman Empire and the Malay world.[2]

The historical influence of the Arab world is recognizable in diverse fields, from the publication of periodicals and novels to political attitudes and attire in the Malay world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[3] Three revolutionary developments, viz. the opening of the Suez Canal (1869), the enhancement of

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[1] For a detailed analysis of these three important figures, see. Charles C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2010); N. R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani: A Political Biography* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1972) and M. H. Kerr, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1966).

[2] Jutta Bluhm-Warn, "A Preliminary Statement on the Dialogue Established between the Reform Magazine al-Manar and the Malay-Indonesian world," *Indonesia Circle* 32 (1983): 35-42; Giora Eliraz, "Islamic Reformist Movement in the Malay-Indonesian World in the First Four Decades of the 20th Century: Insights Gained from a Comparative Look at Egypt," *Studia Islamika* 9/2 (2002): 47-87; and Fred R. Mehden, *Two Worlds of Islam: Interaction between Southeast Asia and the Middle East* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993).

[3] M. Redzuan Othman, "The Middle-East Influence on the Development of Religious and Political Thought in Malay Society, 1880-1940'' (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1994).

transportation systems, and the economic growth of the Malay world in the late nineteenth century, led to dramatically increase in the number of Indo-Malay students, scholars, and pilgrims visiting the Arab world.[4] Having pursued their education in Cairo, Makkah, and Medina, Indo-Malay students and scholars played a pivotal role in the dissemination and implementation of the political and religious thoughts developed in the Arab world in their own countries. They also established an organization called al-Jam'iyyah al-Khayriyyah al-Ṭalabiyyah al-Azhariyyah al-Jawa (Welfare Association of Jawa' Students at the University of al-Azhar) and produced various solutions to Malay world's socio-religious and political problems from Cairo. They published a periodical named *Seruan Azhar* (The Call of al-Azhar) in October 1925, thanks to the advantages of political freedom and intellectual circles of Cairo.[5]

A group of Malay reformists who pursued their education in the heartland of Islam published *al-Imām* (The Leader) in Singapore in 1906, which was the first reformist periodical of the Malay world, with the financial support of the Riau royal family.[6] They sought solutions to modern problems in the light of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah* (the deeds and sayings of the Prophet ﷺ). They accused the traditional religious clergy and Malay *rajas* of causing intellectual stagnation and the socio-economic and religious backwardness of Malays. They were successful in raising the religious and political awareness of the Malays by way of this periodical.

After the termination of *al-Imām* due to financial constraints and ideological debates among the contributors of the periodical in 1908, Malay reformists maintained

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[4] Hafiz Zakariya, "From Cairo to the Straits Settlements: Modern Salafiyyah Reformist Ideas in Malay Peninsula,'' *ID* 15/2 (2007): 126-27.

[5] William R. Roff, "Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920s," *Indonesia* 9 (April 1970): 73-88; M. R. Othman, "The Call of the Azhar: The Malay Students Sojourn in Cairo before the World War II." *Sejarah 3* (1994): 95-110.

[6] Abu Bakar Hamzah, *Al-Imam: Its Role in Malay Society 1906-1908* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1991).

the role of *al-Imām* with *Neracha* (The Scale, 1911-1915) of Haji Abbās bin Muḥammad Ṭāhā, *al-Ikhwān* (The Brotherhood, 1926-1931) and *Saudara* (The Brother, 1928-1941) of Shaykh Ahmad al-Hadi in the Straits Settlements.[7] Besides the publication of the reformist periodicals, they also opened the educational centres, namely madrasahs, which taught both religious and secular disciplines, in contrast to the traditional pondok education system in the Malay world, offering an alternative for scientific and technical education to the British and missionary schools. Reformists castigated the "deviant" religious ceremonies and rituals rooted in society by calling for a return to the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This led to fierce conflict between reformists and traditionalists. They discussed the socio-religious and political problems by way of the periodicals, books, and public debates. Malayan reformists made substantial contributions in raising political, socio-economic, and religious consciousness among the Malay masses even though they could not establish any political party and organization, as opposed to the Indonesian organizational experience, like Muhammadiyah (est. 1912) and Sarekat Islam (1911-1942).

Apart from the Islamic reform in the colonial Malaya, the Minangkabau witnessed a similar tendency in the early twentieth century. As a result of the economic boom in Minangkabau and interaction between the Arab world and the Malay world at that time, Minangkabau students, pilgrims, and scholars pursued their education in the Arab world. Hence, they became aware of the socio-economic and political problems in the Muslim world in general, and Minangkabau in particular. They took the initiative the socio-religious and educational reforms in Minangkabau by inspiring locals with the reformist discourse of the Arab world. Reform-oriented

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[7] For a detailed list of periodicals published in Malaya between 1876 and 1946, see: William Roff, *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic Periodicals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972) and Wan Suhana binti Wan Sulong, "Saudara (1928-1941): Its Contribution to the Debate on Issues in Malay Society and the Development of a Malay World-view'' (Ph.D. diss., University of Hull, 2003).

scholars, like Haji ʿAbdūl Karim Amrullah (1879-1945), known as Haji Rasūl, Shaykh Jamīl Jambik (1860-1947), and Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933) who received their education under the tutelage of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb (1860-1916) in the Arab world, attempted to solve the prevalent religious problems, like animism and superstitions, in their societies.[8] They strived to purify "corrupted" religious practices in Minangkabau, aiming to increase people's consciousness of political and religious issues by means of their periodicals, public debates, and educational institutions. However, they were confronted by the religious authority of the traditional scholars and the political authority of the local rulers (*penghulu*) in addition to the Dutch in Minangkabau, which galvanized the fierce socio-religious and political controversies between these groups in the early twentieth century.

Shaykh Ahmad al-Hadi (1867-1934) and Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933)[9], who are the subject of this thesis, were staunch and influential reformists of the Islamic reform movement in the Malay world, who made numerous important educational efforts and socio-religious reforms. Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi (hereafter al-Hadi) was born in 1867 in Malacca, the most significant historical trading port of Malaya. His Hadhrami ancestors migrated to Malacca in the early eighteenth century from Hadramawt in Yemen, and intermingled with local people due to the religious reputation of the Hadhramis, who propagated Islam throughout Southeast Asia alongside their maritime trading activities throughout the Indian Ocean. Thus, he hailed from Hadhrami-Malay family.

Although al-Hadi could not pursue a formal education, he was able to improve in major disciplines, like Malay language and numerous Islamic subjects, because of

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[8] Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973) 31-56.
[9] For both reformists' pictures, see: Appendix I and II.

which he became involved with the intellectual circle of Pulau Penyengat in the capital of Riau-Lingga. He played a crucial role in the publication of *al-Imām* (1906-1908) in Singapore. After the termination of *al-Imām*, he took the initiative in the establishment of modern educational institutions, including Madrasah al-Iqbal Islamiyyah (1908-1909) in Singapore, Madrasah al-Hadi (1915-17) in Malacca, and Madrasah al-Mashhur al-Islamiyyah in Penang, during the period of 1907 and 1919. Nonetheless, his educational efforts were confronted by financial problems in addition to a lack of interest in the madrasahs among Malay parents. Nonetheless, his madrasahs contributed to the emergence of the new intelligentsia and the growth of religious education in Malaya over the long term. After his educational experiences, he focused mainly on the publications of *al-Ikhwān* (1926-1931) and *Saudara* (1928-1941) in Penang, as well as translations of detective stories and 'Abduh's works and writing novels, such as *Hikayat Faridah Hanum*. After innumerable beneficial efforts for Malay society, the productive thinker and reformist al-Hadi passed away in 1934 in Penang, due to a brain disease.[10]

The second figure of the study, Haji Abdullah Ahmad (hereafter, Haji Abdullah) was born in 1878 in Padang Panjang, West Sumatra. He hailed from an elite family. His father, Haji Ahmad, took part in textile trade in addition to be a religious scholar. He received a qualified education in his hometown. After completing primary school, he pursued his advanced religious education in Makkah from 1895 to 1899, under the tutelage of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, an eminent scholar in the Ḥaramayn. Upon returning to his hometown, he played a crucial role in the dissemination of reformist ideas, specifically the opposition of *bid'a*

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[10] Ibrahim Abu Bakar, *Islamic Modernism in Malaya: The Life and Thought of Syed Syekh al-Hadi 1867-1934* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1994) and Hafiz Zakariya, "Sayyid Shaykh Ahmad al-Hadi's Contributions to Islamic Reformism in Malaya," In *The Hadhrami Diaspora in Southeast Asia,* edited by Ahmed I. Abushouk and Hassan A. Ibrahim (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), 203-223.

(reprehensible innovation) and *khurāfat* (superstitious beliefs). Having moved to Padang, the capital of West Sumatra, in 1906, Haji Abdullah took over the position of his uncle as a teacher. He took the initiative in the establishment of an organization named the Jam'iyyah Adabiyah, whose members were mainly merchants. The Adabiyah Diniyyah School was established in 1909 by him in collaboration with the Jam'iyyah Adabiyah.[11] Besides his educational activities, he published *al-Munir* (Illuminative) in Padang as a fortnightly periodical between 1 April 1911 and 1916, after the cessation of *al-Imām* (1906-1908). The periodical continued the objectives and ideas of the latter, but it too ceased publication because of a fire that destroyed the publishing house, and a lack of funding.[12] Haji Abdullah played a pivotal role in contemporary socio-religious conflicts between the reformists and traditionalists in Minangkabau, like the issue of the *uṣallī* (expressing someone's intention before beginning the prayer) and the validity of the Naqshabandiyya. He contributed significantly to the Islamic reformist movement in Minangkabau by way of his periodicals, books, and educational efforts. He passed away in November 1933.

The main objective of this study is to compare the careers, educational efforts, and socio-religious thoughts of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah to better understand their personal roles and the general development of the Islamic reformist movement in the Malay world in the early twentieth century.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study endeavours to seek answers to three central problems in the existing literature of the socio-intellectual history of the Malay world. Firstly, the Islamic

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[11] Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement,* 38-39.
[12] Azyumardi, Azra, "The Transmission of al-Manar's Reformism to the Malay-Indonesian World: The Cases of al-Imam and al-Munir,'' *Studia Islamika* 6/3, (1999): 92-97.

reformist movement of the Malay world in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries has attracted substantive academic attention from both foreign and local scholars. Nonetheless, the studies have related to either monolithic biographies of figures of Reformists (Kaum Muda) and Traditionalists (Kaum Tua) or holistic analysis of this reformist movement, and there seems to be an academic vacuum in comparative studies between the members of these parties. The study compares the backgrounds, careers, and thoughts of Shaykh al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah. The period chosen for the study is associated with reformists' lifetimes and coincides with the significant stage of the Islamic reformist movement in both Minangkabau and the Malay world in general.

Secondly, although various attempts and efforts to comprehend the political, religious, and intellectual impact of the Arab world on Southeast Asia have been made by local and international scholars, connections and linkages between West Sumatra and colonial Malaya seem not to have been received adequate attention in the existing literature. This study tries to examine the significance and results of Haji Abdullah's visit to Singapore in 1908, because his periodical *al-Munir* maintained the role of *al-Imām*,[13] and his educational activities such as the Adabiyah School were partly inspired by Madrasah Iqbal Islamiyyah in Singapore.[14]

Finally, the literature on Haji Abdullah is not as comprehensive as the literature on al-Hadi in western languages compared to local languages, as explained in the literature review of this study. Furthermore, the main problem is that even though several master's theses and doctoral dissertations have been produced in Indonesian universities, it is quite difficult to access them because local universities of Indonesia

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[13] Ahmat b. Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1933)* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1995), 140.
[14] H. Amirsyahruddin, *Integrasi Imtaq & Iptek dalam pandangan Dr. H. Abdullah Ahmad* (Padang: Syamza Offset, 1999), 11.

still prefer to keep them in their libraries instead of making their digital copies available for outside scholars and researchers. This study provides a relatively detailed biography of Haji Abdullah in English.

1.3   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The thesis strives to answer interrelated questions as follows:

1. What were the key characteristics of socio-religious reforms of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah? Did their ideas have more similarities or differences?

2. What were the major parallels and divergences between the educational reforms of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah?

3. How did they contribute to the *Iṣlāḥ* and *Tajdid* movement in the twentieth-century Malay world?

1.4   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

There are three main purposes of the study:

1. To analyse the parallels and divergences between reformist ideas of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah, the staunch exponents of the Islamic reformist movement in the Malay Peninsula and West Sumatra, respectively.

2. To explore the similarities and differences in terms of the purposes, teaching methods and curricula between educational activities of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah, who established numerous modern educational institutions, including the Madrasah al-Hadi and the Adabiyah School in the Malay world, respectively.

3. To examine the contributions of al-Hadi and Haji Abdullah to the socio-intellectual development of the Malay world.

1.5   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the case of Malay-Muslim historiography, the Islamic reformist movement of the Malay world during the early twentieth century has not been given sufficient attention in contrast to the literature on Malaya and Malaysian nationalism in the period of 1930s and 1950s. Some scholars argue that the Kaum Muda movements did not make any contributions to Malay nationalism,[15] yet Hafiz Zakariya, William Roff, and Radin Soenarno claim that the members of Kaum Muda played pivotal roles in raising religious and political awareness among Malay masses.[16] In addition, their educational activities pioneered the introduction and development of the modern madrasah system in the Malay Peninsula, which led to a flourishing Muslim intellectual class that formed the basis of Malay nationalism itself. This study therefore deals with how al-Hadi's articles and books played a role in political and socio-economic consciousness among Malays.

The most important part of the study is to shed light on the parallels and divergences between al-Hadi and that of Haji Abdullah, to provide a comparative approach and outlook on the socio-intellectual history of the Malay world in the case of the paucity of comparative studies in the literature. Moreover, it makes an original contribution to the existing literature.

As for Indonesian historiography, most existent work in this field focuses on the chronology of organizations, like the establishment of Sarekat Islam and the origin

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[15] For a brief analysis of these arguments, see, Azmi Arifin, "Local Historians and the Historiography of Malay Nationalism 1945-1957: The British, The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) and the Malay Left," *Kajian Malaysia* 32/1 (2014): 4-6.
[16] William Roff, *Origins of Malay Nationalism*, 59; R. Soenarno, "Malay Nationalism 1900-1945," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 1, (1960): 29 and Hafiz Zakariya, "Awakening the Malays from Slumber: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Malaya," In *Tradition, Modernity and Islam*, edited by A. Rahman Tang Abdullah (Selangor: IIUM Press, 2011) 155.

and development of Muhammadiyah, and Indonesian nationalism[17] has attracted more academic attention that the more nebulous religious and intellectual movements of West Sumatra in the early twentieth century. This study addresses this academic gap in the roles and legacies of Haji Abdullah and his journal *al-Munir* (1911-1916), and additionally makes a significant contribution to the literature by providing a detailed biography of Haji Abdullah and the analysis of his political, religious, and social ideas in English, addressing the dearth of such research in existing literature.

1.6   LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is divided into three main sections. The first one deals with the review of the growing body of studies linked to the intellectual and cultural connections between the Arab world and the Malay world, as well as looking at the existing literature related to Islamic reformist movements in both colonial Malaya and West Sumatra in the early twentieth century. The second part states the positive contributions and critics of a few of the important and qualified works concerning the life and thoughts of Shaykh al-Hadi, while the last section analyses academic studies pertaining to the contributions of Haji Abdullah.

The nature, development and mutual influence of intellectual, political, and religious connections between West Asia (particularly the *Ḥaramayn*) from the sixteenth century to the late-nineteenth century and the Malay world in the early twentieth century onward has been the subject of various academic works.[18]

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[17] Only a few examples from the growing literature of Muhammadiyah: James Peacock, *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadijah Movement in Indonesian Islam* (California: The Benjamin/Cummings Publishing Company, 1978) and Hyung-Jun Kim, "Praxis and Religious Authority in Islam: The Case of Ahmad Dahlan, Founder of Muhammadiyah,'' *Studia Islamika* 17/1 (2010): 69-92.

[18] M. R. Othman and A. H. Haris, "The Role of Egyptian Influences on the Religious Dynamics and the Idea of Progress of Malaya's Kaum Muda (Young Faction) before the Second World War," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42/4 (2015): 465-80; Giora Eliraz, "The Islamic Reformist Movement in the Malay-Indonesian World in the First Four Decades of the 20th Century: Insights