

**THE *BAḤR AL-MADHĪ* OF SHAYKH IDRIS AL-MARBAWĪ AND THE  
*JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARĪ* OF TUAN HAJI HUSAYN:  
SIGNIFICANCE *ḤADĪTH* TEXTS FOR MALAY MUSLIMS  
AS TOOLS FOR RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TEACHING  
DURING TWENTIETH CENTURY**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to investigate on the specific *Ḥadīth* texts, *Baḥr al-Mādhī al-sharḥ mukhtaṣar ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī* of Shaykh Idrīs al-Marbawī and *Tazkīr al-qabā'il Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of Tuan Haji Husayn as religious, social and political teachings for Malay Muslims during the twentieth century. These texts are selected for two reasons: firstly, both provide invaluable data for analyses; secondly, both were openly acknowledged by the Malay community until recently as highly esteemed sources of revelation from the Prophet ﷺ.

The research is therefore undertaken on several premises, as follows: Al-Marbawī and Husayn's translations and commentaries are held to have been serviced by the great *Ḥadīth* scholars – al-Tirmīdhī and al-Bukhārī – and should therefore be esteemed accordingly. In line with this, the present study aims to demonstrate al-Marbawī and Husayn's deep condemnation at that time of the misconduct of Malay Muslims and of the ideology held by the *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda* (political polemics) for instance. As a criticism of Malay Muslims, their teaching and condemnation is absolute. This study believed that these two great scholars were independent authorities who would respond to key existing problems (including disunity, unjust leadership, and conflicts between religious scholars) as their mission to uphold the truth as guided by the Prophet ﷺ in *Ḥadīth*.

Furthermore, this study intends to show that al-Marbawī and Husayn *via* these texts may provide the clearest examples of the use of exegesis as a tool for religious, social and political teaching. In the light of their strong influence upon such esteemed *Ḥadīth* scholars (al-Tirmīdhī and al-Bukhārī), it is argued that the writings of al-Marbawī and Husayn represent a vital resource for the purposes of educating the Malay people on the subject of the *Ḥadīth*.

In the interests of validity and reliability, the study provides multiple sources of evidence. These include tape-recorded in-depth interviews with specific researchers (in particular with an expert educationalist in the twentieth century social, political and religious affairs in Malaysia) and academicians who are biographers of this great scholar. Also included are data-gathering techniques such as library and document research. Research methods used to examine the original writings of al-Marbawī and Husayn are largely qualitative, and consist of approaches such as hermeneutic and the inferential technique of content analyses.

The study's hypotheses are therefore two-fold: Firstly, the writing of al-Marbawī and Husayn are seen as crucial to the purity of fundamental Islamic political principles which may also significantly act as transmitters of authoritative *Ḥadīth* teachings to the Malay community. Secondly, if social, religious and political discourse is based on the purity of these translations and commentaries, then all such discourse will be legitimized as deriving directly from the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ— hence, polemics and conflicts may be resolved.

Signed .....  
Date...26.....

**STATEMENT 1**

This thesis is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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**STATEMENT 2**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Declaration/Statements	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Notes on Transliteration	x
Abbreviations	xi
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ḤADĪTH DOCUMENTATION IN EARLY ISLAM</b>	<b>26</b>
1.0 Introduction	26
1.1 Early development of Ḥadīth commentaries written in the Malay world	27
1.1.(i) The Islamization of the Malay world	27
1.1.(ii) The earliest Ḥadīth written by Malay scholars	31
1.1.ii.(a) <i>Hidāyat al-ḥabīb fī al-targhīb wa al- tarhīb</i> of al-Rāniri	34
1.1.ii.(b) The commentary of <i>Sharḥ laṭīf<sup>c</sup> ala arba<sup>c</sup>īn Ḥadīth li al-Imām an-Nawāwi</i> of al-Sinkīli	38
1.1.ii (c) The <i>al-Mawā<sup>c</sup>iz al-badī<sup>c</sup>ah</i> by al-Sinkīli	45
1.1.ii (d) The contents of these texts	46
1.1. (iii)The early compilation of the Ḥadīth by Malay scholars in Malaysia	49

## **CHAPTER TWO: SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF AL-MARBAWI AND HUSAYN** 52

2.0	Introduction	52
2.1	Al-Marbawi: his life and his intellectual activities	53
2.1.1	Al-Marbawi's background	53
2.1.2	Al-Marbawi's educational journey	55
2.1.2. (i)	Al-Marbawi's early education	55
2.1.2. (ii)	Al-Marbawi's teachers in Egypt	60
2.1.3	Al-Marbawi's <i>akhlaq</i> (etiquette)	63
2.1.4	The activities and the contributions of al-Marbawi in Islamic studies	64
2.2	Husayn: his life and intellectual activities	69
2.2.1	Husayn's background	69
2.2.2	Husayn's educational journey	71
2.2.2.(i)	Husayn's early education	71
2.2.2. (ii)	Husayn's teachers in <i>Masjīd al-Harām</i> , Mecca	74
2.2.3	Husayn's academic career within the Malaysian context	83
2.2.4	Husayn's <i>akhlaq</i> (etiquette)	85
2.2.5	The activities and the contributions of Husayn in Islamic studies	86
2.3	Al-Marbawi and Husayn attitudes concerning <i>Tariqah</i> (Sufi spiritual path)	89
2.4	Summary	90

## **CHAPTER THREE: THE WRITING OF *BAḤR AL-MADHĪ* AND *JAWĀHIR AL-BUKHĀRĪ*: THE PURPOSE, THE CONTENT, THE STRUCTURE, AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THE MALAYSIAN CONTEXT**

3.0	Introduction	94
3.1	The rationale of writing the books ( <i>Baḥr al-Mādhī</i> and <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i> )	95
3.1.1	The rationale of writing the <i>Baḥr al-Mādhī</i>	95
3.1.2	The rationale of writing the <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i>	100



3.2 The date of the <i>Baḥr al-Mādḥi</i> and <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i>	103
3.2.1 The date of the <i>Baḥr al-Mādḥi</i>	103
3.2.2 The date of the <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i>	105
3.3 The content of the <i>Baḥr al-Mādḥi</i> (of al-Marbawi) and <i>Jawāhir al-Bukharī</i> (of Husayn)	106
3.3.1. The content of the <i>Baḥr al-Mādhi</i> of al-Marbawi	106
3.3.1. (a) The ‘introduction’ ( <i>muqaddimah</i> ) of <i>Baḥr al-Mādhi</i>	115
3.3.2 The content of <i>Jawāhir al-Bukharī</i> of Husayn	118
3.3.2. (a) The ‘introduction’ ( <i>muqaddimah</i> ) of <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i>	122
3.4 The techniques of writing <i>Baḥr al-Mādḥi</i> and <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i> in order to facilitate a better understanding of the <i>Ḥadīth</i> to Malay readers	125
3.4.(i) Malay translation <i>via Jawi</i> script	126
3.4 (ii) Short commentary and simple translation	128
3.4 (iii) Glossary of <i>Ḥadīth</i> Methodology	130
3.4 (iv) The structure of the chapter headings	132
3.4. iv (a) <i>Abwāb / Kitāb</i> (general chapter)	134
3.4.iv (b) <i>Bāb</i> (sub-topics)	134
3.4.(v) Numerous sources and juristic opinion	140
3.4 (vi) Systematic numbering	145
3.5. The importance of <i>Baḥr al-Mādhi</i> and <i>Jawāhir al-Bukhārī</i> for Malaysian readers	146
3.6 Summary	150

**CHAPTER FOUR: THE *BAḤR AL-MADHI* AND THE *JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI*: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR MALAY MUSLIMS AS TOOLS FOR RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL TEACHING**

4.0 Introduction	153
4.1 The importance of prayers ( <i>salat</i> )	154
4.1 (i) The pillars of the religion	154
4.1 (ii) The dividing line between Muslims and non-Muslims	156
4.2 An account of juristic debate	159
4.2 (i) The ruling of recitation of <i>al-Fātihah</i> in prayer	160
4.2 i. (a) Reciting <i>al-Fātihah</i> in prayer	160
4.2 i. (b) Reciting <i>al-Fātiḥah</i> in every <i>raka'ah</i>	161
4.2 i. (c) Reciting <i>al-Fātiḥah</i> in congregational prayer	162
4.2.(ii) The ruling about ablution after eating camel's flesh	163
4.2.(iii) Photographic issues	165
4.2.iii.(a) The prohibition of <i>taṣwīr</i> (pictures creating a likeness)	165
4.2. iii.(b) Permission for photographing (taking pictures)	166
4.3 The importance of the congregational prayer	167
4.4 The significance of 'sincerity' ( <i>ikhlas</i> ) and 'intention' ( <i>niyyah</i> ) in Malay Muslim life	169
4.5 Obedience and prohibition for leadership	173
4.5.(i) The duties and responsibilities of the rulers	174
4.5.(ii) The obligation of obedience to the rulers	175
4.5.(iii) Disobedience to the rulers	177
4.5.(iv) Forbidden to ask for positions of authority	178
4.5.(v) The prerequisites to becoming rulers	178
4.5.(vi) A warning to rulers	180
4.5.(vii) The categories of rulers	181
4.6 The concept of <i>jihād</i> in the Malaysian context	182
4.6.(i) The concept of <i>jihād</i>	182



4.6. (ii) <i>Jihād</i> : the relation to the idea of the Islamic state	184
4.6. (iii) The links between <i>hijra</i> and <i>jihād</i>	186
4.7 Summary	189
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: <i>BAḤR AL-MADHI</i> AND <i>JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI</i>: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR MALAY MUSLIMS AS TOOLS FOR SOCIAL TEACHING</b>	
5.0 Introduction	191
5.1 On proper manners ( <i>Adāb</i> )	191
5.1.(i) The importance of proper manners in Muslim life	191
5.1.i. (a) <i>Adāb</i> as a basis of social relations and interactions	194
5.1.i. (b) To counsel ( <i>naṣīha</i> ) on how to be good	197
5.1. i. (c) Strengthening their community	197
5.2 Parent-child relationship	198
5.2.(i) Obligation in obedience to parents	199
5.2. i. (a) The superior rights of mother	202
5.2. i. (b) The rights of children	202
5.3 Message for Muslim unity in the country	203
5.3.(i)The concept of unity in Islam	204
5.3. i. (a) The right conduct in relationship	204
5.3. i.(b) Responsibilities to each other	207
5.3. i. (c) The merit of Friday prayer	210
5.4. Critique of Malay Muslim practice	211
5.4.(i) Forbidden worship other than Allah (S.W.T)	211
5.4. (ii) Prohibition of plastering and building over graves	213
5.4. (iii) Prohibition from animal fights	215
5.4. (iv) Prohibition of <i>al-khamr</i> (against the consumption of alcohol)	216
5.4. (v) Prohibited of bribes	218
5.4. (vi) Musical instruments	218
5.4. (vii) Reciting al-Qur`ān	218

5.5 The importance of acquired knowledge	219
5.6 Critiques of Malay <i>ulama</i> ( <i>Kaum Tua</i> and <i>Kaum Muda</i> )	222
5.7 Summary	229
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	230
<b>GLOSSARY OF ARABIC TERMS</b>	237
<b>GLOSSARY OF MALAY TERMS</b>	241
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	242



## NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration used in this thesis is based on Encyclopaedia of Islam with slight variation.

### Consonants

ء	(hamza)	.		ض	(ḍād)	ḍ
ب	(bā`)	b		ط	(tā`)	t
ت	(tā`)	t		ظ	(ẓā`)	ẓ
ث	(thā`)	th		ع	(`ayn)	c
ج	(jīm)	j		غ	(ghayn)	gh
ح	(hā`)	ḥ		ف	(fā`)	f
خ	(khā`)	kh		ق	(qāf)	q
د	(dāl)	d		ك	(kāf)	k
ذ	(dhāl)	dh		ل	(lām)	l
ر	(rā`)	r		م	(mīm)	m
ز	(zay)	z		ن	(nūn)	n
س	(sīn)	s		و	(wāw)	w
ش	(shīn)	sh		ه	(hā`)	h
ص	(ṣād)	ṣ		ي	(yā`)	y

### Vowels

—	( <i>fathah</i> )	a		long <i>fathah</i>	ā
—	( <i>kasrah</i> )	ī		long <i>kasrah</i>	ī
—	( <i>ḍammah</i> )	u		long <i>ḍammah</i>	ū

*Tamwīn* \_\_\_\_\_ is represented by an, in, un respectively.  
Transliteration involves only Arabic words. Others will be written in *italics*.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Ed.	editor
Edtn.	edition
d.	died
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
Ş.A.W	<i>Şalla Allah ʿalayhi wasallam</i>
S.W.T	<i>Subhānahu Wataʿalā</i>
(x:xx)	relating to quotations from the Qurʿān where (x) indicates <i>sūrah</i> (chapter) and (xx) indicates <i>āyah</i> (verse) such as (1:2) which means <i>sūha al-Fātiḥah</i> verse 2.
Vol.	volume



## INTRODUCTION

Basically, there are two main sources for an understanding of Islam: the Holy Qur'ān and the collections of the recorded words, actions and sanctions of the Prophet Muhammadﷺ which are normally referred to as *Ḥadīth*. These two sources were brought to the Malay world which initiated the arrival and introduction of Islam to this region. The *Ḥadīth*, for example, has been a significant instructional force in the religious, political and social teaching of Malay society. Particularly, the introduction of *Ḥadīth* to the community is seen as a source of socio-political revolution<sup>1</sup>.

### Scope of the Research

This study is concerned primarily with the use of specific *Ḥadīth* texts (*Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*) as a tool for religious, social and political teaching in Malaysia. It is an attempt to provide a comprehensive work on the subject, particularly the role of these two texts in terms of their transmission of fundamental Islamic principles to Malay Muslims.

The present study relates only to specific aspects of religious and ethical teaching, such as the obligation of prayer to Muslims, the importance of congregational prayer, the significance of *ikhlas*<sup>2</sup> (sincerity) and *niyyah* (intention) and, on account of the juristic debate for instance, the ruling of reciting *al-Fātiḥah* in prayer, as basic elements in the lives of Malay Muslims. Thus, the obligation of fasting during *Ramadhan*, for instance, will not be part of the focus of the study. In addition, discussion throughout the present study will provide a guide to the political

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Hussein Al-Attas, on the need for an historical study of Malaysian Islamization, *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, vol. 4. No.1, March, 1963, p.63.

<sup>2</sup> Words that are transliterated in boldface are technical terms. I always transliterate the term when it is first used. Thereafter I use the English translation unless I have been unable to find a one-word equivalent in English, in which case I will preserve the boldface transliteration throughout the translation.



teaching which governs a Muslim society, stressing several important elements: such as the role of the *sultans* (royal kings) and obedience to them, and the meaning of *jihad* (striving in the path of Allah) in the Malaysian context.

This study is also concerned to present *Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* teachings that guide believers in right conduct in their social interactions. Importantly, these texts urge the pursuit of knowledge only in the name of Allah (S.W.T) and at the same time using exegesis as a tool for a critical interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* without prior learning, as in the example of the *Kaum Muda*<sup>3</sup> movement. Each of these teaching sections are discussed, beginning with that on 'proper manners', parent-child relationships, the importance of Malay unity, a critique of Malay Muslim beliefs and practices which are clearly prohibited by the Prophet's words and example. The chapter concludes with a critique of interpretations of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* which depart from the purity of the truth as transmitted by the Prophet.

Out of the many scholars from this region the researcher have chosen two Malay scholars who have contributed significantly to the written works of *Ḥadīth* studies in Malaysia. The *Baḥr al-Mādhī* was written by an eminent Malay scholar of the twentieth century - al-Marbawi, while *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* was written by Husayn. They are among of the most prolific Malay *ulama*<sup>4</sup> (religious scholars) that enriched

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<sup>3</sup>The 'kaum' in Malay word is from Arabic 'qaum'; and its definition is a number of people or regarded as belonging together while 'muda' means 'youth'. See [http://uk.encarta.msn.com/dictionary\\_1861761275/group.html](http://uk.encarta.msn.com/dictionary_1861761275/group.html). This is the Malay reformists, well-known as the *Kaum Muda* (Reformist Group) were dissatisfied with the *Kaum Tua* (Traditionalist Group) who were said to be ignorant in understanding of Islam as a complete way of life. The basis of the *Kaum Muda* struggle was to develop Islam in Malaysia in the various fields of their lives, mainly in education and understanding of Islam itself. Because Islam does not prevent its believers from making efforts, but always encourages them pursue development, either to have some knowledge or happiness in life. See W.Roff, *the origins of Malay nationalism*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967, p.60.

<sup>4</sup> This term in Islam meaning the community of learned men. The direct translation would be 'the ones possessing knowledge'. *Ulama* is a plural term, and the singular can be both '*alim* (long i) and '*alim* (long a), where both can be translated with 'learned, knowing man'. '*alim* is the most frequently used of the two. Normally *ulama* are used for the group of men with religious education and religiously related professions. *Ulama* are the group of men expressing the true content of Islam towards both the people and the rulers. See <http://i-cias.com/cgi-bin/eo-direct.pl?ulama.htm>.



Malay religious literature with works on all branches of Islamic knowledge, including several exegeses on the *Ḥadīth*.

The reason for restricting this study to the work of al-Marbawi and Husayn is the position of these authors. While modern academic scholarship in both the Malay world and the western world seems to ignore the intellectual life of the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries<sup>5</sup>, these eras produced works which were of considerable importance for Malay Muslim intellectuals up to the modern age<sup>6</sup>. Husayn's translation, *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* and al-Marbawi's commentary, *Baḥr al-Mādhi*, are among those works. Later Malay Muslim scholarship was to know them simply as 'ulama' and sometimes as Malay *Ḥadīth* scholars. It is because of their writing that reading and understanding of the al-Tirmīdhī<sup>7</sup> and al-Bukhārī's<sup>8</sup> texts comes to occupy such a privileged position. As *Jāmi' al-Tirmīdhī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (written by al-Tirmīdhī and al-Bukhārī respectively) are recognized as a significant part of the Muslim literary *Ḥadīth*, then influential readings of these *Ḥadīth* works likewise deserve scholarly attention.

Another equally important reason is they place in intellectual history. While al-Marbawi and his works can and should be the object of intellectual history, he himself is also a historian of ideas. For example, al-Marbawi's observations on the nature of the al-Tirmīdhī text provide an interesting perspective on the differences

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<sup>5</sup> The typical stance toward these centuries by modern scholars is to dismiss it as a period of mere compilation and commentary. See, Azwira °Abd al-°Aziz & Asmadi Sakat, *Methodologi Ḥadīth*, UKM: Bangi: 1999.

<sup>6</sup> The situation in the Malay world is slightly more complex, given the presence of 'traditional' intellectuals who share certain continuity with the tradition of learning which Husayn so ably represented. Thus, when I use the term 'modern scholarship', I mean those scholars who are associated with the new institution of learning, the national university.

<sup>7</sup> His full name is Muḥammad ibn °Isa ibn Sawrah ibn Mūsa ibn al-Dahak, Abū °Isa al-Sulamī al-Da'ir al-Būghī al-Tirmīdhī (824 – 892). He was widely known as a prominent *Ḥadīth* scholar. He wrote the *Jāmi'*, one of the six canonical *Hadith* compilations used in Islam.

<sup>8</sup> His full name is Muḥammad ibn Isma'īl al-Bukhārī, popularly known as al-Bukhārī (810 – 870). He wrote the *Ṣaḥīḥ* which regards as authentic of all *Ḥadīth* compilations and one of the six *Hadith* major collections.



between this text and another important *Hadīth* works (from other compilers), for example ‘*Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī’ and ‘*Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim’, while Husayn’s representation of authors of *Hadīth* works such as al-Qaṣṭalānī<sup>9</sup> and al-Bukhārī shows him to be far from a mere translator of texts. Thus, with regard to Husayn and al-Marbawī’s presentation, each of their works represents a different type of writing, with Husayn tending more to narrate authentic *Hadīth* and al-Marbawī allowing interpretive concerns to dominate the structure of his work.

As Muslims, the Malays were proud of their Islamic heritage and regarded themselves as an integral part of a wider brotherhood and civilization. Since Islam originated from Mecca and Medina, the Malays also traditionally look to these centers as a source for leadership and guidance. Equally important, since they first became Muslim, elements from Mecca and Medina had exercised a great influence on the society, and this was facilitated and expedited by their own travels to Mecca and Medina, as part of a religious obligation and in order to further their education. The printed works on religious knowledge are introduced which in turn permitted the enhancing and improvement of their understanding of Islam.

It is well-known that Mecca and Medina are the two most important centres which occupy a special place in Islam and Muslim lives. They are the most important education centres for pilgrims and for Muslim intellectuals to meet and to exchange ideas about Islamic studies and information on Muslim societies in general. These circumstances led a significant number of students (for example from the Malay Archipelago<sup>10</sup>) to visit and stay there for some years to acquire knowledge.

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<sup>9</sup> Shaykh Ahmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd al Malik ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Qaṣṭalānī al-Qāhirī al-Shāfi‘ī. He was born in Egypt in 1482 and, living an illustrious life, passed away in 1517. He had completed his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī in 1504.

<sup>10</sup> By the ‘Malay Archipelago’ is meant the areas covering the countries of present-day Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei, the majority of which are mostly dominated by a Muslim-Malay speaking population. See Mohd. Taib Osman, *Perubahan Sosio-budaya dan hubungannya dengan pengajian manusia yang dikatakan ‘Melayu’* in *Rampaian Pengajian Melayu*, Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Penajian Melayu, University of Malaya, 1984, pp. 240- 242. However, it is sometimes is commonly used to refer to the Malay-Muslim population of South East Asia and is widely used by a number of scholars in their works for example Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement on a General Theory of the Islamization of the Malay Indonesia Archipelago*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969. Comparatively the term ‘the Malay world’ is more widely used today and is



Thus, the present study is indeed closely related to the *Ḥadīth* developed by the early Muslim scholars (Middle East). The significance of compilation in early Islam, and the tradition of *rihla ʿilmiyya* (searching for Islamic knowledge), which had begun in those days, created an extensive community of students spread over the world. The rise of Islamic scholarship in the Malay world had much to do with the intense and continued linkages between this area and the Middle East. The searching for Islamic knowledge by Malay students in the Middle East, particularly in Mecca and Medina, had created a community of Malay students in the Middle East and they became the most important channels for transmission of Islamic knowledge and *Ḥadīth* tradition.

Therefore, a study of the history of Malay authors' lives, such as that of al-Marbawi and Husayn, their intellectual activities and works is important for two reasons. Firstly, it will not only throw light on the religious and intellectual relation between the Muslim community of the region and the Middle East, but will also throw light on the spread of Islam in the region, especially in term of Islamic studies and the intellectualism of Malay Muslims in general. More importantly, after going through a long period of studying they became the transmitter of Islamic studies to their people even though many of them resided at Mecca. Their contact with their countrymen was never lost. In fact, they enjoyed the deepest awe of their countrymen and their control of the religious life of their homes.

### **Objectives and Aims of the Research**

Apart from representing the text *Ḥadīth* (of *Baḥr al-Mādḥī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*) in this study, I also intend to present a biographical account of the authors of the work (al-Marbawi and Husayn) which constitutes one of the important aspects of this study. Al-Marbawi is still one of the most distinguished Malay scholars, whose works are

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increasingly accepted by scholar in their works. Among contemporary scholars who prefer to use the term 'the Malay world' in their works, is A.H. Johns, Islam in the Malay World: An exploratory survey with some reference to Qur'anic exegesis, in Raphael Israeli and Anthony H. Johns,(eds..) *Islam in Asia*, vol. II, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1984, pp.115-161.



still being read and studied in schools, mosques, and in higher institutes. However, information on him and his works is largely unknown in the western academic world.

The intention in this is also to demonstrate their deep condemnation at that time of the ideology held by the *Kaum Muda* (the Reformist group) and the *Kaum Tua* (the Traditionalist group). These two great scholars were independent authorities who saw responding to existing problems ( for instance conflicts between the two groups) as their mission to uphold the truth as received directly from Allah by the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, as a criticism of this group, their condemnation is final.

In the light of their strong influence upon such esteemed *Hadīth* scholars as al-Tirmīdhī, al-Bukhārī and al-Qastalānī, it is argued that the writings of al-Marbawī and Husayn represent a vital resource for the purposes of educating the Malay people on the subject of the *Hadīth*. The study's conclusions are therefore two-fold: firstly, the writings of al-Marbawī and Husayn are crucial to the purity of fundamental Islamic principles, and therefore have a vital role to play as transmitters of authoritative *Hadīth* teachings to the Malay community. Secondly, if social, political and religious discourse is based on the purity of these translations and commentaries, then all such discourse will be legitimized as deriving directly from the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ<sup>11</sup>

All in all, the main objective of this thesis is to present a role of *Baḥr al-Mādihī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, based on all available texts of the work and provided with an explanation the methods of writing have been applied in order to facilitate a better understanding of the *Hadīth* to Malay readers as well as a detailed commentary on the *Hadīth* discussed by al-Marbawī and Husayn. The achievement of the objective thus formulated also demands a determination of the date and sources of the work, the purpose of its composition and its significance within the domain of the lives of Malay Muslims. Finally, a detailed study of the content, origin and dissemination of the *Hadīth* in the Malay world is essential to this study.

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<sup>11</sup> ﷺ (*Salla Allah 'alayhi wasallam*) represents the standard Muslim invocation placed after the Prophet's name: May God bless Him and grant Him peace.



Thus, the aim of this research is as follows:

1. To determine the significance of *Ḥadīth* texts for Malay Muslims as tools for religious, social and political teaching.
2. To explain the methods that has been applied by Malay scholars in order to facilitate a better understanding of the *Ḥadīth* to Malay readers.
3. To demonstrate how the *Ḥadīth* compilation was transmitted into Malaysia by the early Malay scholars.

### **Statement of the Problem and Research Questions**

This study identifies that in social and political discourse in Malaysia the use of *Ḥadīth* texts serves social and political as well as religious practical teaching. It also identifies that the development of the *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia and its significance for Malay Muslims was signified by several issues raised by Malay religious scholars. This includes the consciousness and critique of Malay Muslims on the misconduct in their lives, as well as the national awakening (particularly since the introduction into Malaysia of the twentieth century 'reformist' movement, serious polemics have arisen among Malay scholars between *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua*).

Part of the central focus is therefore to clarify several issues, since they now underpin the harsh polemics of modern Malay Islamic discourse. Among the purposes of the translation and commentary of Arabic texts are the definitions of an ideal Islamic society and to preserve the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ to the Malay community. Such discourse is an example of an increasingly common genre of Malay Islamic literature that emphasizes the 'unity' and 'brotherhood' of the Muslim community.

As aforementioned, the aim of the research, then, is to investigate the work of Malay scholars and their contribution among Malay people into their political, social

and religious teaching. The investigation is, therefore, guided by the following research questions:

1. Which key *Ḥadīth* texts form the basis of present social, political and religious teaching?
2. In what precise ways do Malays 'depart' from the *Ḥadīth* in their religious, political and social conduct?
3. What can be done to address these issues?
4. What is the subject of their compilation and its relation to Malay scholarship?
5. How are the principles of their methodology applied in these works?

Guided by these questions, the study focuses on two specific *Ḥadīth* texts, *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* of Shaykh Idrīs al-Marbawi, and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of Husayn. These texts are selected for two reasons: firstly, both provide invaluable data for analysis; secondly, both were openly acknowledged by the Malay community until recently as highly esteemed sources of revelation from the Prophet ﷺ. The research is therefore undertaken on a three-fold premise, as follows:

1. Both these texts should be restored to their former status as clear and authoritative guides for human conduct in areas ranging from manners to *jihad* (striving in the path of Allah)
2. Husayn and al-Marbawi's translations and commentaries both provide the clearest examples of the use of exegesis as a tool for religious, social and political teaching
3. Written methodology is held to have influenced the great *Ḥadīth* scholars - Bukhārī and Tirmīdhī – and should therefore be esteemed accordingly.



## Literature Review

The development of the *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia was signified by several local Islamic activities upheld by Malay scholars<sup>12</sup> which include, for example, the development of *pondok* schools<sup>13</sup>, the recognition of *Ḥadīth* studies as a well-recognizable and independently taught subject in schools<sup>14</sup>, the spread of *Ḥadīth* printing, the editing and translating of *Ḥadīth* manuscripts, and the great interest that has evolved in *Ḥadīth* critics. During twentieth century, *madrasah*<sup>15</sup> itself was regarded as a valuable treasure to the local people of Malaysia as Ishak noted<sup>16</sup>:

..The development of *madrasah* in the Malay Peninsula began when a group of the Malay reformists, well-known as the *Kaum Muda* (Reformist Group) were dissatisfied with the *Kaum Tua* (Traditionalist Group) who were said to be ignorant in understanding of Islam as a complete way of life.....

The nineteenth century witnessed the activities of a knowledge expedition (*rihla ilmiyya*) spread all over the Malay world. Malay students, in fact, pursued their study of Islamic thought in the Middle East countries and finally diffused knowledge to the local Malaysian society after completing their studies. As a result, there exist many types of traditional institutions such as the mosque, *surau*<sup>17</sup>, *pondok*<sup>18</sup>, and *madrasah*<sup>19</sup> established by them.

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<sup>12</sup> Y. Monshe, *Islam and Islamic institutions in British Malays*, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, the Hebrew University, 1979, p.21; Ismail Ishak, *the Malay and Islamic traditional educational system from the min 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day with special reference to the pondok schools in Kedah*, unpublished Master's thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1990,p.27.

<sup>13</sup> An Islamic-Malay term which refers to the Islamic traditional institutions in the Malay region, especially Malaysia and Indonesia.

<sup>14</sup> The fact of the importance of *Ḥadīth* as was shown by Prophet's companions. It should be remembered how they realized his value and so they put an unbelievable amount of effort to be with him and to record and cherish everything he said and did. There are various examples of the Companions memorizing together and cultivating what they had just learned from Prophet. See al-Suyuti, *Tadrib al-rawī fi syarah taqrīb al-nawawī*, vol,2,n.p.,p.211; Abu °Amir Uthman °Abd Rahman ibn Salah, °*Ulum al- Ḥadīth*, Misr: Matba°ah al-Sa°dat, n.d, p.262; M.A. Nadwi, Review: The development of exegesis in early Islam: the authenticity of Muslim literature from the formative period, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, p. 375; °Azami, *studies*,p.13.

<sup>15</sup> *Madrasah* is an Arabic term, and means school in a general sense. In the Malaysia, *madrasah* is synonymous with Arabic school or religious school. Also it is a more formal traditional institution than the others. Ishak,p.48.

<sup>16</sup> Ishak,p.48.

<sup>17</sup> *Surau* is a small building used for religious worship purposes.



Through scholarship in Muslim world over the years, there have been many detailed studies<sup>20</sup> conducted on Islamic intellectual works. Azra (2004)<sup>21</sup>, for example, in his study on the contribution of Malay Muslim scholars between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, revealed the scholarly networks and the transmission of intellectual ideas between scholars in the Middle East and Malay-Indonesian religious scholars.

His meticulous study, using sources from the Middle East itself, shows how scholars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were reconstructing the intellectual and socio-moral foundation of Muslim societies. Drawing on Arabic biographic dictionaries which have never before been analyzed or used as research materials, Azra illuminates a previously inaccessible period of history to show the development of the Middle Eastern heritage in the Indonesian region. The reader can trace the formation and expression of Indonesian Islam and the adaptation of the Arabic intellectualism into recognizably Indonesian idioms<sup>22</sup>. For the first time we have a description of the actual process of localization, a process of interest to historians, anthropologists and sociologists, and also a subject of intense contemporary relevance.

According to Azra, al-Rāniri's<sup>23</sup> work is the pioneer in the field of Islamic intellectual thought in the Malay world. Al-Rāniri for example, not only introduced

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<sup>18</sup> *Pondok* derive its name from the *pondok* (huts) that students built and lodged in around the houses of famous religious teachers.

<sup>19</sup> *Madrasah* is a type of religious school, modelled on Arab prototypes in which some 'secular' subjects may be taught along with the religious. See Ishak, p.165.

<sup>20</sup> <sup>c</sup>Azami, *On Schacht's origins of Muhammadan jurisprudence*, New York & Riyadh : John Wiley & King Saud University, 1985; *Studies in Ḥadīth Methodology and Literature*, Indianapolis: American Trust Publication, 1977; G.H.A. Juynboll, *Muslim tradition; Studies in chronology, provenance, and authorship of early Ḥadīth*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983; J. Schacht, *The origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.

<sup>21</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *the origins of Islamic reformism in Southeast Asia: networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern ulama' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*. Honolulu: Asian Studies Association of Australia, Allen & Unwin, & University of Hawaii Press, 2004, p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> Azyumardi Azra, Book reviews: Islam and the Malay-Indonesian world: transmission and responses by Peter Riddell, n.d, n.p.

<sup>23</sup> The most popular among al-Rāniri's writing is the *Sirat al-Mustakim* (the true path), a treatise on the pillars of Islam, which became a textbook for religious schools. It has been lithographed several times



the importance of the *Ḥadīth* in the life of Muslims, but also compiled some *Ḥadīth* studies of the Prophet ﷺ, which he translated from Arabic into Malay, entitled '*Hidāyat al-ḥabīb fi al-targhīb wa al-tarhīb*' (or well known '*al-Fawā'id al bahiyah fi al-aḥadīthīn nabawiyyah*). This is because he realized the need for this kind of text and at the same time was highly aware that the Arabic language was hard for the Malays in general to understand. Thus, the Muslim population in the Malay world would be able to understand them correctly.

In the light of our present investigation, there are several studies that have been done on Islamic intellectual activity by Malay scholars from the inception of Islam to the present day such as Mahayuddin, Mohd Nor (1983)<sup>24</sup>, Hasan (2002)<sup>25</sup> Wan Sabri (2003)<sup>26</sup>, Mohammad Som(2003)<sup>27</sup>, and 'Uthman al-Muhammady(2003)<sup>28</sup>.

Mahayuddin(1994)<sup>29</sup> for example suggests that the religious works which were written in *Jawi* script between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in Malaysia were much influenced by scholars of Islamic law and Sufism from the Middle East<sup>30</sup>. Nevertheless, it is important to note that their works only describe the contributions of Malay Muslim scholars to the development of Islamic studies particular in jurisprudence and Sufism in this region by collecting their scattered works known as *Kitāb Jawi*<sup>31</sup>. There are some researchers who mentioned these books

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in Singapore. T. Iskandar, Three Malay historical writings in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, *JMBRAS*, vol.40.,PT2,1967, pp 38-53 (p.43.).

<sup>24</sup> Mohd Nor Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic Thought of the Malay Muslim Scholars*, Institute of the Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore 1983.

<sup>25</sup> Hasan Madmarn, *the pondok and madrasah in Patani*, UKM:Bangi, 2002.

<sup>26</sup> Wan Sabri Wan Yusuf, Sayuthy 'Abd al-Manaf and Nadhzirah Muhammad. Shaykh Mustafa Abdul Rahman Mahmud twentieth century Malay Qur'anic interpreter, in Mohamad@ Md. Sujimon (ed.), *Monograph on selected Malay Intellectuals*, International Islamic University of Malaysia, 2003.

<sup>27</sup> Mohammad @Md. Som Sujimon and Wan Sabri Wan Yusuff, Shaykh Dawud al-Fatani's contribution to Muslim scholarship in Malaysia, in *Monograph on selected Malay Intellectuals*,2003.

<sup>28</sup> Uthman al-Muhammady, To' Kenali (Muhammad Yusuf) and Sunni scholarship, in Mohamad@ Md. Sujimon (ed.), *Monograph on selected Malay Intellectuals*, International Islamic University of Malaysia, 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Yahya, Mahayuddin, *Naskah jawi : Sejarah dan teks*, vol. 1, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka: Kuala Lumpur, 1994.p. 1-18.

<sup>30</sup>Yahaya, Mahayudin. *Naskah Jawi Sejarah dan Teks*. p.48

<sup>31</sup> According to M.N Ngah, literally '*kitab*' means 'book' and *Jawi* means 'people of Java' which also refers to 'Malays' because the Arabs in the past considered all the people in the Malay Archipelago as Javanese; therefore the Malay writing using Arabic script is called *jawi* script. *Kitab* in Malay usage



as *Kitab Tua* (means 'a very old religious book') or *Kitab Kuning* (means 'a yellow book').

These books, which were written either in the classical Malay language<sup>32</sup> using Arabic characters or in Arabic itself, were classified into eight groups: first is *Nahwu* (studies of grammar) and *Ṣarf* (studies of morphology system), second is *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), third *Uṣul Fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), fourth *Ḥadīth* (traditions), fifth *Tafsīr* (exegesis or commentary), sixth *Tawhīd* (studies of Islamic conception of monotheism), seventh *Taṣawwuf* (studies of the inner or mystical dimension of Islam) and *Akhlaq* (proper manners), and eight other disciplines of religious and Arabic subjects<sup>33</sup>.

From the early period of Islam in the Malay world until recently, *Kitab Jawi* has been used as a major source of Islamic knowledge by the Malays because most of them do not understand Arabic<sup>34</sup>. They were written mostly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and are available throughout the Malay world. It should be noted here that the writers of the religious books came from many parts of the Malay world, and we can easily identify their origin from their names<sup>35</sup>, for example al-Fatani (from the Patani area) al-Falembani (from the Palembang area), al-Futiyani (from the Pontianak area), and al-Kelantani (from the Kelantan area).

These works fulfilled the urgent need for religious instructions and manuals by the Malay community at that time. These works were written solely for the Malay Muslims in the Malay world where *Jawi* script is used to convey Islamic teachings as the majority of Malay Muslim in this region at that time only understood the *Jawi*

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means 'religious book'; the term *jawi* also refers to the people of Sumatra and Malays in general. See R. Roolvink, *Bahasa jawi*, Leiden: Universitaire Pers Leiden, 1975, p.2.

<sup>32</sup> Malay was in those days already an important language and served as a lingua franca in South East Asia. T. Iskandar, Three Malay historical writings in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, *JMBRAS*, vol.40.,PT2,1967, pp 38-53 (p.43.)

<sup>33</sup> Ismail Ishak, *The Malay and Islamic traditional educational system from the Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day with special reference to the pondok schools in Kedah*, MA Dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 1990. p.84; Dhofier,Z, *Tradisi Pesantre, (Pesantren tradition)*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982, p.54.

<sup>34</sup> H.F.O.B,Trail, an Indian protagonist of the Malay language, Abdullah Munshi, his face and his mother tongue, *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic (JMBRAS)*, vol.52, pt.2,1979. 67-83.

<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless, there are still a great number of them who remained anonymous. They do not mention their name for the reason that they do the works just for the sake of Allah, i.e. to avoid worldly purposes.



script<sup>36</sup>. Their works in *Jawi* script enabled the Malay community in this region to accept them whole-heartedly especially when they realized that those works had been produced by a Malay scholar who was trained in Mecca, the most respectable place and authoritative source in Islam. There is no doubt that the works of Malay scholars had helped to develop the Islamic mind- set of the Malay community in the region. Hence, several branches of Islamic knowledge were dealt with in *Kitab Jawi*.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, books that have been produced placed sole emphasis upon the teaching of the four Schools of Thought (*Madhab*). This is mainly due to the background of the principal scholars who were educated in the traditional institutions which strongly practiced this sect. Accordingly, they become loyal adherents to these Schools. To describe this situation, Ishak notes that<sup>37</sup>:

‘This is evidence that at the time the *Kaum Muda* (Reformist group) launched their criticism upon the traditional practice of Islam in the Malay society, the principal teachers were among the people who opposed that group. For this purpose they established their own organization, well-known as the *Kaum Tua* (Traditionalist group). In practice, however, most of the principal teachers are the followers of the *Madhab Shāfi‘ī*. Therefore, the books for *Fiqh* are derived entirely from the writing of the Shafi‘ī School of law, *Tawhid* and *Usuluddin* from the teaching of Abu Hassan al-Ash‘arī and Abū Mansur al-Maturidi, and *Tasawwuf* from the teaching of al-Ghazali or Abū Qasim al-Junayd. That which is outside Sunni doctrine is considered as a new thing and therefore possibly invalid’.

Furthermore, there are other Islamic intellectual works written by several scholars such as, A.H. Johns (1961)<sup>38</sup>, Fatimi(1963)<sup>39</sup>, Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1970)<sup>40</sup>, and Riddell (2000)<sup>41</sup>. However, they cover only a limited aspect or period of the history of Islamic scholarship particularly in *Ḥadīth* studies in Malaysia.

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<sup>36</sup> Kang Keong Seouck, *perkembangan tulisan jawi dalam masyarakat melayu*, Kuala Lumpur:DBP 1990.

<sup>37</sup> Ishak, *The Malay and Islamic traditional educational system*, p.87.

<sup>38</sup> He is a prolific researcher and among of his contribution is: From coastal settlement to Islamic school and city: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java, *Hamdard Islamicus*, Vol.IV, No.4., Sufism as a category in Indonesian literature and history, *Journal of south East Asian History*, vol.2 ,July 1961,pp.10-23.

<sup>39</sup> Fatimi S.Q. *Islam comes to Malaysia*. Malaysian Sociological Research Institute: Singapore. 1963.

<sup>40</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *The mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, University of Malaya Press: Kuala Lumpur, 1970.

<sup>41</sup> Riddell, Peter, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian world: transmission and responses*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000.



Fatimi, for example, while discussing on the rise of Islam in Malaysia, in some ways explained a little about how the writing of Islamic knowledge began. In other words, they have made no attempt to scrutinize or observe further this subject which was produced by Malay scholars in this period.

On the subject of the evolution and the structure of *Ḥadīth* development, Azwira & Asmadi (1999)<sup>42</sup> explains that:

The developments of *Ḥadīth* studies are 'destructive and retreat' in the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Compared with the productive century, this period recognized as a 'languor phase'. This phase of exposition should be regarded as a period of languor in the history of development of the science of *Ḥadīth*; because instead of a gradual growth, it marked a stage when most of the discussions went round and round in a definite circle without any progress or breakthrough.

According to Azwira & Asmadi, the compilation process of *Ḥadīth* studies in the Middle East was 'not active'. However, it should be stressed here that they did not emphasize the significance of *Ḥadīth* studies in the region of the Malays. The present study believes that Middle Eastern works became significant subsequent to the development of *Ḥadīth* learning of Malaysia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Gibb also stressed that "there was no philosophical and religious movement which really stands still over a period of six centuries (the seventh to the thirteenth centuries)"<sup>43</sup>. It is believed that "although the external formulations of traditional Islam have shown little development from the thirteenth to the end of to nineteenth century, yet, nevertheless, the basic structure of religious life of Malay Muslims in Malaysia has deeply readjusted. As in other religious communities, the process of change generated an expansive energy which found outlets in various forms of activities"<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Azwira °Abd al-°Aziz &Asmadi Sakat, *Methodologi Ḥadīth*, UKM: Bangi: 1999.

<sup>43</sup> Cited by Ishak, p.1

<sup>44</sup> Ismail Ishak, *the Malay and Islamic traditional educational system from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day with special reference to the pondok schools in Kedah*, MA thesis, 1990.



Voll (1980)<sup>45</sup>, on the other hand, illustrated that the eighteenth century was an important period in the development of *Ḥadīth* studies. He pointed out:

In *Ḥadīth* studies, the eighteenth century was a time when increased cosmopolitanism in the international network of scholars helped to bring together a number of different traditions of study. Clearly, the study of *Ḥadīth* was a basic discipline of Islamic scholarship in all parts of the Islamic world in all areas, although with considerably varying degrees of emphasis. ...

Basically, Voll revealed that one of the major linkage points in the developments of *Ḥadīth* studies was the scholarly community in Mecca and Medina. The popular and influential teachers in those two cities formed a cosmopolitan core for the development of *Ḥadīth* studies. Voll points out that the eighteenth century was a time of important development in *Ḥadīth* studies and in the evolution of an activist style of Sufism that can conveniently be called 'Neo-Sufism'<sup>46</sup>. According to him, in the development of *Ḥadīth* studies in the century before the nineteenth century:

...however, there was a tendency within the various regions of the Islamic world to develop distinctive scholarly emphases in the different disciplines, including *Ḥadīth* studies. The core of the *Ḥadīth* literature, especially the six great collections, provided a common starting point, but regions developed their own later medieval 'standard authorities'. This can be seen by examining *ijazahs* the certificates of scholarly authorization, for scholars from the various regions. Regionally distinctive lines of transmission of the basic *Ḥadīth* literature are common<sup>47</sup>.

It is important to note that Voll studied precisely more about the *Ḥadīth* scholars in the eighteenth century *Haramayn* (Mecca and Medina) and their impact in the Islamic world. Nonetheless, his work is an initial attempt to provide a comprehensive account and discussion of scholars in *Haramayn* and their impact on the Islamic world in the eighteenth century. He provides a brief outline of the development of

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<sup>45</sup> Voll, *Ḥadīth* scholars and *tariqahs*: an *ulama* group in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Haramayn and their impact in the Islamic world, *Journal of Asian and African studies*. 1980.15, 264.p.1.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Voll, p.265.

*Ḥadīth* studies in the eighteenth century and shows the possibly critical role of the scholarly community in Mecca and Medina.

In line with Voll's argument, the present study believes that the beginning of the eighteenth century sparked connections among scholars in the Middle East as a result of *Ḥadīth* scholarship becoming increasingly widened in scope. The changing patterns of communication and the exchange of Islamic information eventually made possible significant interaction between styles of *Ḥadīth* works of Malay *Ḥadīth* scholarship in the following centuries. The interaction of travel to and from the Middle East had also been substantially affected by the opening of the Suez Canal in the mid nineteenth century<sup>48</sup>; leading to an increased numbers of Malays making the *hajj* or travelling to study<sup>49</sup>. In fact, scholars were able to made contacts frequently from the widely scattered part of the Islamic world. The glory of *Ḥadīth* studies in early Islamic history in the Middle East is, indeed, repeated again.

Redhuan points out that between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the number of Malays travelling to Mecca and Medina to further their religious education there rose significantly. This proved that the scholars of Mecca had a great influence on the Malay students. The main reason for the increase is the availability of easier transportation and the growing need for the religious teachers following the opening of many *pondok* schools in Malaysia. With the presence of Mecca and Medina as an important centre of Malay students, there came a number of great intellects who not only taught at *Masjīd al-Harām* in Mecca but also produced many books on Islamic studies<sup>50</sup>.

Consequently, general styles of *Ḥadīth* studies have been developed in the Malay world. There exist varieties of action which helped to stimulate a more fundamentalist response as a way of protecting the authenticity of Islam in the Malay

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<sup>48</sup> W. Roff, *patterns of Islamization in Malaysia, 1890s-1990s*, p.211.

<sup>49</sup> Redhuan, *the role of Makka*, p. 147.

<sup>50</sup> Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak, *Malay book publishing and printing in Malaya and Singapore 1807-1949*, PhD. Thesis, University of Sterling, 1992, p. 107.



world<sup>51</sup>. A part of this reaction was a vigorous importance attached to the careful study of the *Ḥadīth*. Malay scholars in the Middle East, particularly in Mecca and Medina, familiarized themselves with the tools of study created by scholars in those two places. Finally they conveyed this scholarly tradition into the Malay world. The most important figures in this were Dawud al-Fatani, Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari and Nawawi al-Bantani<sup>52</sup>. A.H. Johns precisely described that the glory of these intellectuals was not only confined to the Malay community but also spread into Arabia. Nawawi al-Bantani for example, was accorded the title '*Sayyid ulama Hijaz*' (master of the teachers of the Hijaz) for his works<sup>53</sup> and learning shown in discussions with the great scholars of al-Azhar<sup>54</sup>.

In addition, a few local scholars such as Napiah (1989)<sup>55</sup> and Sakinah Maamor (2006)<sup>56</sup> have been investigating *Ḥadīth* studies in Malaysia. However, they cover only a limited aspect or period of the history of Islamic scholarship particularly the *Ḥadīth* in the region. In an article '*Pengajian hadis di institusi pondok*' Napiah considers what *Ḥadīth* studies were teaching in Malaysia a hundred years ago but he does not put forward any discussion to support his argument. He has been investigating the teaching of the *Ḥadīth* in the *pondok* school and only focusing in on one district in Malaysia. He also in some way explained a little about the teaching of Islamic learning in the *pondok* school. In other words, Napiah and Sakinah have made no attempt to scrutinize and observe further this subject which was produced by Malay scholars in this period. This research therefore attempts to elucidate a number of important subjects relating to the teaching of the *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia.

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<sup>51</sup> Wan Saghir, p. 1.

<sup>52</sup> M. Sidin Ishak, p. 107.

<sup>53</sup> The greatest works on *Ḥadīth* are *Tanqihul qawli hathith bi sharḥ lubabil Ḥadīth* and *Nasa'ih al-ʿibad sharḥ al munabbihat ʿala isti ʿdad li yawmil ma ʿad*. See Saghir, perkembangan *Ḥadīth*, p. 7.

<sup>54</sup> A.H. Johns. From coastal settlement to Islamic schools and city; Islamization in Sumatera, the Malay Peninsula and 'Java', *Hamdard Islamicus*, 4:4 (1981), 20-21.

<sup>55</sup> M. Napiah Abdullah, pengajian hadis di institusi pondok: satu kajian di daerah Baling, Kedah, *Islamiyyat*, 1989.

<sup>56</sup> Sakinah@Sapinah Maamor, *Sumbangan Syeikh Ahmad Zain al-Fatani terhadap penulisan hadis*. MA thesis. 2005.



Furthermore, in view of our present investigation, there are several studies that have been done on al-Marbawi and Husayn and their works. They can be divided into two categories. The first is a study which mentions al-Marbawi and Husayn in general and the second is a study which has been specifically focused on them. Studies which represent the first categories are for example by Wan Mohd. Saghīr bin ‘Abd Allah entitled ‘*Perkembangan penulisan Hadith di Asia Tenggara*’ and by Fauzi Deraman entitled ‘*Karya-karya Hadith dalam tulisan Jawi*’<sup>57</sup>.

The second category which has been specifically carried out on al-Marbawi and Husayn can be further divided into two: firstly, the writing on al-Marbawi and Husayn’s life, and secondly, the presentation and publication of several of al-Marbawi and Husayn’s works. Both kinds of works are the results of Mahani Mukhtar’s studies. She is the author of ‘*Shaykh Muhammad Idris bin ‘Abd al Ra‘uf al-Marbawī: sejarah dan sumbangannya di bidang penulisan*’. Some useful information was later added to this biographical survey in Faisal bin Ahmad Shah’s research entitled ‘*Metodologi penulisan Muhamed Idris al-Marbawī dalam Baḥr al-Mādhī*’ which was done for his PhD thesis at the University of Malaya in 2007. Studies about Husayn’s life have been carried out by Ishak Mohd. Rejab entitled ‘*Haji Husain Mohd Nasir al-Mas‘udi al-Banjari*’, in Ismail Mat (ed.), *Ulama silam dalam kenangan*, UKM, Bangi, Malaysia, in 1993. These writings give vivid descriptions of al-Marbawi and Husayn’s life, education, intellectual activities, their students and their works.

In addition, as can be gathered from the list of studies just given, the attention of scholars has been largely focused on *Ḥadīth* scholars emerging from seventeenth century in Aceh. Only few studies have been done on *Ḥadīth* scholars who lived in this century, such as studies by Mahani, Saghīr, Faisal and Ishak on Malaysian scholars. The studies, first by Faisal and second by Ishak, only mention short descriptions of al-Marbawi and Husayn and their works although it cannot be denied that they have highlighted the importance of al-Marbawi and Husayn as scholars and transmitters of the *Ḥadīth* in the intellectual of realm of the Malay world.

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<sup>57</sup> Fauzi Deraman, *Karya-karya Hadith dalam tulisan Jawi*, *Journal Usuludin*, December 1999, no.10, pp.163-173.



The efforts made by Mahani to enlighten our knowledge concerning al-Marbawi's life and his intellectual activities are unquestionably significant. Al-Marbawi has been a popular figure among the Malays, but his biographical data and contributions are not publicly known and recognized. Mahani's information on al-Marbawi thus proves decisively important.

As far as I am concerned, no comprehensive critical study on *Ḥadīth* works, historically, has been done on the *Ḥadīth* written by the intellectual Malays. In fact, little attempt has been made to provide a critical analysis of the *Ḥadīth* in the Malay world (between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries) for instance Wan Saghir. According to Wan Saghir, during twentieth century scholars were profoundly involved in *Ḥadīth* works. They acted according to the challenge of polemics and issues which were facing the Malay Muslims in their religious, political and social life. Their active participation also derived from the effect of the controversies between *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda*, and those who would like to free themselves from the disciplined intellectual control of Sunni classical scholarship in Malaysia<sup>58</sup>. Regarding this phenomenon, then, it is crucial for this study to evaluate relevant research regarding *Ḥadīth* work and their contribution in disseminating *Ḥadīth* to Malay people.

This study is therefore concerned primarily with the use of exegesis of the *Ḥadīth* as a tool for religious, social and political teaching in Malaysia during the early twentieth century. It is an attempt to provide a comprehensive work on the subject of the role of al-Marbawi and Husayn in the transmission to Malay Muslims of fundamental Islamic principles.

Studies and publications of indigenous Islamic writings are useful for many reasons, for example: such writings throw light on the highest achievements of Malay

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<sup>58</sup> Wan Saghir Wan 'Abd Allah, *Perkembangan penulisan Ḥadīth ulama Asia Tenggara*, International seminar on Islamic studies in Southeast Asia (ISIS)20-23 November 1995, p.15

civilization and such documents would also emphasize the effect of Islam upon their language as well as highlight the mentality of Malays in their approach to religious issues

As the conclusion, there are a numbers of studies<sup>59</sup> that have been conducted by local or western scholars investigating the contribution of Malay intellectuals in Malay manuscript especially on Theology, Islamic jurisprudence, and Sufism. The preceding review of Islamic thought and the *Ḥadīth* by Malay scholars indicates that no study has thoroughly examined the *Ḥadīth*'s works that emerged from the Malaysian scholars that show significant influences on the Malay world, particularly on the Muslim society in Malaysia.

### **Methodology of the Research**

The diversity of the problems raised in this study calls for the employment of different research methodological devices for their solution. Research methodology is a framework that guides the researcher in conducting the research appropriately. Basically, it is required to analyze a set of data before any evaluation, justification or examination can be made on the related issues.

Therefore, in the interests of validity and reliability, the study provides multiple sources of evidence. These include tape-recorded in-depth interviews<sup>60</sup> with researchers (in particular with an expert educationalist in twentieth century social, political and religious affairs in Malaysia) and academicians who are biographers of the two great scholars identified. Groups of Malaysian people were selected as respondents in this study who are academicians and scholars (such as Assoc. Prof. Dr

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<sup>59</sup> See Ngah, Mohd Nor. *Kitab Jawi: Islamic Thought of the Malay Muslim Scholars*. Institute of the Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. 1983; Saghir, *Perkembangan Ilmu Fikah dan tokoh-tokohnya di Asia Tenggara*. Tamadani, Solo. 1985; Virginia Matherson and N.B.Hooker. Jawi Literature in Patani: the Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition. *JMBRAS*. Vol.LXI. Part 1. 1988; Wan Yahya Wan Ahmad. The Early Development of Islamic Education in Kelantan, *Journal ISLAMIKA* III,n.d,n.p.

<sup>60</sup> There are three types of interviews; fully structured interview, semi-structured interview and unstructured interview. Denscombe, Martyn. *the good research guide*, Open University Press, Buckingham.Phildalphia, 1998, pp.112-113; Robson, Colin, *Real research world*. Oxford: Blackwell,1993,p.231



Abdul Wahab Salleh, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ariffin Omar and Tuan Haji Hafidz<sup>61</sup>), and who are profoundly involved in Malay manuscripts (for instance Wan Saghir Wan Abullah), biographers, and also specific peoples who are closely related to and/or heirs of these scholars (al-Marbawi and Husayn). Interviews involve a set of assumptions and understandings about the situation which are not normally associated with a casual conversation.

The present study believes that interviews can be a very effective method in this research. It is because an interview is a conversation with a purpose. Thus, this method is a useful technique, as Robson suggests that “interview procedure can be an obvious short cut in seeking answers to research question. He noted further that non-verbal sign may give messages which help in understanding the verbal response”<sup>62</sup>.

Regarding the interview conference, this research applied in-person or face to face interviews<sup>63</sup>. This is because “face to face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one’s line of inquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self administered questionnaires cannot”<sup>64</sup>. This study applied a semi-structured interview<sup>65</sup>, “where the interviewer has planned out a set of questions in advance, but freed herself to modify their order based upon her perception of what seems most appropriate in the context of the conversation”<sup>66</sup>.

As for the purpose of the meeting, the researcher then prepared a great task which required advance preparation and planning. The interviews required careful preparation, such as an arrangement to visit, securing necessary permissions,

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<sup>61</sup> He is a religious scholar who established one of the *pondok* institutions in Malaysia. He used *Bahr al-Madhi* as a main text in teaching *Hadith* in his *pondok*.

<sup>62</sup> Robson, *Real research*, 229.

<sup>63</sup> Creswell, John. W, *Research design qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Sage Publications. 1994,p.151.

<sup>64</sup> Robson, p. 229.

<sup>65</sup> According to Denscombe, semi-structured interview which the interviewer still has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered and perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest.

<sup>66</sup> Robson.p.231.



confirming arrangements, and rescheduling appointments (in terms of covering any absences). Audio tape-recording also has been used during the interview session. It offers a permanent record and security, that is, fully completed evidence in terms of the speech data<sup>67</sup>. Under certain circumstances, especially when interviewees declined to be tape-recorded, the researcher utilized the written field note technique.

In some fields however, it appeared increasingly difficult to obtain highly successful co-operation from potential interviewees<sup>68</sup>. Therefore, due to these reasons and unexpected obstacles, the researcher also considered an interview via e-mail and phone calls<sup>69</sup>.

Thus, this method is used for the analysis of *Ḥadīth* texts in the Malay world and for the reconstruction of al-Marbawi and Husayn's biography and their intellectual activities.

In order to accomplish all the information and data gathering for the present study, library research method was also adopted. The library is the source of a wide range of related written documents such as books, journal, magazines, and newspapers, gathered via website and internet research. I extracted the data from written materials such as manuscripts, articles, books, journals, and newspapers from all of the related institutions such as The National Library of Malaysia, The Islamic Museum of Malaysia, Malays Heritage Centre, The Library of Kedah State, The Library of *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (DBP) and The Library of University of Wales Lampeter. In accordance with the objectives of the study several *Ḥadīth* books which were believed to be evidence of the contribution of prominent Malay scholars in this period has been selected. The *Ḥadīth* books that were purposely chosen for this matter are *Baḥr al-Mādhī* of al-Marbawī and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of Husayn.

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<sup>67</sup>Denscombe, Martyn, *the good research guide*, Open University Press, Buckingham, Philadelphia, 1998,p.122.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p.230

<sup>69</sup> According to Robson, telephone-based surveys interviews are becoming increasingly commonly used as an economical method to replace face-to face interviews. See Robson, p.254.



My approach to the text builds also on the employments of the hermeneutic approach used in the interpretation and understanding of texts. According to Woodward “understanding the internal logic of the text requires exploring its claims on the larger semantic fields in which it is located. These include the Sunni Muslim discourse concerning society, ethics, and ritual, the religious practice, social and political thought”<sup>70</sup>. He further noted that “the *Ḥadīth* translations speak the past by describing the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammadﷺ<sup>71</sup>. They speak the present by placing *Ḥadīth* in the context of Malay social and religious discourse. They speak the future by defining a vision of an ideal Islamic society rooted in the prophetic ideal”<sup>72</sup>.

Woodward also point out that:

In Java<sup>73</sup>, what is not said, or what is said only by implication, is often at least as important as what is said directly. There are linguistic and political reasons for the prevalence of indirect speech in public discourse. In Java, ...direct speech is considered to be rude and insulting. It can also be dangerous. In a political context, where direct criticism of authority is limited, Muslim preachers and authors often invoke the prophetic ideal to critique current social political conditions. Discussions of texts and sermons with Javanese informants indicate that covert messages are often transparent. Many are capable of locating political messages in what, to less discerning ears, appears to be stereological discourse<sup>74</sup>.

This study therefore, is based on historical methods. It is important to note also that research methods used to examine the original writings of al-Marbawi and

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<sup>70</sup> M.R.Woodward, Textual exegesis as social commentary: religious, social and political meanings of Indonesian translations of Arabic *Ḥadīth* texts, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1993, vol.53, pt3, pp.565-583.

<sup>71</sup> S.A.W represents the standard Muslim invocation placed after the prophet’s name: “May God bless Him and grant Him peace”.

<sup>72</sup> Woodward, textual exegesis.

<sup>73</sup> It should be noted here under term *Java*, as it used by Hurgronje, are included all people of Malay race in the fullest meaning of the term; the geographical boundary is perhaps from Siam (Thailand), Melaka to New Guinea. See Snouck Hurgronje, C, *Mekka in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, Leiden and London: E.J.Brill and Luzac, 1931, p.29.

<sup>74</sup> Woodward, textual exegesis.

Husayn are largely ‘qualitative’<sup>75</sup>, and consist of approaches such as ‘hermeneutics and the ‘inferential’ technique of content analysis.

### **Outlines of Chapters**

In accordance with the objectives of the thesis and the problems discussed in it, our study consists of 5 chapters. In the introduction, the subject of the thesis and its significant are briefly explained as well as definition of the objectives set out in the thesis and the methodological approaches used to achieve them.

Chapter 1 discusses the historical background of the *Ḥadīth* with special reference to the compilations of the *Ḥadīth* commentary in early Islam in the Malay world. A historical survey of the compilation of the *Ḥadīth* provides a comprehensive picture of its origin, dissemination and emergence as the most influential *Ḥadīth* development throughout the Muslim world.

Chapter 2 represents a reconstruction of al-Marbawi and Husayn’s biography. It also contains a complete list of their works with brief discussion on their content. Where possible the dates of the works will be established. The main part of this thesis is chapter 3, 4 and 5. Chapter 3 discusses the date, the sources and the purpose of the *Baḥr al-Mādīhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*. The importance of these sources lies in the light they throw on the style of thinking of al-Marbawi and Husayn. Chapter 4 and 5, discussing the significance of *Ḥadīth* texts for Malay Muslims as presented and explained by al-Marbawi and Husayn, is divided, into three parts. The first part offers an explanation and interpretation on the *Ḥadīth* for religious teaching. As part of this, other sources also will be used in order to help us to explain the religious and teaching intelligibly. The second and the third part will be focused on some themes in connection with the political and social teaching as instructed by al-Marbawi and Husayn in their works, such as ‘obedience and disobedience to the rulers’ and ‘the

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<sup>75</sup> This method is suitable when the data is not in the form of numbers and it is also can be applied to examine human’s lives and organizations. See Gary D. Bourma, *A handbook of Social Science Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995,p.207.



significance of *jihad* for Malays'. As wise, scholarly instructors of Malay Muslims therefore, al-Marbawi and Husayn called Malays to strive hard in order to improve their political and social standing. They also believed that Malay backwardness was equally a consequence of the fact that they are not united in struggling for their cause and that they did not follow the true path of Islam as outlined by the Qur`ān and *Ḥadīth*. Finally, in the conclusion, the results of the study are summarized.

## CHAPTER ONE

### A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF *ḤADĪTH* DOCUMENTATION IN EARLY ISLAM

#### 1.0 Introduction

As aforementioned, the present study has a specific objective of illustrating the role of *Baḥr al-Madhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* as a tool in social, political and religious teaching to the Malay readers during twentieth century<sup>1</sup>. In order to achieve these objectives, it is important to illustrate specific topics related to *Ḥadīth* documentation in the early Islamic period in the Malay region, in order to provide the background to this study.

This chapter therefore begins with a brief discussion of the Islamization of the Malay region (where the *Ḥadīth* significantly influences the Malay Muslims in Malaysia) and documentation of the *Ḥadīth* by Malay scholars in this region.

These discussions would help us to understand, firstly, the importance of *Ḥadīth* within Malay-Islamic history and secondly, to understand how the *Ḥadīth* is viewed by the devout and how it came to be regarded as part of Islamic Scripture. However, since the present study has no further attempt to rephrase history, therefore there is no further intent in the present discussion to give detailed descriptions on such topics.

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<sup>1</sup> See 'Introduction Chapter' for further explanation.



## 1.1 Early Development of *Hadīth* Written In the Malay World

### 1.1.(i) The Islamization of the Malay world

This topic deals with a brief discussion of the historical background of Islam and its impact in Malaysia. It is an important topic because the presence of Islam was a transitional period in Malay society. In other words, the Malay character had undergone a great transformation since the conversion. The appearance of *Hadīth* studies in the Malay world, which will be discussed in the following topics, is a consequence of Islamic scholarship<sup>2</sup>.

The study of the Islamization of the Malay world has long attracted the interest of scholars both Easterners and Westerners because its introduction to the region demonstrates uniqueness compared to other parts of the Muslim world<sup>3</sup>. It is important to stress here that the early history of Islam in the Malay world is very complex as there are many problems surrounding its early development in the region. There has been much discussion among scholars, in relation to this, mainly on three major questions; where did the Islam introduced to the indigenous peoples of the Malay world come from? ; when was Islam introduced? ; and finally, who was responsible for bringing and preaching Islam to the peoples of the region? Unfortunately, although many suggestions have been put forward to deal with these questions, there have thus far been no definite answers to these questions<sup>4</sup>.

In the study of the history of the Islamization of Malaysia, various theories<sup>5</sup> and points of view have been presented within a great deal of historical research<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted here that details that led to Islam coming to Malaysia and the events that followed, however, is not going to be dealt with in this present study since it is not an attempt to rewrite history.

<sup>3</sup> Redhuan Othman, *the Middle Eastern influence on the development of religious and political thought in Malay society, 1180-1940*, PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994, p.40.

<sup>4</sup> For the discussion on the theories of Malay Islamisation, see Syed Farid al-Attas, Notes on various theories regarding the Islamization of the Malay Archipelago, *The Muslim World*, vol. 75, Nos. 3-4, July- October 1985, pp. 162-175; Isma'īl Hamid, a survey of theories on the introduction of Islam in the Malay Archipelago, *Islamic Studies*, Vol. XXI, No.3, 1982, p.89.

<sup>5</sup> Syed Farid al-Attas, notes on various, *The Muslim World*, 75 (1985), 162-175.

<sup>6</sup> T.W Arnold, *The preaching of Islam: the history of propagation of the Muslim Earth*, New York: Ms Press, 1974, and S. Q Fatimi., *Islam comes to Malaysia*, Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research



Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas for example presented the evidence for the conversion to Islam found in Terengganu (dating from 1303) which bears an edict regarding Islamic law in Terengganu<sup>7</sup>. Later on, with the rise of the Malacca Sultanate<sup>8</sup>, Islam continued to be spread with much vigour<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, many authors who dealt with the history of the Islamization stressed the fact that Islam was brought to the region by traders either from Arabia, Persia or India<sup>10</sup>.

Generally, the coming of Islam has been seen as a key factor in the change of political, culture and social behaviour in Malay society. However, there are several Western scholars (who have studied its practice and influence among them) denied any profound changes brought by Islam to this society. They consider the process which took place about several hundred years ago to be not a spectacular landmark in their history. J.C. van Leur who was not impressed by the process, suggests that:

The expansion of the new religion did not result in any revolutions or any newly arrived foreign colonist coming to power...nor is there any influence of a cultural sort. Islam did not bring a single innovation of a 'higher level of development' to Indonesia, socially or economically, either in state polity or in trade<sup>11</sup>.

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Institute, 1963, had supported the theory of Indian origin to Islam. Others such as Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas had supported the Arab theory. See Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Preliminary statement on a general theory of the Islamization of the Malay Indonesia- Archipelago*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969.

<sup>7</sup> Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *The correct date of the Trengganu inscription*, Kuala Lumpur: Muzium Negara, 1970, p.24. Hall stated that: '... the earliest Islamic document is a stone inscription at Trengganu with its date defaced. It is somewhere between 1303 and 1387'. See Hall, D.G.E, *A history of South East Asia*, New York: Mac Millan, 1955.

<sup>8</sup> Malacca was became a centre for the propagation of Islam in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Islam was spread through trade and intermarriage between members of royal or merchants' family. Mohd Aris Othman, The sultanate as the basis for Malay political and cultural identity from a historical perspective, *Sari* 1 (2) 161-174, (July 1983), p.165; Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia: A short history*, London: Macmillan, 1954, p.50-51.

<sup>9</sup> Mohd Jamil Mukmin, *Melaka pusat penyebaran Islam di Nusantara*, Malacca: Institute Kajian Sejarah dan patriotism Malaysia, 2004, p.81.

<sup>10</sup> Syed Farid al-Attas, notes on various theories regarding the Islamization of the Malay Archipelago, *The Muslim World* 75, 1985, 162-175; S.Q. Fatimi, *Islam comes to Malaysia*, In Shirle Gordon (ed), Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 1963.

<sup>11</sup> J.C. Van Leur, *Indonesian trade and society*, The Hague and Bandung: van Hoeve, 1955, p.168-69; R.O. Winstedt, *the Malay magician: Being Shaman, Siva and Sufi*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951, pp.73-74; Syed Farid al-Attas, Notes on various theories regarding the Islamization of the Malay Archipelago, *The Muslim World*, 75, 1985, 162-175.



Despite the conclusions made by those scholars, others such as Van Nieuwenhuijze acknowledged that “Islam undoubtedly is an important ingredient in Malay culture and has acted as a means for their social and cultural self-identification”<sup>12</sup>. He further stressed that “the native rulers (for example) who desired a further growth in trading activities in their kingdoms converted to Islam so that they could attract the support of the Muslim traders with their economic resources”. Moreover, he confirmed that “through their conversion and their enlistment of the support of the traders, the native rulers were able to legitimize their rule and at the same time resist the influence of the Hindu Kingdom of Majapahit”<sup>13</sup>.

Similarly, Syed Muḥammad Naguib al-Attas admits that some changes took place in Malay society with the coming of Islam. A significant impact of the Islamization process in three early periods (from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries) is noticeable in many realms of Malay civilization and society. Regarding Malay literature, al-Attas drew attention to Muslim Malay writing at the end of this period:

The 16th and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed the unrivalled prolificness of Malay writing on philosophical mysticism and rational theology. The first Malay translation of the Qur’ān with commentary based on al-Bayḍawī’s famous commentary and translations, commentaries and originals on philosophical mystics and rational theology also appeared during this period which marked the rise of rationalism and intellectualism not manifested anywhere before in the Archipelago<sup>14</sup>.

Al-Attas further added to this discussion that in fifteenth century Muslim Malacca became a centre of Islamic culture in the Malay world. He, therefore, affirms that as a result of the influence of this new centre, the Islamic literature (for example *Ḥadīth* studies), mysticism and law were studied, and large parts of the region were Islamized<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> C.A.O. van Nieuwenhuijze, Legacy of Islam in Indonesia, *The Muslim world*, Vol. LIX, Nos. 3-4, July-October, 1969, p.210 cited by Redhuan, *Middle East*, p.51.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement on a general theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1969, p.28.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

As a result of the rise of the Malacca Empire, al-Attas claims that Malay was then used as the literary and philosophical language of Islam in the Malay world which gave it the status of a literary language and as the lingua franca of the Malay region<sup>16</sup>. Eventually, the extensive use of the Malay language for the flowering of Islamic literature and religion led to its modernization and made its widespread use possible throughout the Malay world<sup>17</sup>. In support of this view, Redhuan indicates that the comprehensive utilization of the Malay language also enriched its vocabulary through the borrowing of a large number of Arabic, Persian and some Turkish words. He concludes that these activities led of the utilization of the Arabic script as a medium of writing which was known in Malay as *Jawi*<sup>18</sup>.

The writing system of the Malay language, which dates back to the seventh century, was quite different from its counterpart today as claimed by Madmarn. It is believed that:

The ancient inscription stones found in Sumatera and Bangka indicated that the writing system of Malay was adopted from the Indian Pali script, an evidence of Hindu-Budhist influence in the area during that time<sup>19</sup>.

Madmarn, who discusses the influence of Islam to Malays, proposed that this ancient system of writing was then almost totally replaced by the Arabic script, due to the spreading of Islamic influence into the regions. According to him:

With the Islamization of the Malay Peninsular in the thirteen century, Islam brought with the message of the Qur'ān and its script. Thus, abandoning original Indian script, the Malays adopted the Arabic writing system with certain modifications to suit the local phonological system<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Islam dalam sejarah dan Kebudayaan Melayu*, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1972,p.21.

<sup>17</sup> Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Preliminary Statement*, pp.74-75.

<sup>18</sup> Redhuan, *Middle East*, p.53.

<sup>19</sup> Madmarn, *The pondok & madrasah in Patani*, UKM, Bangi, 2002,p.40.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



For many centuries, even up to early Husayn and al-Marbawi's century, *Jawi* was the dominant writing in the Malay world, widely used in the court and outside for writing. This has become increasingly important because usage of *Jawi* script would and could enhance the study of Islam especially the Holy Qur'ān. Most of these materials are finding their way into larger and less specialized collections<sup>21</sup>.

As a result, Islam played an important role in promoting language as the standard medium of communication in the region, the *da'wah* (missionaries) activities and production of Islamic religious treatises<sup>22</sup>. Thus, the writing of Islamic studies in Malay has eventually led to the development of the Malay language, and has become the major medium for transmitting various branches of Islamic studies such as the *Ḥadīth* in the archipelago.

### 1.1(ii). The Earliest *Ḥadīth* Written by Malay Scholars

Since there is no agreement on the exact date of when Islam was introduced into the Malay world, it is, therefore, almost impossible to ascertain precisely when the indigenous population of the region first became acquainted with written *Ḥadīth*. Nevertheless, Martin Van Bruinessen believed that some forms of written *Ḥadīth* were taught to the Malay region simultaneously with the coming of Islam<sup>23</sup>. This is mainly because there are two main sources for an understanding of Islam; the Holy Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*.

According to 'Abd Allah the prophetic *Ḥadīth* which was appointed as one of the main sources of Islam is well-established and recognized by almost the entire

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<sup>21</sup> It must be noted here that *Jawi* characters contained additional characters in addition to 29 original Arabic characters to accommodate the Malay words and these characters are: (g),(ng),(p),(nya),and (c). See <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla65/papers/150-155e.htm>, Nafisah Ahmad, National Library of Malaysia, Romanization of multiscript/multilingual materials: experiences of Malaysia.

<sup>22</sup> A.H.Johns, Sufism as a category in Indonesian literature and history, *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, II, 1961, 14. For a discussion of Malay-Ottoman relations see A. Seljuq, Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Malay Kingdoms in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, DI,LVII 1980,pp. 301-10.

<sup>23</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen, *Kitab Kuning*, 3<sup>rd</sup>. edtn., Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1999,p.162.

Muslim community in the world. This recognition covers both formal and informal levels; it was a source of guidance for the rulers as well as for judges and scholars who were dealing with matters of law regarding all aspects of life<sup>24</sup>.

We saw that a number of verses of the Qur'ān describe the roles of the Prophet such as:

'He is the authority in the way the Holy Qur'ān has to be recited'; 'he has the final word in the interpretation of the Qur'ān'; 'he is the only source at which the wisdom based on divine guidance can be learned and he is entrusted with the practical training of the people to bring his teachings into practice'<sup>25</sup>.

These roles however can never be carried out unless his (the Prophet's) teachings, both oral and practical are held to be authoritative for his followers who are placed under his training to obey and follow him<sup>26</sup>. For this reason, the Qur'ān clearly expressed specific terms which give Muslims a mandatory order to obey and follow him.

Since the Qur'ān is the word of Allah (S.W.T), it must be strictly followed. Similarly in the same way the teachings in the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* must be observed by all who admit to being Muslims<sup>27</sup>, as the Qur'ān says: "And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it. And whatsoever he forbids, abstain (from it)"<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> M.Z. Abdullah, *Abdul Qadir al-Jilani: His contributions to the methodological studies of Islamic Dacwah (mission)*, PhD Thesis, University of Kent, 1990.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Qur'ān 3:164, 62:2, 2:129

<sup>26</sup> For more details about the principles have taken by Prophet (Ṣ.A.W), see Beyanouni, F, *Ḥadīth and its principles in the early days of Islam: A critical study of Western approach*, University Of Glasgow: 2003, PhD Thesis; M.A. Nadwi, Review: The development of exegesis in early Islam: the authenticity of Muslim literature from the formative period, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, p. 375; 'Azami, *studies*, p.9.

<sup>27</sup> Y.Dutton, *Sunna, Ḥadīth and Madina 'Amal*, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1993, vol., 4.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Qur'ān, 59:7.



the *Ḥadīth* in the Malay region is the influence of several prominent Sufi scholars (for example al-Raniri and al-Sinkili) and the establishment of such events centralized in Aceh<sup>33</sup>.

The following topics thereby presents a substantial discussion of the works of al-Raniri and al-Sinkili on the *Ḥadīth* in the Malay region. In the present study, al-Sinkili's work was put forward to an extensive discussion as his work reveals the progress<sup>34</sup> and the great system of *Ḥadīth* writing applied by Malay scholars<sup>35</sup>. However, it should also be stressed here that this study has no further intention to present an in-depth description of al-Raniri's work since detailed research has been conducted by numerous scholars such as Azra<sup>36</sup> Muhiden<sup>37</sup> and Saghir.

### 1.1.ii(a) *Hidāyat Al-Ḥabīb Fī Al-Targhīb Wa Al- Tarhīb*<sup>38</sup> of al-Raniri

As far as the evidence permits, the earliest documentation of *Ḥadīth* works by Malay scholars in the Malay world was produced by a Hadramī Ṣufi, Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad bin ʿAli bin Hasanji al-Hamīd (or al-Humayd) al-Shāfiʿī al-Ashʿarī al-Aydarūsī, entitled *Hidāyat al-habīb fī al-targhīb wa al- tarhīb*. Al-Raniri, whose ancestors are reported by Azra to have originated from al-Hadramī, was born in Ranir<sup>39</sup> (modern Randir) an old harbour on the Gujarat coast<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> Aceh is the most important centre of Islamic learning and trade centre in the Malay region between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was located in North Sumatra. See Azra, p.52.

<sup>34</sup> Similarly, on his translation of al-Nawawi's forty *ḥadīth* has been useful for Malay scholars in the archipelago and in Malaysia as well.

<sup>35</sup> For example Husayn and al-Marbawi.

<sup>36</sup> See Azra, *the Origins of Islamic Reformism in South East Asia*, p.

<sup>37</sup> Mohd. Muhiden ʿAbd. Rahman., *Sheikh Nuruddin al-Raniri dan sumbangannya kepada pengajian al-Ḥadīth: kajian terhadap Kitāb al-Fawa'id al-Bahiyah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawiyah* Ph.D Thesis, Jabatan Al-Quran dan al-Ḥadīth, Bahagian Pengajian Usuluddin, Akademi Pengajian Islam, Universiti Malaya, 2003.

<sup>38</sup> This book belongs to Malay Manuscript Centre of National Library of Malaysia or *Pusat Manuskrip Melayu Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia*, (PNM), class number MS 1042.

<sup>39</sup> In the first half of the sixteenth century, Ranir was an important and busy harbour that attracted Arabs, Persian, Turks and Malays to trade or settle there.

<sup>40</sup> Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Raniri and the wujudiyyah of 17<sup>th</sup> century Aceh* in Monograph of the Malaysian Branch Royal Asiatic Society III, 1966,p.12



Thus, throughout the Muslim world, *Ḥadīth* are held to be second in authority and importance only to the Qur'ān. For Muslims, *Ḥadīth* are valued as authority sources of legal knowledge and, owing to the sinless nature of the Prophet's conduct, as a model for Muslim piety and social life<sup>29</sup>.

According to Azwira, the developments of *Ḥadīth* commentary extended from Middle East on to other parts of the Islamic world. In this, Azwira (who describes the introduction and the developments of *Ḥadīth* commentary outside Middle East to the Malay world as the most important event in the history of *Ḥadīth* written in the region) asserts that written *Ḥadīth* has played the most important role in transforming Prophetic *Ḥadīth* to the Malay Muslim community. He further stated that the nature of travelling of *Ḥadīth* scholars from centres of the Muslim world to peripheral regions, carried Islamic beliefs and ideas across language frontiers, and thus accelerated the spread of the *Ḥadīth*. As a result, a number of commentaries were written<sup>30</sup>.

Azwira then concludes that the commentary on the development of the *Ḥadīth* had clearly been moved from the Middle East to the Malay world, though it less certain where it came from. Azwira however affirms that it probably came from or *via* India<sup>31</sup> (due to the Islamization of the Malay world) and from there it reached North Sumatra, and was then disseminated to all over the Malay world.

According to the previous studies<sup>32</sup> the earliest pioneers in compiling the *Ḥadīth* among Malays are al-Raniri, al-Sinkili and ʿAbd Allah al-Faṭani. Previous studies also showed that the most striking features of this period concerning works on

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<sup>29</sup> Voll, *Ḥadīth* scholars and *Tariqahs*: an ulama group in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Haramayn and their impact in the Islamic world. *Journal of Asian and African studies*. 1980.15, 264.p.1.

<sup>30</sup> Azwira, *Ḥadīth*, p.56-57.

<sup>31</sup> Among the scholars from India that were involved in this field is al-Mulla ʿAli al-Qari (1014H), Shah Waliyullah al-Dihlawi (1176H), al-Sonʿanī (1182AH) on *Tauḍih al-afkar* by and Muhammad ʿAbd. Hayy al-Lakanawi (1264H).

<sup>32</sup> Saghir, *penulisan hadith di Asia Tenggara*, p.2-3.; Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in South East Asia*, 2004



According to al-Attas, al-Raniri's father was a Hadramī<sup>41</sup> immigrant with a long tradition of migrating to South East Asia but his mother was Malay<sup>42</sup>. Although his date of birth is unknown precisely, most of the present scholars (for example, Azra and al-Attas), claim that it may probably have been towards the end of the sixteenth century. His ancestors belonged to the al-Hamīd family of the Zuhra, (one of the 10 tribes of the Quraysh)<sup>43</sup>. Not much is known about his early life, except that according to Azra, he acquired his early education in Ranir, and later continued his study with the prominent scholars in the Hadramawt region<sup>44</sup>.

In Hadramawt, he is said to have studied with a well-known teacher of the time, Shaykh Abū Hafs ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd Allah Ba Shayban al-Tarimi al-Hadrami (d. 1656), who initiated him into the *Rifaʿiyyah* order (an old Arab *tariqah*)<sup>45</sup>. According to Azra, Ba Shayban<sup>46</sup> appointed al-Raniri as his *khalīfah* of the *tariqah* (spiritual sufi path) and was therefore responsible for spreading it in the Malay region<sup>47</sup>. Ba Shayban, one of al-Raniri's well-known teachers, was well-recognized as a great Sufi during his lifetime as well as a distinguished scholar of the *Ḥadīth*. He initially studied in Arabia, but later settled in India where he was appointed into the *Rifaʿiyyah* order by Sayyid Muhammad ibn ʿAbd Allah al-Aydarus<sup>48</sup> at Surat.

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<sup>41</sup> Generally, in the sixteenth century, the Hadramis would send their children and youth to their ancestral home (Hadramawt), Yemen and to Mecca and Medina to pursue their religious studies. On completion of their studies, most of them returned to their birthplaces or traveled elsewhere in the Muslim world. This pattern of life among Hadrami immigrants indeed can be observed clearly in the experience of al-Rānirī himself.

<sup>42</sup> Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Raniri*, p.12-13.

<sup>43</sup> Among the prominent Zuhra tribes was ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn ʿAwf, a close companion of the Prophet ﷺ. For further discussion about his life see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *A commentary on the Hujjat al-Siddiq of Nur al-Din al-Rānirī*, Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture, 1986, xiii, 8-12.p.3; Azra, p.54.

<sup>44</sup> For further detail to his education see Azra, p.56-62.

<sup>45</sup> The *Rifaʿiyyah tariqah*, one of the most widespread orders until the fifteenth century, was known for its transitory annihilation in Absolute Reality; its Sufis were noted for their fire resisting and snake-charming skills. See J.S. Trimingham, *the Sufi orders in Islam*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, 37-40; Azra, p.56.

<sup>46</sup> Ba Shayban studied with prominent scholars in Mecca and Medina. Also, in connection with his teachers it appears that he was from al-Shāfiʿī School. For Ba Shayban teachers and disciples see Azra, p. 56-7.

<sup>47</sup> For accounts of the spread of the *Rifaʿiyyah* order in Aceh and other parts in archipelago, see Aboebakar Atjeh, *Tarekat dalam tasawwuf*, Kota Bharu: Pustaka Aman, 1979, pp. 95-98.

<sup>48</sup> He was a great *Sufi* and *ʿalim* and was known as the '*Sahib Surat*' (master of Surat).



During his lifetime, al-Raniri befriended many well-known scholars who were not only known in Tarim but also in Mecca and Medina. One of his friends was a great *Ḥadīth* figure known as Abū Bakr ibn Shihab (d. 1651)<sup>49</sup>. According to Azra, among the important scholars in Tarim where al-Raniri studied with, for example, ʿAbd Allah ibn Shaykh al-Aydarūs, a disciple of Ahmad al-Qushāshi (who also al-Sinkili’s teacher), was ʿAbd al-Azīz al-Zamzami and his son, Zayn al-ʿAbidīn; Qaḍi ʿAbd al-Raḥman ibn Shihab al-Din al-Saqqaf (1538-1605)<sup>50</sup>.

Indeed, during his lifetime al-Raniri was recognized as a great Ṣufi, a distinguished scholar of the *Ḥadīth* and a prolific and knowledgeable writer who wrote no less than 29 works. His works deal mainly with Sufism, jurisprudence, *Ḥadīth*, History<sup>51</sup> and Comparative Religion<sup>52</sup>.

As stated earlier, the *Hidayat al-habīb fī al-targhīb wa al-tarhīb* (‘The encouragement to good and discouragement from evil’) is the earliest of the *Ḥadīth* work by Malay scholars in the Malay world. It is a short treatise written by al-Rāniri to explain the importance of *Ḥadīth* in the life of Muslims which he translated from Arabic into the Malay language. Realising the need for this kind of text and at the same time highly aware that the Arabic language was generally hard for the Malays to understand al-Raniri therefore purposely prepared this Malay translation for the Malay readers.

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<sup>49</sup> According to Azra, al-Muhibbi pointed out that Abu Bakr al-Shihab was a great traditionist (*al-muhaddith al-kabir*), had studied in the Yemen and the Haramayn (Mecca and Medina) before establishing his carrier in Tarim. See Azra, p.174.

<sup>50</sup> He was a leading scholar in the Hadramawt region. He was well-known in *Hadith, Fiqh, Tafsir* and *Tasawwuf*. See Azra, p.173.

<sup>51</sup> He was the first writer in Malay to present a history in a universal context, and to initiate a new form of Malay historical writing. His work is called the *Bustan al-Salatin* and it has been an indispensable source for reconstruction of the early history of Islam in the Malay World.

<sup>52</sup> He was the first scholar ever in the Malay region to write a work on comparative religion entitled *Tibyan fī Ma'rifat al-Adyan*. The *Tibyan* was apparently planned according to the *Kitab al-milal wa al-nihal*, the well-known work on comparative religion by al-Shahrastani.



According to Azra, because the application of Islamic law could not be intensified without a deeper knowledge of the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ al-Raniri, therefore, compiled prophetic *Ḥadīth* in his *Hidāyat al-habīb*<sup>53</sup>. The Muslim population in the Malay region would then be able to understand them correctly as they were written in the vernacular language. In this concise compendium, al-Raniri interpolates the *Ḥadīth* with citations of the Qur'ānic verses in order to support the arguments attached to the *Ḥadīth*, and each chapter bears a heading which is descriptive of its contents. This work contains eight hundred and thirty one *Ḥadīth* which include forty six chapters in Arabic and is translated into the Malay language.

The *Hidāyat al-habīb* had occupied an important place in the history of the development of *Ḥadīth* works in the Malay world, where it had a remarkable degree of popularity in Aceh and Java in that period. Al-Attas suggests that *Hidāyat al-habīb* was written as early as 1635 (in Pahang<sup>54</sup> and brought to Aceh<sup>55</sup>) and it could have become known to the people of the region in the following pilgrimage season after it was written for Aceh, the first area to have been under the influence of the *Hidāyat al-habīb*.

According to Azra, although this is not a comprehensive work of the subject, it nevertheless provides a set of guidelines of methods of reconciliation and preference of *Ḥadīth* in the Malay region. The fact, that the *Hidāyat al-Habīb* was published by later scholars reflects the importance of the work as well as the intellectual status of al-Raniri. Unfortunately, although it was widely circulated in the past the *Hidāyat al-Habīb* is no longer used in this region nowadays. It is believed that the young generation does not fully understand the writing script and the classical language.

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<sup>53</sup> Azra, the origins, p.54-63.

<sup>54</sup> Today Pahang is one of the states in Malaysia, however, in that century Pahang was dominated by Aceh. See Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Raniri*, p.13.

<sup>55</sup> Yahaya, Mahayudin. *Naskah Jawi Sejarah dan Teks*. vol.1., Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka: Kuala Lumpur, 1994. p.48

Importantly, a hundred years later, this work was printed by Shaykh Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Faṭani (known as *Al-fawā'id al-bahiyah fi al-ahādīthīn nabawiyyah*) and appeared on the margin of the great book *Hashiyah jam'ul fawā'id* of Shaykh Dawūd al-Faṭani.

**1.1. ii (b) The Commentary of *Sharḥ Laṭīf 'ala Arba'in Hadith Li al-Imām an-Nawāwī*<sup>56</sup> of al-Sinkili.**

There are other significant works of key scholars who were well-known to us and who wrote on relevant topics in the early and mid-seventeenth century. Amongst them is a Sumatran scholar, 'Abd al-Ra'ūf bin Ali al-Jawi al-Fansūri al-Sinkili. As his name indicates, he was a Malay of Fansūr, Sinkil (modern Singkel), in the south-western coastal region of Aceh<sup>57</sup>. Saghir, however, claims that al-Sinkili's name is Shaykh Amin al-Dīn 'Abd Raūf bin 'Ali al-Fansūrī as it appears in *Mukhtaṣar Tasnif Shaykh 'Abd al-Raūf bin 'Ali al-Fansuri* (by Shaykh 'Abd Ra'uf in *Makhalid Khalifah al-Qadiri al-Bantani*)<sup>58</sup>.

Al-Sinkili's birth dates are unknown, probably early of the seventeenth century although it seems likely that he lived and wrote some year's later than al-Raniri. According to Azra, Rinkes suggests that he was born approximately 1615<sup>59</sup> and died in 1690, while al-Raniri served as *Shaykh al-Islam* of Aceh (between 1637 and 1644, before leaving for Ranir, India, where he died in 1658). However, Saghir proposed that al-Sinkili was born in 1592 that is 23 years earlier than Rinkes' suggestion<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> Belongs to Malay Manuscript Centre of National Library of Malaysia or *Pusat Manuskrip Melayu Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia*, (PNM), MS1314, and Folio 204-339.

<sup>57</sup> Azra p.70-71.

<sup>58</sup> Saghir, *penyebaran Islam dan sisilah ulama sejagat Dunia Melayu*, vol.5, 1999., p.11.

<sup>59</sup> Azra, p.71.

<sup>60</sup> Saghir, *Khazanah Karya Pusaka Asia Tenggara*, vol.1, p.128-129



According to Azra and Saghir, “al-Sinkili has left us with a biographical supplement of his studies in the Middle East”<sup>61</sup>. In the appendix attached to the colophon of one of his works, *‘umdat al-muhtajin ila suluk maslak al-mufridin*<sup>62</sup>, al-Sinkili has supplied us with information of the teachers from whom he learnt, the scholars he met and the places where he studied. Although the account is rather concise, it gives us an excellent representation of how Malay scholars travelled to acquire knowledge and it also shows the process of transmission of Islamic learning among Muslim scholars.

In addition, Azra stated that the seventeenth century marks the emergence of the interaction between Sufism and *Ḥadīth* scholars. Therefore, “*Ṣufi tariqah* provided a more personal tie and common set of affiliations that helped to give the informal groupings of scholars a greater sense of cohesion”. Azra further claims that, for the teacher and student of the *Ḥadīth* in Middle East, *tariqah* affiliation was almost always an important part of their self-identification. This can be evidenced from the care they took in recording not only the *isnad Ḥadīth* but also the *tariqah silsilah*<sup>63</sup>.

According to Azra also, al-Sinkili possibly left Aceh in 1642 in the pursuit of knowledge<sup>64</sup> and also spent 19 years in the Middle East. He studied in a number of places in the Middle East, which is along the *Hajj* routes (such as Doha, Yemen, Jeddah, Mecca and Medina and Egypt). Al-Sinkili illustrates that he learnt from 19 teachers in various branches of Islamic discipline, and also stated 27 other scholars with whom he had personal contacts and relations. This research however does not give detailed accounts of all his teachers of Islamic sciences. Among al-Sinkili’s most prominent teachers in his studies of the *Ḥadīth* are Shaykh Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd Allah

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.; Azra, pp70-86.

<sup>62</sup> MS Jakarta National Library, M1.107 B ; Saghir, *khazanah*. p.128-129.

<sup>63</sup> Literally this means ‘chain’, but it is used to refer specifically to the concept among Sufis of a line of past masters through whom teachings about spiritual enlightenment is passed, one generation after the other. See [http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/islam/bldef\\_silsilah.htm](http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/islam/bldef_silsilah.htm).

<sup>64</sup> Azra, p.73.

ibn Ja'aman, Ali ibn Muhammad al-Dayba' and Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Kurani. The most prominent among them in teaching *Ḥadīth* studies<sup>65</sup> will briefly be identified below.

During his life in Yemen, al-Sinkīlī studied and established relations with many scholars mostly of the Ja'aman family such as Shaykh Ibrāhīm ibn Abd Allah ibn Ja'aman (1672)<sup>66</sup>, al-Ṭayyib ibn Abī al-Qaim ibn Ja'aman and Ishaq ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'aman. According to Azra, al-Sinkili was also a disciple of Shaykh Amin Siddiq al-Mizjaji and 'Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Dayba', both in Zabid, Yemen. It is believed that Al-Dayba' is a scholar of the *Hadith* who had close relationships with the Ṭabaṛī family and other scholars in Mecca and Medina<sup>67</sup>.

Azra also pointed out that another of al-Sinkili's places, where he searched for knowledge, was Jeddah where he studied with Shaykh 'Abd al-Qaḍīr al-Barkhali (*Mufti* of Jeddah). He then continued his travels to Mecca and learnt from great scholars in *Ḥadīth* studies such as Shaykh 'Ali ibn 'Abd al-Qadir al-Ṭabaṛī (d.1660) and Shaykh Badr al-Dīn al-Lahuri. In addition, when al-Sinkili was in Medina, he studied with prominent scholars in *Ḥadīth* studies such as Shaykh Ahmad al-Qushashi (d.1661), Shaykh Ibrahim al-Kurani<sup>68</sup> (d. 1690), and Shaykh 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'd Allah al-Lahuri<sup>69</sup> (d. 1673).

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<sup>65</sup> Azra, p.73.

<sup>66</sup> Mostly known as a *Muhaddith* and *faqih* in Bayt al-Faqih. He was a prolific author of *fatwas* and therefore, one of the greatest scholars in the area.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Kattani, *Fahras*, II, p.587.

<sup>68</sup> His name is Burhan al-Din Ibrahim ibn Hasan ibn Shihab al-Din al-Kurani al-Shahrazuri al-Shahrani al-Kurdi, was born in Shahrin, a village in the mountainous region of Kurdistan close to the borders of Persia. See al-Hamawi, Mustafa Fath Allah (d.1711), *Fawa'id al-irtihal wa nata'ij al-safar al-akhbar ahl al-qarn al-hadi 'ashar*, 3 vols, Cairo: MS *Dār al-Kutub al-Misriyyah*, 1093, vol.I, pp.21-32.

<sup>69</sup> He is a *muhaddith*, was known to be very active in introducing to the scholars of Mecca and Medina the teachings of such Indian scholars as Mula 'Abd al-Hakim al-Siyalkuti and 'Abd al-Haq al-Muhaddith Dihlawi. Among his student in Mecca and Medina were Abū Tahir ibn Ibrahim al-Kurani and Shah Wali Allah. See Azra, p.161.



According to Azra, al-Kurani was a great scholar in *Ḥadīth* studies in Medina and a disciple of al-Qushāshī. Azra also indicates that al-Muradi calls al-Kurani “a mountain among mountains of ‘knowledge’ and a sea among seas of ‘*irfan*’ (spiritual knowledge)”<sup>70</sup>. Moreover, the Indian *Hadith* scholar (Abū Ṭayyib Muḥammad Shams al-Haq al-<sup>c</sup>Azimabadi [b.1857]), noted al-Kurani as the reformer (*mujaddid*) of the seventeenth century<sup>71</sup>.

Al-Kattani (as cited by Azra) affirms that al-Kurani was one of the scholars most responsible in Islamic history for spreading the studies of the *Ḥadīth*, its narration and its *isnad* in the Muslim world, as Azra noted:

Despite his growing fascination with Sufism, Ibrahim al-Kurani did not put aside his genuine interest in the *Ḥadīth*. For that reason he travelled to Egypt in 1650, where he studied the *Ḥadīth* its great *muhaddiths*, such as Muhammad ‘Ala’ al-Din Shams al-Dīn al-Bābili al-Qāhirī al-Azharī (1592-1666), Ahmad Shihab al-Dīn al-Khafajī al-Hanafī al-Masrī (d. 1659), and Shaykh Sultan Ahmad ibn Salamah ibn Isma’il al-Mazzahi al-Qāhirī al-Azharī (1577-1644)...these scholars issued him *ijazahs*<sup>72</sup> to teach the *Ḥadīth*<sup>73</sup>.

Clearly, al-Sinkili was highly educated in the study of the *Ḥadīth* with great scholars in Yemen, Mecca and Medina. Undoubtedly, al-Sinkili’s personal

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<sup>70</sup> Azra, p.18.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> *Al-ijaza* means to permit someone to transmit a *Ḥadīth* or a book on the authority of a certain scholar who gave this permission without having read the book to him. There have been different kinds of *Ijazah* in the science of *Ḥadīth* methodology. For further detailed information about the learning of *Ḥadīth* see Ibn Salah, *‘Ulūm al- Ḥadīth*, pp 150 -161; Azami, *studies in Ḥadīth methodology and literature*, p.20; Kamali, *hadith methodology; authenticity, compilation, classification and criticism of Ḥadīth*, Ilmiah Publishers: Malaysia, 2002.

<sup>73</sup> Azra, p.19.

relationship with al-Kurani was very close as al-Kurani himself issued an *'ijazah'*<sup>74</sup> to al-Sinkili to transmit what al-Sinkili had received from him<sup>75</sup>. In addition, al-Sinkili also had complete education in Islamic learning from various Islamic scholars.

It is well-known that al-Sinkili's written work, *Sharḥ laṭīf 'ala arba'in Ḥadīthan li al-imām an-Nawāwī*, is the earliest commentary on the *Ḥadīth* written in the Malay region. It was written because of al-Sinkili's major concerns that some Malays could not understand Arabic fluently. In order to attract the Malays to learn and to understand the *Ḥadīth*<sup>76</sup> accurately, he came up with a commentary which used the Malay (Sumatra) language instead of Arabic for its Malay explanation. In the introduction, he notes the intention of his work:

..And I wrote in the *'lisan al-Jawīyyat al-Samatrani'iyah'* (Sumatran Malay language) so that the people who used the Malay language should understand the *Ḥadīth* precisely'...<sup>77</sup>

Under the rule of Sultanah Safiyyat al-Dīn<sup>78</sup>, his written work contains his commentary on 40 *Ḥadīth* which were written by al-Nawāwī<sup>79</sup>, and which covered many topics. Here, it shows substantial work done by al-Sinkili where he expounds upon *'ibadat* (devotional services) including the concept of faith and other related topics. This work is the first Malay translation of '40 *Ḥadīth* of al-Nawāwī' in the Malay region, and which is always presented in Sufism teaching. In the light of this information, it is evidenced that this is a collection of *Ḥadīth* concerning the basic and practical duties of Muslims in the vernacular language.

<sup>74</sup> Voll, *Ḥadīth* scholars and tariqahs: an ulama group in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Haramayn, *Journal of Asian and African studies*. 1980.15, 264,p.2.

<sup>75</sup> Azra, p77.

<sup>76</sup> At this time in the Malay region, almost of *Hadith* studies were written in the Arabic language by many scholars from the Middle East; for example *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī of al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim of Muslim and others.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Sinkīlī, *Sharḥ Latif Ala Arba'in Hadihtan Li Al-Imam An-Nawawi*, MS 1314, n.d, p.204.

<sup>78</sup> In his entire career in Aceh, al-Sinkīlī was patronized by the Sultanahs (queen of the kingdom).

<sup>79</sup> Al-Nawawī, Muhyi al-Din Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Shafī'ī, Abu Zakariyya; he compiled many famous collections of *hadith*, e.g., *Riyad al-Salihin*. See *al-A'lam*, 9:184-185.



Al-Sinkili, according to Saghir and Azra, was the first scholar in the Malay region who employed a commentary on the 40 *Ḥadīth*. Furthermore, by way of the *Sharḥ* he shows his fellow Muslims that *Ḥadīth* studies are not confined to purely *Ḥadīth* literature but include the discipline of *Ḥadīth* criticism as well, as he declares:

Now then, as I had written the forty *Ḥadīth* were *ṣaḥīḥ* and *ḥasan* which are derived from *Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim* and I was abbreviating the *isnad* because it should be easier to memorize it<sup>80</sup>.

According to Saghir, the selection of al-Nawāwī's 40 *Ḥadīth* selected by al-Sinkili is the first work on which this method was tried out. This was indeed dictated by the fact that since its compilation (in the thirteenth century), this collection has shown remarkably widespread acceptance by Muslims as a work that incorporates a comprehensive selection of well-authenticated *Ḥadīth* of the most key aspects of religious knowledge<sup>81</sup>.

It is also apparent from al-Sinkili's work that his purpose in documenting the *Sharḥ* was not only for the people of the Malay world, but also to be used as a minor treatise in *Ḥadīth* to be learnt by young students where they had to learn and memorize its contents.

Furthermore, one can hardly overestimate the role of the *Sharḥ* in the history of *Ḥadīth* studies in the archipelago. Therefore, Saghir<sup>82</sup> revealed that 'it is in more than one way a landmark in the history of *Ḥadīth* learning in Malay'. It is clear from the statement of Saghir that the *Sharḥ* has contributed significantly to the study of the

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<sup>80</sup> Al-Sinkīlī, *Sharḥ Latif Ala Arba'īn Ḥadīthan Li Al-Imam An-Nawawī*, MS 1314, n.d., p.204, Belongs to Malay Manuscript Centre of National Library of Malaysia or *Pusat Manuskrip Melayu Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia.*, (PNM), MS1314, and Folio 204-339.

<sup>81</sup> Saghir, interview, January 2006.

<sup>82</sup> Saghir, *perkembangan Ḥadīth*, p.4-5.

*Ḥadīth* in the Malay world. It lays the foundation for a bridge between translation and the *Ḥadīth*, and thus stimulates further study of *Ḥadīth* works in Arabic.

Although the *Sharḥ* was a small collection of *Ḥadīth*, Saghir however asserts that it was considered a key contribution to the development of the *Ḥadīth* discipline. This is because al-Sinkili's work on the *Ḥadīth* is masterly and clear<sup>83</sup>. Based on his methodology of writing, the *Sharḥ* is well-accepted as a good introductory text for a learner in the *Ḥadīth* among the Malay Muslims.

In rendering the *Sharḥ* into Malay, al-Sinkili makes it simple or comprehensible to his fellow Malays in general. Furthermore, he leaves out the chain of transmitters and extensive commentaries which might distract the attention of his audience. Thus, it is clear that his intention is that the *Sharḥ* should be easily understood by his readers and as a consequence become a practical guide for life.

In addition, Azra also stated that al-Sinkili's Sufi teachings were against the doctrines of the *wujuddiyyah* group. Therefore the Sultanah Safiyyah, who agreed with *tariqah Shatariyyah*, approached al-Sinkili to attack *wujuddiyyah* teaching academically. She also seeks help from al-Sinkili to end the crisis between their Sufi's *tariqah* with the other groups of Malay scholars (for example Shaykh 'Abd al-Wahab founder of Dayah in Tiro<sup>84</sup> and the group of *wujuddiyyah* doctrines<sup>85</sup>).

Consequently, al-Sinkili composed this commentary on the *Ḥadīth* to support their *tariqah* Sufi. This is indeed historical evidence to support the argument that the commentary was produced in compliance with Sultanah Safiyyah's request<sup>86</sup>.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> One of the areas in the Malay region.

<sup>85</sup> 'Abd al-Rahman Haji Abdullah, *Pemikiran Umat Islam di nusantara sejarah dan perkembangannya hingga abad ke 19*, 1990, p.129.

<sup>86</sup> In addition there was also the fact that such event had occurred in 2<sup>nd</sup> century of Hijri in Medina. The compilation of *Muwatta'* was requested by the ruler of the kingdom. Malik Ibn Anas compiled a *Muwatta'* on requested by Abū Ja'far al-Mansur, the second Abbasid Caliph. At that time, Abu Ja'far al-Mansur was in need of a book which could help him to remove the contradictory juridical decisions on which current practice was based. He asked Malik to put down in writing the scattered legal material in Medina and compile it in one book. The Abbasids were in desperate need of some middle-



Al- Sinkili was also active in spreading his *tariqah* in other parts of the Malay world, *via* his work. Whether he wrote the commentary to comply with his royal Queen or for the sake of people's request is actually another subject to be investigated. Importantly, however, what is clearly shown to us here is that al-Sinkīli took his responsibility very seriously to disseminate the *Ḥadīth* to Malay readers. Through his work, the commentary has occupied an important place in the history of the development of the *Ḥadīth* in the archipelago ever since it was introduced into the region<sup>87</sup>.

### 1.1.ii.( c) The *al-Mawā'iz al-Badi'ah*<sup>88</sup> by al-Sinkili

The significance of al-Sinkili to the development of Islam in Malay world is irrefutable in the field of emphasizing the importance of the *Ḥadīth*. In fact, not only had he established the commentary of Nawawī, he also wrote *al-Mawā'iz al-Badi'ah*, which is a collection of *Ḥadīth Qudsi*<sup>89</sup>. He was the greatest scholar ever in this part

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path which would put an end to legal divergences and the *Muwatta'* of Malik was intended to meet the situation. It is very difficult indeed to determine the exact date of the compilation of the *Muwatta'*, See MY Guraya, Historical background of the compilation of the *Muwatta'* of Malik Ibn Anas, *Islamic Studies*, 1968, vol.,7, PT 4.p.390.

<sup>87</sup>In addition, Saghir stated that there are two copies of the manuscript of *Syarh Latif*. One is kept by himself and the other one is kept in the Malay Manuscript Centre of the National Library of Malaysia or *Pusat Manuskrip Melayu Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia*, (PNM), MS1314, Folio 204-339 which contains 135 pages in manuscript and microfilm form). According to Saghir, this work was hand written in *Jawi* script which used classical Malay language and was completed in 1680. Unfortunately, the Malay readers presently find it difficult to refer to it as the page system is unfamiliar and the manuscript was never published. Saghir, however, managed to translate the first manuscript but he could not finish the job because of some missing pages (uncompleted manuscript). Saghir, *Penyebaran Islam & Silsilah Ulama Sejangat Dunia Melayu*, 1999, vol.5, p.22.

<sup>88</sup> This manuscript belongs to Jakarta National Library, MS Jakarta National Library, and MI 445.

<sup>89</sup> *Hadith Qudsi* is defined as the Divine communication whose revelation is not the part of the Qur'anic miracle. *Hadith Qudsi* is from Allah, the Most Exalted, from the point of view of meaning, and from the Prophet ﷺ from the viewpoint of actual wording. It constitutes what Allah has communicated to the Prophet through revelation or in dreams. The Prophet ﷺ informed others of its meaning in his own words. Accordingly, the Qur'an superior to the *Ḥadīth Qudsi*, because it is actual Word of Allah. See al-Tohan, Mahmud ibn Ahmad, *Taysir Mustalah hadith*, Riyadh :Maktabah al-Ma'arif, 1987,p.127.

of the Malay Muslim world to take on the enormous task of preparing *Ḥadīth Qudsi* in Malay translation. Furthermore, al-Sinkili's selection of these works reflects his genuine concern for his fellow Muslims at the grassroots level. Basically, all he wants is to lead them to a better understanding of the teaching of Islam. As he thought:

I composed this book in order to assist learners understanding upon the *Ḥadīth*.

According to Azra, al-Sinkili's collection of the *Ḥadīth Qudsi* defines fifty teachings concerning Allah (S.W.T) and His relation to creation, Hell and Paradise, and the proper ways for the individual to achieve Allah's favour. Above of all, Azra affirms that "al-Sinkili mainly highlights the need for each Muslim to find harmony between knowledge (*ʿilm*) and good deeds (*ʿamal*). This is because a better Muslim not only should have knowledge but also must do good deeds"<sup>90</sup>.

As al-Sinkili was highly respected by the Malay students and pilgrims of the region, particularly among his own countrymen, his work perhaps was also very popular in Aceh, in which would have helped spread knowledge of the *Ḥadīth* among the local population. According to Azra, the *Mawāʿiz al-Badīʿah* was published in Mecca (in 1892 [fourth or fifth edition])<sup>91</sup>. It was also republished in the twentieth century (in Penang, Malaysia [in 1949]), and it is still used by Muslims in the archipelago.

### 1.1.ii(d) The Contents of These Texts

As stated above, the work of commentaries of the *Ḥadīth* among the Malay began at about the middle of the seventeen century. At this stage, the *Ḥadīth* was grouped

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<sup>90</sup> Azra, p.83

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.,



around particular themes, of which some were classified under separate titles and chapters as exemplified in al-Raniri's work.

As far as al-Raniri's work on the *Ḥadīth* is concerned, his discussion is limited to only several topics in Islamic teaching. In his arrangement of chapters al-Raniri's began with the role of 'intention', followed with a discussion about Islam, the topics of *iman* and *ihsan*, and ended with the funeral conversation and related matters.

However, regarding al-Sinkili's commentary, *Ḥadīth* that relate to the various topics are placed together without being arranged in various chapters. This commentary was comprised of 135 pages which began with numbers 204 to 339. Saghir, however, states that the numbering system employed by al-Sinkili confused the readers. This is because there are two series of different numbering on the same page, for example 204 and 154 (on the same page).

In his work, sometimes, the use of recitation of the name of Allah appeared without any clear reference to either *Ḥadīth Qudsi* or chapters (*sūrah*) in the Qur'ān, therefore, the arrangement of the commentary makes it difficult for users to consult it because the *Ḥadīth* were put down not according to subject matter. But, so far as the objective behind the compilation of the commentary is concerned, one can discern it by casting a glance at its topics.

As far as the methodology of writing is concerned, al-Raniri translated the text (*matn*) of the *Ḥadīth* only, and ignored the chain of transmitters. His focus was on the explanation and elaboration of the *Ḥadīth*. It is perhaps that his interests were on the content of the *Ḥadīth*, and not the problem of the authenticity of the *Ḥadīth* itself.

In their works, al-Raniri and al-Sinkili provide the *Ḥadīth* using handwriting in *Jawi* script without punctuation marks, commas, semi-colons or paragraphs. Al-Sinkili, for example, quoting the *Ḥadīth* or Qur'ānic verses without any mark or sign

and he did not mention the number and the name of the verses. Thus, in these compilations it is quite difficult for the reader or user to distinguish between *Ḥadīth Qudsi* and Qur'ānic verses.

Typically, al-Raniri and al-Sinkili in their works begin with: "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, and Most Merciful". Furthermore, at the end of the work, they ask the readers to correct any mistakes found in their writings and they beg forgiveness from Allah.

In addition, he also brought up and explained the transmitters of the *Ḥadīth* to Nawāwi and also gave a detailed explanation of Nawāwi's biography<sup>92</sup>. Then he stressed the benefit of the 40 *Ḥadīth* of Nawawi to Malay readers<sup>93</sup>.

In order to provide the understanding of his Sufi *tariqah*, al-Sinkili, strongly asserts that ordinary believers must be allowed to read this book on this subject, therefore in his work he sometimes provides the Sufi terms and offers the meaning of difficult words such as *rūh Muḥammad* (the Light of Muhammad).

As identified earlier, during this century, al-Raniri and al-Sinkili worked in the classical Malay language (Pasai or Sumatra language) using *Jawi* script, which is why it sometimes appears to be hard to read or understand nowadays. However, it should be pointed out here that this style of language was used in that society five hundred years ago and thus was recognisable and acceptable within that period to the particular society.

As a result, based on the discussion above, the present study affirms that al-Raniri and al-Sinkili had set-up an example for later Malay scholars to undertake works on small collections of the *Ḥadīth*. In other words, their works on the *Ḥadīth* have great influence on similar works in Malaysia in the nineteenth century onwards.

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<sup>92</sup> Al-Sinkīlī, 209

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 211-213



### 1.1. (iii) The Early Compilation of the *Ḥadīth* By Malay Scholars In Malaysia

Basically, we do not have much information regarding the compilation of the earliest commentaries on the *Ḥadīth* by Malay scholars in the area of Malaysia (Malay Peninsula). Indeed, we affirm that the *Ḥadīth* texts (in Arabic) could have been known in Malaysia as early as the twelve century, factored by the Islamization in this area. It is because there are two main sources for an understanding of Islam: the Holy Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*.

The earliest indication of the existence of the compilation of *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia is *Hidayat al-habīb fi al-targhīb wa al-tarhīb*, written in Pahang, Malaysia. But we do not have any information on it except that it is reported to have been written by al-Raniri and brought to Aceh.

However, it is suggested these *Ḥadīth* texts of al-Rāniri and al-Sinkīli could have been introduced into this area as early as the seventeenth century<sup>94</sup>. This was indicated by two types of evidence. Firstly, many areas of Malaysia fell under the rule of the Acehese kingdom under Iskandar Muda in the first half of the seventeenth century, for example, Johor in 1615, Pahang in 1618, Kedah in 1619 and Perak in 1620<sup>95</sup>. This close contact between this areas and Aceh, thus, could mean that these works have been brought into the subject areas. Indeed, al-Sinkili's work on 40 *Ḥadīth* of Nawawi works has great influence on similar works in Malaysia in the nineteenth century onwards.

Secondly, the quest for Islamic knowledge in the Middle East by Malay students from Malaysia and Patani would have meant that they would have reached

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<sup>94</sup> M.N.Ngah. *Naskhah Jawi Sejarah dan Teks* Jilid 1. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka: Kuala Lumpur. 1994. p. 18.

<sup>95</sup> Fauzi, Al-Fatani, p.58.

Acheh on their way either to or from the Middle East. They could have spent a considerable time there because Acheh was also an important centre for Islamic learning in that period. Their stay in Acheh would have brought them into contact with these works<sup>96</sup>.

Indeed, there are several major *Ḥadīth* texts written by Malay scholars after al-Raniri and al-Sinkili's period, for example Shaykh Dawud al-Fatani, who is among the prominent scholars in the Malay world, produced several *Ḥadīth* texts for Malay readers such as *Farā'id fawā'id fikri fī Imām al-Mahdi*, (in 1800), and *Kashf al-ghummah fī ahwal al-mawta fī al-barzakh wa al-qiyāmah* (in 1822)<sup>97</sup>. This text (*Kashf al-ghummah*) was translated based on the texts from *Sharḥ al-sudur bi sharḥ al al-mawta wa al-qubūr* of al-Allāmah Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭi and *Mukhtaṣar tazkīrah al-Qurtubī* of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Shaʿrani. In this text, he does not only provide the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ but also offers 'Athar' of companions as well. He discussed life after death, the punishment and agony of burial, and the suffering of a dying man.

In addition, Malay scholars sometimes use their native language in this *Ḥadīth* text, such as *Makan dengan garam dan disudahi dengannya*, *Ḥadīth - hadīth pilihan*, *Daftar rijāl al-Ḥadīth* and *Bishārah al-ʿāmilin wa naḍarat al-ghāfilin* of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Fatani, was published by *Maṭbaʿah al-Miriyah* in Mecca (1887).

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<sup>96</sup> Fauzi, p.59.

<sup>97</sup> Shaykh Daud Abdullah al-Fatani, *Kashf al-Ghummah*, n.p: *Dār al-Fikr*, pp.4-5.



As a conclusion, unlike the Aceh or Patani areas about which a great deal of information is available, we know very little about the compilation by Malay scholars of the *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia. The only information we could rely on is in the seventeenth century where it occurred through close contact between Aceh and various parts of Malaysia.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF AL-MARBAWI AND HUSAYN

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an investigation into the part played by al-Marbawi and Husayn in disseminating Islamic teaching in Malaysia. Special attention is given to their connections with their teachers and the chains of their teachers with those leading Islamic scholars in Middle East (Mecca, Medina and Cairo). This focus (upon the connections and chains of Islamic learning<sup>1</sup> of their teachers) can help us weave together the threads of scholarly interaction in Islamic studies during these periods. In addition, it will reveal the authority and superiority of each particular *Ḥadīth* scholar<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, this chapter is an attempt to give a description of the life and works of two of the most respected scholars amongst the Malays, al-Marbawi and Husayn. It is an examination of how their involvement in the chain of networks of Islamic learning influenced their thought and intellectual disposition as well as their writings on Islamic teaching. Accordingly, this chapter focuses on discussion of the intellectual biographies of al-Marbawi and Husayn, as well as those of some of their teachers in the Middle East.

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<sup>1</sup> Among the *isnād ilmiyyah* (chain of transmission of Islamic learning) there exist what are called the *isnād ‘ali* (supreme *isnāds*), which indicate that the sources of authority occupied a higher or even higher position, but also that the studies they had transmitted were of the highest values. See Azra, p.149.

<sup>2</sup> John, O. Voll, *Ḥadīth* scholars and *tariqahs*: an *ulama* group in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Haramayn and their impact in Islamic world. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 15, 1980, 264-272. According to Voll, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, most of the major *Ḥadīth* scholars in the Haramayn had studied *Ḥadīth* with the leading Egyptian *Ḥadīth* scholar, Muhammad bin Ala’ al-Din al-Babili (1600-1677). These students included ‘Abd Allah bin Salim al-Basri (1640-1722), Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Nakhli (1634-1717), Hasan bin Ali al-‘Ujaymi (1639-1701), Ibrāhīm bin Hasan al-Kurāni (1616-1689). Many of the members of this group had significant contact with the Malay regional tradition of *Ḥadīth* scholarship through itinerant Aceh scholars (al-Rāniṛi and al-Sinkīli). For more discussion of the interaction and scholarly networks see Azra, *the origins*.



The rationale for this focus on the major scholars under whom al-Marbawi and Husayn studied is to put those two latter great scholars in proper context, for it is certain that they played an important role in channelling *Hadīth* studies from Mecca, Medina to Cairo and further to the Malay world.

## 2.1 Al-Marbawi: His Life and His Intellectual Activities

### 2.1.1 Al-Marbawi's Background

Al-Marbawi's full name was Shaykh Muhammad Idrīs bin ʿAbd al-Rauf bin Jaʿfar bin Idrīs al-Marbawi al-Azhari<sup>3</sup> al-Malayuwi; he himself however used not his full name, but simply 'Idrīs al-Marbawi'<sup>4</sup>. The affiliation of the word 'al-Marbawi' to his names here indicates that he was a Malay of Lubuk Merbau, Perak (on the northern coastal region of Malaysia). His place of birth, in a village called al-Masfalah<sup>5</sup>, in the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia<sup>6</sup> in 1892 or 1893 and his formative years there thus meant that he had an understanding of both cultures and, more importantly for his writing, both languages.

Al-Marbawi's father, ʿAbd al-Rauf bin Jaʿfar bin Idrīs originated from Minangkabau, (West Sumatra), but migrated to Malaysia. He was widely known as a ʿālim (knowledgeable man) and a pious person in his village, where he was a religious teacher and a preacher as well. He used to travel to and fro between Malaysia and Mecca; at this time according to Ishak and Redhuan, such journeys were common among the

<sup>3</sup> Al-Azhari means he studied in al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt.

<sup>4</sup> Mahani Mokhtar, *Shaykh Muhammad Idrīs Abd al-Ra'uf al-Marbawi; sejarah dan sumbangannya di bidang penulisan*, Academic exercise, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1990, p.15-16; Ismail Mat Ludin, *Shaykh Idris Marbawi dan sumbangannya*, Academic exercise, UKM, 1991, p.1.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Marbawi, al-Azhari, Muhammad Idrīs ʿAbd al-Rauf, *Qamus Idris al-Marbawi*, Miṣr: Maṭbaʿh Muṣṭafa al-Bābi al-Halabi wa awladih, 1350 A.H, vol.1, p. 292.

<sup>6</sup> Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak & Mohammad Redhuan Othman, *the Malays in the Middle East with a bibliography of Malay printed works published in the Middle East*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2000, p. 5-6. See also A. H. Johns, from coastal settlement to Islamic school and city: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.IV, no.4, pp.3-28.

Malays. They also suggested that the Malays habitually began to travel to Mecca and Medina not long after their conversion to Islam<sup>7</sup>.

Al-Marbawi's father, after marrying Asma' binti 'Abd al-Karīm bin Dusah (a local woman of Perak) in the early 1890's, then travelled to Mecca and decided to settle there<sup>8</sup>. They duly took up residence in Mecca<sup>9</sup>, where their child, al-Marbawi, was born. According to Roff, in 1916 there were at least five hundred Malay families living in Mecca<sup>10</sup> among a growing Malay community.

Al-Marbawi was the eldest among six siblings, all brothers; 'Abd Allah, Tahir, 'Abd al-Kadir, Harūn and Hasan. There were also two sisters, but from a different mother.

Al-Marbawi had two wives: the first wife (Khadijah binti Muhammad Adham) was originally from Malaysia while the second (Munirah binti 'Abd al-Wahab) he met and married in Egypt. With Khadijah, al-Marbawi had ten children but only one survived (Mariyam binti Muhammad Idris). However, there were no children from his second marriage.

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<sup>7</sup> Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak *the Malays in the Middle East*, p. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup> Utusan Melayu, 18 May 1975, p.7 & 14.

<sup>9</sup> Mahani, *Idris Abd al-Ra'uf al-Marbawi*, p.15-16.

<sup>10</sup> William Roff, *origins of Malay nationalism*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1980, p.88 cited by Peter G. Riddell, Arab migrants and Islamization in the Malay world during the colonial period, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, Vol.29.,No.84, 2001, pp.113-128.



## 2.1.2 Al-Marbawi's Educational Journey.

### 2.1.2. i. Al-Marbawi's Early Education.

It appears that al-Marbawi<sup>11</sup> acquired his early religious education in Mecca, mainly from his pious father. Al-Marbawi spent his early life (in Mecca) and studied in the school at Masfalah<sup>12</sup>. Unfortunately, not much is known about this schooling in Masfalah nor of his teachers there.

However, since the *Masjīd al-Harām* (Holy Mosque) in Mecca is a centre for advanced studies of Islamic learning<sup>13</sup>, it is widely believed that he must have studied there. <sup>14</sup>Abd al-Salam, for example, mentions that al-Marbawi was in Mecca between 1892 to 1913<sup>14</sup> where he must have undergone his early and basic Islamic studies under great scholars in *Masjīd al-Harām*. Hamka also indicates that one of the most prominent scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Mecca, who greatly influenced Malay students, was Shaykh Ahmad Khaṭīb bin <sup>15</sup>Abd al-Latif al-Minangkabawi<sup>15</sup>, one of the most important of the Minangkabau 'Reformists' and the first scholar of non-Arab origin to be appointed and commissioned by the *Sharīf* of Mecca as one of the Grand Imams (leaders in prayers) at *Masjīd al-Harām*<sup>16</sup>.

Shaykh Aḥmad Khatib was born in Kota Gedang, near Bukit Tinggi, Sumatra, in 1860 and went to Mecca in 1871. In 1878 he married the daughter of a rich Kurdish merchant in Mecca and settled there for the rest of his life. He wrote some forty-nine

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<sup>11</sup> His pen name 'al-Marbawi' originates from the name of the village.

<sup>12</sup> *Al-Islam*, October 1987, p.50.

<sup>13</sup> Peter G. Riddell, Arab migrants and Islamization in the Malay world during the colonial period, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, Vol.29.,No.84, 2001, pp.113-128.

<sup>14</sup> Abdul Salam, Idris al-Marbawi, *Monograph*,p.91.

<sup>15</sup> Azra, *the origins*,p.152.

<sup>16</sup> For his life see Ajahku Hamka, riwayat hidup Dr. H.Abd Karim Amrullah dan perjuangannya di Sumatera, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn., Djakarta: Penerbitan Djajamurni, 1967. p.230-2.

books on religious matters, most of them printed either in Cairo or Mecca: being a scholar of this stature he must have inspired the students of Mecca. Thus, it is probable that al-Marbawi also availed himself of the opportunity to benefit from his teachings during his stay there, especially in theology.

Al-Marbawi thus appears to have studied largely in Mecca before settling down in Malaysia. It is likely, however, that contact with *Jawi* students and pilgrims was frequent at that time before he and his family settled in Malaysia in 1913, as claimed by Shauki Majid<sup>17</sup>. It was after twenty-two years that his family decided to return to Malaysia.

Al-Marbawi's father was a firm believer in education for his children; thus, he sent his son to school even as an adult. For this reason, upon his return to Malaysia at the age of twenty (in 1913), al-Marbawi was schooled at Lubuk Merbau Malay School for the purpose of learning the Malay language<sup>18</sup>.

As an indicator of al-Marbawi's intellectual capacity, it was reported that by the age of ten, he had memorized 16 out of 30 parts of the Holy Qur'an besides numerous *Hadīth*<sup>19</sup>. Once well-versed in the Malay language, al-Marbawi continued his studies in Islamic knowledge at various *pondok*<sup>20</sup> and *madrasah* institutions.

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<sup>17</sup> Shauki Majid, Bakti 95 tahun: ulama yang terus berazam mencurahkan sumbangan, in *Dakwah*, Oktober, 1987, 6.; Tokoh Ma'al Hijrah 1987; Allahyarham Shaykh Muhammad Idris bin 'Abd Rauf al-Marbawī, in <http://www.islam.gov.my/informasi/islam/tokoh/hijrah08.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Mahani, *Idris Abd al-Ra'uf al-Marbawi*, pp.15-16.

<sup>20</sup> The name '*pondok*' in Northern Malaysia then, and even in Malaysia, now, does not mean only the hut in which a student stays, but a generic name for a particular name for a particular area in which such traditional system of Islamic education is available. The name '*pondok*' is then qualified either by the name of the locality or the name of the most prominent religious scholar in the institution. For example, there was then in Kota Bharu itself the Pondok Kubang Pasu, named after the locality Kubang Pasu, to the north of the town centre. See Abd Allah al-Qari, p.88.



It is important to note here that a ‘*madrasah* institution’ was another form of religious school in Malay society at that period<sup>21</sup>, and represented a ‘new intellectual development’. The first of these, according to Azra, was established in Baghdad in 1654 or 1655 by *Nizam al-Mulk* during the time of the Seljuqs (1645-1780); institutions based on this model quickly spread throughout the Muslim world<sup>22</sup>.

Al-Marbawi then continued his further studies at the *pondok*<sup>23</sup> Shaykh Wan Muhammad at Bukit Chandan, Kuala Kangsar, Perak where among his teachers was the *Mufti*<sup>24</sup> of Perak<sup>25</sup>, and Wan Muhammad bin Wan Husayn (1849-1929)<sup>26</sup>. Al-Marbawi then continued his travels settling in Bohor, where he studied with Husayn<sup>27</sup> himself in the *Madrasah al-Khairiyah* institute (also called ‘*pondok* Husayn al-Mas<sup>c</sup>udi’, named after its principal Husayn), although he does not inform us as to when he left Husayn’s *pondok*. He then furthered his study in *Madrasah al-Misriyah* or *pondok* Shaykh Ahmad al-Fatani in Padang Lalang<sup>28</sup>, Bukit Mertajam, Penang<sup>29</sup>, for four years<sup>30</sup>.

After completing his studies in Penang, he travelled to Kelantan on the East Coast, where he learnt Islamic studies and the Arabic language from various scholars such as Shaykh Muhammad Yusuf bin Muhammad better known as Tok Kenali<sup>31</sup> (1868-1933), Ya ‘akob Legur<sup>32</sup> and ‘Ali Pulau Pinang<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> For further information see George Makdisi, *Madrasah and university in the Middle ages*, *Studia Islamica*, 32, 1970, pp.255-264; Munir A. Ahmed, *Muslim education prior to the establishment of madrasah*, *Islamic Studies*, 26:4, 1987, 321-49.

<sup>22</sup> Azra, *the origins*, p.33; Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak & Mohammad Redzuan Othman, *the Malays in the Middle East with a bibliography of Malay printed works published in the Middle East*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2000, p. 5-6.

<sup>23</sup> It is suggested by Azra that the *pondok* system which has developed in Malaysia was originated from Patani. Azra, *the origins*, p.123.

<sup>24</sup> A Mufti is an Islamic scholar who is an interpreter or expounder of Islamic law. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mufti>

<sup>25</sup> *Al-Islam*, October 1987, p.50.

<sup>26</sup> Shauki Majid, tokoh Ma<sup>c</sup>al Hijrah tawaran jadi Mufti, *Dakwah*, December, 1989, p.13.

<sup>27</sup> *Dewan Masyarakat*, 15 January 1980, p.33.

<sup>28</sup> Khoo Kay Kim, Fadil Othman and Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali, *Islam di Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, page introduction.

<sup>29</sup> It was one of the earliest *madrasa* school in Malaysia and established in 1906. See Redhuan, *the role Makka*, p.154.

<sup>30</sup> *Dewan Masyarakat*, July 15 1980, p.33.

<sup>31</sup> For his life see ‘Abd Allah al-Qari bin Salleh, *To’ Kenali: his life and influence’ Kelantan, Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State*, in William R.Roff (ed.), Kuala Lumpur, 1974, 87-100; ‘Abd al-



Tok Kenali, was al-Marbawi's most important teacher in Kelantan, being a prominent Islamic scholar, reformist<sup>34</sup> as well as a prolific writer in Malaysia: he was born in small village (Kampong Kenali) outside the capital of the state, Kota Bharu, Kelantan in 1866 or 1868<sup>35</sup>, where he received his early education before going to Mecca in 1886.

Because Tok Kenali's training was typical, it is worthwhile to give some account of his education. According to Johns, among the first teachers of Tok Kenali were Kelantan Malays, for example Ibrahim and Muhammad Ali bin 'Abd al-Rahman. This teacher (Muhammad Ali bin 'Abd al-Rahman) became well known because of a collection of *Hadith* that he published in Mecca in 1886 under the title *al-Jawhar al-Mawhub*<sup>36</sup>.

At the age of twenty (in 1886) Tok Kenali went to Mecca and remained for twenty two years, also teaching in *Masjid al-Haram*<sup>37</sup>. It is believed that he was a member of the significant Malay community in Mecca which, by 1915, numbered around 56000, excluding children under twelve years of age<sup>38</sup>.

Also, it is worth mentioning briefly Tok Kenali's teachers in Mecca during his studies; he learned from many Arab scholars, for instance, Shaykh Hasbullah (Muhammad bin Sulaiman from Egypt), Shaykh Muhammad bin Yusuf Khayyat, Shaykh

Rahman al-Ahmadi, *Tokoh dan pokok pemikiran Tok Kenali*, Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kebudayaan Belia dan Sukan, 1983.

<sup>32</sup> Ya'kub Legor (1892-1971) full name is Ya'kub bi Ismail bin 'Abd al-Rahman. He was born in Legor, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand, in 1892. He was excellent student of Tok Kenali and appointed as a teacher at Muhammadi Mosque in Kota Bharu. See Uthman al-Muhammady, Tok Kenali, p. 57.

<sup>33</sup> Utusan Melayu, May 18 1975, p.14.

<sup>34</sup> A.H. Johns, from coastal settlement to Islamic school and city: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.IV, No.4, pp.3-28.

<sup>35</sup> Some scholars are not certain of his birth dates. A.H.Johns, from coastal settlement, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.IV, No.4, pp.3-28.

<sup>36</sup> A.H. Johns, from coastal settlement, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.iv, No.4, pp.3-28.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Peter G. Riddell, Arab migrants and Islamization in the Malay world during the colonial period, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol.29, No.84, 2001, pp.113-128.



‘Ubaid (the Mufti of the Maliki School of Law), Shaykh Muḥammad Amin Mardad ( the *Imām* of the Hanafi School of Law), Shaykh Mukhtar ‘Utarid’ and Sayyid ‘Abd Allah bin Sayyid bin Muḥammad Salih al- Zawawi (the mufti of Mecca), who were the great scholars of *Masjid al-Haram* in that period.

Tok Kenali’s teachers in Mecca also included well-known scholars from the Malay world such as Shaykh Ahmad Khatib bin ‘Abd al- Latif al-Minangkabawi and Wan Ali Kutan. Another eminent teacher of Tok Kenali was Shaykh Muḥammad bin Ismail Dawud al-Fatani, and Wan Dawud bin Wan Mustafa al-Fatani. He also was a student of other important scholars including Shaykh Ahmad bin Muḥammad Zayn bin Mustafa al-Fatani, and Shaykh Sayyid Bakri<sup>39</sup>.

While studying in Mecca, Tok Kenali was considerably influenced by the reform concept (*islah*) of Muhammad ‘Abduh<sup>40</sup>. Tok Kenali’s reformist impulse to introduce new religious ideas and institutions is obvious after his return to Kota Bharu, Kelantan. One of the first things he did after his arrival was to establish an Islamic educational institution, which was crucial to the education of Muslims in advancing their understanding of Islamic teachings and practices. He introduced graded textbooks in religious knowledge, and over the years devised a system of graded instruction in Arabic grammar and etymology, which was published posthumously in 1945<sup>41</sup>. Apart from his contribution to education, Tok Kenali also made a notable contribution to religious life in Kelantan as founder member of the ‘Kelantan Religious Council’ and as an editor of its fortnightly journal, *Pengasoh* (the Educator)<sup>42</sup>. He died on 19 November 1933<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> ‘Abd Allah al-Qari, *Detik-detik sejarah Hidup tuk Kenali*, al-Hidayah Publishers: n.p. 2001, p.37.

<sup>40</sup> A.H. Johns, from coastal settlement to Islamic school and city: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.4, No.4, pp.3-28.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.abim.org.my/minda\\_madani/modules/news/article.php?storyid=4](http://www.abim.org.my/minda_madani/modules/news/article.php?storyid=4)

<sup>43</sup> Uthman al-Muhammady, To’ Kenali and Sunni scholarship, in Mohamad@Md.Som Sujimon (ed.), *Monograph on selected Malay intellectuals*, Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia.



According to Johns; Tok Kenali's influence on al-Marbawi was very strong, especially in the field of Arabic<sup>44</sup>, inspiring him, for example, to produce the first Arabic dictionary<sup>45</sup> for Malay speakers. Interestingly, al-Marbawi commented that his early education at al-Muhammadi Mosque, Kelantan took place under those who were as knowledgeable as the scholars at the *Masjid al-Haram* in Mecca<sup>46</sup>.

Later, al-Marbawi returned to Perak and worked as a Qur'anic and religious teacher after receiving a letter of appointment from the Islamic Religious Council of Perak. The Council also agreed to appoint him as a visiting Qur'an teacher. However, his father was not satisfied with al-Marbawi's education and his position and wanted him to continue his studies<sup>47</sup>. Thus, after staying more than ten years in Malaysia and having completed his studies in various institutions, he then pursued his studies at Al-Azhar University of Cairo, Egypt in 1924.

### 2.1.2. ii. Al-Marbawi's Teachers in Egypt

After studying in Malaysia, al-Marbawi undertook his voyage to Egypt in 1924 with his cousin, and after a difficult journey on board a ship named 'The Prince', he set foot on Egyptian soil to further his education. Thus, the last leg of al-Marbawi's long journey in his quest for knowledge was Cairo<sup>48</sup>.

However, not much is known about his learning in al-Azhar University or of his teachers there, except that his education in Egypt was sponsored by his father. Though it is believed that in al-Azhar he met some Malay students, among them Shaykh 'Abd Allah

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<sup>44</sup> A.H. Johns, from coastal settlement, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.IV, No.4, pp.3-28; Abdul Hayie bin Abd al-Syukor mentioned that those who attended the study circles (*halaqat*) of Tok Kenali were encourage memorizing the text al-Ajrumiyah and Alfiyah of Ibn Malik which contains a thousand lines concerning rules on Arabic grammar. Uthman al-Muhammady, p.55.

<sup>45</sup> 'Abd al-Salam, *al-Shaykh Muhammad Idris al-marbawi*, p. 99.

<sup>46</sup> 'Abd al-Rahman al-Ahmadi, *tokoh dan pokok pemikiran Tok Kenali*, Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kebudayaan Belia dan Sukan, 1983, p.17. For an elaboration of contributions of al-Marbawi, see Mohammad Redhuan Othman, *the Middle Eastern influence on the development of religious and political thought in Malay society, 1880-1940*, Ph.D thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994.

<sup>47</sup> 'Abd Allah al-Qari Salleh, *Kamus Idris al-Marbawi*, Kuala Lumpur: Dar al-Nu'man, Sumbangsih.

<sup>48</sup> Dewan Masyarakat, July 15 1980, p.34; Mahani Mokhtar, *al-Marbawi*.



Ibrahim (from Kedah), Shaykh Ahmad Ata'ullah, Shaykh Husayn Said<sup>49</sup> . Shaykh Ahmad bin Sa'ad<sup>50</sup> and Shaykh Abū Bakar al-Ash'ari (1904-1970) who entered al-Azhar in 1925<sup>51</sup>. In al-Azhar, al-Marbawi worked very hard to enhance his knowledge of Islamic studies.

Besides formally enrolling in al-Azhar, he also studied the *Ḥadīth* under the guidance of al-Shaykh Muhammad Ibrahim al-Samaluti<sup>52</sup> (who had a chain of transmission from al-Bukhāri<sup>53</sup>) at *al-Jami' Sayyidina al-Husayn*, one of the mosques close to al-Azhar. Al-Marbawi deepened his understanding of al-Tirmīdhi's *Jami'* through the teaching of al-Samaluti, and he greatly admired the work of this great scholar.

It was for this reason that he devoted some 10 years to translating and commenting upon this great work. Besides this, he also studied other works such as *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, but stressed that the *Jami'* of al-Tirmīdhi is a very special work that is therefore worthy of translation and commentary; it is said that he had read the *Jami'* seven times before starting to translate and to write his commentaries upon it<sup>54</sup>. After completing his study under al-Azhar, he decided to stay in Egypt in order to work as a writer and publisher.

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<sup>49</sup> Ishak, *the Malays in the Middle East*, p.54.

<sup>50</sup> Dewan Masyarakat July 15, 1980,p.34.

<sup>51</sup> Haron Din, al-Shaykh Abū Bakar al-Ash'ari, 1904-1970: Ulama tegas dan berani, in Ismail Mat (ed.), *Ulama Silam Dalam Kenangan*, Bangi: UKM, 1992, p.13.

<sup>52</sup> He was a great scholar who teaches in *Masjid al-Husayn* and *Masjid al-Sayyidah Zainab* and had a chain of transmitters of al-Bukhari. For further information see Faisal Ahmad Shah, *Metodologi penulisan Mohamed Idris al-Marbawi dalam Bahr al-Madhi*, PhD Thesis, University of Malaya, 2007, p.103; Al-Marbawī, *Bahr al-Madhi*, vol.1,p.1.

<sup>53</sup> Utusan Melayu, May 18, 1975,p.14.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1,p.1.

The next teacher al-Marbawi studied with was a highly charismatic Egyptian scholar, Shaykh Mahmud Ghunaym<sup>55</sup> and Shaykh Muhammad Bahith who was mentioned by al-Marbawi as a great scholar in Hanafi's School<sup>56</sup>. Al-Marbawi also studied with Shaykh Yusūf al-Hawi, who was well-versed in various branches of Islamic discipline, though he was mainly known as a leading expert and a scholar of the *Ḥadīth* and a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence<sup>57</sup>

Al-Marbawi's training was strictly within the scholastic *Ḥadīth* style, inherited from Shaykh Sayyid Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad Shaṭa al-Maliki(d.1883); his studies with Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Samalūṭi therefore included examination of many of the *Ḥadīth* sources beyond the standard six books, especially the *Jami'* of al-Tirmīdhī. For this reason, he is well known as one of the leading *Ḥadīth* scholars, emphasizing the importance of studying the actual sources of the *Ḥadīth*, not merely the six books and later manuals. In particular, he emphasized the importance of Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ* and *Jami'* al-Tirmīdhī's *Ḥadīth* collections and expository studies.

Considering the widely respected status of the scholars with whom he studied, it is certain that al-Marbawi's education was a thorough one since he studied the *Ḥadīth* studies, in jurisprudence, Islamic law, and Qur'anic commentary. Therefore he was well-known as a leader in these studies<sup>58</sup>. His knowledge of the *Ḥadīth* was very strong, and it is evident that he studied *Ḥadīth* mostly with al-Samaluti and other great scholars.

Considering all the teachers with whom he studied and the knowledge he gained from them, it is clear that al-Marbawi's education was complete and comprehensive. In

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., vol.22, p.226-227.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., vol.12,p.133.

<sup>57</sup> Utusan Melayu, May 18, 1975,p.7.

<sup>58</sup> Abdul Salam, Idris al-Marbawi, *Monograph*, p.95



addition, that al-Marbawi studied under these major scholars is to put him in the proper context, for it is certain that those scholars played an important role in channelling the study of Islamic studies from Mecca and Medina to Egypt and beyond to the Malay world. Redhuan, for instance, lists no fewer than twenty prominent scholars of the Malay world who were centred in *Masjīd al-Harām*; many of them travelled back and forth from Archipelago to Mecca and Egypt from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. Shaykh Wan Ahmad al-Fatani, for example, was one of the crucial links connecting various traditions in Islamic learning. By way of his main students such as Husayn and Tok Kenali, both of whom were among al-Marbawi's teachers, he also transmitted the chain of Islamic learning to the Malay world.

Thus, in these spheres of the relationship of Islamic learning between the Arab and the Malay scholars their impact was of paramount importance to the contribution of al-Marbawi to the process (of Islamization), occurring through the medium of the transmission of ideas and teaching to the Malay world.

### 2.1.3 Al- Marbawi's *akhlaq* (etiquette)

According to his friends and colleagues, his demeanor was gentle and friendly. Al-Marbawi practiced the art of simple living and ascetic ways, in serenity and peace, with attendant moral and spiritual courage typical of his personality. He was beyond compare in his asceticism, piety and self-effacement (*al-khdhu*<sup>c</sup>) in his speech and attire<sup>59</sup>.

In fact al-Marbawi was an ascetic (*zahid*) in all matters. He never uttered one word which could grate on one's hearing, was extremely patient in facing trying situations, disliked idle talk but loved talking on religious issues. He led a simple life, avoiding smoking, and filled his days with writing from early morning until midnight, always wearing his al-Azhar gown (*jubah*) and Muslim turban. He was cautious about his health and kept himself physically fit. He always brought along a notebook for short

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<sup>59</sup> Utusan Melayu, July 15 1980,p.32.

written notes<sup>60</sup>. Because of his deep love of the Qur'anic language, he used to speak Arabic with family in his daily life, even though his English and Malay were excellent<sup>61</sup>.

#### 2.1.4 The Activities and the Contributions of Al-Marbawi in Islamic Studies

There can be no question that al-Marbawi was one of the most prolific Malay<sup>62</sup> writers in Malay-Muslim history; as noted by 'Abd al-Salam and Faisal while conducting their research in this area, his many works are still in use in Malaysia. Indeed, the numerous copies of his published books available in public libraries and private collections indicate the high regard in which he is held among the Malays. Al-Marbawi wrote at least twenty works, dealing with almost all branches of the Islamic disciplines. More importantly, al-Marbawi's academic life in Egypt was spent in writing, translating, and editing books as well as involving himself in printing and publishing<sup>63</sup>.

Al-Marbawi's role in the spread of *Ḥadīth* in the Malay world was far greater through his works on *Ḥadīth*, which were widely circulated in this region. We need no long argument to prove that al-Marbawi inherited the tendency from the scholarly networks of emphasizing the importance of the *Ḥadīth* (for example *Kitab Bulūgh al-Marām*). Al-Marbawi's principal work was the commentary *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* of al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'* and without doubt it is one of the major works on *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia. As al-Marbawi states in his introductory notes, he began to write the *Baḥr al-Mādḥi*

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<sup>60</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Baḥr*, vol. 1, p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> Dewan Masyarakat, July 15, 1980, p. 32.

<sup>62</sup> 'Abd al-Salam, p. 99

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*



because it was needed by the Malay community as a practical guide in their daily life. Al-Marbawi's commentary reflects his genuine concern for his fellow Muslims at the grassroots level; all he wants is to lead them to a better understanding of the teachings of Islam<sup>64</sup>.

Al-Marbawi's collection of the *Ḥadīth* of *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī and Muslim possesses a similar nature. It delineates teachings about the divine revelation to the Prophet (Ṣ.A.W), concerning God and His relation to creation, hell and paradise, the proper ways for the individual to achieve God's favour and piety. Al-Marbawi also emphasizes the need for each Muslim to find harmony between knowledge (*ʿilm*) and good deeds (*ʿamal*); knowledge alone will not make a better Muslim: he must do good deeds as well. The work entitled *Kitab Hidangan Guru: Sahih Bukhari dan Muslim*, was prepared for teachers teaching the *Ḥadīth*<sup>65</sup>. The work was printed in two volumes by his own publisher, *Dar al-Matbaʿah al-Marbawiyyah*, Cairo, Egypt. This book consists of *Ḥadīth* which were narrated from al-Bukhārī and Muslim's *Sahih*.

Besides focusing on *Ḥadīth* studies al-Marbawī's works also covered various other fields such as politics, social and Islamic studies (including studies of Qur'ānic commentary and jurisprudence) in Arabic as well as Malay.

The significance of al-Marbawi to the development of Islam in the Malay world is irrefutable in the field of Qur'ānic commentary. He was sufficiently knowledgeable of the Malay language to take on the enormous task of preparing commentary of the Qur'ān in Malay which is entitled *Tafsīr Qur'ān* of al-Marbawī: *Juzu' alīf-lam mīm*. Being the great scholar, it is not surprising that al-Marbawī's work was widely circulated in the

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<sup>64</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.2-3.

<sup>65</sup> Al-Islam, October 1980, p.51.

Malay region<sup>66</sup>. However, this commentary covers only the first two chapters (chapter of *al-fātihah* to *al-baqarah*). It was published in its finished form by *Mathba'ah al-Marbawiyah*, Cairo, 1938, and is also available in the Library of the University of Malaya; it consists of 204 pages (excluding the introduction), and is written in classical Malay<sup>67</sup>.

Thus, it is clear that *Tafsīr* al-Qur'ān has contributed significantly to the study of Qur'ānic commentary in the archipelago. It lays the foundation for a bridge between translation and commentary, and thus stimulates further study on the works of commentary on the Qur'ān in Arabic<sup>68</sup>. Therefore, this work plays an important role in promoting a better understanding of the teachings of Islam.

The influence of al-Marbawi in the field of lexicography was far reaching. He was the first writer in Malay to write an Arabic-Malay dictionary to assist Malay students learning Arabic. His work called *Qāmūs* Idrīs al-Marbawi (dictionary of Idrīs al-Marbawi)<sup>69</sup> is his most voluminous work, reflecting the author's special interest in the field. These two volumes show us how he successfully made use of religious judgments concerning lawful and unlawful matters with some pictorial explanations, and introduced them to Malay audiences.

For this reason, this dictionary is widely used by many from Malay world, besides those in Mecca and Egypt. Al-Marbawi worked with two other Malay scholars, namely Shaykh Juneid Toha and Shaykh Tahir Jalaludin on the arrangement of this great work.

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<sup>66</sup> 'Abd al-Salam p. 99-110.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 99-110. The main sources of the *Tafsīr* Qur'ān of al-Marbawī are *Tafsīr* of Fakhr al-Razi, of Khazin, of al-Bayḍawī, of al-Nasafī, of Ibn 'Abbas and of al-Jalalayn.

<sup>68</sup> Interview, Wan Saghir, January 2006.

<sup>69</sup> The fourth edition of the *Qamus* was published in 1354/1935 by *Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi wa-awladuh* and edited by 'Abd al-Wasif bin Muhammad. It consists of two volumes. Volume one has 18,000 words (from the letter *alif* to *za*) with 700 pictorial explanations; volume two (from the letter 'ayn to *ya*) also consists of 18,000 words, (nearly 500 words explained pictorially) totalling 36,000 words in all including religious judgments (*hukm*) concerning lawful and unlawful matters.



but his two colleagues were said to have returned earlier leaving al-Marbawi to complete the endeavor alone; this task demanded considerable effort and energy, drawing together Arabic language forms from many scholastic sources. It has been pointed out that between 1930 -1950 nearly all teachers and students used al-Marbawi's dictionary as their reference<sup>70</sup>.

With regard to his works and activities, one might assume that al-Marbawi was simply an expert in *Ḥadīth*, especially due to the fact his best known text, entitled *Baḥr al-Mādī*, and is a *Ḥadīth* book. But this does not necessarily mean that he was not learned in jurisprudence ; it is known that he also wrote works entitled *Punca Agama dan Pati Hukum-hukum Ibadat* (the foundation of religion and the essence of rules of worship), *Nizam al-Hayat* (the principles of life), and *Asas Islam* (the foundation of Islam) dealing with Islamic law. These books deal with various topics: for instance ablution, prayers and other related matters, together with some pictorial explanations<sup>71</sup>.

There is no doubt that al-Marbawi established his career in Egypt, but frequently returned to Malaysia, since he maintained a deep concern for Islam and Malay Muslims in Malaysia. Hence, during study in Egypt, he was involved in the Malay community, and he was also a fellow student of some well-known Malay scholars. This involvement in the Malay community kept him fully aware of the religious, social and political developments<sup>72</sup> in Malaysia.

Like other Malay scholars, al-Marbawi maintained constant contact and communication with his homeland while he was in Egypt, so that he was well informed about the developments of Islam there. In this connection therefore, there are a number of

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<sup>70</sup> c Abd al Salam, *Muhammad Idris al-Marbawi*, p. 102.

<sup>71</sup> The advertisement for *Asas Islam* can be found at the end of *Qamus Idris al-Marbawi* and published by Cairo publisher.

<sup>72</sup> See William R. Roff, *bibliography of Malay and Arabic periodicals published in the Straits Settlements and Peninsular Malay States 1876-1941*, London: Oxford University Press, 1972, p.12.



articles written by him on politics and social studies regarding the importance of education and the need for Muslim people to denounce British colonialism: it seems that his interest grew in this area during the struggle for independence from the British. It was for this reason that he took an active part in the Malay-Indonesia student movement, and first became involved in the publication of the monthly journal in Egypt called *Seruan Azhar* (Call of Azhar)<sup>73</sup>.

It is clear that al-Marbawi was involved in events of the student movement. Therefore, he became one of the editors of a newly founded journal which was published by the “*Persatuan Pelajar Melayu Semenanjung dan Indonesia*” (Malay-Indonesia Student Association), also known as *al-Jami'ah al-Khairiyah* (The Welfare Society); this journal inspired the *Kaum Muda* (Reformist Group) movement to fight for Malaysia's independence. However, it was reported that al-Marbawī did not actively participate in politics<sup>74</sup>. Besides the *Seruan Azhar*, the student Society also published another journal in late 1927 called *Pilehan Timoer* (Choice of the East). Both journals were also circulated in the Malay Peninsula; these later brought with them a new periodical called *Semangat Islam* (Spirit of Islam) which lasted for about eighty months<sup>75</sup>.

Besides writing, al-Marbawi also established his own publishing house, known as the *Matba'ah al-Marbawiyah* (al-Marbawi's Publisher), which he managed to establish during his studies in al-Azhar. One of the advertisements also clearly showed that the operations of this publishing company included publication, sale and purchase of books, as well as selling printing tools such as Arabic fonts which came in different sizes<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> cAbd al- Salam, p. 94.

<sup>74</sup> cAbd al- Salam, *al-Shaykh Muhammad Idris al-marbawi*, p. 94.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> According to M. Sidin Ishak and Redhuan, the most successful Malay publishers in Egypt in 1927 was the *Matba'ah al-Marbawiyah*. Another Malay publishing press was the *Matba'ah al-taqaddum al-'ilmiyah* which published the journal *Pilehan Timoer* and other works. See M.Sidin Ahmad Ishak &M. Redhuan Othman, *the Malays in the Middle East with a Bibliography of Malay printed works in the Middle East*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2000, p.67.



## 2.2 Husayn: His Life and Intellectual Activities.

### 2.2.1 Husayn's background

According to Ishak the full name of Husayn was Husayn bin Muḥammad Nasir; he was born on November 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1863 at Titi Gajah, Alor Setar, Kedah<sup>77</sup>. Thus, we know exactly whereabouts in Malaysia he was born. Among the Malays he is known popularly by his nickname, Husayn al-Banjari or Husayn Kedah al-Banjari. The affiliation of the word 'Kedah' (one of the northern states in Malaysia) to his name indicates that he was originally a native of Malaysia. The term 'al-Banjari' however, indicates that he was descended from Banjar, Indonesia.

His father's name was Muḥammad Nasir bin Shaykh Muḥammad Tayyib bin Shaykh Mas'ud bin Qadhi Abū Su'ud bin Shaykh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari bin 'Abd Allah al-Banjari<sup>78</sup> while his mother's was Tengku Fatimah binti Tengku Mahmud (from the royal family of Kubang Pasu, Kedah)<sup>79</sup>.

His grandfather was Shaykh Muḥammad Tayyib bin Mas'ud, who was a great scholar and a teacher in his *pondok* institutes<sup>80</sup>. He was a man of sufficient learning and piety was his guide, living by the philosophy of seeking the pleasure of his Lord in whatever he did. Shaykh Muḥammad Tayyib was also the former *Mufti* of Kedah who held office during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin Mukarram Shah (1854-1879),

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<sup>77</sup> Ishak Mohd Rejab, Husain Mohd Nasir al-Mas'udi al-Banjari, in Ismail Mat (ed), *Ulama silam dalam kenangan*, UKM:Bangi, Malaysia, 1993,p.38.

<sup>78</sup> Wan Saghir Wan Abd Allah, *Ulama Nusantara: Satu paparan mengenai ketolohan dan karya mereka*, a paper presented in a Konvensyen Ulama Nusantara, November 10, 2001.

<sup>79</sup> Ishak,p.38.

<sup>80</sup> On the historical, physical, and curricular aspects of *pondok* education in Malaysia, and also its famous teachers, see Awang Had Salleh, institusi *pondok* di Malaysia, in Zaynal Kling (ed.), *Masyarakat Melayu*, Kuala Lumpur:1977, 33-49; Nik Mohamed bin Nik Mohd.Salleh, perkembangan pendidikan atau pengajian Islam di negeri Kelantan, in Nik Mohamed b. Nik Mohd. Salleh (ed.), *Warisan Kelantan IV*, Kota Bharu: Perbadanan Muzium Negeri Kelantan, 1985, 95-120; Mohd Yusoff bin Abd al-Rahman, pelajaran agama dan kemunculan ulama Kelantan, *Jebat*, 5/6, 1976/7, 96-106; Robert L. Winzeler, traditional Islamic schools in Kelantan, *JMBRAS* 47:1, 1975, 91-103. An important sociological study on the nature of *pondok* education, its running, and its social impact can also be found in Robert L. Winzeler, *Malay religion society and politics in Kelantan*, Ph.D Thesis, University of Chicago, IL, 1970, 126-30. For the relation between *pondok* and the community, see Shirley Gordon, *pondok* and our peasantry, *Intisari*, 2:1, n.d., 32-33.



belonging to the Banjar ethnic group who came to Kedah in 1821 or 1824 with his father, Shaykh Mas'ud, to join the holy war with other Muslims from Kedah against the Siamese<sup>81</sup> invasion. Shaykh Muḥammad Tayyib is reported to have stayed and settled in Kedah after his father died during the war.

Saghir mentions that Husayn's full name incorporates those of his ancestors, and that he belonged to the most prominent line of scholars in Mecca as well as in the Malay world) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Shaykh Muḥammad Arshad al-Banjari(1710-1812)<sup>82</sup>. His full name is Shaykh Muḥammad Arshad bin 'Abd Allah bin 'Abd al-Raḥman al Banjari bin Sayyid Abū Bakar bin Sayyid 'Abd Allah al-Aidrūs bin Sayyid Abū Bakar as-Sakran bin Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥman as-Saqaf bin Sayyid Muḥammad Maula ad-Dawilah al-Aidrūs. Saghir also asserts that his ancestors probably belonged to the line of Sayyidina 'Ali bin Abu Ṭalib and Sayyidatina Faṭimah (al-Zahra), the daughters of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.

In addition, Azra states that Shaykh Muḥammad Arsyad al-Banjari (as a great-great grandfather to Husayn), was the first scholar to establish new Islamic institutions as well as to introduce new religious ideas to South Kalimantan (Borneo). In line with his scholarly position, Azra also adds that Shaykh Muḥammad Arsyad al-Banjari acquired a rudimentary religious education in his own village, apparently from his father and local teachers; when he was seven years old, for example, he is reported to have been able to read the Qur'ān perfectly. He studied for about 30 years in Mecca and five years in Medina before returning to the archipelago, developing expertise in jurisprudence as well as in Sufism, as demonstrated in his great work on jurisprudence is *Kitāb Sabīl al-muhtadīn li al-tafaqquh fi amr al-dīn*. Without doubt this is one of the major works on jurisprudence in the Malay region after the completion of the *Ṣirāt al-mustaqīm* of al-

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<sup>81</sup> Presently Thailand.

<sup>82</sup> See IIK Arifin Mansurnoor, contemporary European views of the Jawah: Brunei and the Malays in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 9:2, 1998, pp 178-209.; Interview, Wan Saghir, January 10, 2006; Azra, p.118-119.



Raniri and the *Mir'at al-tullab* of al-Sinkili, written in 1781 in two volumes upon his return from his long study in Mecca and Medina<sup>83</sup>.

Thus, based on this information, we can see clearly that Husayn was born into a religious and pioneering family who played an important role in developing the Islamic scholarly tradition in Malaysia and the Malay world. In particular, they stimulated and encouraged the Malays to pay special attention to religious matters, and to establish religious educational institutions to popularize the principle of widening and deepening their understanding of Islam. Husayn died in February 10, 1936, aged 74 years old<sup>84</sup>.

## 2.2.2 Husayn's Educational Journey

### 2.2.2. i. Husayn's early education

As for his Islamic education, since he was child he was taught by his own family who were regarded as 'scholars of Kedah'<sup>85</sup>; his religious studies and Arabic education was received from his grandfather. It appears clearly that Husayn acquired his early education in his own region from his father and grandfather.

At the age of five or six, Husayn was taught to memorize Islamic knowledge and through the traditional educational<sup>86</sup> system which was available in Kedah at that time. According to Winzeler<sup>87</sup> Arabic grammar played an important part in Husayn's mental training because it makes for disciplined study and assists the memorization of lessons. Thus, he is reported as well-known for his ability in memorizing at an early age. Due to

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<sup>83</sup> Azra, *origins*, p.118.

<sup>84</sup> Ismail Awang, Tuan Husain Kedah (1863-1936), in Ismail Che Daud (ed), *Tokoh-tokoh ulama Semenanjung Melayu* (1), Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan, 1988,p.194

<sup>85</sup> Interview, Wan Saghir, January 10, 2006.

<sup>86</sup> For more information about the traditional school in Malaysia see Robert L. Winzeler, Traditional Islamic schools in Kelantan, *JMBRAS* 47:1 (1975), 91-103.

<sup>87</sup> Robert L. Winzeler, Traditional Islamic schools in Kelantan, *JMBRAS* 47:1 (1975), 91-103.

his love of learning from the earliest years of his life. he soon became proficient in reading and writing the Qur`ān, rising above the rest of the students in Kedah at that time<sup>88</sup>.

Husayn later travelled to Patani, where he studied for one year with prominent scholars there. It was reported that in 1881, at the age of 19, he was sent to pursue his Islamic education in Patani<sup>89</sup> at *pondok* Bendang Daya, which claimed to be the largest *pondok* school in the Malay world.

It is worth noting that Patani, in the nineteenth century and earlier, was on a par with Aceh as a centre for Islamic education. Matheson and Hooker point out that the *pondoks* in Patani were very prestigious and that their more advanced students were welcomed as teachers elsewhere<sup>90</sup>. Its harbour was also an important centre of trade for Asian and European traders. Hence, it must have been visited by students from other parts of the Malay region. It is therefore not surprising that we find that Husayn is reported to have studied in these institutions in Patani<sup>91</sup>.

Besides overseas students, foreign teachers could also have visited Patani. This continuing expansion in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century is described by Madmarn, who reports that Patani<sup>92</sup> became the centre of traditional Islamic education for Muslims to obtain their early education in Islam before transferring to other Middle Eastern institutions, especially to study under the great teachers at the *Masjid al-Haram* in Mecca. As Madmarn states:

Patani had preserved a unique religious and cultural character and institutions which could not be found elsewhere in the region.

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<sup>88</sup> Interview, Wan Saghir, January 10, 2006.

<sup>89</sup> The well-known *pondok* of Patani in those days, some of which still exist, included *pondok* Dalo, whose teacher was Abd al-Rahman, known as Tok Dalo; Pondok Bermin; whose teacher was Ahmad Idris, known as Tok Bermin; Pondok Mango, whose teacher was Hasan, known as Tok Mango; and many others not recorded scattered around Patani province. For further information about Patani see H. Madmarn, *The pondok and madrasah in Patani*, Bangi:UKM, 2002.

<sup>90</sup> Matheson & Hooker, *Jawi literature in Patani*, p.43, cited by Azra, *the origins*, p.123.

<sup>91</sup> Ismail Awang, Tuan Husain Kedah (1863-1936), in Ismail Che Daud (ed), *Tokoh-tokoh ulama Semenanjung Melayu* (1), Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan, 1988, p.195.

<sup>92</sup> Patani is situated on the east coast of southern Thailand.



Among these were well-known *pondok* (religious institutions) and their respective *tok guru* (a great teacher). Through them, Patani was able to attract students from all over the area. Patani in fact earned a title as 'an early centre of Islam' and as the 'cradle of Islam in Southeast Asia' as well<sup>93</sup>.

Husayn pursued Islamic studies under prominent teachers in several institutions in Patani; for instance, Wan Mustafa bin Muhammad al-Fatani (Tok Bendang Daya I) and also Shaykh °Abd al-Qadir (Tok Bendang Daya II), Wan Mustafa's son. When he was there he met and established a close relationship with well-known scholars for example, Wan Ismail bin Mustafa (Cik Doi) and Tok Kelaba<sup>94</sup>. He then moved to study under Ismail bin Wan Ahmad known as Tuan Semela Tua<sup>95</sup> at the *pondok* of Semla.

After one year in Patani, he then travelled to other *pondok* institutions in Kelantan<sup>96</sup>. Tuan Tabal and Tuan Padang and To' Kono' were probably Husayn's teachers, since they were great scholars in Kelantan at that time<sup>97</sup>. However, we do not have much information on the time he spent there, or on the teachers with whom he studied.

It is interesting to note here that Kelantan was known at the end of nineteenth century as the 'forecourt of Mecca' (*Serambi Mekah*) because of its strong connection with the Holy city. The term was popularly applied to Kelantan because in this state there were many *pondok* institutions established by Mecca-educated scholars; many students seeking religious knowledge made Kelantan their first stop before proceeding to Mecca<sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> H.Madmarn, *the pondok*, p.12.

<sup>94</sup> Interview, Wan Saghir, January 10, 2006.

<sup>95</sup> He was taught in *Masjid al- Haram*, Mecca and well-known as Pak Do 'Ae Semla. See Madmarn, p. 34.

<sup>96</sup> The first *pondok* was founded around 1820 at Pulau Condong by Abdul Samad Abd Allah. Present day, Kelantan is one of the states in Malaysia. See Nik Abd al-Aziz bin Hj. Nik Hassan, Approaches to Islamic Religious teaching in the state of Kelantan between 1860 and 1940, *SARI*, Occasional Papers, Institute of Malay Language and Culture, 1:1, January 1983, p.81; °Abd al- Halim Ahmad, Pendidikan Islam di Kelantan, in Khoo Kay Kim (ed.), *Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Modern*, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, 1984, p.45.

<sup>97</sup> Ismail Awang, Tuan Husain Kedah (1863-1936), in Ismail Che Daud (ed), *Tokoh-tokoh ulama Semenanjung Melayu* (1), Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan, 1988,p.195.

<sup>98</sup> Nik Abd al-Aziz, Approaches to Islamic Religious teaching; °Abd al- Halim Ahmad, Pendidikan Islam di Kelantan.



Leaving Kelantan, Husayn continued his studies in Terengganu, which were among the important centers of Islamic learning in this region. He then went on a journey through Singapore, Johore, Medan, Sumatera and Perak<sup>99</sup> to widen his religious knowledge. It is uncertain however when he embarked on his journey to these institutions though it is apparent that his purpose was to deepen knowledge. He must have gone there after completing his education in Kelantan. Unfortunately, not much is known about Husayn's schooling in these institutions or of his teachers there. After eight years he then returned to Titi Gajah, Kedah to assist his grandfather teaching at the *surau*<sup>100</sup>.

### 2.2.2. ii. Husayn's Teachers in *Masjid Al-Harām*, Mecca.

*Masjid al-Harām* in Mecca is the most blessed centre of Islamic teaching. Thus for centuries *Masjid al-Harām* became a centre for advanced studies for scholars, where they spent their life in advancing their knowledge and understanding of Islam. There they gained proficiency in Arabic and Islamic religious studies. The most pious Muslims of Malaysia hoped to send their children to study under certain religious scholars for a number of years acquiring Islamic knowledge. Here appeared illustrious names like al-Raniri, al-Sinkili, Shaykh Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani, Shaykh Daud al-Fatani, Shaykh Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, Shaykh Nawawi Bantani, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib, Shaykh Ahmad al-Fatani and many others<sup>101</sup>.

Teaching in the *Masjid al-Harām*, as elsewhere, was conducted in small groups in circles (*halaqah*) - as was the practice for centuries. Apart from this mosque there was the centre for learning at Medina, at the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ), where scholars

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<sup>99</sup> Isamial Awang, p.195.

<sup>100</sup> The Malay term '*surau*' and its contraction '*suro*' is widely used in the Malay world. Linguistically, the word '*surau*' means simply 'place' or more specifically 'place for worship'. See R.A.Kern, the origin of the Malay *surau*, *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 29, 1, 1956, p.179.

<sup>101</sup> For general study on Malay Islamic scholars, see Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World*, Horizon Books, Singapore, 2001.



from the Malay world flocked to deepen their knowledge in Islamic studies and Arabic, as Madmarn states;

In fact, every corner of the *Masjīd al-Harām* is being used for circles (*halaqat*) of Islamic study. The seekers of knowledge are free to choose the mentors under whom they would like to learn. It is certainly true that learning circles at the *Masjīd al-Harām* in Mecca continue to have a great impact upon Muslims, not only those from the Malay Muslim world, but also from every corner of the Muslim community. It is believed that seeking knowledge under the roof of *Masjid al-Haram* will bring blessing (*barakat*).....<sup>102</sup>.

Azra also states that here personal relationships were formed and became the ties that connected them to each other<sup>103</sup>. Teachers were well acquainted personally with each of their students; they thus recognized the special needs and talents of each student, and they attempted to meet those special needs. The significance of this should not be underestimated; it is through these processes that the teachers issued authority (*ijazah*) to their students or appointed them to transmit Islamic teaching<sup>104</sup>.

Furthermore, according to Riddell, the Malay Muslims usually came to study in *Masjīd al-Harām* during the time of the *hajj*. Besides trying to find opportunities to study, they also performed the *hajj*<sup>105</sup>. If the situation permitted them to stay longer (*muqims*<sup>106</sup>) in Mecca, they continued to study under certain teachers. Snouck Hurgronge has described clearly the process of learning for non-native Arabic speaker in the *Masjīd al- Harām*:

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<sup>102</sup> Madmarn, p. 36.

<sup>103</sup> Azra, *the origins*, p.10.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Peter G. Riddell, Arab migrants and Islamization in the Malay world during the colonial period, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, Vol.29.,No.84, 2001, pp.113-128.

<sup>106</sup> Pre-modern writers have used the term *mujawir* to describe settled pilgrims and those whose stay in Mecca had been long. See IIK Arifin Mansurnoor, contemporary European views of the Jawah: Brunei and the Malays in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 9:2 (1998) pp 178-209.

The great majority of the students come from abroad, and if their mother tongue is not Arabic, must go through long preliminary study in that language before they are ripe for instruction in the *Haram*. Few have attained in their Javanese, Malay, Malabar, or other homes such a knowledge of Arabic as to enable them to follow the lectures; most come very young and very imperfectly prepared in that respect. In such cases, after having made some progress in reciting the Qur'an, they go for some years to school to a learned fellow-country man living in Mecca, who explains to them the easier texts in their mother tongue<sup>107</sup>.

Hurgronje also adds that the Malays or Javanese students would study under native teachers for several years, “the more so because there are among the foreign scholars (many) not inferior to their Arab colleagues”<sup>108</sup> and these Malay people, also, are both teachers and student as he states:

In Mecca, they are the ones most highly regarded: from their country folk on pilgrimage they enjoy the deepest awe, and from Mecca they control the religious life of their homes. Almost all *Jawa* who teach in the Holy City have risen to this height in Mecca herself<sup>109</sup>.

In describing how scholars who came from many Muslim countries were able to get teaching positions in the *Masjīd al-Harām* and how they were involved in the transmission of Islamic studies, Azra states:

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<sup>107</sup> Snouck Hurgronje, C, *Mekka in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, Leiden and London: E.J.Brill and Luzac, 1931, p.291, cited by Madmarn, p. 36; Peter G.Riddell, Arab migrants and Islamization in the Malay world during the colonial period, *Indonesia and the Malay world*, vol.29., No.84., 2001.

<sup>108</sup> Snouck Hurgronje, C, *Mekka in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, Leiden and London: E.J.Brill and Luzac, 1931, p.29.

<sup>109</sup> Madmarn, p.36.



In order to be allowed to teach, teacher scholars who came from many different places in the Muslim world were able to get teaching positions in the *Haramayn* (mosque in Mecca and the Prophet Mosque in Medina), were required to have *ijazah* (authority); which established the academic credentials of the holder. The most important credential was the *isnād*, namely, the chain of authority that indicated the unbroken teacher-student links in a transmission of certain books or teachings. The *ijazah* was issued by a recognized teacher to his students, generally after they studied with him. However, there were a few showing that the *ijazah* might also be issued through relatively short meetings and through correspondence with the teacher<sup>110</sup>

Thus, it is believed that the Malay scholars had chains of transmission of Islamic learning connections with leading *Ḥadīth* scholars in this way. The significance of such ‘chains of knowledge’ is that they assist us to follow the diverse threads of scholarly interaction in *Ḥadīth* studies during these periods. In addition, through their transmitters, the authority and superiority of the particular person as a *Ḥadīth* scholar is revealed<sup>111</sup>.

Redhuan states that in Malay society<sup>112</sup>, having performed the *hajj* served to authenticate and confirm one’s piety and knowledge in matters of religion<sup>113</sup>. It is believed that many Malays in this period, particularly the young, went to Mecca and Medina to perform the *hajj* and then stayed on for a couple of years, some for a couple of decades, to equip themselves as respected scholars<sup>114</sup>. This was a normal practice among the more religious Malay parents who could afford it, particularly in the eastern and northern peninsular Malaysia states where religious education was most developed to

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<sup>110</sup> Azra, *the origins*, p. 11.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>112</sup> However, it is difficult to ascertain who was the first Malay to go to the Mecca and Medina in the quest for knowledge and when it happened. According to Shafie, Shaykh Abd al- Malik Abd Allah of Trengganu (1650-1736) was certainly among the first Malay to have studied there. He studied in Mecca for twelve years after receiving his early education in Aceh. He was a student of Abd al-Rauf al-Sinkili and also studied under the famous Medina scholar, Ibrahim al- Kurani. See Shafie Abu Bakar, Sheikh ‘Abd al- Malik bin ‘Abd Allah (Tuk Pulau Manis), *Warisan*, 5 (1989), p. 15-16.

<sup>113</sup> M. Redhuan Othman, the role of Makka- educated Malays in the development of early Islamic scholarship and education in Malaya, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 9:2 (1998), pp 146-157.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*



send their sons at a young age to Mecca to study Islam and to carry out the *hajj*, the fifth pillar of Islam<sup>115</sup>.

Therefore, after exhausting all the learning avenues in Patani, Husayn undertook his voyage to Mecca in 1892 with his wife, Wan Khadijah binti Wan Yusof; after a difficult journey of six months by ship, he set foot on the sacred soil of the Holy City of Mecca to perform the pilgrimage and further his studies.

In Mecca, Husayn was involved in the Malay community and was a fellow student of Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani. Husayn joined the group of 'Malay students', among them Tok<sup>116</sup> Kenali, (from Kelantan), Wan Sulaiman Sidek, (from Kedah) and Ya'kub, (from Sik, Kedah). His involvement in the Malay community thus kept him fully aware of the religious, social and political developments in the Archipelago.

Furthermore, it is stated that Husayn stayed in Mecca for four years, studying and writing about religion; studying with many renowned scholars, such as Shaykh Nawāwi al-Bantani (d.1813-1897)<sup>117</sup>. It is important to examine briefly the biography of this teacher, as he further shows us the connections Husayn and his fellow Malays had with these extensive scholarly networks. Shaykh Nawāwi al-Bantani for example was accorded the title Master of the teachers of the Hijaz ( *Sayyid Ulama al- Hijaz*) for his books and his skill, and for the leaning shown in discussions with the Shaykhs of al-Azhar<sup>118</sup>.

According to Azra, al-Bantani had studied with a number of prominent scholars in Mecca and Medina, among who were Shaykh Ahmad al-Nahrawi, Shaykh Ahmad al-

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<sup>115</sup> Shafie Abu Bakar, Ke arah pembaikan dan pengembangan system pendidikan pondok di Malaysia, *Pendidikan Islam*, vol.2, October 1984, p.30.

<sup>116</sup> The epithet 'Tok' in Malay is not to be confused with 'datuk' meaning grandfather; it connotes a mark of respect indicating seniority in learning, good character, influence, or craft; like *Tok Guru*, a very respectable religious teacher, *tok 'alim* a very learned man, *tok penghulu*, a village chief, *tok fiqh*, an 'alim in Islamic sacred law, and so on. See Uthman al-Muhammady, To' Kenali and sunni scholarship, in Mohamad @Md.Som Sujimon ( ed.), *Monograph on selected Malay intellectuals*, 2003, Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia.

<sup>117</sup> A.H. Johns, from coastal settlement to Islamic schools and city: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java, *Hamdard Islamicus*, 4:4 (1981), 20-1.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.



Dimiyati<sup>119</sup>, Shaykh Sayyid Ahmad Zayni Dahlan, and Shaykh Muhammad Khatib al-Hanbali. Al-Bantani was thus one of the most important Malay scholars in Mecca Medina<sup>120</sup>, to whom many Malay Muslims from the archipelago flocked, many of them later becoming great scholars in their own country. Therefore, they carried with them the chain of transmission of religious learning and tradition in the time of transition from Islamic traditionalism to modernism<sup>121</sup>. Being a scholar of this stature, al-Bantani must have inspired the students of Mecca and Medina; thus, it is probable that Husayn also availed himself of the opportunity to benefit from his teachings, (especially in the *Ḥadīth*) during his visits to this place<sup>122</sup>. Husayn possessed a ‘chain of transmission of learning’, which originated from al-Bantani to include such major network scholars as Shaykh Ahmad al-Nahrawi and Shaykh Ahmad al-Dimiyati.

Another of Husayn’s teachers was a highly charismatic Meccan scholar, Shaykh Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zayn bin Mustafa al-Fatani<sup>123</sup> (1856-1906), who was born in 1856 at Kampung Sena Janjar, Patani in southern Thailand. He received his early education from his Meccan-educated father and then at *pondok* of Bendang Daya, Patani (which claimed to be the largest *pondok* institution in the Malay world), continuing his studies in Jerusalem and Egypt, as well as Mecca where he studied under several great scholars, for example Tok Kenali, Wan Musa bin ‘Abd al-Samad, and Ibrahim.

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<sup>119</sup> Muhammad Hafidz states that Shaykh Ahmad al-Dimiyati studied with a number of scholars in the Haramayn, the most famous of whom was al-Sharqawi, ‘Abd Allah bin Hijazi bin Ibrahim al-Sharqawi al-Azhari (1150-1227/1737-1812). Al-Sharqawi was a student of Ahmad al-Damanhuri, Mahmud al-Kurdi and Ahmad al-Jawhari. He was a *muhadīth* scholar.

<sup>120</sup> Azra, *origins*, p.151.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Through Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani, Tuan Husayn carried *isnād musalsal* of al-Bukhari, of al-Tirmidhi and of Muslim. According to the method in which the *Ḥadīth* has been reported by Tuan Husayn in this period should be classified as *isnād musalsal*. *Isnād musalsal* (uniformly-linked) is one in which all the reporters, as well as the Prophet S.A.W, use the same mode of transmission such as ‘an (on the authority of), *haddathana*, (he informed us), *sami‘tu* (I heard), repeat any other additional statement or remark, or act in a particular manner while narrating the *Ḥadīth*.

<sup>123</sup> For his biography see Wan Saghir Wan Abd Allah, *Fatwa tentang binatang hidup dua alam Syaikh Ahmad al-Fatani*, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Hizbi, 1990, pp 33-60; Wan Saghir, *al-‘Allamah Syaikh Ahmad al-Fatani; ahli fikir Islam dan Dunia Melayu*, Kuala Lumpur: Khazanah Fathaniyah, 1992.



It should be noted here that he himself was a student under important scholars of Islamic studies, such as Shaykh Abd al-Rahim al-Kabuli. Shaykh Wan Ahmad was the youngest of Husayn's teachers and, respectfully, was known as 'Tuan Guru Wan Ahmad'<sup>124</sup>. He was among the great scholars in *Masjīd al-Harām* in the late 1870s owing to his high reputation as a scholar; as a result, he attracted many students from the Malay world, who upon returning home became leading scholars in their respective localities. His students went on to fill high positions in politics, as *Mufti* in various parts of Malaysia, Kalimantan and Cambodia and as teachers and founders of *pondok* institutions. He was well versed in various branches of Islamic discipline, although he was mainly known as a leading expert in Islamic law. Nik Hassan, for example, affirms that Shaykh Ahmad's position in the studies of *Ḥadīth* should be ranked in line with Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi<sup>125</sup> and Maulana °Abd Allah al-Sindi<sup>126</sup>. Like most scholars of Islamic studies, he emphasized the importance of *Ḥadīth*, in terms of its position not only as the second source of Islamic legal doctrines but also as an indispensable source of proper moral conduct.

Shaykh Wan Ahmad's prominence was noticed by Snouck Hurgronje while he was in Mecca, who acknowledged him as 'a savant of merit'<sup>127</sup>. Shaykh Wan Ahmad's

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<sup>124</sup> His grandfather, two of his three uncles and two cousins were all well-known as scholars in Malay Archipelago; see Virginia Matheson & M.B.Hooker, *Jawi Literature in Patani: The maintenance of an Islamic tradition*, *JMBRAS*, 61, 1 (1988), 36.

<sup>125</sup> According to Voll, Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi, was one of the major intellectuals in *Ḥadīth* studies in eighteenth century. Shah Wali Allah was born in Delhi and received his early education in India, first with his father, and then he studied the *Ḥadīth* with Shaykh Afdal al-Sirhindi. His training was within the strict *Ḥadīth* style, inherited from °Abd al-Haq al-Dihlawi (d. 1642), and his studies with Shaykh Afdal were primarily in the standard *Ḥadīth* collections. He then went to the Haramayn where he studied *Ḥadīth* and other subjects with some of the leading scholars in the cosmopolitan community, including Abu Tahir Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Kurani. His studies included examination of many of the *Ḥadīth* sources beyond the standard six books, especially the Muwatta of Malik. See John.O.Voll, *Ḥadīth scholar and tariqahs: an ulama group in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Haramayn and their impact in the Islamic world*, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*( JAAS) XV, 3-4, 1980; see the biographical sketch of Wali Allah at the beginning of Wali Allah al-Dihlawi, *al-Khayr al-kathir (al-mulaqqib bi khaza'in al-hikmah)*, Cairo: Ali Yusuf Sulayman, 1974, p.3-5.

<sup>126</sup> Madmam, p.23

<sup>127</sup> C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970, 286.



stature as a respected scholar in the Hijaz representing the Malay world was also recognized by the Ottoman government; Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamīd entrusted to him for example the supervision of the Malay press, *al-Maṭbaʿah al-Miriyya al-Ka'ina*, when it was established in Mecca in 1884<sup>128</sup>. His great work on the study of the *Ḥadīth is Bisyarāh al-ʿāmilin wa nazarah al-ghāfilin*. Shaykh Wan Ahmad died on January 14, 1906 or 1908 in Mina.

Thus, having studied with Shaykh Wan Ahmad Zayn as well as with Nawāwi al-Bantani and others, Husayn clearly had strong links with the ‘learning transmission’ networks in *Ḥadīth* in this period.

It appears that Husayn also had many teachers either of Egyptian origin or with a strong Egyptian connection. Since there is no evidence that he ever travelled to Cairo, he must therefore have studied with them in Mecca. Two of these scholars, who were well-known at that time, were Shaykh Muḥammad Yusūf al-Khayat, and Sayyid Muḥammad ibn Sulaiman Hasbullah al-Makkī (d.1877); these scholars were well-versed in various branches of Islamic discipline, though they were mainly known as leading experts in Islamic knowledge. Since they were experts in these areas, it is highly plausible that Husayn studied these branches learning under them.

Husayn’s next teacher was Wan Ali bin Abdul Rahman Kuttan al-Kelantani<sup>129</sup> (1837-1912), who was also a respected scholar who taught in *Masjīd al-Harām*. With him, Husayn advanced his studies in *Ḥadīth* and theology. He was also the author of a number of books including the famous text on the studies of *Ḥadīth* such as *Jawhar*

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<sup>128</sup> Hurgronje, *Mekka in the latter part*, p. 286.

<sup>129</sup> Nik Abd al-Aziz bin Hj. Nik Hassan, *Approaches to Islamic Religious teaching in the state of Kelantan between 1860 and 1940*, *SARI*, Occasional Papers, Institute of Malay Language and Culture, 1:1, January 1983, p.82.



*Mawhud* (1886), *Zaharah al-Marid fi 'Aqa'id al-Tawhid* (1890), *Majma' al-Qasa'id* (1900).

In addition to studying with the scholars mentioned above, Husayn also studied with Shaykh Ahmad bin Muḥammad Yunus (Ahmad Lingga), Shaykh Umar Bali, Shaykh Umar Sumbawa, Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir bin Abd al-Rahman al-Fatani, Shaykh 'Abd al-Samad bin Muḥammad Salleh al-Kelantani or well-known as Tuan Tabal<sup>130</sup>. Tuan Tabal was a well-versed scholar in various areas of religious studies; one of his specialties was jurisprudence.

As well as studying with scholars whom he mentioned specifically as his teachers, Husayn established contacts and relations with other prominent scholars in Mecca, both resident and visiting. He does not specify the nature of his relations with them, but there is little doubt that he gained great advantage from them. They can be assumed, at least, to have inspired him and brought him a much wider intellectual perspective. Most of these scholars are familiar names in the networks of transmitters of Islamic teaching; they include Shaykh 'Ubaid, the *Mufti* of the Maliki School of law, Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn, the *Imām* of the Hanafi School of Law, Shaykh Sayyid Bakrī, Shaykh Sayyid 'Abd Allah bin al-Sayyid Muḥammad Salih al-Zawāwī, the *Mufti* of Mecca and a teacher in the sacred mosque<sup>131</sup>.

Considering all the teachers he studied with and the knowledge he acquired from them, it is clear that Husayn's education in Islamic studies was complete and comprehensive. Hence, he possessed more than sufficient knowledge to earn him fame as a major Malay *Ḥadīth* scholar in the period between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Husayn was, of course, not the first scholar to introduce Islam to the Malaysia

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<sup>130</sup> He was the author of a number of books such as *Munabbih al-Ghāfilīn*, *Bidāyat al-Ta'īm*, and *Minyatul Ahli*. Some of these books were published in Mecca. See Ihsan Hardiwijaya Ibagā, Ulama dan sistem pondok di Kelantan abad ke 19, *Dian*, 120, May 1979, 22; 'Abd al-Halim Ahmad, Pendidikan Islam di Kelantan, in Khoo Kay Kim (ed.), *Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Moden*, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, 1984, 46-7.

<sup>131</sup> Abdullah al-Qari, *Detik-detik sejarah hidup Tuk Kenali*, al-Hidayah Publishers, 2001, p.37.



area, but he undoubtedly played a crucial role in the intensification of Islamization among its population.

### 2.2.3 Husayn's Academic Career within the Malaysian Context

This section will focus upon the significant role of Husayn in the development of Islam in Malaysia, particularly in the northern state<sup>132</sup>. He appears to have begun teaching while he was in Sungai Rebana, Perak<sup>133</sup> in 1888; unfortunately, there was no record or clear information about his disciples there. It is only after he returned to Kedah<sup>134</sup> that we are able to trace details of those who followed him. These disciples, who were from Patani, Indonesia, as well as from the local area, were responsible for spreading Husayn's teachings, in many parts of the Malay world.

As stated earlier, Husayn studied at Mecca for four years and after his return from Mecca in 1896, he continued teaching in the Kedah district, for instance in Titi Gajah, Alor Ganu, Bohor, Bagan Ulu and Padang Lumat<sup>135</sup>. While he was teaching at Titi Gajah, he was invited to open a *pondok* institute at Alor Ganu, a nearby village to Titi Gajah<sup>136</sup>. He accepted the offer and taught in the school for three years. In addition he also opened a *surau* at Titi Gajah in order to continue teaching Islamic religious knowledge to hundreds of students every day.

According to Ismail, in 1900 Husayn moved to Bohor where he established his own *pondok* institution, and where his students included both males and females between 15 and 60. There were two types of *pondok*: the first was called the inner *pondok*, which was reserved for married couples, while the second was the outer *pondok* meant for

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<sup>132</sup> These states are Perak, Kedah, Penang and Perlis.

<sup>133</sup> In present, Perak is one of the states in Malaysia. See Ismail Salleh Tuan Hussain Kedah in Bibliografi Ulama Kedah, vol.,1, p.55.

<sup>134</sup> Kedah is one of the states in Malaysia.

<sup>135</sup> Ishak, Husain Nasir al-Banjari, *Ulama silam dalam kenangan*, p.43-44

<sup>136</sup> Ismail Salleh Tuan Hussain Kedah in Bibliografi Ulama Kedah, vol.,1, p.55.

bachelors<sup>137</sup>. Husayn managed his *pondok* at Bohor for 12 years, to the point that he was nicknamed 'Husayn Bohor'.

Within a short period of time, Bohor gained fame as providing the greatest religious teaching authority in Kedah<sup>138</sup>. The Bohor's *pondok* thus attracted numerous students from throughout the region, who specialized in various branches of Islamic teaching, and in turn established their own *pondok* when they returned to their home villages<sup>139</sup>. Husayn received good treatment and due respect from the Sultan of Kedah. This high reputation meant that Husayn even had students from the royal family such as Tunku Mahmud (King of Kedah) and his son, Tunku ʿAbd Allah<sup>140</sup>.

However, in 1912 Husayn moved to Bagan Ulu<sup>141</sup> where he opened another *pondok* institution. Here he had around 400 students; one of his most famous students was ʿAbd al-Rahman bin ʿAbd Allah, well-known as ʿAbd al-Rahman Merbok. Husayn managed this institute for about 8 years before opening yet another *pondok* institute at Selengkoh in Sungai Limau; however, as the area around Selengkoh was muddy, Husayn found that he had fewer students than expected. Nevertheless, he continued teaching in Selengkoh for the next 4 years before deciding on another pilgrimage to Mecca with his children and grandchildren<sup>142</sup>. After returning from Mecca he established another institute in Padang Lumat, Kedah in 1924.

There is no record of the precise number of Husayn's students, but Ghani suggested that it was more than a thousand<sup>143</sup>, although, there is no doubt that his most prominent student in the archipelago was al-Marbawi, who became a great scholar. Among Husayn's most celebrated students were Shaykh Ismaʿil Hamzah, (*mufti* of Perak) and Wan ʿAbd Allah Zawawi bin Wan Muhammad (judge of Perak). Lebai

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<sup>137</sup> Ismail Salleh, p.56; Ahmad Abd al-Ghani Saʿid, *Tuan Husain Kedah*, BA dissertation, University of Malaya, 1977.

<sup>138</sup> Ismail Salleh, p.56.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ishak, p.43-44

<sup>141</sup> The place is now known as Pantai Merdeka in northern Malaysia, Kedah

<sup>142</sup> Interview, Wan Saghir January 10, 2006.

<sup>143</sup> Ahmad Abd al-Ghani Saʿid, *Tuan Husain Kedah*, BA dissertation, University of Malaya, 1977.



Zakariya (from Pahang), Tuan ‘Umar brother of Zakariya, Lebai Daha (from Perak), Lebai Sulung (from Bengkalis), Wan Nik, Cik Nik and Wan Din (from Patani)<sup>144</sup>

The spread of Husayn’s teaching and works in Malaysia did not necessarily require his physical presence in the region since his disciples played an important role in spreading Husayn’s teachings and works when they return to their own regions. Therefore, from the early twentieth century, Muslims from the Malay world came to Kedah in large numbers.

It is believed that these students would have helped to transmit Husayn’s teachings by disseminating them among their own students and countrymen by way of their teachings, copying his texts and making commentaries on them. From the editions which Ghani examined in older collections in the *pondok* institutions, he concluded that Husayn’s works were almost certainly more frequently consulted earlier in the twentieth century than today. However, a reason for this is probably the difficulty of reading the old (classic *Jawi*) form of the Malay language which he used. It is worth noting here that the numerous copies of his manuscripts in public libraries and private collections still extant in Malaysia indicate the high esteem in which he is held among the Malays. Thus, there can be no question that Husayn was one of the most prolific among Malay scholars. Even though he is not nor read so much today, his work remains highly influential.

#### 2.2.4 Husayn’s *akhlaq* (etiquette)

Husayn was no ordinary religious scholar. Because of his intellectual distinction and personality, he attracted scholars and students from distant parts of the Malay world to attend his schools to study and learn from him. As a friend and a teacher “he was extraordinarily humble and he loved to intermingle with his students. Furthermore, instead of simply overwhelming them with all the necessary teaching, he preferred to discuss with them”<sup>145</sup>.

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<sup>144</sup> Ishak, p. 44.

<sup>145</sup> Ahmad Abd al-Ghani Sa’id, *Tuan Husain Kedah*, BA dissertation, University of Malaya, 1977.



Husayn had never expected any form of gifts or payments from the public<sup>146</sup>, since he actually owned hundreds of belongs of rice-fields, as well as rubber and coconut plantations; he also had some properties in Banjarmasin. He was also the person who donated the land upon which was built the Titi Gajah Mosque and Muslim cemetery, and institutions, such as Padang Lumat Religious School, and the Pokok Sena Religious School in Seberang Prai<sup>147</sup>. On February 10, 1936, Husayn died after succumbing to an illness in his *pondok* school of Pokok Sena, in Seberang Prai. He was laid to rest in Titi Gajah, Kedah.

### 2.2.5 The Activities and the Contributions of Husayn in Islamic Studies

In terms of works on Islamic teaching, Husayn was considered a crucial figure for the history of Islam in Malaysia. He possessed more than sufficient knowledge to earn him fame as a major Malay scholar in the nineteenth and twentieth century. He devoted himself to teaching and writing in several *pondok* schools in Malaysia.

Interestingly, even though it is a well-known fact that Husayn had learnt from many great teachers and in various fields of knowledge, it was evident in his writing that he was the follower of the Shafi'i School of law in the area of jurisprudence, and adhered to *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah* (Followers of *Ahl Sunnah wal Jama'ah*) in theology.

According to Ishak, Husayn wrote a numbers of works on various subjects, ranging from the *Hadith* to Sufism<sup>148</sup>. Ishak also reports that eighteen to twenty of Husayn's works have been discovered<sup>149</sup>, in the form of published monographs and manuscripts.

<sup>146</sup> Ismail Salleh, Tuan Hussain Kedah (1863 – 1936), in *Bibliografi ulama Kedah*, vol.1, Lembaga Muzium Negeri Kedah, 1996, p.56.

<sup>147</sup>[http://ms.wikipedia.org/wiki/Husin\\_bin\\_Muhammad\\_Nasir](http://ms.wikipedia.org/wiki/Husin_bin_Muhammad_Nasir), 2nd December 2007

<sup>148</sup> Ishak, Hussain Mohd Nasir al-Mas'udi al-Banjari, in *Ulama Silam Dalam Kenangan*, ed. Ismail Mat, Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1993.p. 44.

<sup>149</sup> Ismail Awang mentioned that he wrote 13 books, but Saghir on the other hand believes that he wrote 20 books. See Ismail Awang, p. 199; Saghir, *Ulama Nusantara*, Utusan Malaysia, Isnin, 31 Mei 2004.



Besides teaching, he also published new religious texts every year, dealing with Islamic knowledge<sup>150</sup>; His first book in theology entitled *al-Nur mustafid fi Aqa'id ahl al-Tawhid* was published in 1887. This book deals with the doctrine of Sunni. This was a significant text because his aimed at bringing believers onto the right path: that is, the way of the Muslims of the *ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah* who have followed the way of the Prophet and the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-Khulafa' al-Rashidin*). His last book, written in 1935 was about 'replacement prayers', known as *Bunga Geti*.

The significance of Husayn to the development of Islam in Malaysia in the field of jurisprudence is irrefutable. Among the major work of Husayn is *Hidayat al-Sibyan fi Ma'rifat al-Islam wa al-Imān*. Its earliest edition was published by *Matba'ah al-Taraqqil Majidiyah al-Uthmaniyah* in 1913 and also reprinted by *Matba'ah al-Ahmadiyah*, 82, Singapore Road in 1927, proofread and edited by Shaykh Idris bin Husein al-Kalantani. Then follows *Majmu' al-la'ali li al-Nisa' wa al-Atfal*, divided into ten volumes of works on religious observances; the first of these volumes was completed in 1932, printed later for the third time by The United Press, Pulau Pinang<sup>151</sup>.

The *Hidayat al-nikah* is another ample work on jurisprudence: covering the law and the rule of marriage it was written in 1929: this also concerns divorce and what is involved, as well as teaching about marriage. *Tafrih al-Sibyan fi mawlid al-Nabī min waladi 'adnan*, was completed on Tuesday, 1923; its contents relate to the history of the Prophet's birth, printed by *Matba'ah Persama*, Pulau Pinang, in 1962<sup>152</sup>.

We need no long argument to prove that Husayn inherited the tendency from the scholarly networks of emphasizing the importance of the *Ḥadīth*. According to him, the application of the Islamic law could not be intensified without a deeper knowledge of the

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<sup>150</sup> See Ishak Mohd Rejab, Hussain Mohd Nasir al-Mas'udi al-Banjari, in *Ulama Silam Dalam Kenangan*, ed. Ismail Mat, Bangi:Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1993.; Ismail Salleh, Tuan Hussain Kedah (1863 – 1936), in *Bibliografi ulama Kedah*, vol.1, Lembaga Muzium Negeri Kedah, 1996, p.56.

<sup>151</sup> This work was found in 2004, July 14, at Kampung Pulau Pisang Kedah.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.



*Hadīth* of the Prophet. He emphasized the importance of the *Hadīth*, in terms of its position not only as the second source of Islamic legal doctrines but also as the indispensable source of proper moral conduct<sup>153</sup>. Husayn's translation of this work reflects his genuine concern for his fellow Muslims at the grassroots level; all he wants is to lead them to a better understanding of the teachings of Islam.

With regard to his works and activities after his return to his homeland, one might assume that Husayn was simply an expert in jurisprudence and the *Hadīth*, especially due to the fact that his best known text entitled *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* is a *Hadīth* book. But this does not necessarily mean that he was not learned in theology; it is known that he wrote a work entitled *Hidayat al- atfal*, dealing with theology which contains discipline for child learners, completed in 1917<sup>154</sup>.

Another work dealing with theology is *Bidayah al-talibin ila ma'rifat rabb al-<sup>o</sup>alamin* in 1928, printed for the second time by The United Press Dato' Keramat Road, Pulau Pinang 1941; this work was later revised by Ilyas Ya'qub al-Azhari. The *Usul al-tawhid fi ma'rifah al-turuq al-iman li rabb majid*, completed in 1930 explains the pillars of Islam and faith, also discussing the study of the unity of God and the study of jurisprudence. The second printing was arranged by Matba'ah al-Zainiyah, Taiping, Perak, 1928 as well as the third printing in 1936. In 1973, this work was again reprinted by The United Press, Pulau Pinang, by permission of the author's son Tuan Guru Ahmad bin Tuan Husayn<sup>155</sup>.

Husayn, through his activities and academic career played a major role in the history of Islamic learning in the Malay world. Although the works bore Arabic titles, they were in fact written in Malay. This reflects Husayn's concern that his Malay co-religionists should be able to understand the precepts of Islamic law. It must be kept in

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<sup>153</sup> Husayn, *Jawahir al-Bukhari*, p.2-3.

<sup>154</sup> Ishak Mohd Rejab, Hussain Mohd Nasir al-Mas'udi al-Banjari, in *Ulama Silam Dalam Kenangan*, ed. Ismail Mat, Bangi:Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1993.; Ismail Salleh, Tuan Hussain Kedah (1863 – 1936), in *Bibliografi ulama Kedah*, vol.1, Lembaga Muzium Negeri Kedah, 1996, p.56.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.



mind, however, that Husayn was not simply a great *Ḥadīth* scholar or an expert on Islamic law; he was also a Sufi, devoting a number of writings to Sufism and theology.

Obviously, in considering Husayn's contribution to the spread of religious learning among Malay Muslims, it is believed that among his major contributions is his translation of Arabic works into Malay, as well as presenting the views of the Shafi'i School of Thought taken from their various works published in Mecca, Egypt and Istanbul. These works were written solely for Malay Muslims in the Malay Archipelago, where *Jawi* script is used to convey Islamic teachings, as the majority of Malay Muslims in this region at that time only understood the *Jawi* script. His works in *Jawi* script enabled the Malay community in this region to accept them enthusiastically, especially when they realized that these works were produced by a Malay scholar who was educated in Mecca, the most respected place and authoritative source in Islam. Hence, there is no doubt that the work of Husayn has helped develop the Islamic thoughts of the Malay community in the region.

### 2.3 Al-Marbawi and Husayn Attitudes Concerning *Tariqah* (Sufi Spiritual Path)

From the early nineteenth to the mid twentieth century, Sufi *tariqah*<sup>156</sup> were widespread in Malaysia; members of the *ulama* and the intellectual classes frequently practiced them. Among these *tariqah*, the most popularly known were the Naqshabandiyah, Ahmadiyah and Shadliyah *tariqahs*<sup>157</sup>.

Al-Marbawi and Husayn did not practice any *tariqah* in the sense of spiritual paths associated with any established spiritual leaders such as Ahmadiyah (named after Shaykh Ahmad bin Idris), Naqshabandiyah (named after Shaykh Baha' al-Din al-Nashabandi), and al-Shadliyah (named after Shaykh Abu al-Hasan al-Shadili)<sup>158</sup>. But if

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<sup>156</sup> The present study however will not dwell on detail of the development of Sufism or *Tariqah* in the Malay world since it has been discussed by many scholars, for example see Azra, *the origins*.

<sup>157</sup> 'Uthman al-Muhammadi, To' Kenali and Sunni scholarship, in Monograph on selected Malay intellectuals, Mohamad@Md. Som Sujimon, p.67.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.p.68; Ishak,p.47.

*tariqah* is understood as a spiritual path involving the practice of certain invocations, prayers, and discipline of the soul by the cultivation of the spiritual virtues like repentance, patience, reliance on Allah (S.W.T), nobility of character, intimacy with God, and so on, then al-Marbawī and Husayn could be considered as Sufi (successful practitioners of the spiritual path), even though they are not associated with any Sufi brotherhood.

## 2.4 Summary

As we have seen, the Malaysian *Ḥadīth* scholars (al-Marbawi and Husayn) were involved in the twentieth century's scholarly network, indeed had traceable connections with networks of earlier *Ḥadīth* scholars around the world. While they did not have direct teacher-student connections with al-Rānīrī or al-Sinkīlī, their own teachers in Mecca and Medina were among the prominent figures in the transmission of Islamic learning in their period and had direct connections with earlier scholars to whom the two predecessors have also been linked.

The Malay students in Mecca and Medina represented major lines of intellectual tradition among Malay Muslims. Examination of their history and the textual materials they produced and taught from will help “to illuminate not only the nature of religious and intellectual relationships between Malay Muslims and Middle East Muslims but also the development of Islam in the Malay Archipelago. Their lives and experiences presented a bright picture of the various connections that existed between them and Middle Eastern scholars”<sup>159</sup>.

These scholarly networks of the chain of transmission for Islamic learning involved a number of prominent Middle Eastern scholars teaching in Mecca and Medina. They constituted “a cosmopolitan scholarly community linked together in a relatively solid fashion by way of their studies, particularly of the *Ḥadīth*, and their involvement in

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<sup>159</sup> Azra, *the origins*, p.3



the transmission of the *Ḥadīth*. Contacts and interactions between these scholars and students from distant places of the Muslim world resulted in further expansion of these international networks, involving several Malay students<sup>160</sup>.

Al-Marbawi reportedly undertook his voyage to Egypt and studied under many well-known scholars of his day for a number of years. After completing his studies from al-Azhar, he decided to stay in Egypt in order to work as a writer and publisher.

His training was within the strict *Ḥadīth* style, inherited from Shaykh Sayyid Abi Bakr bin Muhammad Shaṭa al-Maliki, and his studies with Shaykh Ibrahim al-Samaluti were primarily in the standard *Ḥadīth* collections. These studies included examination of many of the *Ḥadīth* sources beyond the standard six books, especially the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhari. When he returned to Malaysia he became, among others, a leading teacher of the *Ḥadīth*, emphasizing the importance of studying the sources of *Ḥadīth*, not just the six books and later manuals. In particular, he emphasized the importance of Bukhari *Ṣaḥīḥ* and *Sunan* al-Trimidhi of *Ḥadīth* collection and study.

Considering the status of the scholars with whom he studied, it is certain that al-Marbawi's education was a thorough one; he studied *Ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, *shari'ah*, *tafsir* and *kalam*. He had a strong disposition towards the study of the *Ḥadīth*, and it is evident that he studied the *Ḥadīth* mostly with al-Samaluti, from whom he also took chain of transmitters. The importance of mentioning these major scholars under whom he studied is to put al-Marbawi in the proper context, for it is certain that those scholars played an important role in channelling *Ḥadīth* studies from Mecca, Medina to Egypt and further to the Malay world.

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

Having grown up in an environment of learning, together with possession of many great qualities Husayn was naturally driven to dedicate his life totally to the field of *Hadīth*. He obtained his basic knowledge at home and later travelled to far off lands in search of this great area of learning, for example in Patani and Kelantan. From there on, he continued his journey to and arrived in Mecca, where he studied under many well-respected teachers of his day for several years. After completing his studies, he decided to stay in his home town, where he became a teacher much sought after by Malay students, especially from the Malay world. His popularity thus made him one of the most well-known teachers in Malay history. He was a dedicated teacher who contributed much to the education of students of the Malay world in general and the Malay community in particular.

This long description of the works of al-Marbawi and Husayn demonstrates that they were the most prolific Malay authors in Malay-Muslim history and that their written work was to lead the Malay community to an understanding of Islamic disciplines. Indeed, the publication dates of their books clearly indicate that the height of their career was in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Furthermore, the number of teachers they studied with and the learning they gained from them demonstrate that al-Marbawi and Husayn's education was complete and comprehensive. They therefore possessed sufficient knowledge to earn fame as major Malay scholars of the late nineteenth and mid twentieth centuries.

There can be no question that al-Marbawi and Husayn should be included among the most important Malay authors in the history of the Malay world. Their contribution to the education of the Muslim populace of the archipelago, both generally and in Malaysia particularly, proved to be a significant and vital one as shown by the numbers of Malay Muslims in those areas. The popularity and importance of their works is readily apparent from the fact that a number of their works are still being used as textbooks, and are particularly well known among the *pondok* community of Malaysia.



In conclusion it can be observed that al-Marbawi and Husayn , as intellectual and spiritual figures and traditional scholars steeped in traditional Sunni scholarship were acutely aware of the changes taking place around them and in their society. With a sense of urgency they made an attempt to prepare the Malaysian people through educational and journalistic efforts, so that they could strengthen themselves in facing such changes and challenges.

Even though al-Marbawi and Husayn were schooled in the traditional mould, they were aware of the prevailing issues, even on the international scene; thus they combined the external appearance of the men of the old school, yet they were ‘modern’ in their intellectual awareness. This was combined with their concerted spiritual collectiveness, which kept them on track, unswayed by challenging external events in their social and cultural lives.

It is worth taking note however that they did not break away from the traditional Sunni legacy in reforming education and religious thinking, unlike other figures who would stand for ‘reform’ in the Malay world, and who were tainted with rather shallow intellectual awareness compared to them. These were figures in whom profound spiritual awareness was combined with social and educational activism, and they have left a strong legacy.

Hence, because of their scholarly connections, al-Marbawi and Husayn were, without doubt, the most prominent Malay *Ḥadīth* scholars in this century. However, their importance in the light of *Ḥadīth* studies in the Malay world lies not only in their involvement in the ‘Islamic learning’ networks but also more importantly in their writings, al-Marbawi especially, which were widely used in the Malay world, particularly in the *ulama* circles , in the *pondok* school and other Islamic institutions. Therefore, in line with the biography of al-Marbawi and Husayn discussed, attention falls on their magna opera, the *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* and *Jawāhir*. Chapter three is devoted to these great works.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE WRITING OF *BAHR AL-MADHI* AND *JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI*: THE PURPOSE, THE CONTENT, THE STRUCTURE, AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN THE MALAYSIAN ONTEXT.

#### 3.0 Introduction

In chapter two, a list was provided of al-Marbawi and Husayn's known works. It is apparent from the list that there are several works on *Ḥadīth* which are attributed to them, for instance *Kitāb Hidangan Guru: Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī dan Muslim* in two volumes<sup>1</sup> and *Kitab Bulūgh al-Marām*<sup>2</sup>. To our knowledge, of these works only *Baḥr al-Mādhi* of al-Marbawi remain popularly read in religious schools and mosques as well as in higher institutions, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia<sup>3</sup>. The present edited work of Husayn (*Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*), on the other hand, is almost unheard of publicly<sup>4</sup>. This does not however detract from its importance. It was a popular and an influential work in Husayn's time and in subsequent periods.

The popularity of *Baḥr al-Mādhi* is borne out by the number of copies in Malaysia. Indeed, these works provide complete and comprehensive instruction on the *Ḥadīth* and are therefore essential for teaching purposes. In addition, the fact that these authors devoted such effort to the work is clear evidence in itself that these

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Islam, October, 1980, p.51-52.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> In order to facilitate Malay readers with this work, Abdullah al-Qari Haji Salleh Haji Salleh has worked out a summary of *Baḥr al-Mādhi* which used Roman script instead of *Jawi* script in his *Intisari Baḥr al-Mādhi: Ḥadīth - Ḥadīth serta hukum sembahyang (Mengandungi 454 Masalah Agama)* [Summary of *Baḥr al-Mādhi*: on *Ḥadīth* and rules of prayer (454) religious problem]. See 'Abd al Salam, p.110.

<sup>4</sup> Since it has no copy and unused in religious institutions in present day as stated by Saghir.



*Ḥadīth* texts were widely read over the Malay world. It is for these reasons that we have taken this work as the main object of this study.

### 3.1 The Rationale of Writing the Books (*Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*).

#### 3.1.1 The Rationale of Writing the *Baḥr al-Mādhī*<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* (the collections of the recorded words, actions and sanctions of the Prophet Muḥammadﷺ) are the two main sources for an understanding of Islam. Throughout the Muslim world, *Ḥadīth* are held to be second in importance only to the Qur'ān. They are preserved and range from theological statements concerning the nature of Allah (S.W.T), to instructions for ritual performance and accounts of the Prophet's appearance.

Therefore, it is significant to discuss in brief here the importance of *Ḥadīth* to Muslims as guidance in their life because *Ḥadīth* are reports of the sayings and the religious and social behaviour of the Prophet Muḥammadﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ himself declares that:

I have left among you two things, as long as you hold fast to which you will not go astray (*sic*): Allah's Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ<sup>6</sup>.

While another *Ḥadīth* states that:

I have indeed been brought the Qur'ān and something like it along with it, yet the time is coming when a man replete (*sic*) on his couch will say: Keep to this Qur'ān; what you find in it to be permissible treat as permissible, and what you find in it to be prohibited treat as prohibited' but what God's Messenger has prohibited is like what God has Prohibited<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> *Baḥr al-Mādhī* which I used for this study published by Dār al-Fikr, the place and the date of publication is not mentioned.

<sup>6</sup> Y.Dutton, *Sunna, Ḥadīth and Madina amal*, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1993, vol., 4, p.26; *Mishkat*, vol I.p.471; Mālik, *Muwatta'*, ii, p.208.

<sup>7</sup> *Mishkat al-Masabih*, vol. 1, p.431.

These statements indicate the high status attributed by the Prophet ﷺ himself to his *Sunnah* (to the extent that he appointed it) and along with the Qur'ān, as the main source of guidance to which Muslims should resort whenever they deal with the matters of life.

It is recognized that in the time of the Prophet, he specifically asked his companions to convey his teachings to others. Al-Bukhāri for example reports a *Ḥadīth* in which the Prophet ﷺ says:

Those who are present (here) should convey the message to those who are absent.<sup>8</sup>

This is confirmed by a further *Ḥadīth* which says:

Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence.

In this way, <sup>c</sup>Azami stated that the above *Ḥadīth* reveals that the Prophet ﷺ frequently urged his companions to convey knowledge about him<sup>9</sup>. The Prophet ﷺ would specifically instruct companions to teach their people what they had learnt upon their return<sup>10</sup>. <sup>c</sup>Azami further affirmed that the Prophet ﷺ encouraged these activities by informing his followers of the great rewards for teaching and learning, as well as the possible punishment for refusing to do so<sup>11</sup>. Along with these commands, one would naturally expect this kind of standard or principle to make the process of diffusion more efficient. The central command of conveying *Ḥadīth* to future generations is clear.

It is for this reason that, in the 'introduction' to *Baḥr al-Mādhī*, al-Marbawi provides us with the rationale for writing this *Baḥr al-Mādhī*. This was to

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<sup>8</sup> Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol.2, Book 26 (*ʿilm*) No. 795, 9

<sup>9</sup> <sup>c</sup>Azami, *studies*, p.10

<sup>10</sup> A.H.M.Mujtaba Hossain, The role of memory in the preservation of *Ḥadīth*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, 1990, vol.35, p.122.

<sup>11</sup> <sup>c</sup>Azami, *studies*, p.12.



disseminate and to provide a body of the religious guidelines of the *Ḥadīth* for the Malay community<sup>12</sup>.

From his writing we can discern that the rationale for the writing of the *Bahr al-Mādhī* was the author's wish to provide and to answer and explain the questions being put to him, for example, the various verdicts of jurists as well as the discrepancy between traditions, in relation to *Ḥadīth* teachings. It is also worth noting that while this may be considered the author's main reason, it is evident from the work itself that he also wanted to give advice and guidance to Malay Muslims who were following the path of Islam<sup>13</sup>.

Nevertheless, it is not clear at whom al-Marbawī actually chiefly aimed his work. Was it at the people whom he calls '*ummah Nabi Muḥammad (Ṣ.A.W)*' [all those followers of the Prophet Muḥammad] or to a particular group he calls '*kepada saudara-saudaraku*',<sup>14</sup> (to all my brothers [the Malay Muslim community]) or to the public in general who do not understand Arabic? In answer to this question, we can argue that an examination of this work demonstrates that the author did not have any particular group in mind while writing the work except for the Malay Muslim community<sup>15</sup>.

It appears that he wrote this work to provide a text of religious guidelines for the public on matters concerning Islamic teaching as outlined by the Prophet ﷺ. Although this point, based on the statement of the author himself, may be contested, the question which needs to be asked here is why did not the author give his teaching orally to those who went to him? If we assume that al-Marbawi gave his teaching to such people in this manner, which seems to be most probable, why then did he feel that there was a requirement for a written version to accompany his oral teaching? It

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<sup>12</sup>The author wish to answer and expand the problems by using the Hadith of the Prophet. See Al-Marbawi. *Bahr*, vol.1, p.3.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. vol.1, p.3.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Since the early nineteenth century the Malay community has comprised several groups, for example Malay religious leaders which are divided into two groups (the traditionalist group and the reformist group), Malay rulers and chiefs, Sufi scholars, and laymen. See Rahimin Affandi 'Abd al-Rahim. Traditionalism and reformism polemic in Malay-Muslim religious literature, *Islam and Christian-Muslim relations*, vol.17, no.1, January 2006.pp. 93-104

is argued here that by putting his teaching and explanations in writing, al-Marbawi was aiming to address a wider audience rather than just a few particular individuals<sup>16</sup>.

Clearly his intention in writing this book was to assist Malay Muslims to understand the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet accurately. This is essentially significant since Malays on the whole did not understand the Arabic language in that particular period of time. As stated in his introduction, initially he did not think it necessary “to embark on this venture”, but later fulfilled this task with the hope of benefiting the people<sup>17</sup>.

Data gathered from in-depth interviews with Saghir confirms that al-Marbawi’s motive was two fold. Firstly, the intention was to provide the Malay people with *Ḥadīth* as sources of legal knowledge. Secondly, al-Marbawi wished to provide a model of piety for Malay Muslims based on the sinless nature of Muhammad’s conduct, and this was the rationale for wishing to translate the revered commentaries of as great a scholars as al-Tirmidhi<sup>18</sup>. Further evidence is given by al-Marbawi himself:

...When I completed studying *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhi* my heart was overcome with adoration for this work, especially for its arrangement and its account of the Islamic law of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, since it has cited thousands of *Ḥadīth* as well as other knowledge with a careful rendering, and arranged them into different chapters<sup>19</sup>.

The above statements therefore confirm the importance of al-Tirmidhi's *Jāmiʿ* as a vital collection of *Ḥadīth* teachings, which will explain basic problems of Islamic

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<sup>16</sup> Hafiz, interview, February 2006; Saghir, January 2006. According to Muhammad Qasim Zaman, during the nineteenth century the printed text came to be wholeheartedly embraced by the Muslim religious as a vehicle for the effective dissemination of their ideas. See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, commentaries, print and patronage: *Ḥadīth* and the madrasas in modern South Asia, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, 62(1),1999.,pp.60-81.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> His full name was Muhammad ibn ʿIsa ibn Sawrah ibn Mūsa ibn al-Dahhak, Abū ʿIsa al-Sulami al-Darir al-Bughi al-Tirmīdhī. See Asmadi Sakat, *Metodologi Imām al-Tirmīdhī dalam kitab Sunan Jamīʿnya: Kajian perbandingan dengan Metodologi Sunan Ibn Majah*, MA Dissertaion, UKM.1998.

<sup>19</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1,p. 2.



law for the Malay Muslims. In this regard ʿAbd Allah Muḥammad al-Anṣari affirms that:

Al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmiʿ* is more beneficial than al-Bukhari and Muslim's collections, since their compilations are for the scholars, whereas Tirmidhi's *Jāmiʿ* is for both the scholars and the laymen<sup>20</sup>.

We can thus state with certainty that al-Marbawī specifically viewed Tirmidhi's *Jāmiʿ* as more accessible for both scholars and laymen than Bukhārī and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīh*. Hence, it was for this reasons that al-Marbawī chose to translate and comment on this *Ḥadīth* text in preference to all others.

In this regard Saghir too emphasizes that the purpose of al-Marbawī's writing is to provide answers about various concepts and meanings on matters concerning the Methodology of *Ḥadīth* studies. This, he says, can be observed from the author's approach to his work since in addition to discussing such matters as Islamic law and other spiritual matters, he also included a glossary of *Ḥadīth* terminologies<sup>21</sup> for example *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* and *daʿīf ḥadīth*.

In almost the same way in viewing this issue, ʿAbd al-Salam nevertheless points out that the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* was written to explain and elaborate *Ḥadīth* to the Malay community in their language without focusing on the problem of authenticity of the *Ḥadīth* itself. He writes:

As far as methodology is concerned, al-Marbawī translated the *matn* (text) of the *Ḥadīth* only, and ignored the *sanad* (chain of transmitters). His focus was on explanation and elaboration of the *Ḥadīth*. It can be said that his

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<sup>20</sup> Al-Maqdisi, Muhammad Yakin, *Shurūṭ al-a'immati tahqiq al-kauthari*, Misr: Matba'ah al-Qudsi 1357AH cited by Asmadi Sakat, *Metodologi Imām al-Tirmīdhī dalam kitāb Sunannya Jāmi'nya: Kajian perbandingan dengan Metodologi Sunan Ibn Mājah*. MA Dissertaion, UKM,1998.

<sup>21</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Baḥr*, vol.1, p.4. For further details about the teaching of *Ḥadīth Methodology* to Malays community see Faisal Ahmad Shah, *Metodologi Muhamad Idris al-Marbawī dalam Baḥr al-Mādhī*. PhD thesis, University of Malaya, 2007.

interest was in its content, and not on the problem of authenticity of the *Ḥadīth* itself. This is to encourage the reader to refer back to the original text. He also added further information and explanation in the column of problems<sup>22</sup>.

Certainly, Federspiel affirms that “because the issue of the authentic and rejected *Ḥadīth* was resolved in the early century of Muslim history therefore Malays of this century do not need to undertake comprehensive investigation as the great scholars of *Ḥadīth* did”<sup>23</sup>. However, Federspiel goes on to state that it is important to religious scholar or leaders to comprehend the process of development in judging *Ḥadīth* :

It does remain important for Malay Muslims, particularly those preparing for leadership roles in the community as religious scholars, fully to understand the process that took place in judging what could or could not stand as authentic. Studying the science of *Ḥadīth* analysis is therefore important for perception of that historical process, but not for actual analysis, although this may be done in a few sample cases as illustrative of the difficulties and problems confronted by the original investigators<sup>24</sup>.

In line with this view, Ian Proudfoot asserts that content analysis is rarely necessary for Malay Muslims “because Muslim scholars have always been concerned about the integrity of the text and their strategy for preserving this integrity of the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ was through controlled transmission”<sup>25</sup>. He concludes that “the text was to be transmitted only through competent transmitters, knowledgeable and trustworthy scholars to whom custody of the text could be entrusted”<sup>26</sup>.

### 3.1.2 The Rationale of Writing the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*

In the same spirit, the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of Husayn (written earlier than *Baḥr al-Mādihī*) also provided for the local Malay people. According to Annie Brisset, “one

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<sup>22</sup> ‘Abd al- Salam Muhammad Shukrī, al-Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Idrīs al-Marbawī’s contribution to Islamic Studies in the Malay World, *Monograph on selected Malay Intellectuals*, p.109.

<sup>23</sup> H.M Federspiel, *the usage*, p.9

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ian Proudfoot, from recital to sight-reading: the silencing of texts in Malaysia, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, vol.30, no, 87, 2002, pp.117-144.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



translates not only into a target language, but into a 'discourse cible' (target discourse) as well"<sup>27</sup>.

Thus, having noticed the great need of those Muslims in Malaysia to learn the correct authentic *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ and also to acknowledge *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* (of *al-Bukhārī*) as the most authentic of the Prophet's *Ḥadīth*, therefore Husayn undertook the project of translating<sup>28</sup> the meanings of the *Ḥadīth* and its contents into the Malay language to serve the Muslim community, as illustrated in his introduction. Thus, the scholar asserts that:

I have translated this book because of the encouragement I have received from the scholars and my friends to translate the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī wa ba'du sharḥ* of *al-Qaṣṭalānī* ...<sup>29</sup>

It also may not be clear at whom Husayn actually primarily aimed his work. Was it to a particular group he calls '*kepada kekasihku*, (my beloved friends), or to the public in general whom he addressed as '*encik-encik* or *tuan-tuan*' (ladies and gentlemen) who were unable to understand Arabic.

Having examined his work, we may state firmly that the author did not have any particular group directly in mind while writing this work. However, it appears from the evidence discussed that the text was written as a guide to the *Ḥadīth* text for the public (which means for all people and Malay Muslims) on matters concerning Islamic teaching.

In addition, Saghir and Hafiz assert that because of the movement which seeks to renew and strengthen the role of Islam in the faith and deeds of the Malay Muslims, calls for greater knowledge of the *Ḥadīth* continue to be stressed by the scholars in this century<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Mustapha Ettobi, cultural representation on literary translation: translators as mediators/creators, *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 37,2006,vol 37,PT2, pp.206-229

<sup>28</sup> Husayn translated the book of al-Qastalani's (*Jawāhir al-Bukhārī wa ba'du sharḥ al-Qaṣṭalānī*) commentary of al-Bukhari's book.

<sup>29</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.2.

<sup>30</sup> Saghir, interview, December 2005; Hafiz, interview, January 2006.

Furthermore, we will see many cases where texts of the *Ḥadīth* were prepared with this effort in mind as Federspiel writes:

The ‘revivalist and propagation movement’ aside, many lay Muslims undertake their own informal studies of religion as a pious activity. They seek privately - alone, in family sessions or through meetings among friends - to learn more about their own religion and its various aspects to improve their own understanding of the beliefs and practices of Islam and thereby allow them to improve their own behaviour. Studying and reading Traditions (*Ḥadīth*) has been an important part of such religious intensification<sup>31</sup>.

Federspiel concluded that “literature concerning the *Ḥadīth* (whether it is explanatory or inspirational in nature) plays its role here, both for the scholars and for those who are the object of this renewal”<sup>32</sup>.

Thus, whether he wrote the commentary to comply with his friends’ or the people’s request, what is clear is that Husayn took the responsibility very seriously to disseminate the *Ḥadīth* to Malay readers.

We can summarize the rationale for writing *Ḥadīth* text because in the twentieth century, the importance of the *Ḥadīth* rose with the advent of the reformist Muslim movements at that time. Therefore, for the Malay scholars “new interest in both these scriptures (stress on the Qur’ān and verified *Ḥadīth*), opened the way for scholars to formulate new Malay-language materials concerning them”<sup>33</sup>. Scholars worked with translations of the *Ḥadīth* into Malay to produce appreciable collections<sup>34</sup> for the Malay Muslim community.

It is argued here that the Malaysian works discussed in this study provide a strong base for the study of the *Ḥadīth* in Malay Muslim society due to its

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<sup>31</sup> Federspiel, *The usage of Traditions of the Prophet in contemporary Indonesia*, p.4.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Federspiel, *The usage*, p.6-7.

<sup>34</sup> Saghir, interview, January 2006



conscientious translation from the original Arabic texts. While not all of the material of the great collectors has been rendered into Malay, enough exists to satisfy most Malay Muslims and also students of Islam. Since value is still placed on reading this material in Arabic and all classical collections do exist in Arabic<sup>35</sup> in many places throughout Malaysia, it therefore seems unlikely that *Ḥadīth* are not available in the original Arabic for anyone who wants to use the material.

Thus, we understand that the work was composed by al-Marbawi and Husayn in this century to impart to non Arabic speakers a true understanding of the *Ḥadīth* teachings in their language and more importantly as a teaching for the Malay society<sup>36</sup>.

### 3.2 The Date of the *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhāri*

#### 3.2.1 The Date of the *Baḥr al-Mādḥi*

Fortunately, al-Marbawi does provide the exact date when he finished writing the volumes of *Baḥr al-Mādḥi*. According to Faisal, the first volume of *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* was published in 1933, and the final volume was finished on the night of December 24<sup>th</sup> 1957 when the author was sixty-four years old,<sup>37</sup> but it was published in 1960<sup>38</sup>. All 22 volumes were published by *Maktabah wa maṭba'ah al-bābī al-halabi wa-awladuh*<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there was often writing and publishing on *Ḥadīth* in the Arabic language. See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Commentaries, print and patronage: *Ḥadīth* and the madrasas in modern South Asia, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, 62 (1), 1999, pp.60-81.

<sup>36</sup> In this period conflicts appeared between the followers of the Traditional School of Fiqh and those who would like to free themselves from the disciplined intellectual control of Sunni classical scholarship. For details discussion see Azra, Islamic thought: theory, concepts and doctrines in the context of Southeast Asian Islam, In K.S. Nathan and Mohammad Hashim Kamali, e.d. *Islam in Southeast Asia: Political, social and strategic challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*

<sup>37</sup> Abdul Salam, p.109.

<sup>38</sup> Faisal, *metodologi*, p.141.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Marba'wi, *Mukhtaṣar Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī: Baḥr al-mādḥi*, vol.1, Cairo: *Sharikah Maktabah wa-maṭba'ah al-Bābī al-Halabi wa-awladuh*, 1933,2-3.

Therefore, we can say that al-Marbawi took roughly nine years to finish his work on *Baḥr al-Mādhi*, provided that we exclude the years when he stopped writing due to reasons such as the Second World War, for example. As a whole, even though it took him many years, al-Marbawi worked very hard from 1941 onwards, and in due course 22 volumes were published.

These copies were printed on high quality paper without printing errors and are freely available in the state of Malaysia. These works were also printed by *Dār al-Fikr*. Although the place and the date of publication are not mentioned, it is thought that this publication was also issued in the twentieth century.

According to al-Marbawi, his work on *al-Baḥr al-Mādhi* was delayed for 16 years following the start of the Second World War as he mentioned in volume 20:

‘I finished compilation with bestow from Allah (S.W.T) in the night of 18<sup>th</sup> May 1955, since it has been postponed for sixteen years because of the Second World War between Britain and Germany, Japan and Italy in 1939.

He resumed his work (i.e. volume 21) on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1955 and managed to finish on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1955. If we consider this date, this means that al-Marbawi stopped writing volume 20 around 1939, but that it was only published in 1941. The final volume was written immediately afterwards, and was finished on the night of 24<sup>th</sup> December 1957<sup>40</sup>. There is some argument as to the date of publication mentioned in the edition and the statement of al-Marbawi himself. However, al-Marbawi’s statement in his book is here considered to be more reliable as follows:

‘*Inilah akhir kitab Baḥr al-Mādhi juzuk yang ke duapuluh dua telah selesai daripada menyusunnya dan menulisnya pada malam kedua daripada bulan Jamād al-Awal 1377 berbetulan 14 Disember 1957 di Mesir*’

This is the last of (*Baḥr al-Mādhi*) twenty- two volumes which I finished compiling and writing on the night 2<sup>nd</sup> of *Jamād al-Awal* 1377 or 14<sup>th</sup> December 1957 in Egypt’

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<sup>40</sup> Abdul Salam, p.109.



It must be noted here that al-Marbawi's final volume did not comment on the whole of al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'*. Indeed, volume twenty-two stopped abruptly on *Tafsīr sūrah al-Kahf*, while *Jāmi' al-Tirmīdhī* continue up until al-*Mu'awwizatayn*<sup>41</sup>. Volume five of the *Jāmi'* on *manāqib* (virtues) was also left incomplete by al-Marbawi without sufficient commentary, or any suggestion that he would like others to continue his work. This could be taken as being up to other Malay scholars to assume responsibility for continuing al-Marbawi's work.

### 3.2.2 The Date of the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*.

Unfortunately, concerning *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*'s work, Husayn does not provide the exact date when he finished writing. According to Saghir, the earliest dated manuscript known to have survived was published by the *Maktabah al-Zayniyah* Press, Taiping, Perak in 1931. On the front page of the text (1<sup>st</sup> volume), it informs us that it was published in 1931, by consent of the Sultan of Perak. This earliest publishing of the text thus indicates that the work must have been written in or earlier than 1930.

There is a strong possibility, however, that the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* was written between 1925 and 1930. This is based on invaluable information given in the collections of Muṣṭafa ʿImārah (the work on al-Qaṣṭalānī's commentary) as Husayn stated in his text: "the commentary of al-Qaṣṭalānī was commented on by Muṣṭafa as well". The collections of Muṣṭafa were examined by the scholars of University al-Azhar in 1922, and it therefore seems highly plausible that Husayn's text may have been written sometime between 1925 and 1930, after the collections of Muṣṭafa, to offer the Malay community an interpretation of *Ḥadīth* teaching and thus save them

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<sup>41</sup> The last two chapters of the Qur'an, i.e. the *sūrah al-Falaq* and *al-Nās*.

from false imitations of these truths, although it is very interesting to note here that nowhere in his work does he mention the date.

### **3.3 The Content of the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* (of al-Marbawi) and *Jawāhir al-Bukhari* (of Husayn).**

Generally, the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* can be divided into several sections for example: the introduction, the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet under numerous chapters (*abwāb*) and sub topics (*bāb*), the author's commentaries and translations, a glossary of *Ḥadīth* terms, and the ending (*khātima*).

The content of the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* in general can be deduced from the 'introductions' (*muqaddimah*) to their work. The purpose of the 'introduction' in both cases is to illustrate the structure and the content. Discussion of the contents on this topic will commence firstly with the content in general and followed with the 'introduction' to these works. Thus, due to the importance attached to these works by the respective authors, these will now be discussed.

#### **3.3.1. The Content of the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* of al-Marbawi**

In the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* al-Marbawi commented on 2781 of 3956 *Ḥadīth* in *Jami'* of Tirmīdhī which comprises 1831 sub topics (*bāb*) under 47 chapters (*abwāb*), for example:

Chapters of purification and its related matters, chapters of prayer which also include zakat and its related matters, chapters of fasting, chapters of pilgrimage, chapters of *ʿumrah* and funerals, marriage, chapters of divorce, invoking mutual curses (*liʿan*) and business transactions, chapters of business transactions, religious rules (*ahkām*), blood, money and its related matters, chapters of sacrifice, vows and oaths and *sirah* of the prophet, chapters of jihad, dress and food, chapters of drinks, goodness (*birr*) and relation (*ṣilat*), chapters of relation (*ṣilah*), medicine, inheritance, bequest, allegiance (*wala'*), gift (*ḥibah*), and predestination (*qadar*),



chapters of trials (*fitan*), dream interpretation (*ru'yah*) and testimonies, chapters of dream interpretation, testimonies and abstinence (*zuhd*). chapters of characters of hereafter, gentleness (*raju'iq*), and piety (*wara'*). chapters of characters of paradise, hell, and faith and its related matters knowledge, and asking permission and its related matters manners, reward (for reciting) the Qur'an; chapters of Qur'anic interpretation (*Tafsir*) *Tafsir sūrah al-Mai'dah* and other *sūrahs* (until *al-Kahf*) .

The *Baḥr al-Mādhī*'s text also consists of 8,282 problems pertaining to religious and worldly matters and was published in 22 volumes with 5068 pages. However, the total numbers of sub topics in *Baḥr al-Mādhī* is 1831, which is not much compared with *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ (taḥqīq)*<sup>42</sup> by Ahmad Muhammad Shakīr) which comprises 2221 sub topics<sup>43</sup>. The difference in the total figures of *bāb* in al-Marbawi's work is because he does not provide some of the chapters in *Jāmi' al-Tirmīdhī*, for example, the chapter of *al-Tafsīr*, chapter of *al-Da'wāt* and chapter of *al-Manāqib*.

The *Baḥr al-Mādhī* can be divided into several sections:

- i) The 'introduction' of the text.
- ii) The *Ḥādīth* in different chapter arrangements (chapters and sub topics).
- iii) The problems which are related to the *Ḥādīth*.
- iv) Discussion by different *muḥaddith* sources<sup>44</sup>, and different verdicts of jurists.
- v) The commentaries by the author himself.

The specific title of the book (*Mukhtaṣār Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī wa sharḥ hu bi lughat al-Jawī al-Malāyū al-musamma: Baḥr al-Mādhī*), very precisely defines its

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<sup>42</sup> It means verification or realization of the *Ḥādīth*.

<sup>43</sup> Al-Tirmīdhī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ wa Huwa Sunan, taḥqīq* by Ahmad Muhammad Syakir

<sup>44</sup> For example from *Imām* Bukhārī and *Imām* Muslim

contents. Nevertheless it was not clear what he means by ‘*mukhtaṣar ṣaḥīḥ* al-Tirmīdhī’ because al-Marbawī provides no information or explanation in his work. Was it that he summarised *Jāmiʿ* of al-Tirmīdhī itself or from the other written works by other scholars who compiled and summarised *Jāmiʿ* of Tirmīdhī?

According to Faisal, the commentaries of *Jāmiʿ* al-Tirmīdhī have been compiled by several scholars for example, *Mukhtaṣar al-Jāmiʿ* by Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAqīl al-Balīsī al-Shāfiʿī, *Mukhtaṣar al-Jāmiʿ* by Najm al-Dīn Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Qawīy al-Tufī al-Hanbalī (d. 1310) and *Mukhtaṣar Sunan al-Tirmīdhī* by Abū al-Fadl Taj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abd al-Muhsin al-Qalʿī<sup>45</sup>. This work was compiled with 88 *Ḥadīth* with 722 pages (in 1721) and kept in al-Maktabah al-Mahmudiyyah in Medina, Saudi Arabia.

Since the status of the work (*Mukhtaṣar Sunan*) was still in hand- writing and contained a small number of *Ḥadīth*, I suggest that al-Marbawī does not comment on the work of Abū al-Fadl. Thus, we can agree that an examination of this work demonstrates that the author does summarize from the *Jāmiʿ* of al-Tirmīdhī as we understand from his writing<sup>46</sup>.

Al-Marbawī himself entitled his work ‘*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī* of the *Ḥadīth* collection of al-Tirmīdhī (which means as an effort to elucidate the meaning of the

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<sup>45</sup> Faisal, *metodologi*, p.139.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140.



Prophetic traditions in al- Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'*<sup>47</sup>); a 'sharh' and 'mukhtaṣar'<sup>48</sup> (commentary and summary)<sup>49</sup> as he stated in the 'introduction' means his text is a commentary and a summarization of al- Tirmīdhī's work<sup>50</sup> (meaning he does not comment on all the *Ḥadīth* in *Jāmi'* ), omitting the chain of transmitters (*isnad*)<sup>51</sup> and any repeated narrations<sup>52</sup>.

It is significant to note here that the 'ikhtīṣar sanad' (omitting the chain of transmitters) strategies have been discovered in some other authors' *Ḥadīth* texts; for example al-Nawāwī (in *Riyāḍ al-Ṣaliḥīn*) and Ibn Hajar al-<sup>c</sup>Asqalānī (in *Bulūgh al-Marām*). This strategy is also established in 'mukhtaṣar's book' for example *Mukhtaṣar Sunan Abū Dawūd* of Zakī al-Dīn <sup>c</sup>Abd al-<sup>c</sup>Azīm ibn <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Qawī al-Mundhirī (d.1258)<sup>53</sup>. Thus, because *Baḥr al-Mādihī* was written to explain and elaborate the *matn* of *Ḥadīth* to the Malay community with little focus on the problem of authenticity of the *Ḥadīth* itself, therefore he employed this strategy ('ikhtīṣar sanad') in his writing.

Furthermore, it can be said that in his works, he systemized the *Ḥadīth* according to the chapters as in al- Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'* itself<sup>54</sup>. This is to help the reader to refer back to the original text. Therefore, a short statement on the title page draws the appropriate conclusions, that this title is indicative of al-Marbawī's methodology and approach to his work.

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<sup>47</sup> Faisal, *metodologi*, p.140.

<sup>48</sup> However, there is no information or explanation by al-Marbawī himself what he means by 'Mukhtasar Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī'.

<sup>49</sup> This means that al-Marbawī based his work on the full work of al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'*.

<sup>50</sup> For further details discussion see Faisal, *metodologi*, p.199.

<sup>51</sup> One of his techniques is to cite the *Ḥadīth* from one or two Companion. See *Baḥr*, vol.1,p.16.

<sup>52</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Baḥr*,p.3.

<sup>53</sup> Faisal, *metodologi*, p.198.

<sup>54</sup> *libd.*, p.140

However, before further discussion of al-Marbawi's presentation, it is appropriate to discuss briefly al-Tirmīdhī's methodological approach. According to the specific al-Tirmīdhī's techniques in the text, his work is thus classified under several 'classifications' by scholars of *Ḥadīth* as follows<sup>55</sup>:

- 1) *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Tirmīdhī<sup>56</sup>: According to al-Suyūṭī, al-Khaḍīb has mentioned this book as *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Tirmīdhī<sup>57</sup>.
- 2) *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*: This name has been given by al-Hākim al-Nishapurī (d. 405A.H)<sup>58</sup>.
- 3) *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*: According to al-Kattani, occasionally *Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Tirmīdhī is called *al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*<sup>59</sup> but this is rarely used.
- 4) *Al-Sunan*: This is classified as a *Sunan*, implying that the book has been divided into to legal chapters, for example purification, prayer, and fasting. These *Ḥadīth* are narrated on the authority of the Prophetﷺ, while the opinions of the companions are usually not mentioned<sup>60</sup>.
- 5) *Al-Jāmi'*: This name is well-known among the *Ḥadīth* scholars and has been used constantly. The *Jāmi'* which are *Ḥadīth* collections contain a broad range of topics. As indicated by its literal translation, this is a combination of various topics<sup>61</sup>. Generally, any *Ḥadīth* could be attached to any one of eight different fields. An *al-Jāmi'* technically is a comprehensive selection from each of these categories. Of course there

<sup>55</sup> Asmadi, Methodology Imām al-Tirmīdhī, p.47-48.

<sup>56</sup> *ʿAridah al-Ahwadhi Sharh Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Tirmīdhī of Ibn al-Arabi is one of the commentaries of *Jāmi'* al-Tirmīdhī.

<sup>57</sup> Al-Suyūṭī, Abu al-Fadl Jalal al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Rahmān bin al-Kamāl Abu Bakr bin Muḥammad, *Tadrib al-rawi, Sharh al-taqrib, tahqiq* by Abd al-Wahhab Abd al-Latif, Miṣr: *Maktabah al-Qāhirah*, 1379 A.H/ 1959 AD, p.95; see also al-Mubarakfuri, *Muqaddimah tuḥfat al-ahwadhi*, vo.1, p.368.

<sup>58</sup> Kamali, p. 59; al-Tirmīdhī, Abū ʿIsa Muhammad bin ʿIsa bin Sawrah, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ wa huwa Sunan al-Tirmīdhī, Tahqiq* Muhammad Fuʿad ʿAbd al-Baqi, 1<sup>st</sup> Edn., Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah*, 1408AH/1987AD.

<sup>59</sup> Al-Kattani, al-Sayyid Muhammad bin Jaʿfar, *al-Risalah al-mustatrafah*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Beirut: *Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah*, 1400A.H/ 1979A.D, p.9.

<sup>60</sup> Al-Kattani, *al-Risalah al-mustatrafah*, p.9. Also see 'Al-Jami' Al-Ṣaḥīḥ' A Review.htm.

<sup>61</sup> Nūr al-Dīn ʿItr, *Manhaj al-naqd fi ʿulūm al-Ḥadīth*, pp.198-199.



also exist individual collections restricted to a single field. These categories comprise<sup>62</sup>:

- i) *Ḥadīth* pertaining to jurisprudence issues<sup>63</sup>.
- ii) *Ḥadīth* pertaining to scholastic philosophies<sup>64</sup>.
- iii) *Ḥadīth* related to the interpretation of the Qur'ān<sup>65</sup>.
- iv) *Ḥadīth* of Ethics.
- v) *Ḥadīth* pertaining to '*Riqāq*' (self-rectification and wilful renunciation of worldly matters<sup>66</sup>).
- vi) *Ḥadīth* relating historical accounts as well as the Prophet's ﷺ expeditions<sup>67</sup>.
- vii) *Ḥadīth* comprising the virtues of the Noble Family, companions and others<sup>68</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.inter-islam.org/hadeeth/bukhari.html>. Also see Al-'Itr, *Manhaj al-naqd*, p.198-199.

<sup>63</sup> For example in al-Tirmīdhī's *al-Jāmi'*, they range from the 'chapter of Purification' to the 'chapter of Will'. These have been written on this subject as they contribute greatly towards the foundational concept of knowledge in Islam.

<sup>64</sup> These categories generally come under the chapters of Faith and Belief. Ibn Abi Khuzaymah's '*Kitāb al-Tawhid*' and Bayhaqī's (d.1065) '*Kitāb al-Asma' wa al-Sifat*' are typical examples. It was stated that al-Bayhaqī, Ahmad ibn al-Husayn al-Shāfi'i, Abū Bakr; wrote several famous works on *Ḥadīth* and Shāfi'i's *fiqh*. See *Al-'Alam*, 1:13

<sup>65</sup> This is a very interesting chapter in the book. Individual works on the subject include those of Ibn Mardawayh, al-Dailami, Ibn Jarīr and others. Nevertheless, the most highly merited book is rightfully '*Al-Dur Al-Manthūr*' by Imām Suyūṭī.

<sup>66</sup> '*Riqāq*' is technically translated as accounts that demonstrate purity of heart. '*Kitāb al-Zuhd*' by Ahmad bin Hanbal and 'Abd Allah bin al-Mubārak (d.797) have always been appreciated. Many more scholars have made compilations on the topic but, regrettably, mostly adopt a very liberal standard of veracity. This has understandably resulted in contempt towards most works in this field received from more strict scholars.

<sup>67</sup> This chapter is divided into two significant categories. For example topics including the creation of man, the world and the cosmos, the sky and the earth, animals, angels, the jinn, accounts of previous prophets and nations who have perished are generally debated in '*Kitāb Bad' al-Khalq*', whereas, issues regarding the Prophet's ﷺ life-accounts and those of his family and Companions are mostly mentioned in '*Kitāb Al-Siyār*'. The '*Siyār*' of Ibn Ishāq, or Ibn Hishām is prime examples in this field. Later scholars have contributed heavily towards the creation of a rich library on this topic making the Prophet ﷺ the most spoken of and most commented upon figure in human history.

viii) *Ḥadīth* of 'Fitān'. This word literally means strife and tribulations.

The above discussion thus illustrates that in his *Jāmi'*, al-Tirmīdhī has included detailed commentaries and teachings across every area of human conduct as follows:

..Doctrine (*ʿaqā'id*), legal rules, moral teachings, manners (*al-adāb*), Qur'anic commentary, the history and biography of the Prophet (*al-tafsīr wa al- tarīkh wa al-siyār*), seditions and crises (*al-fitān*), and the virtues (*manāqib*) and vices (*matalib*)<sup>69</sup>.

The breadth of al-Tirmīdhī's treatment thus elevates the status of his work to 'al-*Jāmi'*', in keeping with Islamic scholastic tradition.

Therefore, al-Marbawī has compiled and commented on *Jāmi'* al-Tirmīdhī as a guide to the Malay community. Al-Marbawī has discussed and commented on the *Ḥadīth* on dogmatic (*ʿaqā'id*), legal rules, moral teachings, proper manners (*al-adāb*), Qur'anic commentary, history and biography of the Prophet (*al-tafsīr wa al- tarīkh wa al-siyār*), seditions and crises (*al-fitān*), and virtues (*manāqib*) defects (*matālib*) as in al-Tirmīdhī's work. The importance of al-Marbawī's contribution to Islamic scholastic tradition here is that he was the first to embark upon a comprehensive translation into Malay of al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'*, elaborated with detailed commentaries across all the areas detailed above.

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<sup>68</sup> Detailed works can be found on the topic, mostly works with particular interest in praise of a specific tribe, clan or personality.

<sup>69</sup> Muhammad ʿAbd al-Rahman bin ʿAbd al-Rahim al-Mubarakfūrī, *Muqaddimah Tuhfah al-Ahwadhī*, p.52-53; Asmadi Sakat, *Metodologi Imām al-Turmūdhi*, pp.24-28.



From the above discussion therefore it is concluded here that the words '*sharḥ mukhtaṣar ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī*' in themselves signify the depth of al-Marbawī's coverage in his commentaries upon al-Tirmīdhī's work. Thus, the term '*sharḥ mukhtaṣar*' of al-Marbawī's work is significant in relation to its content for the following reasons:

- i. He leaves out the chain of transmitters (only mentioning one or two narrators).
- ii. He does not comment on the entire *Ḥadīth* in *Jāmi'*
- iii. He does not include the whole information that has been given in *Jāmi'* for example '*ʿamal fuqahā*' (practices of *fuqaha*).

These terms '*sharḥ mukhtaṣar ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmīdhī*' thus signify that al-Marbawī has treated in depth every area covered by al-Tirmīdhī himself<sup>70</sup>.

Interestingly, the term '*ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Tirmīdhī' implies that al-Marbawī may not have included in his collection a '*ḍaʿīf ḥadīth*' or '*ḥasan ḥadīth*' of al-Tirmīdhī. It means he did this intentionally and that his goal was to show that there were no *ḍaʿīf* or *ḥasan ḥadīth*' in his text. Nevertheless, in the chapter of al-*ṭaharah* for example, he included *ḍaʿīf* and *ḥasan ḥadīth* together with *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*<sup>71</sup>. Hence, the readers will therefore assume that most of the *Ḥadīth* in his commentary are *ṣaḥīḥ*, whereas throughout his commentary, in contrast, he did not provide any information or any explanation about why he applied '*ṣaḥīḥ*' instead of '*jāmi'* or *sunan*'.

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<sup>70</sup> This is the commentary and summary of al-Tirmīdhī's work which covers all areas of Islamic teaching for example the *aḥādīth aqā'id* (dogmatics), *ahkām* (legal rules), *al-riqāq* (moral teachings), *adab al-ṭaʿam wa al-sharab* (etiquette of eating and drinking), *al-tafsīr wa al-tarikh wa al-siyār* (Qur'ān commentary, history and biography of the Prophet), *al-fitān* and *al-manāqib* (the virtues of the Prophet and his Companions).

<sup>71</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.16.

It appears however, that his work entirely consists of *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* therefore it is suggested here that the terms used as the title (*ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Tirmīdhī...) of his book, although he included the *daʿīf*, *ḥasan* and others, are appropriate<sup>72</sup>.

Similarly, also relevant here is that this method has been applied by later commentaries, for example, al-Albānī's work<sup>73</sup> entitled '*Jāmiʿ Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmīdhī*', and which has as its main purpose to compile all the *ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* of Tirmīdhī. Thus, all the *Ḥadīth* which are 'weak' or 'suspect' in Albānī's opinion have been omitted. Therefore the total number of *Ḥadīth* in this particular edition is only 3,101; fully 855 *Ḥadīth* less than the original text<sup>74</sup>. This omission accords with Albānī's method; he has shortened the *isnād* by mentioning only their names and has given his personal classification of each tradition, without reference to al-Tirmīdhī<sup>75</sup>.

It is important to note here that the number of *Ḥadīth* are counted on the basis of the *isnād* and not on the basis of the *matn*. It is essential to make this vital principle of verification clear as ignorance about this fact can raise some serious misunderstandings which influence so much of Muslim and Western scholars' thought as al-Tabrizi stated:

When we say '...that Muslim collected three hundred thousand of *Ḥadīth* and included only 4,000 in his compilation, it does not imply that he rejected the rest of the stock deeming it to be unreliable. This means that the

<sup>72</sup> Hafiz, interview, January 2006.

<sup>73</sup> Al-Albānī, Muhammad Naṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Jāmiʿ Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmīdhī*, Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States:Riyad, 1408 A.H.

<sup>74</sup> Regarding Albānī's text compiled in three volumes, the first volume has 388 pages including an introduction; the second volume consists of 419 pages, while the third volume has 470 pages including an index. This text in three volumes was written in Arabic and was published in Riyad in 1408 A.H. by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States.

<sup>75</sup> Al-Albānī, Muhammad Naṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Sunan al-Tirmīdhī wa huwa al-Jāmiʿ al-Mukhtasar min al-Sunan ʿan Rasūlillah S.A.W wa maʿrifah al-Ṣaḥīḥ wa al-maʿlul wa maʿalaihi al-ʿamal al-maʿrūf bi Jāmiʿ al-Tirmīdhī*, Abu ʿUbaydah Mashur ibn Ḥasan al-Salman, Riyad: *Maktabah al-Maʿrif*; [http://www.msapubli.com/affiliated/Html/categories/Jamiatul\\_ulama/tirmidhi02.htm](http://www.msapubli.com/affiliated/Html/categories/Jamiatul_ulama/tirmidhi02.htm).



words and deeds of the Prophet ﷺ were transmitted to Muslim through numerous *isnād* running into thousands, out of which he selected 4,000 *isnād* as the most authentic and narrated the texts on their authority. A *matn* which is transmitted through one hundred *isnād* is in *Ḥadīth* literature treated as one hundred *Ḥadīth*; for instance, the text of the first *Ḥadīth* in Bukhārī (the actions are judged on the basis of intention) is counted as a selection of one out of 700 *Ḥadīth* since it has been transmitted through such a large number of *isnād*<sup>76</sup>.

In addition, throughout the presentation of al-Marbawi, Faisal suggests that al-Marbawi's commentary is a '*sharḥ mutawassīṭah*'. It is because al-Marbawi's text focuses on the meaning of the *Ḥadīth* with little explanation of the study of *Ḥadīth* Methodology<sup>77</sup>.

### 3.3.1. (a) The 'Introduction' (*Muqaddimah*) of *Baḥr al-Mādhī*

Al-Marbawi begins, like any other author of the *Ḥadīth* texts, by praising Allah (S.W.T) and His absoluteness for bestowing upon him His blessing and guidance in his difficult task. This is followed by the author's praise for the blessed messenger of Allah, Muhammad ﷺ and of his family and companions.

He then enlightens his readers as to the methodology of his writing and its purpose. Here he explicitly states that some in the Malay community not versed in Arabic will not understand the *Ḥadīth* correctly since those who were employed in the study of *Ḥadīth* investigation wrote not in their own language but in Arabic. Thus, he provides greater knowledge of these *Ḥadīth* in terms which are meaningful for his readers, so that they will be fully equipped to travel the path of Islam in purity.

Al-Marbawi begins the 'introduction' with a detailed description of the structure of his work, which runs into fifteen pages: page two to page sixteen. Part of

<sup>76</sup> Al-Tabrizi, *Mishkāt*. p.xiv

<sup>77</sup> According to Faisal there are three style of *shurūḥ/ sharḥ* which are *sharḥ mukhtasarah*, *sharḥ mutawassīṭah* and *sharḥ muwass'ah*. For detailed explanation about the *sharḥ* styles see Faisal, *Metodologi*. p.149.

this consists of a glossary of terminology found in the *Jāmiʿ* of al-Tirmīdhī, and an explanation of the purpose of commentary. The first five pages present his view of the generic features of *Jāmiʿ* al-Tirmīdhī as a text, and he elaborates on the complexities which are the consequence of this structure. Also, he cautions his readers, both laymen and scholars, that the terminologies of the *Ḥadīth* in al-Tirmīdhī's text convey particular meanings, for example, *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*, and should thus be read with care. In this case, for example, al-Marbawī explains the meaning of *ḥasan ḥadīth* as defined by al-Tirmīdhī:

Wherever al-Tirmīdhī has mentioned a *ḥasan ḥadīth* in his book, he meant a *Ḥadīth* which does not contain a reporter accused of lying and it is not *shadh* (rare) and the *Ḥadīth* has been reported through more than one *sanad*<sup>78</sup>.

After establishing this point, the author reminds his audience that their duties depend on their 'intention'. Al-Marbawī writes:

ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab reported Prophet ﷺ as saying: verily the deeds are to be judged by intentions and for every person (there is in store for him) what he aims at. He whose migration is for the sake of Allah and His messenger his migration (is in fact for Allah and His messenger) and he whose migration is for the worldly (end) he would attain that or for a woman with whom he (likes) to marry; his migration is for that for which he migrated (*sic*)<sup>79</sup>.

Al-Marbawī does offer immediately his interpretation of the above *Ḥadīth*, also providing sources from different Schools of Thoughts (*Madhāhib*). However, a short statement on the *Ḥadīth* then draws the appropriate conclusions. He then states briefly his conclusion that rewards for deeds enacted depend both on their 'intention' and their desire for the blessings of Allah (S.W.T) All will thus be judged according

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<sup>78</sup> *Bahr*, vol.p.4.

<sup>79</sup> Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, the translation of the meanings of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Hilal Yayinlari, Turkey, 1992, vol.1, p. 1



to ‘intention’. This includes faith, ablution, prayers, fasting and the *ahkām*<sup>80</sup> of Allah (S.W.T)<sup>81</sup>.

Al- Marbawi makes a very strong case in his ‘introduction’ for the uniqueness of *Jāmiʿ* al-Tirmīdhī, suggesting that his work operates on many different levels; the function of this introduction, then, is to alert the reader to its many facets so that he or she can derive maximum profit from it. At the same time, the nature of al- Marbawi’s strength of purpose is clear. Since he viewed the *al-Jāmiʿ* of al-Tirmīdhī as appropriate for every one, all his strength was devoted to this commentary and translation into the Malay language as a teaching medium<sup>82</sup>.

With reference to the presentation of his commentary , it seems that he had great influence on the classical commentary ‘introduction’ such as *al-Minhaj sharh ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* of al-Nawāwī (d. 1277), *Fath al-bārī bi sharh ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* of Ibn Hajar<sup>83</sup> (d.1448), or early contemporary texts such as *Tuhfa al-ahwadḥī bi sharḥ Jāmiʿ al-Tirmīdhī*<sup>84</sup> of Abū al-ʿUla Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Rahmān ibn ʿAbd al-Rahīm al-Mubarakfūrī (d.1935). Thus, by adhering to the ‘introduction’ of al-Nawāwī’s *Minhaj* or al-Mubarakfūrī’s *Tuhfa al-ahwadhi*, the authors strive to demonstrate the coherence, not self-evident to all readers, of the contents of al-Tirmīdhī’s *Jāmiʿ*.

<sup>80</sup> ‘*Aḥkam*’ according to Islamic Law, there are five kinds of orders; which are (a) compulsory (*wajib*), (b) order without obligation (*mustaḥab*), (c) forbidden, (d) disliked but not forbidden (*makruh*), (e) legal and allowed (*ḥalāl*). See Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *the translation of the meaning of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari*, Hilal Yayinlari: Turkey, 1992, p.ixvii

<sup>81</sup> Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, the translation of the meanings of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Hilal Yayinlari, Turkey, 1992.vol.1, p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> A deeper purpose here was also to re-affirm the importance of fundamental Islamic principles as a means of resolving current disputes, as will be discussed in Chapter Five.

<sup>83</sup> Abu al-Fadl Ahmad bin ʿAli bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin ʿAli al-ʿAsqalani. For more detailed biography see *the Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.

<sup>84</sup> The *Tuhfa* was first published at Delhi : *Idārat al-Hakim*, 4 vols., between 1927 and 1935; the second edition was published at Medina : *al-Maktabah al-Salafiyya* ,10 vols., between 1963-67, and reprinted in 1406 A.H.; another edition was published at Damascus : *Dār al-Fikr* ,10 vols., in 1979, and yet another at Beirut : *Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabi*, in 1404/1990. See M.Q.Zaman, commentaries, print and patronage: *ḥadīth* and the *madrasas* in modern South Asia, *Bulletin of the school of oriental and African Studies*, 62(1), 1999, p.60-81.



According to Muhammad Qasim Zaman, “the exegetical assumptions and strategies discussed by some authors in their ‘introductions’ are, standard<sup>85</sup>; this is the case not just in Ibn Hajar’s introduction to his commentary, but in those across major religious traditions”<sup>86</sup>. As Henderson said:

One of the ‘most common commentarial assumption(s) regarding the character of canons in most traditions is that they are well ordered and coherent...<sup>87</sup>

Based in its published form, this ‘introduction’ is followed by twenty-two commentaries. These are essentially in the nature of extremely brief remarks on difficulties raised by these *Ḥadīth* (al-Tirmīdhī’s *Ḥadīth*). *Bahr al-Mādhī*’s work thus consists of 8,200 problems pertaining to religious and worldly matters. This first Malay translation and commentary upon al-Tirmīdhī’s *Jāmi‘* in the Malay world generally, and in the Malaysian context particularly,<sup>88</sup> and has been widely circulated in the Malay world.

### 3.3.2 The content of *Jawāhir al-Bukharī* of Husayn.

In the same manner as al-Marbawī, Husayn introduces his text by praising Allah (S.W.T) and His absoluteness for bestowing upon him His blessing and guidance in his difficult task. Also in his foreword he “praises Allah (S.W.T) for His great mercy and benevolence in the sending Prophet Muhammad to His Devotees, invites them to the worship of Allah, who is the One and Only<sup>89</sup>, and orders them not to ascribe

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<sup>85</sup> For example, the author’s discussion about the terms that al-Bukhārī or al-Tirmīdhī did not explain in their text. Therefore *Hadith* scholars tried to discover how these terms were used by al-Bukhārī or Tirmidhi. For further discussion see Fadel, M, Ibn Hajar’s Hady al-sari: a medieval interpretation of the structure of al-Bukhari’s *al-Jami‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*: introduction and translation, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 54 (3), 1995, 161-97.

<sup>86</sup> Muhammad Qasim Zaman, commentaries, print and patronage: *ḥadīth* and the *madrasas* in modern South Asia, *Bulletin of the school of oriental and African Studies*, 62(1), 1999, p.60-81.

<sup>87</sup> For more on this and other commentary assumptions, see John B. Henderson, *scripture, canon and commentary: a comparison of Confucian and western exegesis*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, pp. 89-199.

<sup>88</sup> Al-Islām, November, 1987, p.51.

<sup>89</sup> This is to negate the idea of Polytheism, a system in which people believe in many gods and lords. Such a system is opposed to our truest and profoundest conceptions of life. For Unity in Design, Unity in the fundamental facts of existence, proclaim the Unity of the Maker. See ‘Abd Allah Yusūf ‘Alī, *The meaning of The Holy Qur’ān*, Amana publications: USA, p.1714.



partners unto Him to bring them out of the darkness of polytheism into the light of monotheism”:

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, and Most Merciful<sup>90</sup>. Praise belongs to Allah who has eased the people of Islam’s breasts to the *sunna*. Thus, they were led by it and in its study found comfort. He destroyed the ones iniquitous in their innovations after they had become excessive in disputing it and their innovations had exceeded all bounds. I witness that there is no god except Allah, alone, with no partner, the knower of the heart’s submission and of its refusal (to submit), the One aware of its hidden secrets, be they united or separate (sic)..

This is followed by the author’s praise of the blessed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, of his family and his companions.

Praise belongs to Allah (S.W.T) and I also bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His messenger, the one by whose right falsehood became low after it had been high. Through his mission, the lights of guidance reappeared and their proof became manifest, after they had been extinguished. May Allah bless him and grant him peace as long as the Heavens and the Earth endure, the former in its loftiness, and the latter in its vastness; and, may He bless his family and companions, those who crushed the armies of the apostates, and who conquered their fortresses. They abandoned their homes and desire for the love of the one calling them to Allah (S.W.T), never to return to them after bidding them farewell. They were zealous in following his words, deeds, and manners, thereby preserving the noble *Sunah* (norms) from disappearance...”

Husayn then tells his readers the rationale for writing the work, relating that some of his friends requested him to compose this text. His readers are not specifically informed who his friends are, the reason for their request or what sort of questions or problems led to the request. Nevertheless, he informs these friends that he wrote the work in order to enlighten them in their understanding of the *Ḥadīth*

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<sup>90</sup> The Arabic words *Rahmān* and *Rahīm*, translated as ‘Most Gracious’ and ‘Most Merciful’ are both intensive forms referring to different aspects of Allah’s attribute of Mercy. The Arabic intensive is more suited to express Allah’s attributes than the superlative degree in English. For detail discussion see ‘Abd Allah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur’ān*, IPCI: Islamic Vision, Birmingham

literature of Bukhāri, because being Malay, they did not comprehend these texts in Arabic<sup>91</sup>.

Husayn then proceeds to enlighten his readers about the importance for the Malay community of learning *Ḥadīth*. According to him:

The study of the *Ḥadīth*, which is received from the best of mankind, is the noblest thing which has been singled out for special attention, and the most appropriate thing in which precious days should be spent. No rational man would doubt that the axis of these sciences is the Book of Allah (which is) followed and the *Sunna* of His select Prophet. The remaining sciences are either tools to understand them, and they are the lost things which are sought, or they are unrelated to them, and they are the harm to be overcome.

Thus, the author sees it as his task to throw light upon the relevance of the *Ḥadīth* to the religious and social life of Muslims in Malaysia. Husayn reminds his readers that the sayings and actions of the Prophet not only complement the Qur'ān, but, being the authentic record of the Prophet's life, they also lead followers to the source of revelation and provide them with access to the inner, spiritual dimension of the *Ḥadīth* teachings.

Husayn then mentions that every religion seeks to build ideal patterns of society, prescribing certain ethical rules and devotional observances for achieving that end. Life in harmony with the spirit of such rules and laws can be realized only by forming and moulding the life of the followers of that religion after the perfect model of that system. Thus, in the case of Islam, this model is obviously the life of the Prophet ﷺ because his *Ḥadīth* provide us with the means of realizing the inner reality, the gist and spirit of the Islamic system of beliefs and observances<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>91</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.1-3.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.



Husayn then concludes the ‘introduction’ with a verse of the Qur’ān revealing his uniqueness and virtues, inclusive of his accomplishments and deeds, so that mention of him adorns the book’s conclusion.

The content of Husayn contains several sub-topics and beginning with the *Hadīth* ‘How Divine inspiration first came to Muhammad ﷺ’ and comprising the *Hadīth* for most devotional practices. These are examples of concise information of the *Ḥadīth* in his book:

sub-topics of an explanation: How the Divine inspiration started, sub-topics of an explanation: the belief of Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: regarding the deeds of faith of Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: your invocation is your faith (invocation means belief), sub-topics of an explanation: a Muslim is the one who avoids harming other Muslims with his tongue and hands, sub-topics of an explanation: to feed (others) is part of Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: to wish for one’s (Muslim) brother what one likes for one-self is a part of faith, sub-topics of an explanation: to love the Prophet ﷺ is a part of faith, sub-topics of an explanation: to swear allegiance to Prophet ﷺ sub-topics of explanation: sweetness (delight) of faith and Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: the sins of abusing others, sub-topics of an explanation: a person who embraces Islam sincerely, sub-topics of an explanation: both legal and illegal things are evident, sub-topics of an explanation: religion is to be sincere, sub-topics of an explanation: a person who is asked about knowledge.

Husayn provided the book with a brief ‘introduction’ of the same size as the book itself. He deals with matters relating to spiritual and behavioural practices, to those relating to leadership (as political teaching) as well as the etiquette of charitable giving (*sadaqah*) to others. The books exist in printed form. It is clear that the compiler had as an aim that his book should be an easy reference source for authentic *Hadīth* for Malay Muslims’ practice in their life<sup>93</sup>.

In his interpretation of the *Ḥadīth*, Husayn briefly highlights the importance of learning *Ḥadīth*, followed by different topics based on the meaning of each *Ḥadīth*.

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<sup>93</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.4-6

For example, the beginning of revelation is the theme for the first *Ḥadīth*: three issues that could ascertain a person's pleasurable experiences of faith (then the Prophet urged the *Anṣar* to be loyal and pay allegiance). Sub-topics were included under each *Ḥadīth* when necessary.

Thus, this work is considered to be midway between the source books predominantly employed by specialists (al-Bukhārī and al-Qaṣṭalānī) and those used by the general reader for the purposes of practical application in his or her devotions.

### 3.3.2 (a) The 'Introduction' (*Muqaddimah*) of *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*

In contrast, the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of Husayn's 'introduction' is a relatively brief work as compared to *Baḥr al-Mādḥī*. It has only seven pages with the first part of it consisting of praises to Allah (S.W.T), and an explanation on the authority of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The rest of the pages (sixth to eight), however, present his view of the learning of *Ḥadīth* as a principal study in Islam. In his 'introduction' also, Husayn elucidate the structure of the work and explains the reasons which led him to compose and translate his *Jawāhir*.

The precise title of the book, *Tazkīr qabā'il al-qadaḥī fī tarjamah Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, accurately describes its contents. Husayn himself entitled his efforts as a Malay translation of *Ḥadīth* from the commentary of al-Qaṣṭalānī; a '*tarjamah*' (translation) which refers to a 'reproduction' of an already known work, with a comprehensive translation generally printed alongside the original text for quick reference and easier understanding, together with omission of the chain of narration. This in itself indicates Husayn's methodology and approach to his work, as stated in his preface:

I have translated this book because of the encouragement I have received from scholars and my friends to translate the *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of al-Qaṣṭalānī commentaries.



These words are evidence that Husayn's book was adapted or translated from Arabic; local views are prevalent, however, since even the title of the original was changed. For example the contents of *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī wa ba'd sharh al-Qaṣṭalānī*<sup>94</sup> was translated into Malay under the title '*Tazkīr qabāil al-qadahi fī tarjamah Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*'. This was a strategy (the title is in Arabic) designed to attract readers perhaps, but the contents are written in Malay.

According to Fauzi during the early twentieth century in the Malay region, a need was felt to prepare a digest of the *Ḥadīth* in order to convey its teaching to Malay society. Since the content of al-Qaṣṭalānī's commentary (this is a commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* from al-Bukhārī) was 'simple' and complete as well as comprising *Ḥadīth* on Islamic practicalities<sup>95</sup>, it was translated into Malay.

Husayn's contribution here was the most significant in this sphere as he selected *Ḥadīth* out of al-Qaṣṭalānī's compilation to be included in his selection which he entitled *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*. His selection is therefore representative in the sense that he not only gathered his material according to the principle of simplicity used in the work of al-Qaṣṭalānī<sup>96</sup>, but that he arranged it on the basis of the authenticity of *Ḥadīth*.

Following the principle of abbreviation and simplification, we found that Husayn restricted himself to the authentic *Ḥadīth* of Bukhārī, in which he benefited from a rich choice of textual material in preference to *Ḥadīth* of a lower category.

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<sup>94</sup> The book is an Arabic commentary by al-Qaṣṭalānī on the *Ḥadīth* collection of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

<sup>95</sup> Fauzi Deraman, Karya-karya *Ḥadīth* dalam tulisan Jawi, *Journal Usuludin*, December, 1999, no.10, pp.163-173.

<sup>96</sup> Shaykh Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Abū Bakr bin 'Abd al Malik bin Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Qaṣṭalānī Al-Qāhīrī Al-Shāfi'ī. He was born in Egypt in 1482 and, living an illustrious life, passed away in 1517. He had completed his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in 1504. See, Mustafa Muhammad 'Imārah, *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī wa syarh al-Qaṣṭallani 700 Ḥadīth mashrūḥah*, n.d :Maktabah al-Tijāriyah al-Kubrā, p.waau.



Having confined himself solely to authentic *Ḥadīth*, it was natural for him to choose those texts which were most reliable. He found his task of verifying the *Ḥadīth* smoothed by the fact that this had already been dealt with in masterly fashion by the venerable scholar, al-Qastalānī<sup>97</sup>. With surpassing expertise this distinguished scholar had already edited the book, giving the sources of the *Ḥadīth* and distinguishing those that were authentic from those that were not. His compilation of the *Sahīh Ḥadīth* of al-Bukhāri, was noteworthy for its clarity and thoroughness.

With regard to the time in which al-Bukhāri compiled his great work, Nadia stated that the ninth century saw a new phase of development in *Ḥadīth* studies<sup>98</sup>. Usually there is an almost complete consensus among Muslim and non-Muslim scholars that the ninth century, was the most active for searching and investigating *Ḥadīth* of Prophet, and is for this reason termed the 'golden century'<sup>99</sup>. A large number of Muslim scholars were driven by a deep sense of religious and social obligation to collect and preserve the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* in written form<sup>100</sup>. Some of them spent most of their lives travelling, interviewing, studying, and searching out the truth concerning the *Ḥadīth* and its narrators<sup>101</sup>.

Analysis of Husayn's 'introduction' also yielded confirmation that he does not provide any account of the genesis of al-Qastalāni's commentary, or brief biographical notes on al-Qastalāni (from whom he took his commentary of *Ḥadīth*). Husayn also does not supply any introduction to the life, work and creed of al-Bukhāri, nor an explanation of the significance of the *Ṣahīḥ* and its place in relation to

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<sup>97</sup> Fauzi Deraman, Karya-karya *Ḥadīth* dalam tulisan Jawi, *Journal Usuludin*, December, 1999, no.10, pp.163-173.

<sup>98</sup> A.Nadia, An Arabic papyrus in the Oriental Institute stories of the Prophet, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, July 1946, vol.,v, No:3,p.169.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, the impact of the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* on Medieval Arabic literature, p.340.

<sup>101</sup> By this time as Nadia A. has stated that the scholars of *Ḥadīth* for instance Ali ibn 'Abd Allah (d.848), who was a diligent student of tradition, collected and wrote out on papyrus the entire *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal. He placed the bulky work in a large bookcase for safekeeping, as he taught during his subsequent absence on a journey. A.Nadia, An Arabic papyrus in the Oriental Institute stories of the Prophet, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, July 1946, vol., V, No: 3, p.169.



other collections of *Ḥadīth* as al-Qastalāni previously did in his text<sup>102</sup>. He also provides no description of the chains of transmission of al-Bukhārī's work, or the channels through which the *Ṣaḥīḥ* has reached scholars of the Malay world. Even though his introduction confirms that he thinks highly of al-Bukhārī's work, he does not however present an account of the rationale behind the way the titles of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* have been arranged by al-Bukhārī<sup>103</sup>.

This method was applied in order to assist the readers in their understanding of the *Ḥadīth*. In some instances the author explains briefly about the benefits obtained from the *Ḥadīth*. Husayn's 'introduction' confirms that in arranging the book, he committed himself to criteria of validity within this; he includes therein only authentic *Ḥadīth*, as the basis of its contents.

Therefore, we understand that Husayn's aim included the separation of valid *Ḥadīth* from those which were less reliable, but was not limited to this only. He also was able to profit from the scholarship of previous centuries (such as al-Raniri's and al-Sinkili's works<sup>104</sup>) which he then translated from Arabic into Malay.

### **3.4 The Techniques of Writing *Bahr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* In Order To Facilitate A Better Understanding of the *Ḥadīth* To Malay Readers.**

There are several techniques or methods which have been applied by al-Marbawi and Husayn in presenting *Ḥadīth* to Malay readers. According to Faisal, al-Marbawi applied traditional expertise in *Ḥadīth* as well as his own technique. His qualitative research shows that "techniques of interpretation of *Ḥadīth*, *riwāyah* (narrative), and *dirāyah* (knowledge) as well as *fiqh al-Ḥadīth* have been applied by al-Marbawi"<sup>105</sup>.

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<sup>102</sup> See Muṣṭafa Muhammad 'Imārah, *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī wa syarh al-Qastallani 700 Ḥadīth masyruhaḥ*, p.waau.

<sup>103</sup> For further information about the style of the previous scholars provided in their commentary see Muhammad Qasim Zaman, commentaries, print and patronage: *ḥadīth* and the *madrasas* in modern South Asia, *Bulletin of the school of oriental and African Studies*, 62(1), 1999, p.60-81.

<sup>104</sup> See previous chapter (Chapter One) for detailed information.

<sup>105</sup> Faisal, *metodologi*.

However, for the purpose of this section, we shall limit our discussion only to several techniques of al-Marbawi and Husayn's text.

### 3.4.i) Malay Translation *via Jawi script*.

In order to facilitate and to spread *Hadīth* teaching to the Malay community the commentary of *Baḥr al-Mādhī* (of al-Marbawi) and translations of *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* (of Husayn) were written in the vernacular. These two texts are most suitable for their purpose, which is to present to Malay Muslim readers by using *Jawi* script and in their own language (Malay), a book of reliable authorship and content based only on *Ḥadīth* texts which are authentic and reliable, and characterised by brevity.

According to Becker as cited by Woodward, "any translation is in a sense a 'new work', because changing the language of a text changes the 'semantic fields' and contexts in which is situated. He goes on to suggest that 'bringing old texts into the present' is a common Malay world phenomena"<sup>106</sup>. This method of translation often involves reinterpreting with combining older materials.

Therefore, Muslim authors exercise great caution when reproducing or translating the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*, they exercise 'less restraint and more creativity'<sup>107</sup> in the reproducing of commentary. In the case of the Malay texts considered here, the result is a work of the type that Becker describes as 'both ancient and contemporary'<sup>108</sup>. It is thought ancient because it translates al-Tirmīdhī and al-Qaṣṭalānī's text and contemporary because it locates the meaning of the text in modern Malaysia.

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<sup>106</sup> Woodward, textual exegesis, pp565-583

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Woodward, pp565-583.



It is worth stating here that the Malay language was the lingua franca of the Muslims in Malay world, and an essential vehicle for the spread of religious ideas throughout the Malay region. According to Andalaya, the oldest Malay manuscripts in the *Jawi* script date from the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. He further stated that Malay literary activities developed mainly through translations from Persian and Arabic<sup>109</sup>. Therefore, A.H Johns described these literary activities as 'enriching the language of the tribe'<sup>110</sup>.

Ishak, who examines the contributions of Malay publishing and printing in Malaysia, suggests that the *Jawi* characters were preferred because of their traditional background and its association with the Malay Muslims religion. Therefore if a book was written for the public and intended to reach a large circle of readers, it had to be written in *Jawi*<sup>111</sup>.

Furthermore, El-Edrus who discusses the characters of *Jawi* script and the importance of *Jawi* writing as the only medium which the Malay could acquire a greater knowledge of Islam stated that:

Undoubtedly the Arabic alphabet in the *Jawi* writing is a vital and dominant factor; of the 29 letters in the *Jawi* script, only 5 are unique to the Malays, the others being the same as in Arabic. Frequently, borrowed Arabic words have been naturalised or assimilated by the Malays according to their own grammatical rules and usages<sup>112</sup>.

Thus, all these distinguishing features make these books highly accessible for a practising Muslim in which he or she can have confidence, which will be easy for him or her to understand, and which will stimulate him or her to commit its saying to his or her heart for the purpose of reciting.

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<sup>109</sup> Andalaya, L.Y., Malay Peninsula, in: *El* vol. 6, pp.232-39. 1987; Ronkel 1987:240.

<sup>110</sup> Unpublished paper by A.H. Johns presented to the conference on Eighteenth century Renewal and Reform in Islam, Jerusalem, 1985. See Nehemia Levtzion, Eighteenth century Sufi brotherhoods. structural, organizational and ritual changes, in Islam: essays on scripture, thought and society, Peter G.Riddell and Tony Street, Ed. New York, 1997, p. 157

<sup>111</sup> Ahmad Ishak M. Sidin, *Malay publishing and printing in Malaysia and Singapore 1809-1940*, PhD Thesis, 1994, University of Edinburgh, p.27.

<sup>112</sup> El-Edrus, *the role of kitab jawi*, p.53.

### 3.4 ii) Short Commentary and Simple Translation

As far as the translation is concerned, al-Marbawi and Husayn have made every effort to make this accessible for Malay readers. Thus, in order to assist with accurate translation of the Arabic meanings into Malay, they enlisted two languages (Arabic and Malay).

This collaboration ensured an in-depth understanding of the Arabic text and its religious setting, together with a readable and accurate rendering in Malay; it was clearly vital that they should exercise extreme care in conveying the meanings and yet should adhere as far as possible to the structure of the original Arabic.

However, if they were obliged to add a word in order to make clear the meaning, they placed it between square brackets and showed in a marginal note why this was necessary. They have however, retained the Lord's name (Allah instead of 'Tuhan' in Malay) in its Arabic form without translating it, together with such technical terms (as *ruku'*, *ḥadīth*, *dua'*, *sujūd*) and have kept the practical phrases of invocation such as *al-ḥamd*, *dhikr* and *tasbīh* in Arabic<sup>113</sup>, for ease of reading and so as to make it possible for Malays to read with ease and understanding. The printing of the translation was placed following the Arabic text for ease of reference.

Compared to the original texts, the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* is short and modest, in the sense that though he deals with a wealth of *Ḥadīth* knowledge, he confined himself to a brief exposition. Why did he do this? It can be argued that there was an important circumstance which determined the compositional structure of the text: the peculiarity

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<sup>113</sup> See for example in *Baḥr al-Mādhī* of al-Marbawi, vol.2,p.185.



of traditional Muslim education in the Malay world. Islamic education among the Malays was performed by means of learning certain comparatively short texts by heart, followed by interpretation and comment by the teacher during the pupil's recitation, as Johns has convincingly demonstrated<sup>114</sup>:

...when a child grows up, Allah bestows upon him the light for their (the text's) complete understanding, and this is not hard for him, since he already knows the expressions in which the texts are reproduced, because he has learnt them by heart'.

Thus, throughout each text we see that the Arabic text is reproduced, followed by the Malay translation. The bulk of the text is devoted to commentary of the quotations from the *Ḥadīth*, placed at the head of each chapter or sub-topic followed by the explication of individual *Ḥadīth*<sup>115</sup>.

The modes of interpretation general in Malay texts are observed, as Woodward notes<sup>116</sup>; the first discusses general principles, explaining what the text is about and why it is important, the second makes detailed reference to Arabic commentaries or provides an exegesis in terms of technical points in Islamic history and theology.

The type of commentary or translation used in both of these great texts supports each scholar's purpose, in setting out with great clarity how the *Ḥadīth* can be applied to all areas of human conduct<sup>117</sup>. In this way, even untutored Malay Muslims would find the religious instruction accessible for them.

Thus, this emphasis on scholarly interpretation, but with extensive commentary to enable Malay Muslims to appreciate the significance of *Baḥr al-Mādhi* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhāri*, places the Malaysian text within the scholarship

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<sup>114</sup>A.H Johns. Islam in South-East Asia: reflections and new directions, *Indonesia*, 1975, pp.33-55

<sup>115</sup> Al-Marbawī. *Baḥr*; Husayn. *Jawāhir*.

<sup>116</sup> Woodward, textual exegesis. 569-570.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*.

educational system. In all probability, this was precisely the method of teaching which al-Marbawi and Husayn had in mind at the time of writing this text. It can be argued, in addition, that being a short text, its content and meaning were best understood when it was studied under a teacher who then gave his oral commentaries on it.

### 3.4 iii) Glossary of *Ḥadīth* Methodology

The text of *Baḥr al-Mādhī* provides a glossary of *Ḥadīth* Methodology 'terms'. for example when he says: this *Ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ḥadīth* or *gharīb ḥadīth*, which in our opinion was provided by al-Marbawī to remind the readers of the status or classification of the *Ḥadīth* and to aid the memory of young Islamic religious students. For example al-Marbawi explains in brief the meaning of *ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥasan*, and *gharīb ḥadīth* as defined by al-Tirmīdhī:

A) *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* is<sup>118</sup>:

- Each reporter must be trustworthy.
- He should be able to preserve the text of a *Ḥadīth*
- The chain of transmitters should go back to the Prophet ﷺ without any interruption.
- His report must agree with those of other reliable reporters.
- There should be no hidden defect in the text or chain of transmitters.

B) *Ḥasan Ḥadīth* is:

Al-Marbawī stated that wherever al-Tirmīdhī has mentioned a '*ḥasan ḥadīth*' in his book, he meant a *Ḥadīth* does not contain a reporter accused of lying and it

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<sup>118</sup> There is no difference of opinion between Tirmīdhī and other scholars in its application, since the overwhelming majority of the scholars including Tirmidhi meticulously followed the definition of Shāfi'ī. See al-Shāfi'ī, Muhammad bin Idrīs, *al-Risalah*, Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, al-Qāhirah, 1358AH, pp.370-371. For this reason Tirmīdhī did not define the *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* in his '*Ilal. Baḥr*', vol.1, p.4.



is not *shādh* (rare)<sup>119</sup> and the *Ḥadīth* has been reported through more than one chain of transmitters (*taqwiyah*)<sup>120</sup>.

C) *Gharīb Ḥadīth* is<sup>121</sup>:

According to al-Marbawi, this *Ḥadīth* may be classified as ‘*gharīb*’ for one of the following three reasons:

- Firstly, a *Ḥadīth* may be classified as *gharīb* since it is narrated from one chain only.
- Secondly, a *Ḥadīth* can be classified as *gharīb* due to an addition in the text, though it will be considered a sound *Ḥadīth*, if that addition is reported by a reliable reporter.
- Thirdly, a *Ḥadīth* may be declared *gharīb* since it is narrated through various chains of transmitters, but having within one of its chains an addition in the *sanad*. According to Tirmīdhī these definitions prove that a *gharīb ḥadīth* does not necessarily mean weak, but it might be *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan*, as long as it comes through a single *sanad*.

Al-Marbawi cautions his readers both laymen and scholars that the terminologies of al-Tirmīdhī’s *Ḥadīth* in his text convey particular meanings (for example this is ‘*ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*’), and should thus be read with care as he does not elaborate these collective terms throughout his book. Therefore, al-Marbawi

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<sup>119</sup> For example if a person comes with a statement that sounds correct, but contradictory to another sound statement that is of a higher level of authenticity, then that's called *shadh* and unacceptable.

<sup>120</sup> *Bahr*, vol.p.4; al-Hanbali, Ibn Rajab, *Sharh ‘Ilal al-Tirmīdhī*, *tahqīq* of Hammam Abd al-Raḥīm Sa‘īd, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Urdun: *Maktabah al-Manār*.

<sup>121</sup> Asmadi, *metodologi*, p.210.

begins his explanation of the meaning of ‘this *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*’ or ‘this *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb*’ to remind readers about it.

However, according to the majority of the scholars (‘*ṣaḥīḥ*’ and ‘*gharīb*’ or ‘*ḥasan*’), *ṣaḥīḥ* and *gharīb* never should be combined, whereas according to al-Tirmīdhī they can be combined. It is believed that al-Tirmīdhī has his own method of using collective terms such as ‘[this *Ḥadīth* is] *ḥasan gharīb*, [this *Ḥadīth* is] *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb*, [this *Ḥadīth* is] *ṣaḥīḥ gharīb* and [this *Ḥadīth* is] *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*’. It should be remembered that al-Tirmīdhī did not explain these collective terms anywhere and scholars have tried to discover how these terms were used by Tirmīdhī<sup>122</sup>.

Therefore according to Nūr al-Dīn al-ʿItr, al-Tirmīdhī implies [this *Ḥadīth* is] ‘*ḥasan gharīb ḥadīth*’ which means it has many chains of transmission and is, therefore, considered as *ḥasan*, but since the text or chain of transmitters consists of an addition, it is classified as *gharīb*<sup>123</sup>. Furthermore, *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb* as applied by al-Tirmīdhī implies that the *Ḥadīth* is *ḥasan*, since it has several chains of transmitters; it is *ṣaḥīḥ* as the chains are authentic and it is *gharīb* in the manner in which al-Tirmīdhī has narrated it. *Ṣaḥīḥ gharīb* then, implies that the *Ḥadīth* is authentic but the *sanad* is single. As previously mentioned Tirmīdhī does not consider it a pre-requisite that an authentic *Ḥadīth* must have several chains of transmitters<sup>124</sup>.

### 3.4 iv) The Structure of the Chapter Headings.

In this regard, we will illustrate in brief the techniques of al-Marbawī in organizing his text. Traditionally, *Ḥadīth* books contain three key aspects: the ‘*sanad*’, the ‘*matn*’ and finally the ‘*tarjamah al- bāb*’ (the chapter-headings).

<sup>122</sup> Asmadi, *metodologi*, p.223.

<sup>123</sup> Nūr al-Dīn al-ʿItr, *manhaj al-naqd*, pp.271-272.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.



Woodward asserts that while some scholars question the propriety of translations, most accept them as aids to interpreting Arabic texts and as the basis for sermons and elementary theological instruction. Many Malaysian Muslims who do not read Arabic adopt translations as authoritative<sup>125</sup>. For the majority who have received their education in secular schools, published translations and commentaries are primary sources of Islamic knowledge beyond the rudimentary instruction they receive at home or in local mosques.

Attention should also be drawn to the variety of writing methods adopted by the author which have been applied to the transmission of *Ḥadīth* as elementary knowledge to Malay readers. These approaches to compilation were in themselves influenced by the original author (al-Tirmīdhī).

The present study will therefore discuss in brief al-Marbawī's compilation methods in order to make *Bahr al-Mādī* an instrument for the better understanding and memorizing of the various important *Ḥadīth*. The utilisation of chapter headings, terminologies and abridgement or abbreviation, for example, is a common feature of *Ḥadīth* writings in this century, in line with their function of imparting a true understanding of *Ḥadīth* study, as a core educational foundation for Islam in schools and in the wider communities beyond.

In order to facilitate a better understanding of the *Ḥadīth*, al-Marbawī is concerned with the text (*matn*) itself, not the chain of transmitters (*isnad*). In line with this purpose, his focus was thus on explanation and elaboration of the *Ḥadīth*, since his interest was on the content and intention to use it to argue the point which he is

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<sup>125</sup> M.R. Woodward, Textual exegesis as social commentary: religious, social and political meanings of Indonesian translations of Arabic *Ḥadīth* texts, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1993, vol.53, pt3, pp.565-583.

explaining not on the transmitters. To encourage the reader to refer back to the original text, chapters are systemized as in the original text.

Here al-Marbawi adds elaborative information and explanation in the ‘problem section’, for example. The first *Ḥadīth* provides a model of his general approach; referring to ‘the role of intention’, he begins with a short introduction, analyzes the text itself, with a brief reference to the chain of transmission. If a ‘problem’ for discussion arises, this is dealt with by numbered references. Thus, for example, if a problem of meaning recurs, the reader can clarify this by cross-checking with a previous analysis. In line with the original classifications, terminologies such as *ṣaḥīḥ ḥasan* and *gharīb* continue to be used<sup>126</sup>.

#### 3.4. iv (a) *Abwāb / Kitāb* (General Chapter)

According to Asmadi the authors of the *Ḥadīth* works usually use a general title or chapter heading (*tarjamah al-bāb*)<sup>127</sup>; the *tarjamah* were then grouped into two sections and identified as *tarājum ‘āmmah* (books [*kitāb*]) or chapters [*abwāb*]) and *tarājum juz’iyyah* (sub- topics or subsections [*bāb*]).

*Bahr al-Mādhi*, for example, consists of 47 chapters<sup>128</sup> which begin with ‘chapter of *al-ṭaharah*’ and finished with ‘chapter of *al-tafsīr*’ whereas in Husayn’s text there is no description of the ‘*abwāb* or *kitāb*’ as in al-Bukhāri.

#### 3.4.iv (b) *Bāb* (sub-topics)

Usually, several sub headings ( *bāb* ) are given under chapter headings. For example, in *Bahr al-Mādhi*, there are sub topics of *mā jā’a lā tuqbal ṣolat biḡhayri ṭuhur*, sub

<sup>126</sup> For example see *Bahr al-Mādhi* in *Abwāb al-ṭaharah*, vol.1.

<sup>127</sup> Asmadi Sakat, p. 46

<sup>128</sup> The term ‘*Abwāb*’ also been used by Shaikh Ahmad Muhammad Shakir and al-Mubarakfuri in their texts.



topics of *al-istinja' bi al-ḥijārah*, sub topics of *mā jā'a an miftah al-ṣalat al-ṭuhur*, sub topics of *ma yaqūlu idhā dakhala al-khala'* which occur below the chapter heading of '*al-ṭaharah 'an Rasūlullah (S.A.W)*'<sup>129</sup>. An example of this method is as follows:

Ibn 'Umar reported Rasūlullah (Ṣ.A.W) as saying: No prayer is accepted without purification and no charity is accepted out of ill-gotten wealth (*sic*).

At this point the *Ḥadīth* itself is reported by Ibn 'Umar concerning ablution taken from sub-topics of *ma jā'a lā tuqbal ṣolat biḡhayr al-ṭuhur*, and presented in the chapter of *al-ṭaharah 'an Rasūlullah (Ṣ.A.W)* in al-Tirmīdhī's text<sup>130</sup>. In this sense al-Marbawī directly introduces to Malay readers the techniques of al-Tirmīdhī's work since these techniques are systematically used in his own text<sup>131</sup>.

Another aspect of al-Tirmīdhī's methodology was followed by al-Marbawī in proving '*'an Rasūlullah (Ṣ.A.W)*' following each chapter. It is noted by al-Mubarakfūrī, who suggest that the reason why al-Tirmīdhī uses this term is because al-Tirmīdhī desires to clarify that the *Ḥadīth* narrated in his text are *marfū'* (elevated) and not *mawqūf* (stopped)<sup>132</sup>.

With regards to these terms therefore it is appropriate to discuss them in brief. The terms *marfū'* means that the *Ḥadīth* has been narrated directly from Prophet's own words by a reporter, whether a companion, successor or other, while *mawqūf*

<sup>129</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, p.16—18.

<sup>130</sup> Al-Marbawī's entitled his chapter-headings as *Abwāb* (Chapters) and entitled sub topics as *Bāb*, for instance, *Bāb ma jā' fī alladhi yufassir al-Qur'an bira'yihī* Similar technique was also found in as al-Tirmīdhī's books. In addition, al-Tirmīdhī added '*'an Rasūlullah ṣ.a.w.*' to the word *Abwāb* in each of his chapter's headings, for example *Abwāb Tafsir al-Qur'an 'an Rasūlullah ṣ.a.w.* This kind of technique is then followed by al-Marbawī.

<sup>131</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, Dar al-Fikr, n.d, vol 11, p.3.

<sup>132</sup> Since in al-Tirmīdhī's period there is confusion between *Ḥadīth* from Prophet and *al-athār* of a companion.



means a narration from a companion only; that is, these are his own words, not those of the Prophet ﷺ<sup>133</sup>.

Attention should next be drawn to the approach of Husayn's book. In previous topics this study has discussed that Husayn's translation is of al-Qaṣṭalānī's commentary of al-Bukhārī's text. However, in this topic the study demonstrates the influence of al-Bukhārī's arrangement particularly in chapter headings in Husayn's work since al-Bukhārī's work and al-Bukhārī himself was highly regarded as one of the greatest scholars in *Ḥadīth*<sup>134</sup>.

Therefore, when we compare *Jawāhir al-Bukhari* of Husayn with al-Bukhārī in terms of arrangement of chapter headings, we find that Husayn himself in his presentation brings in only one particular sub- topic as a heading without any subsection; for example, one *Ḥadīth* is placed under one topic area such as '*Bāb pada menyatakan permulaan wahyu bagi Rasulullah s.a.w*' (sub-topics of an explanation: How the Divine inspiration started). In al- Bukhārī's original *Ḥadīth* text however, he uses in contrast chapter headings (*kitāb*); for example, 'How the divine inspiration started' which takes place under the chapter of Revelation'<sup>135</sup>.

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<sup>133</sup>The term often also used here is *al-Athār* which literally means 'imprint, relic or vestige' that inherited from the past, as noted by Kamali: It is often used synonymously with *Ḥadīth*, both of which are understood in the sense of valid precedent, but *athār* is wider than *Ḥadīth* in that it includes all that is attributed to the Prophet, his companions, followers and other leading figures. However, some scholars of *Ḥadīth* especially the non-Arabs from Khurasan and Persia, have reserved *athār* for the sayings and precedents of the companions only. An equivalent term to *athār*, which is commonly employed, is *khābar mawqūf*, that is, what a companion has indicated to be a part of the *sunna* but whose chain of *isnād* does not reach the Prophet himself. See M.Hashim Kamali, p. 85. Also see al-Tohan, Mahmud ibn Ahmad, *Taysīr mustalah ḥadīth*, Riyād: *Makatabah al-Ma'arif*, 1987, p.16

<sup>134</sup> The study only discusses the style of writing in chapter headings without focus on the *matn* or *sanad Ḥadīth* since the text of Husayn is short and modest.

<sup>135</sup> Narrated 'Aisha the mother of the faithful believers: the commencement of the Divine Inspiration to Allah's Apostle (Ṣ.A.W) was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright day light, and then the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him. He used to go into seclusion in the cave of Hira' where he used to worship (Allah alone) continuously for many days before his desire to see his family. He used to take with him food for the journey and then come back to (his wife) Khadija to take his food like-wise again till suddenly the Truth descended upon him while he was in the cave of Hira'. The angel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'I do not know how to read'. The Prophet ﷺ added: 'The angel caught me (forcefully) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read but again I replied: 'I do not know how to



Another important variation from the original text lays in al-Bukhārī's text where he arranged chapter headings entitled '*kitāb*'<sup>136</sup> with sub headings under the term '*bāb*' dissimilar to Husayn's style, as Fadel stated:

'Al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* has classified and arranged the *Hādīth* according to the subject matter which they deal with. He gave to each chapter a title indicating a certain point and under that title he stated down the entire *Hādīth* that are relevant. This procedure has resulted in the occurrence of the same *Hādīth* under various headings, because one *Hādīth* might deal with a great number of aspects of Islamic jurisprudence. Al-Bukhārī used each *Hādīth* so that every point that can be inferred from what it referred to<sup>137</sup>.

Another difference in arrangement in Husayn's text for example in writing about the '*Hādīth* revelation' is where he narrates two *Hādīth* which occur under 'sub-topic How the Divine inspiration started' without chapter headings, whereas in the original al-Bukhārī narrated six *Hādīth* under *Kitāb al-wahy* (the chapter on the book of Revelation)<sup>138</sup>. Nevertheless, the point is apparent here that the style of Husayn should be appreciated because his purpose is to impart a true understanding of the *Hādīth* to Malay readers from the Arabic in a way which is easy for them to memorize.

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read (or what shall I read)?' Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said: 'Read in the name of your Lord, who has created (all that exists) has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous'. Then Allah's Apostle s.a.w returned with the inspiration and with his heart beating severely. Then he went to Khadija bint Khuwailid and said: 'Cover me! Cover me! They covered him till his fear was over and after that he told her everything that had happened and said' 'I fear that something may happen to me'. Khadija replied: 'Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving ones afflicted by calamity.....But after a few days Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while.

<sup>136</sup> *Kitāb al-Imān* (The Book of Belief [Faith]) and particular topics as a *Bāb* (Chapter) e.g. *Bāb qawl al-nabiyy s.a.w buniya al-Islām 'ala khamsin* ('Chapter the statement of the Prophet ﷺ : Islam is based on five principles').

<sup>137</sup> For detailed study about the arrangement of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* see Fadel, M, Ibn Hajar's Hady al-sari: a medieval interpretation of the structure of al-Bukhārī's *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*: introduction and translation, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 54 (3), 1995, 161-97.

<sup>138</sup> Al-Tabrizi, *Mishkat*, vol.1, p.1-14.

In terms of work arrangement, Husayn does not use any numbering or referencing system within his sub-topics<sup>139</sup>. The following *Ḥadīth* is an example, which occurs under the sub-topic: How the Divine inspiration started where he omits the chain of transmitters, and only the first narrator in each string is kept; as shown below:

Narrated Aishah: Al-Hārith bin Hishām asked the prophet ﷺ: How is the Divine inspiration revealed to you? The prophet ﷺ replied; ‘Sometimes it is (revealed) like the ringing of a bell, this form of inspiration is the hardest of all and then this state passes off after I have grasped what is inspired. Sometimes the Angel comes in the form of a man and talks to me and I grasp whatever he says.’

Following from the above, it is clear that the titles signify textual content in a way which corresponds to Husayn’s purpose which is to inform the reader of this content as iterated by Husayn himself; ‘this is the topic in which there is this...’. This approach demonstrates the influence of al-Bukhāri’s method where the title appears to be sometimes taken either from the exact wording of the text (*matn*), a portion of it, or from its meaning. Thus, through Husayn’s work, Malay readers would receive great benefit in being able to understand the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhāri indirectly.

To turn to the original text of al-Bukhāri, is to appreciate his great work, therefore it is significant to discuss it briefly here. The title ‘*Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Musnad min Ḥadīth Rasūl Allah wa sunanihi wa ayyamihi*<sup>140</sup>’ (The authentic, documented *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, his rules, and his battles) is itself indicative of Bukhāri’s

<sup>139</sup> Mustafa’s, however, conveys *aḥadīth* with particular numbers beginning with number one and onwards.

See ‘Imarah, Mustafā Muḥammad, *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī wa sharh al-Qaṣṭalani 700 ḥadīth mashruḥah*, Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Islamiyyah, n.d.

<sup>140</sup> M.Fadel, *JNES*, p.163.



methodology and approach. The word “*al-Jāmi‘*”<sup>141</sup> signifies that coverage extends to all the eight areas that *al-Jāmi‘* are generally known to encompass as stated by Fadel.

It is significant to mention here that to achieve his goal, al-Bukhāri has applied several methods and all possible means as observed by Hassan A. Qader Yahya:

Al-Bukhāri (869) was the first systematic book in this field. He was an encyclopaedic pious man. He spent most of his life studying or travelling for the sake of knowledge. He has strict criteria to judge people and documents. Al-Bukhāri was the first to apply what we can confidently explain as scientific investigation with the least possible error. He applied research methods such as historical, comparative, and field research methods under a system of strict rules and procedures<sup>142</sup>.

Therefore Fadel, who discusses the methodology of al-Bukhāri in presenting *Ḥadīth*, suggests that the term ‘*al-ṣaḥīḥ*’ signifies that al-Bukhāri does not include in his collection a weak *Ḥadīth* (*ḍa‘īf*) that was known as such. Fadel further noted that “al-Bukhāri described his work as a manual, but what was not included in his book “*Ṣaḥīḥ*” does not denote non- authentic, as was emphasized by Bukhāri himself”<sup>143</sup>.

‘Azami stated that the term ‘*musnad*’ implied that the *Ḥadīth* al-Bukhāri were connected by chains of authority to the companions (numbering 9082 in total). ‘Azami then added “al-Bukhāri has repeated which of these have more than one *isnad*, as the strength and reliability of the *isnad* is deemed to increase with the plurality of its chains of transmission; thus when the repetitions are taken into account

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<sup>141</sup> According to Goldziher: the structure of this book (*al-Jāmi‘ al- Ṣaḥīḥ*) is that of pure traditions (without addition of *ra‘y* as in *Muwatta‘* of Malik). M.Fadel, *JNES*, p.163.

<sup>142</sup> Yahya, Hassan A.Qader, *The development of early Islamic methodology comparative study of Ḥadīth literature through al-Bukhari*, <http://www.geocities.com/hy2006us/Bukharimethod.htm>.

<sup>143</sup> M.Fadel, Ibn Hajar Hady al-Sary, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 1995, vol., 54, PT3, p.164.

this figure reduces to 2602, which excludes ‘*Ḥadīth mawqūf*’ and the sayings of the successors”<sup>144</sup>.

Moreover, there is no doubt according to Awajan that the book of al-Bukhāri contains 3450 sub-topics, which are divided into 106 chapters (The chapters [which means each chapter bearing a heading which is descriptive of its contents, which often seems to be taken from the portion of *Ḥadīth* concerned, and will generally explain at the beginning of each *bāb* words which he thinks require elucidation<sup>145</sup>]). Some of these headings are reflective of al-Bukhāri’s personal insights, and a depth of *Ḥadīth* information that is not found in other collections, as Goldziher remarks “he (al-Bukhāri) always think first of the theoretical applications for which his material should or should not be used”<sup>146</sup>.

### 3.4.v) Numerous Sources And Juristic Opinion<sup>147</sup>

In writing his work, al-Marbawi relied on several sources which can be identified as directly mentioned by him. It is believed that there are approximately 66 sources from different fields in Islamic Studies<sup>148</sup>. The following are several example sources have been supplied by al-Marbawi. For example:

- From his great teachers such as al-Shāikh Ibrāhīm al-Samalūti and al-Shāikh Mahmūd Ghunaym.
- From *Kitāb al-Tafsīr* (The commentary of the Qur’ān) and ‘*Ulūm al-Qur’ān*’ (the study of the Qur’ān) sources, for example:

<sup>144</sup> Al-‘Azami, *Studies*, p.89.

<sup>145</sup> W.H.A. Awajan, *Early literary trends for the Qur’ānic exegesis during the fist three centuries of Islam*, PhD Thesis, University of London, 1989.

<sup>146</sup> Cited by M.Fadel, Ibn Hajar Hady al-Sary, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 1995, vol., 54, PT3, p.164.

<sup>147</sup> The list of sources will be detailed in section 3.5.

<sup>148</sup> Faisal, *metodologi*, p.412.



- *Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān* of Muhammad bin Ahmad ibn Abī Bakr ibn Farh al-Qurtubi (d. 1272),
  - *Anwar Al-Tanzīl Wa Asrār Al-Ta'wīl* of 'Abd Allah bin 'Umar ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Baydawī al-Shāfi 'ī,
  - *Madārik Al-Tanzīl Wa Haqā'iq Al-Ta'wīl* of 'Abd Allah ibn Ahmad ibn Mahmūd al-Nasafi,
  - *Lubāb al-ta'wīl fi ma'ani al-tanzīl* of Ali ibn Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar Kaḥil al-Syaikhī well know as al-Khāzin (d.1340).
  - *Al-Umm* of Muhammad ibn Idrīs ibn al-Abbas al-Syāfi 'ī
  - *Al-Majmu'* of Muhy al-Dīn Yahya bin Syaraf al-Nawāwī (d.1277).
  - *Fiqh 'ala Madhabi al-Arba'ah* of 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad 'Awd al-Jazīrī,
  - *Mukhtaṣar al-Muzani* of Isma'īl ibn Yahya ibn Isma'īl al-Muzani (d.877),
  - *Mughnī al-Muhtaj* of Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Syarbīni al-Khatib (d.1569),
  - *Minhaj al-Tālibin* of Imām al-Nawāwi
- From *Hadīth* Books sources:
    - *Musnad al-Shāfi 'ī* of Imām al-Shāfi 'ī,
    - al-Bukhārī *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muḥammad ibn Isma'īl al-Bukhārī (d.869),
    - Muslim *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Qusyairī al-Naysābūri (d. 874).
    - *Sunan* Abū Dawūd of Sulayman ibn al-Ash'ath al-Sajistāni (d. 888),
    - *Jāmi'* al-Tirmīdhi of Muhammad ibn 'Isa bin Sawrah al-Trimidhi,
    - *Sunan* al-Nasa'i of Ahmad ibn Syu'aib al-Nasa'i (d. 915),

- *Ṣaḥīḥ* Ibn Khuzaymah of Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ishaq bin Khuzaymah al-Nisaburi (d.923).
- *al-Targhīb wa al-tarhīb* of Zakiy al-Din °Abd al-°Azim ibn °Abd al-Qawiy al-Mundhiri (d. 1258).
- *al-Jāmi° al-Saghīr min Ḥadīth al-Bashīr al-Nazīr* of Jalal al-Din °Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr ibn Muhammad al-Suyūfī(d. 1505).
- From the books of *Ḥadīth* commentary.
  - *Al-Minhaj Sharh* Saḥīh Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj of al-Nawāwi.
  - *°Umdah al-Qarī Sharh Saḥīh* al-Bukhārī of Badr al-Din al-°Aini.
  - *'Irshād al-Sārī* by Shaykh Ahmad bin Muḥammad ibn Abu Bakr ibn Abdul Malik ibn Ahmad bin Muḥammad al-Qastalāni al-Qāhiri al-Shafi°ī . (d. 1517),
  - *°Aridah al -Ahwadhi* of Ibn al-°Arabi,
  - *Fath al-Bāri fi Sharh Ṣaḥīḥ* al-Bukhārī of Ibn Hajar al-°Asqalānī
  - *Sirāj al-Munīr Sharh Jāmi° al-Saghir* of Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Muḥammad al-°Azīzī (d.1659)
  - *Ihya' Ulūm al-Dīn* of Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ahmad al-Tusi al-Ghazālī (d.1111)

In this way, he also provides different scholastic views:

- i) The views of School of Thoughts (Shāfi°ī, Malikī, Hanafī and Hanbali).
- ii) The scholars of the al-Shāfi°ī School. for example al-Nawāwi and al-Qastalāni (*Irshād al-Sārī*). In some cases (for example on the *Haid*<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> *Haidh* is a type of blood that is discharged from the womb of a woman every month.



issues) al- Marbawi does provides two positions taken by the Shāfiī School which are *qawl al-qadīm* (first position) and *qawl jadīd* (new position) such as ʿAtaʿ, Ibn Abī Mulaikah, al-Shaʿbī, al-Nakhaʿi, Makhūl, Zuhri, Abū al-Zinād, Rabiʿah, Hammad ibn Abī Sulayman, Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī, Sufyan al-Thawri, and Layth ibn Saʿd<sup>150</sup>.

- iii) The scholars of al-Malikī School, for example Qaḍī ʿIyād (of *Ikmal al-Muʿlim bi fawaʿid* Muslim) and Ibn al-ʿArabī (of *ʿAridah al-Ahwadhī*).
- iv) The scholars of al-Hanafi School, for example Badr al-Din al-ʿAinī (*ʿUmdah al-Qārī fī syarh al-Bukhāri*).

It appears from the volumes in their entirety that the structure of al-Marbawī's text was firstly to place a relevant title for the chapter, and secondly raise problem issues followed by one or two *Hādīth* related to the heading, which explain the different *Madhāhib* together with their analytical proof. These *Hādīth*, whether the status is *ṣahīh*, *ḥasan* or *ḍaʿīf*, will be followed with a justification statement by al-Tirmīdhī as al-Marbawī himself states:

‘Before I narrate the *Hadīth*, I will explain the problem which related to heading. Then I will follow with *Hadīth* which clarify the Shafiʿī's School and other Schools of jurists, following Abū ʿIsa's (al-Tirmīdhī) opinion<sup>151</sup>.

The above account can be found in *Bab mā jā'a lā tuqbal ṣolāt bighayri tuḥūr* where al-Marbawī expresses his views about five problem matters related to the *Hādīth*. Here, assisted by scholars and by juristic opinion such as al-Nawāwī and Abū Ḥanīfah, al-Marbawī presents in detail what factors makes ablution essential.

<sup>150</sup> *Bahr al-Mādīnī*, vol.1, p.206, vol. p.28.

<sup>151</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.3.

In the writing of his work, al-Marbawi relied on several sources. This is because the text has the purpose of providing a better understanding of *Ḥadīth* and represents a *Ḥadīth* teaching text for readers, we find that at times al-Marbawi may also explain that the same *Ḥadīth* has been narrated by other scholars such as al-Bukhārī and Muslim<sup>152</sup>, as, for example, in sub-topics of *mājā' la tuqbalu ṣolāt bighayri ṭuhur*, where he cites both al-Bukhārī and Muslim:

...and this *Ḥadīth* has been narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim in their books<sup>153</sup>.

Thus, by noting such statements, we, as readers, will find out that al-Bukhārī has narrated this *Ḥadīth* in his '*Ṣaḥīḥ*' under the sub-topic of *lā tuqbal ṣolat bighayri ṭuhur*; while Muslim cited this in the sub-topic of *wujūb al-taharah li al-ṣalat*<sup>154</sup>. From this perspective, al-Marbawi's consummate skill serves as an instrument for Malay readers not only to understand *Ḥadīth* literature in *Baḥr al-Mādhi* or al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'*, but also benefit from other great scholars such as Bukhārī and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Husayn, in contrast with al-Marbawi's techniques, does not provide any sources or any discussion on juristic debate in his entire text.

To conclude, from the list sources which have been provided by al-Marbawi in his work, it is clear that al-Marbawi's work was based on many sources either mentioned in detail or not mentioned by him. The variety of sources which he used when writing the *Baḥr al-Mādhi* testifies to his intellectual achievement and confirm his reputation as one of the most knowledgeable Malay *Ḥadīth* scholars of his time. More importantly, the use of these sources demonstrates that al-Marbawi did not

<sup>152</sup> This method is similar to what al-Tirmīdhī did in his *Jāmi'*.

<sup>153</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Baḥr*, vol.1, p.17.

<sup>154</sup> See al-Bukhārī, 'Abd Allah Muḥammad bin Isma'īl bin Ibrahīm Bardizbah al-Ju'fi, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Misr: Idarat al-ṭabaqat al-muniriyyah 1928; Al-Nawāwī, Abi Zakariya Yahya, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi sharh al-Nawāwī*, Misr: *Matba'ah al-misriyyah wa maktabtuhu*. N.d, vol.3, p.102.



reject past traditions but rather he reinterpreted them from the established point of view.

### 3.4 vi) Systematic numbering

Analytical research into al-Marbawi and Husayn textual arrangement has revealed a great array of points which may possibly have been considered by the two authors. In terms of method in writing chapters, al-Marbawi's approach is more organized than Husayn's. Chapters and *Ḥadīth* in *Baḥr al-Mādhī* for example, are systematically numbered, whereas Husayn does not use any numbering system.

Moreover, the *Ḥadīth* of each volume in *Baḥr al-Mādhī* have their own system of numbering in Arabic script; beginning with number one in each volume, to allow easy reference to discussions of problems, for example. In the first chapter, for instance, al-Marbawī places 112 particular sub-topics under the chapter of *al-ṭahārah*, where related issues are precisely and specifically discussed. This efficient and organized preparation means that the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* are extremely important to the Malay world and have greater practical credibility for them in comparison with the work of Husayn.

To conclude our discussion on the techniques of the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, it is clear that all these approaches are used in the *Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* to serve the great purpose of providing a better understanding of *Ḥadīth* texts. Also they indirectly introduce to Malay readers the methodology of writing by great scholars in compiling the *Ḥadīth*, as well as being an instrument or a means for easily memorizing the *Ḥadīth*. In addition, the chapters and the sub-topics used in the text also function as guides for easier practical usage in their lives. These translations and commentaries therefore represent a vital resource for the purposes of educating the Malay people on the subject of the *Ḥadīth*.

### 3.5. The Importance of *Baḥr al-Mādhi* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhāri* For Malaysian Readers

It can be seen, then, from the content of the texts that the clarity with which al-Marbawī and Husayn have dealt with all areas of human conduct makes their teachings a vital tool for religious, social and political discourse in contemporary Malaysia<sup>155</sup>.

According to Fauzi and Ngah, this is particularly the case since among the purposes of the translations and commentaries of Arabic texts was the definition of an ideal Islamic society and, importantly, indications of the ways in which Malays fall short of this ideal<sup>156</sup>. In line with this argument, Bernard Lewis,<sup>157</sup> for example, has stated that the contemporary translations are examples of what he terms an ‘authoritarian and quietist’ mode of Malay Muslim practical thought<sup>158</sup>. Therefore, it is stated by Faisal that in the context of Malaysian political culture these authors adopt this method to seek to restructure the Malay Muslim society into the ideal Islamic society based on the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ<sup>159</sup>.

Hence, in the *Baḥr al-Mādhi* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhāri*'s texts, the ‘introduction’ is replaced by a brief statement explaining the significance of these texts for Malay readers. Al-Marbawī, for example, first stated his great respect for al-Tirmīdhī's work; portraying him as a great *Ḥadīth* scholar who was blessed by Allah (S.W.T) with skill in *Ḥadīth* scholarship<sup>160</sup>.

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<sup>155</sup> http Wan Sabri Wan Yusuf, Shayuthi Abdul Manaf & Nadzirah binti Muhammad, Shaykh Mustafa Abdul Rahman Mahmud (1918-1968) twentieth century Malay Qur'anic interpreter, in Muhammad@Mohd. Som Sujimon (ed.), *Monograph on selected Malay intellectuals*, pp.275-276. Also see Abdul Salam, al-Marbawī and his contribution, *Monograph on selected Malay intellectuals*, p.99; [://www.ibnyahya.com/World/marbawi.htm](http://www.ibnyahya.com/World/marbawi.htm).

<sup>156</sup> Fauzi Deraman, Karya-karya *Ḥadīth* dalam tulisan Jawi, *Journal Usuludin*, December 1999, no.10, pp.163-173; Mohd. Nor bin Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic thought of the Malay Muslim scholars*, p.viii.

<sup>157</sup> Lewis, Bernard, *the political language of Islam*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988 cited by M.R. Woodward, textual exegesis, pp.565-583.

<sup>158</sup> M.R. Woodward, textual exegesis, pp.565-583

<sup>159</sup> Faisal, *Metodologi*, p. 366-392; Also see Mohd. Nor bin Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic thought of the Malay Muslim scholars*, p.viii.

<sup>160</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Baḥr*, vol.1, pp.5-8.



Al-Marbawī next gives a brief biography of ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab (from the Prophet’s life to the time of Umar’s Caliphate), followed by an evaluation of Umar’s position in the Islamic movement<sup>161</sup>. ʿUmar is described as a great scholar who was blessed by Allah with skill in leadership, an excellent juristic judgement and in Islamic knowledge, who was a pivotal figure in the history of Islam<sup>162</sup>. While al-Marbawī analyzes his decisions primarily in military and political terms, he is nevertheless also concerned with the religious or character judgments that interest Muslims<sup>163</sup>.

In a same way, his intention is also that at the same time the Malay community may understand the background, the leadership and ‘sainthood’ of ʿUmar precisely, as is shown in the following description on ʿUmar’s life<sup>164</sup>:

For your information my brothers! ʿUmar al-Khattab was the second Caliph and he was from the Banu ʿAdi clan of the Quraysh tribe. He was born in Mecca. His father was Khattab ibn Nufayl, and he is said to have belonged to a middle class family. He was literate, which by some accounts is considered to be uncommon in those times, and he was also well known for his physical strength, being a champion wrestler<sup>165</sup>.

Similarly, Husayn who is the author of *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, also mentioned his admiration for al-Bukhārī because of his greatness in *Ḥadīth* studies<sup>166</sup>. It is stated

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Since it was under his aegis that the Muslims expanded outwards from the Syria-Arabian steppe to conquer the great powers of the time, (the Sassanid and Byzantine [Roman] empires).

<sup>163</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, pp.5-8.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> In the early days, before he converted to Islam, it was reported that when Rasūlullah (Ṣ.A.W) first declared his message of Islam, ʿUmar resolved to defend the traditional religion of the Quraish (regarded by Muslims as idolatry). ʿUmar was most adamant in opposing Muhammad and very prominent in persecuting the Muslims. ʿUmar therefore, resolved to assassinate Muhammad. A Muslim he met on the way told him to set his own house in order first, as his sister and her husband had converted to Islam. ʿUmar went to her house and found her reciting verses of the Qur’an. He became infuriated and hit her. When he saw her bleeding, he was sorry for what he had done and in order to please her he said he would read the *sūrah*, Ṭa Ha that she had been reading. He was so struck by the *sūrah* that he accepted Islam that day. After that, Muslims believe that he was as determined and impetuous in defending Islam as he had been in persecuting it. ʿUmar is a strong leader, an excellent jurist, a progressive statesman, and the second of the rightly-guided Caliphs. He did not seek advancement for his own family, but rather sought to advance the interests of the Muslim community, the *ummah*. See in *Bahr al-Mādhī* for further information about Umar’s life.

<sup>166</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.6.



that by an early age, al-Bukhāri had memorised thousands of *Ḥadīth* by heart with their complete chain of narrations, going from him to his teacher, and his teacher's teacher, all the way to Muhammad ﷺ, and by his sixteenth year, he became a 'Master of *Ḥadīth*'<sup>167</sup>.

Woodward believes that "the appearance of extraordinary abilities at an early age is a common theme in Malay biographical myth and is often attributed to divine intervention"<sup>168</sup>, politicians, leaders, and religious scholars for example are often said to have shown signs of greatness and divine inspiration as children. In addition, Woodward has pointed out that "the ability to memorize the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* without years of effort is thus held to be a gift from Allah and a sign of sainthood"<sup>169</sup>. Therefore, for Malay readers, these personal qualities establish the sacred character of al-Tirmīdhi and al-Bukhāri's work and link them with local concepts of sainthood.

In this way, al-Marbawi does not discuss criticism al-Tirmīdhi's concerning the conduct of the reigning Caliphate<sup>170</sup>. As stated above, al-Marbawi confirms his neglecting of 'practical politics', as only those biographical aspects of the work of Tirmīdhi and ʿUmar are selected in his work. This, however, does not mean that the

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<sup>167</sup> Muḥammad Azizullah, *Glimpses of the Ḥadīth*, The Crescent Publications:n.p.,1973,p.41

<sup>168</sup> M.R. Woodward, Textual exegesis as social commentary: religious, social and political meanings of Indonesian translations of Arabic *Ḥadīth* texts, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1993, vol.53, pt3, pp.565-583.

<sup>169</sup> Woodward, Textual exegesis as social commentary: religious, social and political meanings of Indonesian translations of Arabic *Ḥadīth* texts, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1993,vol.53,pt3,pp.565-583

<sup>170</sup> "The Abbasid Caliphate, despite its brilliant contributions to Islam, brought along with it many thorny problems. Greek Philosophy (for example) flowed freely into the Islamic world. This was fully sanctioned by the government who later declared the Muʿtazila school of thought as the state religion. Anyone who opposed the Muʿtazila school of thought therefore would be opposing the state. Thus, with the influence of Greek philosophy infiltrating the people, many Muslims began attempting to reconcile reason and revelation. As a result they deviated from the *Sharīʿah*, and misled many innocent weak Muslims into moving away from Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. On the one hand, this meant that many scholars of Islam came to the fore in order to defend the truth of the *Sharīʿah*. On the other hand, forgeries and interpolations of the *Ḥadīth* were common by rulers who wished to fulfill their personal motives in defending the power of human reason. As a counter measure (reaction) ʿUmar bin Abdul ʿAziz initiated a movement for the compilation of the holy *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet (Ṣ.A.W.ﷺ) as by this time there was a fear of it being lost. Eventually this gigantic task was undertaken by six towering scholars of Islam, one of whom was al-Tirmīdhi". See [http://www.sunnah.org/history/Scholars/imam\\_tirmidhi.htm](http://www.sunnah.org/history/Scholars/imam_tirmidhi.htm); Also see Asmadi,pp.24-28.



participation of al-Tirmīdhī in a ‘fundamental activist’ mode of Islamic politics did not influence al-Marbawī’s works at all. Al-Marbawī’s citation of al-Tirmīdhī works (*Ḥadīth*) in his call for support to reshape society in Malaysia are closely interrelated. In this sense, ‘*Kaum Tua* groups’ ignore those elements which could be used to propose an alternative or radical activist discourse, in contrast to ‘*Kaum Muda* groups’<sup>171</sup>. The key point to address here however is not which group is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but that al-Marbawī and Husayn sought to achieve unity for the Malay people, based on the purity of the *Ḥadīth*<sup>172</sup>.

Woodward believes that the Malay text therefore “combines these approaches by establishing analogies between events in the early history of Islam and contemporary life and emphasizing the meanings of the text”<sup>173</sup>. Similarly, here al-Marbawī and Husayn state that the types and qualities of blessing available to the early Muslim community can still be obtained.

It is clear that Husayn and al-Marbawī decidedly seek to present the prominent *Ḥadīth* scholars al-Bukhārī and al-Tirmīdhī, to the readers of their translation or commentary through the preservation of al-Bukhārī’s and al-Tirmīdhī’s *Ḥadīth*. The Malay Muslim community and students of *Ḥadīth* in Malaysia are able to continue to gain knowledge of their *Ḥadīth* of al-Bukhārī and al-Tirmīdhī without doubt. That the book would be studied with and by actual or prospective scholars seem taken for granted; that the prominent scholar is once again part of this study circle is what bears emphasis here. Even more important, thanks to this new form of making the prominent scholar once again present, they can, in principle, be part of as many simultaneous study circles as there are printed texts enshrining their words.

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<sup>171</sup> See Chapter 4 for detailed explanation about these groups.

<sup>172</sup> For further explanation see Chapter Four.

<sup>173</sup> M.R Woodward, textual exegesis. 569-570.

### 3.6 Summary

To conclude, the purpose, content, structure and the importance of the writing *Bahr al-Mādhī* of al-Marbawi to the Malay Muslim community could be summarized as follows:

- Al-Marbawi's commentary is based on the collection of *Ḥadīth* of al-Tirmīdhī's *Jāmi'*.
- Al-Marbawi does provide an information date for when he finished.
- The intention was to provide the Malay people with *Ḥadīth* as sources of legal knowledge.
- Al-Marbawi wished to provide a model for Malay Muslim piety based on the sinless nature of Muhammad's conduct.
- To provide in brief the answers about various concepts and meanings on matters concerning *Ḥadīth* Methodology.
- Al-Marbawi divided his book into several sections: the 'introduction', the *Ḥadīth* in different chapter arrangements, the problems which are related to the *Ḥadīth*, discussion by different sources, and also the commentaries by the author himself.
- The work was composed by al-Marbawi to impart to non Arabic speakers a true understanding of the *Ḥadīth* teachings and more importantly as a teaching in political, social as well as religious life for Malay society.
- Al-Marbawi's approach did not simply restrict his efforts to compiling and commentating upon *Ḥadīth*; rather he extended the task further, to deriving legal and moral rulings from them for Malay readers. His general strategy was to introduce a chapter with an outline of a ruling and follow it up with narrations in favour or contradicting the title of the chapter. This outstanding feature of his commentary makes its contribution to and effect on the local people more significant than that of Husayn.
- The presence of this aspect of al-Marbawi's work means the quest for *Ḥadīth* under a certain topic is much easier, and is thus, more readily appreciated by



other researchers or learners when constructing specific related searches. This more comprehensive technique has contributed strongly to the supremacy of al-Marbawi's commentary and compilation of over that of Husayn.

The purpose of the writing and significance of the translation of *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* (of Husayn) can be seen as follows:

- Husayn's translation is based on commentary of al-Qaṣṭalānī's book of al-Bukhārī *Ṣaḥīḥ*.
- Husayn does not provide the exact date when he finished writing
- The intention was to provide the Malay people with *Ḥadīth* as sources of legal knowledge.
- It was written to explain authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) *Ḥadīth* to the Malay community in their language.
- Husayn divided his book into several sections: the 'introduction', the *Ḥadīth* in different sub-topic arrangements, along with the Malay translation, without any commentary.
- The work was composed by Husayn also to impart to non Arabic speakers a true understanding of the *Ḥadīth* teachings and more importantly as a teaching in political, social as well as religious life for the Malay society.
- Husayn's concern is to gather available authentic *Ḥadīth* under a specific topic regardless of any particular jurisprudence or other derivation of the ruling. It may be concisely stated here that the primary purpose of Husayn in compiling *Ḥadīth* was to record the narrations without any attention to the juristic problems. It may even be said that the purpose was not only that of composing a book; rather the aim was to preserve by translating the *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth* of Bukhārī into individual texts and to disseminate these to the Malay community in the early twentieth century.

To conclude, the objective in compiling *Bahr al-Mādihī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* can be discerned by examining their topics, since the compilers have taken great care to provide *Ḥadīth* material for readers which is indispensable for regulating their practical lives according to the demands of Islam.

Finally, it has been demonstrated that both these texts are considered to be authoritative collections, which provide a clear guide for human conduct in areas ranging from manners to *jihad*. Husayn and al-Marbawi's translations and commentaries are among the clearest examples of the use of exegesis as a tool for religious, social and political teaching. Therefore, in line with the significance of these works to Malay readers, Chapters Four and Five are devoted to these great works.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE *BAḤR AL-MADHĪ* AND THE *JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARĪ*: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR MALAY MUSLIMS AS TOOLS FOR RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL TEACHING.

#### 4.0 Introduction

In chapter three demonstrated that both of these texts (*Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawahir al-Bukhārī*) are considered to be authoritative collections, which provide a clear guide for human conduct in areas ranging from religious ruling to political conduct. Husayn's translations and al-Marbawi's commentaries are among the clearest examples of the use of exegesis as a tool for religious, social and political teaching.

Therefore, in line with the significance of these works to Malay readers, this chapter is devoted to these great works. The authors of the *Ḥadīth* texts stress various aspects of religious issues in their works. They devote a great deal of effort to explaining the *Ḥadīth* concerning the obligation of prayer to Muslims, the ruling of reciting *al-Fātihah* in prayer, the importance of congregational prayer, and the significance of 'sincerity' (*ikhlas*) and 'intention' (*niyyah*) in the lives of Malay Muslims.

The *Ḥadīth* texts of al-Marbawi and Husayn also provides a guide to the political teaching which governs a Muslim society. The authors therefore devote their writings to an explanation of this political teaching which stress several important elements: such as the role of the *sultan* (royal king) and obedience to him, and the meaning of *jihad* in a Malaysian context.

However, it should be stated here that a detailed discussion of the significance of *Baḥr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhari* for religious and political teaching is beyond the scope of this subject and therefore will not be scrutinized in this study. Nevertheless, as an appreciation of the role and its meaning for Malay readers, it will

be helpful here to discuss several current issues which specifically relate to al-Marbawi and Husayn's analysis of religious and political aspects in their works.

#### 4.1 The Importance of Prayers (*salat*)

As religious scholars of the Malay community, al-Marbawi and Husayn took a firm position on urging Malay Muslims not to miss any of the daily ritual prayers. They were adamant about following the *Sunnah*<sup>1</sup> as strictly as possible, and therefore not being negligent about prayers.

##### 4.1 i) The Pillars of the Religion

To begin a discussion of the significance of prayers to Muslims, Husayn for example points to a Prophetic *Ḥadīth* that refers to Allah (S.W.T) terming prayers the 'pillars of the religion'. In this, he was concerned that the behaviour of Malay Muslims should reflect complete adherence to the example of the Prophet ﷺ and the companions of the Prophet as he writes: 'Allah (S.W.T) has prescribed the obligatory prayers and the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* declares that the prayers are the pillars of our religion'. Husayn's interpretation of prayer as the pillars of religion is the clear significance of the *Ḥadīth* which he states:

- The Prophet ﷺ declares that Islam is based on (the following) five (principles):
1. To testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and that Muhammad is Allah's Prophet.
  2. To offer (compulsory congregational) prayers dutifully and perfectly.
  3. To pay *zakat* (alms)
  4. To perform *Hajj*
  5. To observe fast during the month of *Ramadhān*.

The above *Ḥadīth* which was translated by Husayn reminds Malay Muslims of the need for devotional prayer because it is the pillar of Islam that the Prophet ﷺ

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter one for its meaning.



affirms after declaring the testimony of faith, by which one becomes a Muslim. In addition, Husayn asserts that to offer worship to Allah (S.W.T) was made obligatory upon all the prophets and for all Muslims (for example when Allah [S.W.T] spoke directly to Moses):

And I have chosen you, so listen to that which is inspired for you.  
Verily, I am Allah! There is none worthy of worship but I, so  
worship Me and offer prayer perfectly for My remembrance<sup>2</sup> (*sic*).

For al-Marbawi prayers are therefore an important dimension for a spiritual believer who wishes ‘to see’ and experience God’s ‘presence’<sup>3</sup>. It is for this reason that the *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* of al-Marbawi (for example in ‘the chapter of prayer’) contains comprehensive information on a wide variety of topics relating to prayer, including: the method by which Muslims clean themselves prior to the prayer; the different types of prayer; the actions that invalidate prayer; the necessary parts to prayer, and more<sup>4</sup>.

The chapter of prayer in fact contains commentary under 138 sub-headings (for example ‘pertaining to prayer’, ‘times of prayer’, ‘observing prayers in the earlier parts of their respective timings’, ‘the excellence of prayers’, ‘pertaining to *sujūd* [prostration] and its excellence’ ‘the congregational prayer and its excellence’ and ‘the merits of prayers’), which illustrates al-Marbawī’s interest in ensuring that prayers are not seen as just ritual performances ordered by the *Shari‘a* (Islamic law) but as an integral component of Islamic discipline.

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<sup>2</sup> Al-Qur’ān 20:13-14

<sup>3</sup> See al-Marbawī, *Baḥr*, vol.2 & vol. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

#### 4.1 ii) The Dividing Line between Muslims and Non-Muslims.

As a wise, scholarly instructor, al-Marbawi stresses the belief that prayer is the most important pillar of Islam, which is clearly demonstrated as the dividing line between belief and disbelief<sup>5</sup>, which is for this reason discussed in detail as he states:

Buraydah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ declares: the covenant that is between us and them (unbelievers) is on the basis of prayer, so he who abandons it (in fact shows) infidelity (to Allah).

The commentary then illustrates that prayer is compulsory for every Muslim who has reached puberty and is of sound mind<sup>6</sup>.

For al-Marbawi, prayer is considered the principal mode of worship: so important that to miss one intentionally is a sin in Islam. Therefore al-Marbawi writes that the Prophet ﷺ for this reason constantly reminded believers of its importance:

°Abd Allah ibn Mas'ūd narrated: "I asked the Prophet ﷺ: 'Which of these actions is the best?' He replied 'prayer at its stated time'. I said: 'What comes next?' He replied: 'Kindness to parents'...."<sup>7</sup>

Having discussed this topic al-Marbawi further wisely reminds Malay Muslims:

O my brothers! Allah (S.W.T) has prescribed five obligatory prayers and the Prophet ﷺ declares that Allah (S.W.T) claimed prayers are the pillars of religion; whoever neglects prayer therefore becomes as an unbeliever<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.18,p.170

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., vol.2, p.34.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.2, p.93.



In this way, al-Marbawi also teaches that prayer is not only a form of worship in Islam, but also a reminder that, by it, followers will be strengthened to abstain from ‘bad deeds’ (as they are more aware of their actions) and be protected from evil.

Thus, al- Marbawi instructs that the stages of *wudu*’ include the purification of both ‘the outer and inner’, and ‘open and hidden impurities’ as the Prophet ﷺ declares:

When a bondman- a Muslim or a believer- washes his face (in the course of ablution) all sins that he committed with his eyes will be washed away from his face along with water or with the last drop of water and when he washes his feet, every sin towards which his feet walked would be washed away with water or with the last drop of water, with the result that he becomes pure of all sins<sup>9</sup>.

Al-Marbawi then recites two verses from Allah’s (S.W.T) revelations in the Qur’ān:

O you who believe! When you rise up for prayer (*ṣalat*) wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and lightly wipe your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles<sup>10</sup>.

Elsewhere Allah (S.W.T) reveals again:

And He it is Who sends the winds as good news heralding His mercy, and We send down purifying water from the sky<sup>11</sup>.

*Hadīth* and Qur’anic verses used in al- Marbawi’s texts aim to highlight the importance of prayer and to emphasize that there are many other benefits brought by prayer: for example, it strengthens faith in the existence of Allah (S.W.T) and strengthens this belief in the heart<sup>12</sup>. Also, one of the most important virtues of prayer as described in *Baḥr al-Mādīni* is its enabling the Muslim heart to grow in humbleness as al-Marbawi states: “prayers are means of establishing a relationship between the

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<sup>9</sup>Al-Marbawī, *Baḥr*. vol.1, p.18-19.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Qur’ān,5:6

<sup>11</sup> Al-Qur’ān, 25:48.

<sup>12</sup> It makes this belief constructive in a practical way throughout the daily course of life; it helps the realisation of natural aspirations to high morality, excellence and virtuousness and it purifies the heart and develops the mind.

divine and the believers. Therefore it is necessary for Muslim to practice the utmost humbleness in prayer because it will lead to victory"<sup>13</sup>. More importantly, Malays understand that prayer is obligatory for them and whoever neglects prayer becomes as an unbeliever, and also will get punishment from Allah (S.W.T).

Hence, with the help of the commentary of al-Marbawi under 'the chapter of prayers' (pages 2-232), Malay Muslims can see that prayer is the best way to develop a sound personality and to ensure that every believer's aspirations are set on a mature path to development, as the Prophet~~ﷺ~~ declares:

When anyone of you observes *ruku'* (bowing down) and he recites thrice in his *ruku'*: 'Glory be to my Lord, the Great', he completes the *ruku'*; and that is the least of it. And when he *sujud* (prostrates) and says in his prostration three times: 'Glory be to my Lord, the Highest', his prostration becomes complete: and that is the least of it<sup>14</sup>.

From this perspective, it is a lesson in discipline and determination, and a way to practice devotion to Allah (S.W.T)<sup>15</sup>. It is thus evident from the diversity of prayer topics discussed by al- Marbawi that his aim was to give advice and guidance to Malay Muslims following the path of Islam, and also to provide general guidelines on matters concerning prayer.

Thus, Husayn's translation and al- Marbawi's commentary combine together to demonstrate in a variety of prayer topics that Islamic prayer is more than just a succession of physical movements and a recital of the Holy Qur'ān. For Muslims, prayer should also be a means of spiritual devotion, of moral uplift and physical exercise.

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<sup>13</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*. vol.1, p.18-19.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., vol.2, pp.164-165.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.93.



## 4.2 An Account of Juristic Debate

In the book of *Bahr al-Mādhi*, al-Marbawi supplied 8,282 problems pertaining to religious and worldly matters which were published in 22 volumes with 5068 pages. *Bahr al-Mādhi* for example expounds in detail and analyzes the various verdicts of different jurists in various issues or problems such as the ruling of reciting *al-fātihah* in prayer, the ruling on Friday prayer, the ruling of ablution after eating camel's flesh, what makes the ablution essential, photography issues and more.

According to el-Edrūs, the Malays readily accept the other Schools of Thought, for example Hanafī instead of Shāfi'ī in some cases. For instance, in the paying of *zakat al-fitr*<sup>16</sup>, the Malay tends to follow the Hanafi School (which is better to pay in cash or money instead of paying with rice or wheat). El-Edrus then, stated:

The Malays are broad-minded Muslims. It is because towards the other Muslims sects or School of Thoughts, they are amenable and would accept certain interpretation under special circumstances. During this period the majority of the Indian Muslims are followers of the Hanafi School, while the Malays are followers of the Shāfi'ī School, but they agree on many aspects...<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, in *Bahr al-Mādhi* al-Marbawi provides a large account on the juristic debate on numerous issues to elaborates clearly for Malay Muslims the differing scholastic interpretations of preferences in the Prophet's *Ḥadīth*.

Al- Marbawi was able to distinguish himself by adding his distinctive voice to the discourse of each school or each sect, and perhaps also, to attract reader on the basis of his learning and ingenuity. In some issues he therefore offered the opinion of

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<sup>16</sup> Charity given to the poor at the end of the fasting in the Islamic holy month of *Ramadhan*. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zakat\\_al-fitr](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zakat_al-fitr).

<sup>17</sup> El-Edrus, Syed Muhammad Dawilah, *The role of Kitab Jawi in Islamic thought in the Malay Archipelago with special reference to Umm al-Barāhin and the writings on the twenty two attributes*, PhD Thesis, 1995, p.51.

the companions (for instance Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthman, ʿAlī, Jabīr ibn ʿAbd Allah<sup>18</sup>), of successors, and the views of School of Thoughts (Shāfiʿī, Maliki, Hanafi and Hanbali) for example in the ruling of reciting *al-fātihah* in prayer and the ruling of ablution after eating camel's flesh<sup>19</sup>. In presenting the views of juristic judgment he relied on several sources, for example: the *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim, the *Majmūʿ* of al-Nawāwī and *al-Jāmiʿ* of al-Tirmīdhī.

A detailed argumentation of the differences in juristic opinion or the consensus of religious scholars (*ijmāʿ*) in this text is beyond the scope of this study and therefore will not be scrutinized. Nevertheless, to appreciate the content of *Bahr al-Mādhi*, it is useful here to discuss several issues which specifically relate to al-Marbawī's analysis of the arguments and opinions of the four Schools of Muslim jurisprudence.

#### **4.2 i) The Ruling of Recitation of *al-Fātihah* (the Opening Chapter) in Prayer**

##### **4.2 i. a) Reciting *al-Fātihah* In Prayer**

As a spiritual teacher of the Malay people, al-Marbawī wishes to analyze and explain questions being put to him in relation to Islamic teachings (in this case prayers); it is for this reason that he discusses in detail the ruling for reciting *al-fātihah*, for example. Al-Marbawī's exposition of this ruling is consistent with the view of Traditional Scholars (for example the scholars from al-Shāfiʿī School) that the reciting of *al-fātihah* is obligatory, and that without it prayer is not valid.

Al-Marbawī then draws on juristic opinion to clarify this matter for Malay readers. In this view the majority opinion of scholars, for example al-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad and Mālik, is that: "it is obligatory to recite *al-fātihah* in prayer, and prayer is not

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<sup>18</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.2, p.148.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. vol.1, p.116-117. See also vol.p.118-119.



valid without it". Al-Marbawi then demonstrates that this opinion is based upon many *Ḥadīth*, for example:

- “For the one who does not recite the *sūrah al-fātiḥah*, the prayer is no prayer”<sup>20</sup>.
- “Where the ‘Mother of the Qur’ān’ (*al-fātiḥah*) is not recited this prayer is not valid”<sup>21</sup>.

On the other hand, Abū Hanīfah (and those of his companions who agreed with him for example al-Awza‘i and al-Thawrī) argue that it is not obligatory to recite *al-fātiḥah*; rather any portion of the Qur’ān would be sufficient, in accordance with Allah’s (S.W.T) commandment:

And recite what is easy [for you] from the Qur’ān<sup>22</sup>.

This view is supported by the Prophet’s ﷺ own words to the man who prayed badly:

When you stand to pray, say the *takbīr* (saying Allah is the Greatest),  
and then recite what is easy for you from the Qur’ān<sup>23</sup>.

#### **4.2 i. b) Reciting *al-Fātiḥah* In Every *Raka‘ah*.**

As a next step, al-Marbawi considers juristic rulings on whether it is obligatory to recite *al-fātiḥah* in every *raka‘ah* (refers to one unit of the prayer). Here there are three main groups: firstly, those who follow al-Shāfi‘ī are of the view that recitation of *al-fātiḥah* is obligatory in every *raka‘ah*, while others hold that it is sufficient to recite it for most (but not all) of the *raka‘ah*. Yet, another group (for example al-Hasan and the majority of the scholars of Baṣrah) argues that it is sufficient to recite it simply in one *raka‘ah*; in this, they adhere the literal sense of the *Ḥadīth*.

<sup>20</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.2,p.147-149.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> al-Qur’ān ,73:20

<sup>23</sup> Al-Marbawī,*Bahr*, vol.2. p.147-149.

For the one who does not recite the *sūrah al-Fātiḥah* (Opening of the Book) the prayer is no prayer<sup>24</sup> .

#### 4.2 i. c) Reciting *al-Fātiḥah* In Congregational Prayer

Recitation of *al-fātiḥah* where one is a follower in a congregational prayer is then discussed, where scholastic opinion falls into three groups<sup>25</sup>:

1. It is obligatory upon him to recite *al-fātiḥah* in all prayers.
2. It is optional whether or not to recite it in all prayers.
3. He should recite it in those prayers in which the recitation is silent, but not in those prayers in which the recitation is spoken aloud.

In this way, Malay Muslims can easily differentiate amongst these arguments, since they are drawn from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. Their differences are therefore merely differences of interpretation and understanding, or indeed of difference of preference; it is not a question of validity and invalidity. In all these cases, opinions are 'valid', since their base is one and the same.

The point here for al- Marbawi is not to discuss which is the strongest opinion, but to instruct for Malay readers that *al-fātiḥah* has specific rulings to it that are not shared by any other verses of the Qur'ān. In this, he withholds his own leanings towards the view of al-Shāfi'ī; his purpose is rather to set out clearly the differing scholastic interpretations of preferences. On this point al-Marbawi differs from Husayn, who does not enter into discussion as to juristic opinion concerning the recitation of *al-fātiḥah*.

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<sup>24</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.2, p.148.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p.149-150



#### 4.2.ii) The Ruling About Ablution after Eating Camel's Flesh.

In Islam, prayer has become the most effective instrument for self-purification. Therefore, the merit attached to ablution, its performance and intention, the etiquette associated with entering the mosque, the blessings of the call to prayer, and many other associated acts, make prayer an outstanding and solemn means of nurturing an awareness of Allah in one's heart.

For this reason al- Marbawi demonstrates precisely the ruling of ablution in *Bahr al-Mādhi*. Nevertheless, it should be stated here that a detailed discussion 'the ruling of ablution' in this topic is beyond the scope of this subject and therefore it will not be analysed in this study.

However, it is essential here to discuss some issues which are not often related to Malay readers (for example the ruling about ablution after eating camel's flesh) because he desires to provide a body of the religious guidelines of the *Ḥadīth* for the Malays community.

In *Bahr al-Mādhi* al- Marbawi thus explains that:

The Prophet ﷺ has been asked about performing ablution after eating camel's flesh; whereupon he said: 'Yes'. The Prophet ﷺ has been asked about performing ablution after eating mutton, whereupon he said: 'No'<sup>26</sup>.

According to this issue 'the ablution after eating of the camel's flesh', al- Marbawi has analyzed this *Ḥadīth* under number 308. He then puts forward a further *Ḥadīth* on the topic (*Bāb al-wuḍu' min luḥum al-Ibil*), as he states:

According to al-Nawāwī there is difference of opinion amongst the jurists about this matter. Some of the jurists (for example Mālik, Abū

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<sup>26</sup> Al- Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1,p.118.

Hanīfah and Shāfi‘ī ) affirm that eating of the camel’s flesh does not ‘break the ablution’. In line with the same argument there are companions (for example Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman and ‘Ali, ‘Abd Allah bin Mas‘ud, Ubay bin Ka‘ab, Ibn ‘Abbas, Abu Dardā’, Abū Ṭalhah, Amir bin Rabi‘ah and Abu Umāmah). But according to others, (for example Ahmad bin Hanbal, Ishaq bin Rahwaih, Yahya bin Yahya, Abū Bakr bin al-Mundhar, Ibn Huzaimah and al-Hafīḍ Abū Bakar al-Bayhaqī) it does ‘break ablution’.

Regarding the above discussion about the problem with eating camel’s flesh, the question naturally arises why such exception is made for the flesh of the camel. Various reasons have been put forward, for example al-Tabrizi has stated on his *Mishkat* that:

Shabir Ahmad Uthmānī deems its offensive smell to be the main cause. Shah Wālī Allah al-Dihlawī however, has given a different view, when he stresses that the eating of camel’s flesh had been forbidden in the Book of al-*Tawrah*. All other Messengers of Banī Isrāīl agreed to it but it was nevertheless permissible for the followers of Muhammad ﷺ. Ablution was therefore enjoined upon them as an expression of thankfulness to Allah S.W.T. for his favour<sup>27</sup>.

These scholars offered plausible reasonable explanations, for example Shabbir affirms that this order of ablution after eating the flesh of camel is one of the main phases through which new converts had to pass to learn the laws of purification. Firstly, “ablution was made obligatory for everyone who ate food touched by fire. This was done in order to accustom people to the habit of purification. Later on, concession was granted in this matter, but it was ordained to continue this practice of ablution in case of camel’s flesh; subsequently the full concession was given”<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Al-Tabrizi, *Mishkāt*, translated, p.171; Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani, *Fath al Mulhim: commentary on Sahīh Muslim*, vol. 1, p.490; Shah Wali Allah , *Hujjah al-Balighah*, Vol.1, p.177.

<sup>28</sup> For detailed study, see Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani, *Fath al Mulhim: commentary on Sahīh Muslim*, Vol. 1, p.490, Shah Wali Allah , *Hujjah al-Balighah*, Vol.1, p.177



According to the author of *Mishkāt*, there were different views concerning the conditions in the folds of sheep and camels. Sheep and goats are small and meek animals, and one feels no danger from them, and therefore, one has no cause to fear them. But this is not the case of for camels. They at times become violent and one has to exercise great care in living by their side, therefore prayer in their folds is a cause of distraction<sup>29</sup>.

#### 4.2.iii) Photographic Issues

There are several juristic opinions on photographic issues which are treated in *Bahr al-Mādhi*, as follows:

##### 4.2.iii. a) The prohibition of *taṣwīr* (pictures creating a likeness).

As a wise, scholarly instructor, al-Marbawi reminds Malay Muslims of the prohibition on the creation of a likeness as the Prophet ﷺ declares:

Whoever makes a picture in this world will be asked to put life into it on the Day of Resurrection, but he will not be able to do so<sup>30</sup>.

Al- Marbawi teaches Malay readers that according to al-Shāfi'ī and al-Nawāwi, it is prohibited to create images of animals or to create things in the likeness of God's creation, except for pictures of scenery<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Al-Tabrīzi, *Mishkāt*, translated, p.171.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr al-Mādhi*, vol.12, p.134.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.135.

#### 4.2. iii.b) Permission for Photographing (Taking Pictures)

In relation to this issue, al-Marbawi cited the opinion from his teacher Shāykh Ibrāhīm al-Samalūti:

“I (Shāykh Ibrāhīm al-Samalūti) asked my teacher Shāykh Muhammad Najdī Shāykh Ruwāq al-Sharāquh about the photography issue, and he states that this art is no more than capturing a shade or a reflection by special technique. He clarifies that what is forbidden is to create a likeness which has no previous existence in order to produce something like that which Allah has created. Using a camera to take a picture is similar to fixing what we see in a mirror. No one says that looking into a mirror is forbidden because it shows a likeness of Allah's creation. We use lenses in cameras in order to capture a mirror picture of the person or the object for which we need a photo. This is perfectly legitimate”<sup>32</sup>.

We can, therefore, conclude from the discussion of *Bahr al-Mādhi* on this topic that there is consensus amongst *ulama* (for example al-Shāfiʿī and al-Nawāwi) that likenesses (whether shaped or painted which have for their objects illustrating a person, creatures, or idols that are worshipped) are strictly prohibited. Moreover, it is forbidden to make, sell, own or to be photographed for such likenesses. Paintings of people who are recognized as dictators or unjust rulers, or atheists or people whose natural conduct is contrary to Islam, may not be hung upon any wall. However, paintings of natural scenery are permissible.

The point here for al-Marbawi is not to discuss which the strongest view is, but to demonstrate for Malay readers that some issues have specific rulings upon them. In this, he withholds his own leanings towards the view of al-Shāfiʿī; his purpose is rather to set out clearly the differing scholastic interpretations or preferences. On this point al-Marbawī differs from Husayn, who does not enter into discussion as to juristic opinion in his text.

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<sup>32</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.12, p.135.



### 4.3 The Importance of the Congregational Prayer

In *Baḥr al- Mādḥi*, al-Marbawi stresses the importance of congregational prayer to Malay Muslims in their life. It is because prayer in congregation is of the highest status in Islam and its performance (for spiritual unity) must not therefore be neglected<sup>33</sup>. Congregational prayer itself also deeply affects the *iṣlah* (correction and purification) of the Muslim and works to increase his faith<sup>34</sup>; for this reason many *‘ibadat* (acts of worship) accompany it, such as *wuḍu’* (ablution) and walking to the mosque<sup>35</sup>, as reported by Ibn ‘Umar:

Prayer in congregation is 27 grades in excess of one’s prayer alone<sup>36</sup>.

It is for this reason, then, that congregational prayer is emphasised by al-Marbawi under ‘*Bāb mā jā’a fī fadl al-jamā‘ah*’ section, since this is above the lone man’s prayer by twenty-seven ranks in excellence.

For al- Marbawi, “by establishing the divine purpose of communal worship, Allah’s superiority can thus be established and the unity among Malays can be achieved by its performance. But this unity can be achieved only when the Islamic community regularly practises meeting together; all should assemble daily for that worship which is the greatest sign of faith, and the most important among all devotions according to Allah’s commands<sup>37</sup>. Al-Marbawi then underlines this importance with specific *Ḥadīth*:

The Prophet declares: “He who attends the congregation for *‘Isha* prayer, receives a reward equivalent to half a night of worship, and he who attends both *‘Isha* (the night prayer) and *Fajr* (the dawn

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<sup>33</sup> Syed Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwī, relevance of the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet to religious and social life in modern times, in *The place of Ḥadīth in Islam, Proceeding of the Seminar on Ḥadīth*, p.13.

<sup>34</sup> Al- Marbawī, *Baḥr*, vol.2. p.94

<sup>35</sup> Syed Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwī, *Proceeding of the Seminar on Ḥadīth*, p.13.

<sup>36</sup> Al- Marbawī, *Baḥr*, vol.2. p.94.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

prayer) prayer with the congregation and he shall receive the reward of one whole night of worship”<sup>38</sup> .

In another *Hadīth* the Prophet ﷺ also declares: If you but knew the reward in performing prayer in the first row, you would fight amongst yourselves to stand in that very place.

Hence, al-Marbawi stresses for us why it is necessary that we perform prayers five times daily together with the congregation, in the mosque itself. It is because the Prophet ﷺ indeed proposes a punishment for those who do not attend, even though they may perform their own prayers at home.

The Prophet ﷺ declares: I have a strong desire to order prayer to be established, and then order a man to lead the people in prayer. Then I would gather men and carry bundles of wood to those who will not attend, and burn their houses upon them<sup>39</sup> .

The Prophet ﷺ affirms: Whosoever hears the call to prayer, and does not respond, even though he prays at home alone, this is no prayer unless he has a valid excuse.

In this, a major concern for al-Marbawi is that Malay Muslims should understand the significance for them of congregational prayer, and how this relates to the importance of unity in Islam. The importance of this congregational prayer is significant because the whole of humanity directing itself to Allah (S.W.T), demonstrating the unity of the community, and of taking the same path in life, therefore represents a picture of an ideal Muslim society.

For this reason, al-Marbawi illustrates the significance of this unity for Malay Muslims, such as the binding of worshippers in group prayer, then brotherhood by which love and peace are solidified. Thus, the commentary shows Malay Muslim readers the way to feel equal, and humble yet exalted, through standing in identical positions, reciting similar words, performing expressive actions, and turning towards one Lord. Their unity of position inspires them with the feeling of the value of humanity and the equality of all human beings before Allah.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.p.103.

<sup>39</sup> Al- Marbawī, *Bahr*,vol.2,p.96



#### 4.4 The Significance of ‘Sincerity’ (*Ikhlas*) and ‘Intention’ (*Niyyah*) In Malay Muslim Life.

As a spiritual teacher, al-Marbawi is greatly concerned with ‘sincerity’ and ‘intention’ in Malay Muslim life. It is because in Islamic discourse, ‘sincerity’ means absolute devotion to Allah (S.W.T). It is the opposite of *shirk* (associating other beings or powers with Allah)<sup>40</sup>. For Sufis, this quality interprets as ‘selflessness’: for them this is a vital state of mind in the effort to approach Allah (S.W.T) which in their view demands such ‘selflessness’ even in ritual acts<sup>41</sup>.

In line with this connection, Woodward demonstrates that “in the Malay world the Traditional scholars and Malay Sufi explain that one who is truly ‘sincere’ does not seek Allah’s blessing, but worships and loves Him for His own sake, eventually losing awareness even of ‘sincerity’ itself”<sup>42</sup>. Equally important here is the concept of ‘intention’ (*niyyah*)<sup>43</sup>. In a legal sense, ‘intention’ refers to the pronouncement of a statement of intent prior to the performance of a ritual act; in a broader sense, the presence of ‘right thinking’, intention renders a pious act of greater value than ritual<sup>44</sup>. In this sense, ‘intention’ is associated with ‘sincerity’<sup>45</sup>.

It is because of this close link that *Bahr al-Mādhi* begins with a discussion of the concepts of ‘intention’ and ‘sincerity’; to stress this link is vital, since Malay Muslims understand them as elements of the mystical path leading to direct experience of Allah (S.W.T)<sup>46</sup>. While al-Marbawi’s text supports this interpretation, it also uses these concepts as the basis for a critique of social and religious behaviour, based on the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

<sup>40</sup> Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *the translation of the meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari*, p.xvi

<sup>41</sup> Qamar-ul Huda, the remembrance of the Prophet in Suhrawardi’s ‘Awarif al-Ma‘arif, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 12:2, 2001, pp.129-150.

<sup>42</sup> Woodward, *the Journal of Asian Studies*, pp.565-583.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> That is, if prayer is offered in a spirit of ritual without ‘sincerity’ and ‘intention’, that prayer is as nothing before Allah.

<sup>45</sup> See Wensinck, Arent, Niya, in Hamilton Gibb and Johannes Kramers, (eds.), *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1974, pp.449-50; Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.10.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.11, pp.144-145; Woodward, textual exegesis, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, pp.565-583.



Verily, the deeds are to be judged by 'intentions' and for every person (there is in store for him) what he 'aims' at. He whose migration is for the sake of Allah and His messenger his migration (is in fact for Allah and His messenger) and he whose migration is for the worldly (end) he would attain that or for a woman with whom he (likes) to marry; his migration is for that for which he migrated .

Thus (with reference to the *Ḥadīth*) al- Marbawi discusses 'intention' in detail, which points to its significance in the life of the Malay Muslims. According to his commentary the *Ḥadīth* testifies that the reward of deeds therefore depends upon the 'intention'; every person will be rewarded by Allah (S.W.T) according to that 'intention'. This includes faith, ablution, prayers, *zakat*, fasting and the *aḥkām*<sup>47</sup> (commandments) of Allah<sup>48</sup>, for example<sup>49</sup>.

This *Ḥadīth* clearly indicates that because 'intention' is the measure for rendering actions truly 'sincere', where intention is 'sound' then action is 'sound'; where it is 'corrupt', then action is 'corrupt'<sup>50</sup>. Hence, because of the importance of 'sincerity and intention' to Muslim life, according to al- Marbawi this first *Ḥadīth* was the first reported by al-Bukhāri, where it serves the purpose of an introduction, pointing out that all deeds that are devoid of the proper intention are vain.

For this reason, al-Bukhāri relates the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* at the start of his book, and once again in the chapters dedicated to jihad, belief, marriage, the freeing of slaves, emigration, and to renouncing dishonesty and oaths. Al- Marbawi goes on to

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<sup>47</sup> '*Aḥkam*' according to Islamic Law, there are five kinds of orders; which are (a) compulsory (*wajīb*), (b) order without obligation (*mustahab*), (c) forbidden, (d) disliked but not forbidden (*makrūh*), (e) legal and allowed (*ḥalāl*). See Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *the translation of the meaning of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari*, Hilal Yayinlari: Turkey, 1992, p. ixvii

<sup>48</sup> Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, the translation of the meanings of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Hilal Yayinlari, Turkey, 1992. Vol.1, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.8.

<sup>50</sup> Wherever there is action accompanied by 'intention', then there are three states: first, if an action is performed out of fear of Allah (S.W.T), then this is the worship due to Him as His slaves. Second, if the intention is to seek 'the Garden' and reward, then this is the worship of 'traders', who seek profit; third, if the action is performed out of modesty and shame before Allah (S.W.T), (discharging the duty of service and discharging (the duty of gratitude), then this implies fear of falling short in the believer's heart, and fearful uncertainty as to whether or not the action is acceptable to Allah (S.W.T). Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.10 ;vol.1,p.8-12; vol.11, pp.144-145.



stress al-Shāfi'ī's affirmation that this *Ḥadīth* comprises a third of all religious knowledge;<sup>51</sup> it is one of the authentic *Ḥadīth* which serves as an axis of Islam.

Al-Marbawi further comments:

For your knowledge my brothers, the meaning of this *Ḥadīth* is that Allah will not accept your deeds when they are offered without fearful awareness of Allah. He accepts that offering only through which you show Him your fearful awareness of Him. This indicates that no act of worship is without 'intention'. The 'intention' is that you want to draw 'near to Allah' and carry out His command<sup>52</sup>.

*Bahr al-Mādḥi* uses varied examples to illustrate the importance of 'sincerity' and 'intention', illustrating the principles of 'sincerity' and 'intention' by reference to the several Schools of Thought (*Madhāhib*), for example al-Shāfi'ī and Hanafī (page 3-15). The fact that other topics range from the relative merit of private and congregational prayer to the immorality between Muslims indicates that Marbawī's intent was to illustrate the importance of these virtues as ethical principles.

It is for this reason he expounds at length 'sincerity' and 'intention' as abstract principles, but he also establishes historical connections among the individual *Ḥadīth* and provides them with a Malay context, beginning as follows:

I have to declare to you my brothers; 'sincerity' means full obedience motivated solely by Allah (S.W.T). That is, the obedience of a Muslim which is directed towards Allah alone, not by affection for humans, in order to be praised or to be loved by humans, or whatever purpose is the reason for offering worship to Allah. Thus, as a Sultan or leader your commandment is following the Qur'an and the *Ḥadīth*<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1,p..12

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.8-13

The commentary continues to explain as follows:

For your awareness my brothers! The *Ḥadīth* points out that the Prophet in all actions never allowed worship to Allah unless to Allah only. That which he wishes for us (Malay Muslims) is 'sincerity' in ritual observance in both the internal (*batin*) and external (*dhahir*) sense, directed only towards Allah, to whom no-one is joined and who takes no partner<sup>54</sup>.

Al-Marbawi explains this point by reference to selected jurists and to scholastic commentary from early Islam, such as al-Shāfi'ī, Abū Hanīfah, Nawāwī, Ibn 'Arabī and others (without mention of their names). He observes that they interpreted this passage in two ways; one ritualistic, and the other sociological. Some comment that Allah does not recognize or accept ritual performance unless it is accompanied by the appropriate spiritual rites, while stating that the cultivation of these states leads individuals to focus on the 'common good' rather than on personal gain<sup>55</sup>.

Through al-Marbawi's commentary, the Malays would thus understand and interpret this *Ḥadīth* in both ritualistic and sociological ways. Accordingly, when the reader reads (these *Ḥadīth*) it is necessary that he should think and reflect so that he will understand 'correct belief', 'proper action' and 'right intention'. The 'proper' actions are those which we do purely out of love and obedience to Allah. This means that we should acquire the highest and most sincere as well as 'correct belief' integrated with proper action and right intention. It is, consequently, fundamental that every noble action should be founded upon these two virtues; the heart should be unrestrained by such things as hypocrisy, greed for wealth, or any other worldly things that fall into the category of such evils and that could destroy noble deeds.

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<sup>54</sup> Al- Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.13.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.



#### 4.5 Obedience and Prohibition for Leadership

In Islam, politics was an important part of life that religious leaders had to participate in. Therefore, *Baḥr al-Mādhī* of al-Marbawi and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* of Husayn demonstrates clearly ‘a political model’ which is rooted in the purity of the truth as declared by the Prophetic *Ḥadīth* ﷺ.

Before further elaborating the issues of obedience and prohibition for leadership, however, it is worth drawing attention to the background position of the sultan or rulers in brief. This discussion allows us to review basics first and to understand how the sultan or rulers are regarded in their positions. This present topic, however, does not intend to give a detailed description because this is not an attempt to rephrase history.

In Islam, the ‘Supreme Commander’ of the Muslim community following the death of the Prophet ﷺ was called ‘*Imām*’ or Caliph<sup>56</sup> according to M.N Ngah. However, when the power of the Caliph in Baghdad became very weak the provinces of the Caliphate were ruled by independent governors who called themselves ‘Sultans’. Thus, in his own dominion every Sultan was absolute ruler in matters both spiritual and temporal. It was during this time that Islam came to the Malay world, and the Malays therefore continued to call their Supreme Commander ‘Sultan’<sup>57</sup>. However, according to Hefner, “before the Islamization of the Malay world, Malays perceived their political condition in terms of divine kingship that is, they considered themselves to be living in a community oriented around a *Raja* (Sultan) who was not only the focus of political life but was also endowed with religious and physiological significance”<sup>58</sup>. The Malay thus believed that “the Sultan was the head of the kingdom and he was protected by a supernatural force conferred upon him by the virtue of his kingship”<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> M.N Ngah, *Kitab Jawi*, p.40

<sup>57</sup> Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman, *towards a history of Malaysian ulama*, Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, p.10.

<sup>58</sup> Robert W.Hefner and Patricia Horvatich, *Islam in an era of Nation-States*, University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p.10.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Nevertheless Nawab stated that “after the Islamization of the Malay world which led to the kingdom becoming the focus of political life. Islam did not alter the notion, instead his ‘divinity’ was further enhanced by the addition of various prayers being recited by the ruler during ceremonies. This gave the ruler an added sacredness as he could now assure his subjects that God would bless them for their loyalty to his leadership”<sup>60</sup>.

#### 4.5.i) The Duties and Responsibilities of the Rulers

*Baḥr al-Mādḥī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* stress the responsibilities of the rulers or Sultan to their sultanate as well the responsibility of the sultanate to their rulers.

Rahim, noted that during the nineteenth century, the political standpoint of Malaysia was governed by several main groups; “the Malay rulers (Sultans), the Malay aristocrats, the *ulama* (religious scholars) and the British colonial”<sup>61</sup>. The former two groups constituted the ‘upper class’ in Malay society and their living standards were far ahead of those of the middle class and the Malay peasantry. This ‘upper class’ dominated most of the government positions, but neglected the welfare and development of their society<sup>62</sup>.

Therefore, al- Marbawi and Husayn were critical of the negative role of this group in Malay society, and of their indifference to the discrimination against fellow Malays in their country. For this reason both al- Marbawi and Husayn’s early writings condemned the Malay rulers for leading extravagant and self indulgent lives in their own ‘palaces’, while the Malay commoners lived in poverty and were left far behind the immigrants.

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<sup>60</sup> Mohamed Nawab , *towards a history of Malaysian ulama*, Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, p.10.

<sup>61</sup> Rahimin Affandi Abd. Rahim, traditionalism and reformism polemic in Malay-Muslim religious literature. *Islam and Christian – Muslim Relations*, vol.17, no.1. January 2006, pp.93-104.

<sup>62</sup> Ilya Romiza, *Za’ba, Monograph*, p.137.



Such behaviour is clearly unacceptable within the Malay–Islamic political tradition; justice must become the basic requirement for the legitimacy of a Malay sultanate, in line with the principles of the *Ḥadīth*. Both al-Marbawi and Husayn comment that this emphasis on justice is demonstrated in the traditional swearing-in ceremony at the installation of Malay Sultans, where they have to swear to do their utmost to rule justly by saying: *wa-Allahi, wa-ta-Allahi, wa-bi-Allahi*<sup>63</sup>.

In addition, under section ‘*Bāb mā jā’a fī al-Imām al-‘Adīl*’ al-Marbawi demonstrates (for example) that the Sultan or rulers of the Muslim society must strive to:

1. Establish justice (including the punishment of crime) among the people.
2. Preserve Islam in its original form, and defend against the introduction into Islam of heretical beliefs (*bid‘ah*).
3. Ensure the protection of society. Those within the borders of the Muslim state (whether they are Muslims or not) should feel sufficiently secure to be productive members of the communities contained by Islam
4. Secure the physical borders of the state, using arms and other defensive measures.

#### 4.5.ii) The Obligation of Obedience to the Rulers

Bagley, who discusses matters ‘with reference to counsellors of the sultanate’ as stated by Hefner and Patricia, affirms that “the *ulama*’s positions in terms of political power are varied throughout Islamic history, for example al-Ghazali in his ‘*Nasihat al-Muluk*’ wrote that the Sultan was ‘God’s Shadow on Earth’<sup>64</sup>, and was the Lord’s delegate over his creatures and must therefore be held in high regard. Al-Ghazali also ‘stigmatized’ any form of rebellion, even if this was against an oppressive and evil monarch. For al-Ghazali<sup>65</sup>, Muslims must do nothing in the face of such oppression

<sup>63</sup> Al-Edrus, *the role of Kitab Jawi*, PhD Thesis, 1995, p.65.

<sup>64</sup> F.R.Bagley, *Ghazali’s Book of Counsel for King*, London: Oxford University Press, 1964, p.72 cited by W.Hefner and Patricia Horvatic, *Islam in an era of Nation-States*. University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p.10.

<sup>65</sup> This view could be motivated by the fact that he himself was a courtier appointed by *Nizam al-Muluk* to be a teacher of the Shafi‘i jurisprudence in the Madrasah Nizamiyah of Baghdad.; Robert W.Hefner and Patricia Horvatic, *Islam in an era of Nation-States*, University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p.10.

and evil, but must instead keep bitter thoughts in their hearts<sup>66</sup>. In this way, social peace and harmony can be achieved in the outer world. Thus, war and violence should be avoided at all costs even in the face of an autocratic rule<sup>67</sup>.

Therefore, in line with same view of al-Ghazali, we can see in earlier Malay *Hadīth* texts<sup>68</sup> that the Sultan is considered to be a 'shadow of Allah upon the earth'. Thus, according to Malay Muslim scholars, obedience to the Sultan or King is *fard kifayah*<sup>69</sup>.

Thus, in dealing with the obligation of obedience to the rulers in Malaysia, Malay religious scholars for example al-Marbawi and Husayn adopted the *al-Ghazalian* approach which means that it was the duty of the people to be loyal to the Sultan,<sup>70</sup> and not to commit treason because this represented an act 'against God'<sup>71</sup>.

Al-Marbawi is therefore careful to point out in his commentary that if the Sultan or ruler governs wisely according to the commandment of the Qur'ān and the *Hadith*, then the people must show him allegiance and support him. On the other hand, if he becomes unjust, or is so handicapped as to become ineffective (for example through blindness or amputation), then he may be justly and lawfully removed, but not through force or arms<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> Massimo Campanini, 'al-Ghazali' in Seyyed Hossein Nasr (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Philosophy*, Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2002, p.260.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.13, p.105.

<sup>68</sup> Such as the writings of al-Rānirī and al-Sinkīlī in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>69</sup> *Fard kifayah* is not obligatory for every individual of the Muslim community. If only a few fulfil it, it is sufficient, but if none fulfils it, the whole community is guilty of sin. See Mohd. Nor Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic thought of the Malay Muslim scholars*, p.36; Zayn al-'Abidin Muhammad al-Fatani, *Kashf al-Litham*, Cairo, 1308AH/1890AD., p.362.

<sup>70</sup> Mohamed Nawab, *towards a history of Malaysian ulama*, Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, p.6.

<sup>71</sup> T. Iskandar, *Nuruddin Ar-Raniri's Bustanu's Salatin*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1966, p.46.

<sup>72</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.10, p.41.



#### 4.5.iii) Disobedience to the Rulers

In line with this, Husayn states that disobedience is only permissible in the event that the ruler's decision is clearly contrary to the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*, as he states:

Allah revealed: O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those who are in authority (*uli al-amr*)<sup>73</sup>.

Although Husayn counsels support for the Sultan, he warns him that he must not rule unjustly. Thus, in political affairs, Husayn sternly warns that the ruler is worthy of support only if he is 'just and honest' as the Prophet ﷺ commands:

It is obligatory upon a Muslim to listen (to the ruler) and obey whether he likes it or not, except when he is ordered to do a sinful thing; in such case, there is no obligation to listen or to obey<sup>74</sup>.

This *Ḥadīth* 'crystallizes the parameters' of obedience which is due to Muslim rulers. From this standpoint, the honour of the ruler is inextricably linked to his surrender to the Command of Allah and His Messenger (S.A.W). Otherwise, apart from condemnation in the Hereafter, he will also suffer humiliation in this world. Thus, according to al-Marbawī, obedience to a Muslim ruler demands two conditions:

- i) First, his command must not violate the Holy law of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*;
- ii) Second, he must command of the subject only what is possible.

If, however, the ruler fails to meet these two conditions then obedience to his will also cease to be obligatory<sup>75</sup>. It is because of these two conditions that this *Ḥadīth* sends a warning to rulers that they must not submit people to unbearable hardship. Obedience to a ruler is essential to the collective interests of the community.

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<sup>73</sup> Al-Qur'ān, 4:59.

<sup>74</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.8

<sup>75</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.12,p.12.

#### 4.5.iv) Forbidden to Ask For Positions of Authority

In this commentary al-Marbawi also warns against those rulers who seek their position of authority through ambition as the Prophet ﷺ declares:

Whoever asks for a position of authority and is given it as a result of that request, will be left alone as its captive. If he is granted this position without asking for it, he will be helped (by Allah) in discharging its responsibilities<sup>76</sup>.

For al-Marbawi, by the term ‘rulers’ is meant caliphate or any other rank affiliated to its hierarchy. Yet, it is not desirable to strive for such high position as it brings with it a heavy responsibility and one may not abdicate or be absolved from it.

However, if a man is offered this high position without solicitation, he should accept it. This *Ḥadīth* therefore urges Muslims (particularly those who do not have enough ability) to abandon the ambition of achieving dominion and power. It is feared by al-Marbawi that because of their lack of wisdom they will manage badly the task assigned to them, and that will render them guilty in the sight of Allah.

This *Ḥadīth* thus backs the idea presented in this chapter by al-Marbawi, that a person putting himself forward for office should be deprived of it. This is in line with his view that ambitious persons who manage to obtain high office, damage the interests of others. In his opinion, a government should aim primarily at the welfare of the people, not serve the interests of a privileged few or benefit merely the holders of key posts.

#### 4.5.v) The Prerequisites To Becoming Rulers

Al-Marbawi also emphasizes the importance of criteria (based on the *Ḥadīth*) for selecting leaders or rulers. At the same time, *Ḥadīth* concerning the qualities necessary to be worthy to lead prayers as ‘*imām*’ are also discussed<sup>77</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.10, p.37.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, vol.2, p.127



The Prophet ﷺ declares: The person who is best versed in the recitation of the Qur'ān, should lead the prayer; but if all those present are equally versed in it, then the one who has most knowledge of the *Sunnah*; if they are equal in that respect too, then the one who has emigrated (to Medina) first, if they are equal in this respect also, then the oldest of them. No man should lead another in prayer where the latter has authority, or sit in his house without his permission <sup>78</sup>.

In another narration:

The Prophet ﷺ said, one who is most senior in accepting Islam, should lead the *salat* (prayer)<sup>79</sup>.

For al- Marbawī, these *Hadīth* therefore illustrate that the order of priority for the appointment of *imām* (one who leads the prayers) should go to those *qari'* (reciters of the Qur'ān) who can clearly articulate their recitation of the Qur'ān; who are pious in nature, and who act faithfully according to those teachings. The Prophet ﷺ also explained that rulers must be seen to apply these teachings as 'a reference point' in the acquisition of areas of knowledge which is outside Islam. Furthermore, he must not be a non-practising Muslim.

These *Hadīth* are also used as added 'symbolic' selection criteria in ranking the hierarchy of religious scholars<sup>80</sup> and the rulers in the Muslim community. To this end, he draws up specific characteristics which possible candidates for the ruler must display to be 'legitimised' under *Shari'ah* as laid down by the Prophet ﷺ:

1. Rulers or leaders must be Muslim.
2. The ruler must be male. This condition is based on the *Hadīth* in which the Prophet ﷺ states that a nation would not profit under a woman leader.

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<sup>78</sup> A-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.2,p.122-126

<sup>79</sup> Ibid,p.127-128

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., vol.13, p.105.

3. He must be knowledgeable in Islamic teaching, and be possessed of wisdom and judgement to make sound independent decisions and stand firm by those decisions.
4. He must be just, have good morals, and be trustworthy.

According to this elaboration of the Prophet's words, then (as set out in *Hadīth*, vol.2, pages 127-128), al-Marbawi crystallises two main 'parameters' for 'conditions' to be met by prospective rulers<sup>81</sup>:

i) The first is the relevant high-level qualities, virtues, wisdom and judgement for the position to which he is appointed, and the second is his capacity for discharging responsibilities thereof. For example, a ruler should primarily possess the ability to maintain law and order and to establish justice:

ii) Secondly, he should be endowed with sufficient dynamism and vision to confront new demands and situations. This basic principle applies to every official, whether in the capacity of governor, minister, or advisor<sup>82</sup>.

#### 4.5.vi) A Warning to Rulers

Clearly, the commentary of *Bahr al-Mādī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* serve to legitimize and sanctify the authority of the ruler within the wider political order; it also issues a stern warning to those in authority. *Bahr al-Mādī* of al-Marbawi states:

The Prophet ﷺ declares: "He who does not look after his subjects with goodwill and sincerity, will be deprived of the fragrance of *Jannah* (Heaven)"<sup>83</sup>.

Another *Hadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ: "A ruler (who having control over the affairs of the Muslims), does not strive diligently for their betterment and does not serve them sincerely, will enter *al-Nār* (Hellfire)"<sup>84</sup>.

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<sup>81</sup> Al-Marbawi. *Bahr*, vol.2, p.127-128.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., vol.10, p.36.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



Al-Marbawi thus stresses that the designated ruler is accountable to Allah for the extent of his diligence for the 'betterment' of the Muslim people. The responsibility for wise dealings in Muslim affairs is therefore heavy. It is for this reason that the lesson in this *Ḥadīth* contains a warning. Those leaders who violate the trust which is placed in them are 'forbidden from entering *Jannah*'.

An example of such violation of trust is the giving or acceptance of bribes, which is forbidden in Islam. The ruler must not therefore be tempted to use money to procure special favours, or encourage dishonest practices, as is seen in the Prophet's curse:

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the one who bribes and the one who takes bribes<sup>85</sup>. O my brothers! This is often practice in our country nowadays, a bribe should never be given and it is a big sin<sup>86</sup>.

#### 4.5.vii) The Categories Of Rulers

The wisdom, guidance and justice expected in the sultan or ruler is further emphasised through the 'two categories' identified in the *Ḥadīth*. For every three rulers, only one will enter Heaven<sup>87</sup>. Only those who treat their subjects with gentleness, who are 'well-wishers' and provide their people 'with justice', are worthy of the prayers of the believers. Those who consider only their own interest and who do not uphold wisdom or justice for their subjects will not enter Heaven.

Beyond this, rulers are counselled to adhere to justice, uprightness and equity because this will endear them to Allah Himself. On the basis of the great trust and authority which is rested in the ruler, we are therefore told that rebellion against him is disallowed unless he commits a flagrant act of disbelief, and does not abide by the duties of Islam (particularly if he neglects the duty of prayer)<sup>88</sup>.

In brief, then, Husayn's translation and these elements of al-Marbawi's commentary ('the duties and responsibilities of the rulers', 'the obedience and disobedience to rulers', 'a warning to rulers', 'the prerequisites to becoming rulers'

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 37

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 34-39.

and ‘the categories of rulers’ sub-headings) provide a political model which is rooted in the purity of the truth as received directly from Allah by the Prophet ﷺ. Taken as a whole, therefore, the commentary acts as a clear and authoritative guide for political leadership in the modern context of polemical debate. Above all, the text issues a stern warning to those holding positions of authority that personal (as opposed to institutional legitimacy) must be rooted in piety, humility and a sincere intent to govern in the interest of the Malay community.

#### **4.6 The Concept of *Jihād* In the Malaysian Context.**

##### **4.6.i) The concept of *Jihād***

It is al-Marbawi’s intention, as a religious scholar, to raise political awareness through his commentary of the need for *jihād* (struggle for or defence of Islam). This is in line with his recognition of the key nature of his role as a scholar. Indeed, Redhuan states that “the religious scholars were ‘singled out’ to carry out this task, and that those of them who did not bother to learn about political matters were condemned as traitors to the homeland and religion”<sup>89</sup>. He goes on to affirm (strongly) that “the backwardness of the Malays was a direct result of the loss of their political freedom” under the rule of British colonialism, and its exploitation both of the people themselves and their resources:

Their ‘eyes were blinded and minds were closed’ by the colonialists who robbed them of their freedom. These colonial powers on the other hand enjoyed free minds and unhindered progress. The colonialists were blamed for suppressing the freedom of the Malays and jeopardising their interest. They were also resented for exploiting Malaya and Indonesia for their products and natural resources<sup>90</sup>.

As part of a political programme for achieving freedom, the *Bahr al-Mādhī* is therefore filled with the numerous layers of meaning attached to al-Marbawi’s understanding of the material and spiritual world implications of *jihād*<sup>91</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> Redhuan, *the middle eastern*, p.274.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., vol.11, pp.190-334



In accordance with these ‘understandings’ the *Bahr al-Mādhī* is organised thematically with separate subheadings; in each section al- Marbawi gives both relevant detailed information and connecting ideas to larger significant issues such as freedom from oppression ( the significance of *jihād*) . This work consists of 318 sub-headings (*baḥ*) in two chapters (*abwāb*) which are ‘ chapter of *al-fadāil al-Jihād*’ and ‘chapter of *al-Jihād*’, delineating the virtues of the *jihad* according to the Qur’ān and the *Ḥadīth*, with a lengthy discussion of each aspect of this subject.

Al-Marbawi also demonstrates that there are two types of *jihād* in Islam which are; *jihād an-nafs* (*jihād* against one’s self), and *jihād* against the unbelievers (*kuffar*)<sup>92</sup>. Here the *Ḥadīth* itself clearly demonstrates the importance of one’s own self and any wrong desires. There are *Ḥadīth* regarding *jihād an-nafs* as stated by al-Marbawi in his text:

Fadalah Ibn ‘Abīd said that the Prophet ﷺ declares: The best *jihād* is for one to perform *jihād* against his own self and against his desires<sup>93</sup>.

Thus, al- Marbawi stresses with some urgency the duty of Muslims to defend their faith and the welfare of the Muslim community within it when threatened.

The protection of Islam is therefore an essential obligation for every Muslim, in the sense of waging *jihād* against unbelievers, who attack and annex a Muslim state. Muslims are then obliged to fight them within the concept of *jihād* until they regain their freedom<sup>94</sup>.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., pp.195-200.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp.199.

<sup>94</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.11, p.146.

After explaining the significance of *jihād* to protect and defend Islam, al-Marbawī concludes the ‘*Bāb of Fadā’il al-jihād*’ with a declaration that those who carry out *jihād* and who die during the war will be rewarded from Allah, in accordance with the words of the Prophet ﷺ as he states:

Allah (S.W.T) reassures those who act in this way by saying ‘Do not think that those who fell in the *Jihad* are dead; certainly not, they are still alive’<sup>95</sup> The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says: ‘Those who are killed in the *jihād* are in the odour (*sic*) of sanctity beyond praise...

Al-Marbawī then goes on to underline through these and ensuing verses the great rewards and praise due to those who wage *jihād*, explaining to followers the details of various kinds of honours which they will receive from Allah (S.W.T).

Al-Marbawī then strengthens and reinforces the spiritual nature of *jihād* by linking it with the ‘cleansing of fasting’:

‘Umamah reported that the Prophet ﷺ asserts: “if anyone fast for a day while on *jihad* Allah will put between him and Hell a ditch as wide as the distance between Heaven and Earth”<sup>96</sup>.

#### 4.6. ii) *Jihād*: The relation to the idea of the Islamic state

It is here, however, that the concept of *jihād* appears to interconnect with an implicit notion of the ideal Islamic state. We infer that such a state (*Dār al-Islam*) should be based on the Qur`ān and the *Ḥadīth*. Otherwise, the state itself would have to be termed (*Dār al-kufr*<sup>97</sup>), a ‘state of unbelievers’. Al-Marbawī gives no further details as

<sup>95</sup> Al-Qur`an, 2:154, 3:169.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.11,p.202.

<sup>97</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.12,p.41-85



to this notion particularly with regard to its system and administration. However, an Islamic state must function to protect Islam and the Muslims within it<sup>98</sup>.

As to the contribution of Husayn concerning the waging of *jihād* against the colonialism of unbelievers, he was (as stated) a pioneer of the concept of *ulama* and of Islamic educational institutions. Nevertheless, he has surprisingly little to say about ‘the struggle against the unbelievers’. There is no evidence in *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* (or elsewhere) that he urged the waging of *jihād* against the unbelievers even though the state of Kedah had been annexed by them.

Therefore, appeals for *jihād* (interestingly) came from al-Marbawi himself even though he spent most of his life in Egypt. However, this is strong evidence of his very close attachment to and concern for the protection of Islam in his homeland. No record or evidence exists to state that al-Marbawi himself led *jihād* against the British, but the urgency of his teachings about its doctrine indicates that he was not ‘the *ulama* or Sufi pictured by *Kaum Muda*, as one merely occupied with his spiritual journey, and alienated from his community’<sup>99</sup>.

That al-Marbawi viewed it as his mission as religious scholar to urge Malay Muslims to protect and defend Islam against the invaders is perhaps due to his constant contact and communication with his homeland while he was in Egypt, so that he was well informed about the developments of Islam there. This led him to write a number of articles (sent to Malaysia)<sup>100</sup> on politics and social sciences regarding the importance of education, and the need for Muslim people to denounce British colonialism in Malaysia; it seems that his interest grew in this area during the struggle for independence from the British. Contacts and communications between the Malay world and Egypt were thus well maintained. Malay scholars such as al-Marbawi clearly were well informed about the development of Islam in Malaysia, particularly in connection with the continued encroachment by unbelievers.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp.77-81.

<sup>99</sup> Mustajab, Mohd Sarim. Gerakan Islam Islamiyyah di Tanah Melayu 1906 hingga 1948, in *Malaysia: sejarah dan proses pembangunan*, Kuala Lumpur: United Selangor Press, 1979, pp.149-173.

<sup>100</sup> For more details about his contribution to Malays see chapter two.

It was therefore perhaps an increasing conviction that this encroachment must be stopped that caused al-Marbawi (through *Bahr al-Mādhi*) to encourage Malay Muslims to lead the *jihād* against the invaders. It is perhaps for this reason that he devotes the greater part of volumes eleven and twelve to the virtues of *jihād* in order to urge the rulers and Malay people to act to stop this encroachment<sup>101</sup>. Although al-Marbawi made no explicit mention of the British in his commentary, what he calls unbelievers or infidels were undoubtedly the British colonialist, who had intensified their attempts to annexe Malaysia during this century<sup>102</sup>. In other words, it is the British who were to be the target of the *jihād*.

It is clear therefore that al-Marbawi uses his commentary on the *Hadīth* as a religious, social and political tool to guide Malay Muslims along the right path both to protect themselves, their families and their homeland against colonial invaders, and to achieve freedom from their suppression at that time. Only in the event of attack is *jihād* justified, however, not otherwise:

Oh my brothers! There is obligation to you if unbelievers come and attack or caught your brothers in your country. Therefore, if you are summoned to fight, go forth<sup>103</sup>.

#### 4.6. iii) The links between *Hijra* and *Jihād*

A major concern for al-Marbawi is that Malay Muslims should understand the significance for them of *hijra*, and how this relates to the concept of *jihād*. Thus at others he shows that *hijra* is ‘held to be among the most meritorious acts’ in that this is a journey (forsaking all) for followers of the Prophet ﷺ from Mecca to Medina. This al-Marbawi terms ‘migration’.

<sup>101</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.11, p.145.

<sup>102</sup> Abu Bakar, *Islamic modernism in Malaya*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1994, pp.10-13; Auni Abdullah, *Islam dalam sejarah politik dan pemerintah di Alam Melayu*, Kuala Lumpur: Nurin Enterprise, 1991, p.95; Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali, Agama dan kebangkitan anti-British di Tanah Melayu, in Khoo Kay Kim (ed.), *Tamadun Islam di Malaysia*, Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1980, p.62; R.A.Rahim, traditionalism and reformism polemic in Malay – Muslim religious literature, *Islam and Christian – Muslim Relations*, vol.17, no.1, January 2006, pp.93-104.

<sup>103</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, j.11, pp.196-199.



The essential point here is that the *hijra* marks the beginning of Islam as a community in which spiritual and earthly lives were completely integrated. It was a community (in Medina) inspired by Allah, and totally obedient to Allah: 'a group of people bound together by faith'<sup>104</sup>. Beyond this, al-Marbawī also suggests a symbolic layer of meaning; he affirms that the *hijra* implies 'migration from the evil deeds to good deeds'<sup>105</sup>.

Next al-Marbawi moves on to explain that the *hijra* in the 'literal sense' is no longer necessary, as the Prophet ﷺ declares: 'after the fall of Mecca, *hijra* is no longer required'<sup>106</sup>. Its purpose was twofold: to protect Islam and the Prophet ﷺ, and to make the practice of Islam possible. Only in the symbolic sense above does its significance continue, since the Prophet ﷺ himself signifies that it is now replaced by the concept of *jihad*<sup>107</sup>.

Al-Marbawi himself, however, uses the 'terms' *hijra* and *jihād* loosely. At times these are interchangeable, but at others *hijra* refers specifically to 'migration'. As for *jihād*, this sometimes refers to the need to protect Muslim countries in the name of Allah. It is for this reason that al-Marbawi emphasises the importance of the Prophet's *Ḥadīth*:

The Prophet ﷺ was asked: which deeds is (*sic*) the best? He replied:  
*jihād* in the 'cause of Allah'.

Al-Marbawi further develops the concept of *hijra*, with reference to the words of the Prophet ﷺ.

There is no emigration after the conquest (of Mecca) but only *jihād*  
[(striving and fighting in the cause of Allah) will continue] and good  
intention. So if you are summoned to fight, go forth<sup>108</sup>.

<sup>104</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.1, p.14; vol.12.p.144-145

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p.15.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p.14; vol.11, p.144-145.

<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, according to Woodward, *hijra* is still required even after the fall of Mecca to the Muslims, and argues that the types of blessing available to the companions of the Prophet can still be attained. See Woodward, textual exegesis, p.573.

<sup>108</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.11, pp.196-199.

The clear point here is that the above *Ḥadīth* confirms that if a country or a region is considered a 'Land of Islam' (*Dār al-Islam*) it is not necessary to leave it to live elsewhere. It is, however, compulsory to emigrate from such regions if they are 'lands of unbelievers' (*Dār al-Kufr*) and where it is therefore difficult to hold fast to Islamic injunctions.

An additional point made is that just as it is not necessary to migrate from one Islamic country to another then it is equally forbidden in Islam to leave an Islamic country to settle permanently in the 'land of the unbelievers' for the sole reason that the latter has plentiful wealth and social welfare programmes. This (we infer) can lead to 'divided loyalties', for example, where the Muslim may become 'part of' the unbeliever's culture, and be reluctant to 'wage war' upon it to protect and defend Islam<sup>109</sup>.

The inference here is that through al-Marbawi's commentary in his *Baḥr al-Mādhi*, the Malays would understand the full meaning of the *jihād*. This meaning emerges as 'a central and broad Islamic concept that includes the struggle to improve the quality of life in society, struggle in the battlefield for self-defence or fighting against tyranny or oppression'<sup>110</sup>. Al-Marbawi's discussion thus reinforces the concept of *jihād* in the sense of striving hard, or fighting to defend one's life, property, freedom, and religion. However, *jihād* can also refer to an attempt to 'free other people' from oppression and tyranny.

In brief, then, this 'spirit and readiness' must always be kept alive so that Muslims may respond immediately to the call of *jihād* wherever and whenever the need arises. It is for this reason that Muslims are urged to take all precautions against the enemies of Allah (S.W.T) and to prepare themselves to take action against the enemy with all means available to them, according to the example of the Prophet ﷺ.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p.144-145.

<sup>110</sup> Woodward, *the Journal of Asian Studies*, pp.565-583.



This is politically significant for the reason that historically Malaysia has a long history of rebellion inspired by the concept of *jihād*. This rebellion has however been inspired by *jihād* as a purely religious concept, not the wider concept which is clear in al-Marbawi's text. This broadness of interpretation therefore shows that it is incorrect to narrow the significance of the struggle against British domination to a purely religious act. Al-Marbawi clearly states that this struggle takes place in the wider social and political context. In all of the foregoing, then, his commentary demonstrates the use of exegesis as a teaching tool.

#### 4.7 Summary

It can be seen, then, from the above discussion that the clarity with which al-Marbawi and Husayn have dealt with all areas of human conduct makes their teachings a vital tool for religious, social and political discourse in contemporary Malaysia. Thus, the use of *Ḥadīth* texts for teaching and instruction serves a social and political as well as religious function, with three strands interlocking.

It is for this reason that these two great scholars use this teaching method to make available to Malay Muslims the truth as received directly from Allah by the Prophet ﷺ. In particular, their mission emerges as one of structuring an ideal Muslim society based on the purity of fundamental principles derived directly from sayings of the Prophet ﷺ, as contained in the *Ḥadīth*.

This study focuses on the broad principles of such a society, however. It is beyond its scope to separate out religious, political and social specifics and examine implications for human conduct in detail. Nevertheless, brief reference has been made to juristic debate on broader issues such as reciting *al-Fātiḥah* in prayer, prohibition against the taking of alcohol, and so on.

To conclude this chapter, the translation and the commentary of *Bahr al-Mādī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* can be understood as a scriptural justification of the

political stance of Malay's current leadership. Its discussion of a just society, leadership, rulers, and sultan establishes a textual basis for some of the central principles of the Islamic political teaching. In addition, the clear guidelines across all areas of human conduct contained in these two great texts represent a vital resource for the purpose of constructing the ideal Islamic state. Its principles are based on the purity of the Prophet's example as contained in the *Ḥadīth*.

It is therefore affirmed that a return to these principles is vital to rectify current political departures from the fundamental truth discussed, such as the drinking of alcohol, the taking of bribes at leadership level, and so on. The writings of al-Marbawi and Husayn thus have a vital role to play as transmitters of authoritative *Ḥadīth* teachings to the Malay community, as set out with clarity by these two great scholars.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### ***BAHR AL-MADHI AND JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI:*** **THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR MALAY MUSLIMS AS TOOLS** **FOR SOCIAL TEACHING.**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

In addition to drawing important lessons for Malay Muslims from the example of the Prophet ﷺ in religious and political matters, al-Marbawi and Husayn are also concerned to present teachings to guide believers in right conduct in their social interactions. In the same way, both scholars urge the pursuit of knowledge only in the name of Allah (S.W.T), at the same time using exegesis as a tool for critical interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* without prior learning, as in the example of the *Kaum Muda* movement (Modernist). Each of these teaching sections are here discussed in order, beginning with that on 'proper manners' (*adāb*) in section 5.1; parent-child relationships in section 5.2; the importance of Malay unity in section 5.3; a critique of Malay Muslim beliefs and practices which are clearly prohibited by the Prophet's words and example in section 5.4, concluding the chapter with a critique of Malay *ulama* to keep away from dispute between themselves.

#### **5.1 On Proper manners (*Adāb* ).**

##### **5.1.i) The Importance of Proper Manners In Muslim Life.**

Al-Marbawi and Husayn concur in placing great stress on proper manners (*adāb*)<sup>1</sup> in Muslim life; their main concern here is that a true Muslim should maintain both an internal spiritual and external worldly discipline<sup>2</sup>. Thus, as "the two worlds are closely related, it is important (for Muslims) to perfect their spirituality, and for their physical

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<sup>1</sup> *Adab* is prescribed etiquette, a way of living in Islam.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adab\\_%28behavior%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adab_%28behavior%29)

<sup>2</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13, p.80.

customs to reflect their inner spirituality”<sup>3</sup>. For this reason, therefore, the concept of ‘*adāb*’ is emphasized by al-Marbawi and Husayn in a symbolic sense, since these are inner concepts which should govern social structure and human interactions within it.

Al-Marbawi’s emphasis upon *adāb*<sup>4</sup> stems from the conviction that it is necessary “to submit oneself wholly to the *Shari‘a*, which is the manifestation of divine order”<sup>5</sup>. His purpose is thus to show Malay Muslim readers how to create through right behaviour a perfect harmonious society, using an intensely structured model. ‘*Adāb*’ is therefore a significant element in the text, because it demonstrates how all the minute details of individual conduct can be improved to reflect the wisdom of the Prophet ﷺ *Sunna*<sup>6</sup>.

According to Husayn, the believer needs to be prepared to fulfill this profound responsibility by controlling thoughts and actions at every moment, in every place. On this subject, he wrote:

The Prophet ﷺ declares that: Allah (S.W.T) had taught me good manners, and then He taught me wisdom in morality, to follow a virtuous path and give wise and virtuous advice<sup>7</sup> (*sic*).

Based on this reason, Husayn places prominent stress on *adāb*. The Prophet’s ﷺ words confirm that spirituality and inner wisdom manifests themselves in good manners; the result is social harmony, arising out of spiritual principles.

The two scholars (al-Marbawi and Husayn) therefore explain that the spiritual principle of good character in one’s dealings with others is above all to avoid harming, annoying or inconveniencing them, as declared by the Prophet ﷺ:

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<sup>3</sup> Qamar-ul Huda, the remembrance of the Prophet in Suhrawardi’s ‘*Awarif al-Ma‘arif*, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol.12,no.2, 2001, pp.129-150.

<sup>4</sup> The word *adāb* has a variety of meanings in Arabic. For a good survey see F.Gabrieli, ‘*Adab*’ in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol.1, pp.175-6.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.13,p.80.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.19,p.149.

<sup>7</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*,p.7



The [true] Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe<sup>8</sup>.

Al-Marbawi's commentary also insists that any act that harms, annoys, or inconveniences others, without sound justification, is a manifestation of evil character, and in direct contradiction to the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ.

As a Muslim, we need to be guided by the words and example of the Prophet himself, as one with whom Allah Himself (S.W.T) was well pleased (as being, "of tremendous character") and whose example was praised as "the most beautiful of examples"<sup>9</sup> in the Qur'ān. As Iqbal states, "we see that the basis of *adāb* is to promote the social good, and spread love and mercy between humanity"<sup>10</sup>.

Both texts, hence, clearly emphasized that remembering and applying (both spiritually and socially) the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* on '*adāb*' is a crucial component in terms of strengthening the true meaning of the Prophet's ﷺ words for the minds, souls and actions of Muslims. At the same time, by using the *Ḥadīth* in this way recreates the very same practices and movements which the Prophet ﷺ performed in this world, and in a spiritual sense brings the believer closer to him.

Husayn, on the other hand, refrains from comment here, but it can be inferred that practising the *Sunna* of the Prophet is not merely imitation. Remembering all *Ḥadīth* regarding '*adāb*' by heart would strengthen the piety of the Malay Muslim - that is, by performing the same physical movements and following the spirituality of the Prophet ﷺ words and examples during his life<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.19.

<sup>9</sup> Iqbal J.Unus, The place of *Ḥadīth* in Islam, *Proceeding of the Seminar on Ḥadīth to Celebrate the 1200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great Muḥaddith Imām Bukhārī*, The Muslim Students' Association of the United States & Canada, 1980,p.5.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*.pp.5-7

Husayn then reminds the Malay Muslim that the Prophet's purpose in these 'adāb' Ḥadīth is not only to strengthen the piety and spirituality of the individual but beyond that there should be perfect bonding in unity to each and every Muslim community, as he cited:

The Prophet ﷺ claims: None of you would be a believer till I am dearer to him than his father, his children and (in fact) the whole of mankind<sup>12</sup>.

The Prophet ﷺ, to Husayn, was 'trained' as the final messenger by Allah (S.W.T) and his words and examples as 'final messenger' are therefore handed down for all Muslim believers to follow (through the Qur'an and Ḥadīth).

As evidence throughout the discussion above, both writers (as evidenced throughout *Bahr al-Mādih* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*) clearly uphold the conviction that it is obligatory for every Malay Muslim to take the 'adāb' Ḥadīth into his or her heart in order to get closer to Allah (S.W.T) and His Prophet ﷺ.

### 5.1.i.a) Adāb As A Basis Of Social Relations And Interactions

In affirming the 'adāb' of the Prophet ﷺ, al-Marbawi (as well as Husayn), make a strong instructional position by presenting it under two chapters: 'the chapter of *al-adāb*'<sup>13</sup> and 'the chapter of *al-birr wa al-ṣilah*', and with 150 sub-topics (*bāb*) such as the following:

*'Bāb mā jā'a fī birr al-wāliḍayn', Bāb mā jā'a min al-faḍl fī ridā al-wāliḍayn', Bāb mā jā'a fī haq al-jawār, Bāb mā jā'a fī huquq al-walidayn, Bāb mā jā'a fī sila al-rahim, Bāb mā jā'a fī rahmah al-yatim wa kafālatuhu, Bāb mā jā'a fī rahmah al-Muslimīn, Bāb mā*

<sup>12</sup> Ibid,p.19.

<sup>13</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Bahr*, vol.19, pp,149-227.



*jā'a fī al-ghībah, Bāb mā jā'a fī al-bakhīl, and Bāb mā jā'a fī mu'āsharah al-nās'.*

Al-Marbawi uses *Baḥr al-Mādḥī* (for the purpose of teaching) by examining precisely the significance of relationships which are the basis of social relations and interactions including such as between parent-child, relationships between Muslims and their neighbours (pages 60 to 234)<sup>14</sup> *et cetera*.

It is based on this strong foundation that al-Marbawand Husayn create for Malay Muslims the ideal of a perfect Muslim society in which *adāb* operates within it throughout its spiritual symbolic sense, as well as socially, embracing kinship, authority, and obligations towards neighbours, the poor and orphans. From this perspective, al-Marbawi and Husyan uses the concept of kinship in a symbolic sense to show to the Malay Muslim how social structure and human relations is the fundamental layer in the type of community which the Prophet ﷺ desires the believers of Allah to create.

According to both al-Marbawi and Husayn, *adāb* is an essential part within the society, hence, Malay Muslims should maintain good relations with their relatives, and should not unjustly favour them over others. Moreover, a Muslim is required to be a good person to his or her neighbours regardless of their religion or belief (be it Buddhism, Hinduism, *et cetera*)<sup>15</sup>. Indeed, Malay Muslims ought to keep this in their hearts, as al-Marbawi states:

The Jibrīl kept recommending treating neighbours with kindness until I (the Prophet ﷺ) thought he would assign a share of inheritance”<sup>16</sup>.

This teaching (from the *Ḥadīth* and discussion of it throughout both *Baḥr al-Mādḥī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*) highlights the profound importance in Islam of how

<sup>14</sup> Al-Marbawi, *Baḥr*, vol.13.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.13, p.139

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.183

we should behave towards our neighbours, and of the significance of our actions and words. The essential point here is that if we follow the Prophet ﷺ way, then this relationship is a force for good, a purveyor of peace and justice for everyone, providing stability in a warring world without peace and harmony<sup>17</sup>.

Such concern for neighbours should take many forms, as explained by al-Marbawi (in vol.13 of *Bahr al-Mādī*) in the following examples:

- Ensuring that neighbours have basic necessities,
- Ensuring that a Muslim should not eat if his or her neighbour is going hungry,
- Ensuring that Muslims should wish for their neighbours what they wish for themselves,
- Ensuring that they should share both their happiness and sorrow.

This neighbourly concern means not spying on them and respecting their privacy, and neither gossiping about them nor harming them in any way<sup>18</sup>.

Al-Marbawi, thus, clearly teaches us that precise ‘*adāb*’ had to be followed at all times in order to follow and internalise the spirituality of the Prophet ﷺ. In this way, through adherence to the Prophet’s *Ḥadīth*, al-Marbawi attempted to move his Malay Muslim readers from remembering the Prophet ﷺ as a historical figure and to embodying his spirituality and his legacy in a living sense. For this reason also, he emphasised that the Prophet ﷺ used to make ‘allegiance’ with whoever came to him that the convert would submit to Islam in faithfulness and spread good faith and counsel to other Muslims<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13, p.183.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. pp.138 – 143.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.102.



### 5.1.i. b) To Counsel (*Naṣīḥa*) On How to Be Good

The command to give ‘good counsel’ is stated openly many times in different *Ḥadīth*. One who offered such allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ on this basis was (for example) Jaʿir ibn ʿAbd Allah, who declares that:

I came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him, “Shall I offer allegiance to Islam? He stipulated the condition of good counsel to every Muslim. I gave allegiance to him on that basis”<sup>20</sup>.

It is for this reason the lessons from this *Ḥadīth* are emphasized by al-Marbawī. As vital to the teachings, he states “that is because giving good advice to someone indicates your love for him. You want him to benefit in what he is doing and help him avoid anything harmful. When the Muslims’ love for one another spreads far and wide and sincere good counsel becomes universal, then, strength, victory and support envelop them”<sup>21</sup>.

### 5.1.i.c) Strengthening Their Community

The commentary continues to highlight the type of perfect Muslim society which is created through the symbolic, spiritual and social application of the ‘*adāb*’ and how in this way it creates ‘one body’ of believers, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

The believers are like one body<sup>22</sup>.

This unity is an ultimate strength which cannot be either resisted or disputed, in the same way as the hardness of bricks is founded upon the strength of their cohesion and solidity.

In the style of many great scholars, al-Marbawī gives a visual picture to his readers, to make his meaning more concrete: ‘the walls will not collapse if all the bricks stick together’<sup>23</sup>. Thus, bricks are only stronger than walls and able to support

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<sup>20</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13, p.102

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.102-103.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p.109

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

them when there is purity and freedom in one single block, as well as by 'the strength with which its parts are inter-connected'. The strength of Muslims is therefore only obtained by the totality of their good counsel and love for each other<sup>24</sup>.

Al-Marbawi's strong position here thus affirms the centrality of the '*adāb*' of the Prophet ﷺ in maintaining a disciplined structure through Islamic teaching, but beyond this, the use of *Ḥadīth* of '*adāb*' places the Prophet's *Sunna* and spirituality at the heart of teachings for Malay Muslims. This intense concentration on '*adāb*' practices could sometimes point to the desire for control by its use over its Muslim members. The deeper intention however is to cause believers to remember and 'relive' the *Sunna* of the Prophet.

To summarize, then, both al-Marbawi and Husayn, as religious scholars, urge spiritual development through good moral conduct in all areas of human activity. Their texts (as a significant part of this development) suggest that each individual should know his own ability and weaknesses, and behave responsibly to correct and nurture his or her spirituality. Such self-discipline and effort are crucially important to prevent evil deeds and negative acts, towards themselves as well as towards other people.

Both scholars emphasize that the acquisition of such high quality of moral conduct is essential to spiritualize the Malay Muslim way of thinking. It was through this more 'spiritual' way of thinking that disputes and conflicts could be resolved by referring to the Prophet's words and deeds. This spiritual development, in line with the Prophet's example, will in turn enrich their communities and therefore develop their society.

## 5.2 Parent-Child Relationships

In this section of his teaching, al-Marbawi is particularly concerned to address the problem of behaviour and lack of respect for parents and elders amongst Malay Muslim children, for which parents did not accept responsibility. Thus, he urges

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



parents to teach their children self-discipline. to instil in them the good manners which they themselves develop according to the example shown by the Prophet ﷺ, and respect for their elders.

It is important to stress here that firstly, all Muslims must be as the Prophet himself would be within the family unit. Each family unit then enriches the wider society, as each brick works with the other as a totality to make a fine building. It is for this reason that al-Marbawi focuses on the family unit itself as the heart of the Muslim community, and on the different relationships which radiate outwards from it. In this sense, he focuses on the ‘brick’ itself within the total ‘interconnectedness’ of the wall of which it is part.

Most important here is not only the parent-child relationship, but also the parents’ ‘loved ones’, as in the *Ḥadīth* below:

The finest act of goodness on the part of a son is to treat kindly the loved ones of his father<sup>25</sup> .

### 5.2.i) Obligation Of Obedience To Parents

An integral part of harmony within the family and in the wider community is that each individual must have clear ‘rights’ as well as obligations, as indicated through al-Marbawi and Husayn’s teachings. The ‘rights’ of a child, however, may become the ‘responsibility’ or ‘duty’ of the parents, for example. Likewise, the ‘rights’ of the parents become the ‘duty’ of the child. It is in this sense that al-Marbawi stresses the ‘reciprocity’ of relationships within kinship networks and beyond, instructing children that they should<sup>26</sup> act, as cited in the Qur’ān:

Allah (S.W.T) reveals: “Worship none but Allah (S.W.T) (alone) and be dutiful and good to parents...”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13, p.73

<sup>26</sup> Mohd. Nor Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic thought of the Malay Muslim scholars*, p.32.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Qur’ān, 2:83.

This counsel is then further strengthened. 'Kindness to parents' is ranked by the Prophet himself as the second of those three actions which 'Allah (S.W.T) loves best:

Ibn Mas'ūd said: I asked the Prophet ﷺ: which action Allah (S.W.T) loves best. He replied: Prayer at its proper time. Then what? I asked. He said: Then kindness to parents. I asked, then what? He replied: Then *jihad*<sup>28</sup> in the Way of Allah (S.W.T)<sup>29</sup>

Al-Marbawi and Husayn taught their Malay Muslims readers that Allah Himself (S.W.T) commands that His people worship Him alone, and that the obligations of Malay believers towards each other are second only to this commandment. If, we treat our parents kindly, then, we earn the pleasure of Allah (S.W.T).

As a great scholar, al-Marbawi is very cautious to stress that although kindness and obedience must be shown towards our parents, they must not be obeyed in that which causes disobedience to Allah (S.W.T)<sup>30</sup>.

If it is the case that our parents wish us to act against the will of Allah, then we may be forced to refuse them. Nevertheless, our behaviour must continue to be kind, in accordance with Allah's commands. Al-Marbawi reminds us that under difficult circumstances (such as if a mother asks her son to divorce his wife) obedience to the parent is an obligation only if that wish is justified in the light of Allah's word. If, for example, the daughter-in-law does not fulfil her duties as a Muslim wife, then, the mother's request for divorce should be obeyed by her son<sup>31</sup>. This is because the daughter-in-law herself disobeys (by her behaviour) Allah's commands. To remain married to her would therefore incur His great displeasure. Following from this, sons and daughters must do their best to behave kindly with their parents, as the Prophet himself affirms:

The Pleasure of Allah (S.W.T) lies in the pleasure of the parent. The Anger of Allah (S.W.T) lies in the anger of the parent<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> The importance of jihad and its contextual meanings is discussed in chapter 4.

<sup>29</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13, p.64

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, vol.13, p.67.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.65-69.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.65



Elaborating further on this *Ḥadīth*, al-Marbawi yet again stresses the importance of respect and kindness towards parents, as declared by the Prophet ﷺ:

The satisfaction of the Lord is (in) the satisfaction of the parents and the displeasure of the Lord is (in) the displeasure of the parents<sup>33</sup>.

This *Ḥadīth* confirms to readers that the pleasure or displeasure of parents incurs the pleasure and displeasure of Allah (S.W.T). Elsewhere, al-Marbawi identifies benevolence toward parents as one of the acts most pleasing to Allah (S.W.T). We can affirm his views on this matter by understanding the paragraph below<sup>34</sup>:

Islam gives weight to the problem of the obligations parents owe their children, for example, to raise, educate, provide them with subsistence, but at the same time Islam gives attention to the obligation of children to obey and sacrifice for their parents.

It is a fundamental point, then, that parental obligations must be observed strictly in Islamic society. This important point was also confirmed by Husayn<sup>35</sup>:

The Prophet ﷺ said: Everyone of you is a ruler and everyone of you shall be questioned about those under his ruler; the king is a ruler and he shall be questioned about his subjects; and the man is a ruler in his family and he shall be questioned about those under his care; and the servant is a ruler so far as the property of his master is concerned and he shall be questioned about that which is entrusted to him.

To conclude this section, it is for this reason that as great scholars, al-Marbawi and Husayn emphasize parental entitlement by right to kind and dutiful treatment from their children, since this is an important duty which Allah (S.W.T) has taken care to emphasize so strongly. In their view, it is essential for every human being to know what constitutes kind treatment of parents.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.,p.60

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.p.60-68

<sup>35</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*,p.9.

### 5.2. i. a) The Superior Rights of a Mother

Al-Marbawi explains that between parents the mother has more rights than the father. The reason for these increased rights is apparent because the mother has borne the burden of pregnancy and childbirth, has undergone the pains of delivering the baby, has sacrificed her own comforts to provide comfort to her children, has looked after them and felt anxiety for their well-being<sup>36</sup>. It is for this reason that they deserve our good treatment more than the father, as al-Marbawi states:

A *Hadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ tells us that a companion asked the Prophet, “Who deserves my good treatment most? Your mother, said the Prophet. Who next? Your mother. Who next? Your mother. Who after that? Your father<sup>37</sup> .

This means that the mother deserves treatment from her children which is three fold that merited by the father.

### 5.2.i.b) The Rights of Children

In *Bahr al-Madhi*, al-Marbawi also stresses to Malay parents that their children also have the right to be fed, educated, clothed and protected until they reach adulthood. al-Marbawi affirms this with the Prophet’s ﷺ words:

He who provides good upbringing to three daughters shall go to Paradise<sup>38</sup> .

Al-Marbawi reminds us that children have many psychological needs. They, for example, need to be loved, cared for, kissed and hugged. He also reminds us that the Prophet ﷺ loved children greatly and sometimes he would even kiss small children he met on the street:

Once a Bedouin saw the Prophet ﷺ kissing a small kid. Out of wonder he said: I have eight children but I never kiss them. The Prophet ﷺ remarked: What can I do if Allah (S.W.T) has taken away love and

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<sup>36</sup> Al -Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13,p. 62.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.,p.61-62

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.,p.87



compassion from your heart<sup>39</sup>. The Prophet ﷺ would show special kindness to orphaned children (*sic*).

This, then, indirectly outlines the ‘rights’ and ‘duties’ of both parties in the parent-child relationship, and of the hierarchical character of social relations as described by al-Marbawi in his commentary. For him, if both the parents and children live according to these guiding principles, they can create a family environment that is most conducive to peace and contentment for the parents and to a healthy growth in the personality of the children.

Thus, it is beyond doubt that the Prophet’s ﷺ own words give life and meaning to the teachings of al-Marbawi and Husayn. Similarly, these great scholars wish their readers to remember and put into practice the Prophet’s ﷺ words in any action and in each thought. It is for this reason that al-Marbawi and Husayn select those *Ḥadīth* which speak of social responsibility with the intention that Malay Muslims may ‘mirror’ and ‘re-enact’ the Prophet’s own example in relationships between parents and their children<sup>40</sup>. The theme of ‘benevolent parents’ thus acts as a basis for social teachings as to right conduct within the Malay community.

### **5.3 Message for Muslim Unity in the Country**

These two great scholars are especially concerned to focus their instruction on the need for Malay Muslims to become a united body, acting from a sound base of right conduct in all the areas which are presented. Their scholarly task is vital one particularly when considering the religious, social and political background against which the commentaries were written, as described below.

During the twentieth century Malays were facing severe social problems, particularly because of their disunity and poor standard of living compared with other

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.86.

<sup>40</sup> M.R. Woodward, textual exegesis, *Journal of Asian Studies*, pp.565-583.

ethnic communities, especially the Chinese<sup>41</sup>. Poverty was the biggest difficulty for Malay society and the greatest obstacle in its development.

This poverty was apparent in both their material and intellectual lives, despite the potential for prosperity<sup>42</sup>. The need was for teaching in good moral conduct, and they badly needed 'the qualities of leadership', 'self-reliance, self respect, self sacrifice, sense of responsibility, sense of duty, punctuality, honesty and so on. 'Truthfulness and self-perseverance' were especially vital in facing such adversity, as Za'ba has also observed<sup>43</sup>. Za'ba also argued that misguided and corrupt religious beliefs and instruction were actually responsible for '75% of the ills that Malays have been heir to'<sup>44</sup>.

It is, then, this need that al-Marbawi and Husayn address in their scholarly teachings: urge Malays to strive hard to improve their political and social standing<sup>45</sup>. Both writers also affirmed that Malay backwardness was aggravated by lack of unity in struggling for their cause, and by their failure to follow the true path of Islam as outlined by the Qur'ān and *Hadīth*.

### **5.3.i)The Concept of Unity In Islam**

#### **5.3.i. a)Right Conduct In Relationships**

As aforementioned, both scholars emphasize the importance of unity in society. From this perspective, the apparently harmless act of severing relationships with other Muslims or relatives becomes a grave sin, as al-Marbawi warns in citing the words of the Prophet ﷺ:

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<sup>41</sup> For further information see Za'ba, Rajin orang China:orang Melayu ketinggalan, *al-Ikhwān*, vol.ii, December, 1926.

<sup>42</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol. 15, pp.130-131.

<sup>43</sup> Ilya Romiza Hj. Suri, Za'ba: his ideas on Islamic revivalism, *Monograph*, p.133.

<sup>44</sup> Za'ba letter to O.T. Dussek, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1936, Za'ba Collection, National Archive, Kuala Lumpur.

<sup>45</sup> Redhuan, *the middle eastern*, p.280.



If a person severed links with his society, he will not get into Paradise<sup>46</sup>.

Instead, in order to build a strong and unified community, living and co-operating together in the journey from birth to death is essential for every Malay Muslim. If a man is sick, for example, it is an obligation to visit him; the same way, if he dies it is an obligation to attend the funeral<sup>47</sup>.

A similar pattern of urging right conduct by referring to the words and example of the Prophet himself is seen in Husayn's style of exegesis:

Narrated by 'Abd Allah bin 'Amr : A man asked the Prophet ﷺ: What sort of deeds (or what qualities of) Islam are good, the Prophet replied: To feed (the poor) and to greet those whom you know and those whom you do not know<sup>48</sup>.

The example of the Prophet ﷺ is once more given, when he declares:

A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand Muslims are safe. And the emigrant is one who abstains from that which Allah (S.W.T) has prohibited<sup>49</sup>.

In urging this unity for Malay Muslims, Husayn does not neglect however to draw attention to a key *Ḥadīth* which sets out for them exactly what they must do in actual practice:

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East and the West (in prayer); but righteous is he who believes in Allah (S.W.T) and the Last Day and the angels and the Book (Holy Scripture) and the Prophets: and gives his wealth, in spite of the love for it, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and to the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free and offers prayer perfectly and pays the *zakat* (alms) regularly, and those who fulfil their covenant when they make it. And those who are patient in (severe poverty),

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<sup>46</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13,p.83.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.142.

<sup>48</sup> Husayn, *Jawahir*, p.19.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. p.18.

and in ailment (disease) and in time of fighting (during battles) such are the people of truth and such are the pious<sup>50</sup>.

Thus, it is made clear to Malay Muslims that the unity for which they must strive is founded on conduct which is of great merit in the sight of Allah (S.W.T). Key areas of conduct which are of great merit in the sight of Allah (S.W.T) can thus be summarised as follows:

- to aid Muslims who are in financial difficulty
- to strive for religious knowledge and understanding
- to recite the Qur'ān, and make arrangement for its study and teaching
- to hold meetings for the understanding and elucidation of the message of the Qur'ān.

The nature of Husayn's appeal to the spiritual intelligence of his Malay readers indicates that he intended his instruction for a diverse audience of well-educated Muslims, religious scholars and laymen who would recognize and respond to the need for the concept of unity in Islam through striving for the truth, as given by the Prophet ﷺ. Husayn's appeal is, therefore, to those who would be 'true believers', for example, under the heading of 'right conduct in Islam':

The Prophet ﷺ said that no Muslim is a true believer in Islam until and unless he loves for his fellow man what he loves for his own self<sup>51</sup>.

We can infer from the above, then, that in his great work of translation from Arabic to Malay for use as a teaching tool, Husayn is actually demonstrating "how he himself has fulfilled his 'covenant' with the Prophet ﷺ as 'caretaker' for the Muslim community, as believers are commanded to do by Allah Himself (S.W.T.)"<sup>52</sup>. This is also a way for Husayn to show his Malay readers at the same time that they in turn must fulfil their own 'covenant' with the Prophet ﷺ. They too must undertake to be 'caretakers' of the Muslim community.

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<sup>50</sup> Al-Qur'ān, 2:177.

<sup>51</sup> Husayn, *Jawahir*, p.19

<sup>52</sup> Ishak Mohd.Rejab, Haji Husain Mohd. Nasir al-Mas'udi al-Banjari, in Ismail Mat (ed.), *Ulama Silam dalam Kenangan*, Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1993, p.46



A key element of his methodology is thus to ‘centre’ the Prophet himself within the life and practice of each believer, and to remind them as they read this wise instruction that the Prophet is ‘present’ in their social activities. It is part of this ‘covenant’ for example for Muslim believers to ensure the social welfare of their fellow Muslims, as a high priority in their lives, so as not to displease Allah (S.W.T)”<sup>53</sup>. This concept of the ‘covenant’ with the Prophet thus gives life and meaning to Husayn’s scholarly teaching, and focuses the spiritual eyes of his readers’ hearts upon remembering and living out the Prophet’s words in each action and in each thought.

### **5.3.i. b) Responsibilities To Each Other**

In contrast to Husayn, al-Marbawi uses exegesis not only as direct translation of the Arabic, but also as a medium to express his urgent moral purpose. He is particularly concerned about the degenerate behaviour of Malay Muslims in the absence of good behaviour, which it is clearly his intent to challenge through the means of his commentary:

For your concern my brothers! Nowadays our Muslim community faces problems because of the influence of modernization and are struggling to meet these challenges. We have become cowards and see many problems in our society, for example, there are many prostitutes in our villages, gamblers, alcoholics, absence from five daily prayers, thieves, robbers and burglars, rulers do not ensure the protection of society, they love wealth and so on... Precious moments are forever lost on account of our carelessness, love of wealth and worldliness. We have become cowards; we allow the unwanted changes in political and worldly development to cause our spiritual death. We are left with just one remedy to this situation that we should revert to the past. Our zeal and courage can change our fate and in this way we can better protect our interests, our religious beliefs, our countries and our generations. Nothing else can defend us. The Muslims of yesterday really had something beyond the courage that made them stronger than a hundred times bigger army

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

of non-Muslims. But, today that courage and zeal is not found in Muslims....<sup>54</sup>.

Al-Marbawi accepts that the challenge delivered in recognizing the truth of our ultimate purpose is a great one <sup>55</sup> - that is, in terms of obedience to the commandments of Allah the Most High (S.W.T). Since he is our Creator we, therefore, should dedicate our lives to fulfill His great plan for each one of us, as for 'to Him we shall all return':

From Him we come, for Him we live and to Him we shall all return.  
In fact, the sole purpose of creation as described by the Qur'ān is to worship Allah (S.W.T) and serve His cause, the cause of truth and justice, of love and mercy, of brotherhood and morality<sup>56</sup>.

Al-Marbawi indicates that because of our great commitment to Allah (S.W.T) as our Creator, we accept our responsibility for our relationships with each individual, responsibility for our relationships with those in the community in which we live, and responsibility for relationships within the wider society beyond.

In the same way, others are in turn responsible for our wellbeing. It therefore follows that if we are obedient to the commandments of Allah (S.W.T) as given to us through the words and example of the Prophetﷺ, then all things are linked together to form a great and powerful unity, where responsibility of each person for others is as the cement which binds together each single brick in the entire edifice:

A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>54</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.15, pp.130-131.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., vol.13, p.80.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., vol.13, p.80

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.



Al-Marbawi's message for his readers is, thus, that the individual is responsible principally to Allah (S.W.T)<sup>58</sup>, then (because of His commandments) for the common welfare and prosperity of society, a responsibility in which society also has in turn for the welling of each one of us. This is a sound social-mindedness and genuine feeling of binding responsibility which will lead each of us to recognize that we should do our utmost for our community and contribute to its common welfare.

It is for this reason that a-Marbawi, as a wise scholar and teacher, urged Malay Muslims to involve themselves in harmonizing social activities in order to increase their feeling of solidarity to each other and within their community. Thus he agrees with Husayn:

None of you will have faith till he wishes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself<sup>59</sup>.

Husayn's teaching is that no one can stand alone. As a Muslim, he is commanded to play an active part in contributing to social unity so that good or evil can be dealt with together as a community rather than singly<sup>60</sup>.

This social unity, however, can only be achieved if each individual is absolutely certain of the right conduct in all areas in which he or she might meet problems. It is for this reason that al-Marbawi gives more than 100 example areas of where it is essential for the Malay Muslim to follow the example of the Prophet ﷺ (under the heading of 'the right conduct in social relationships'). He speaks, for example, of the importance of sincere love for one's fellow human beings; of mercy for the young and respect for elders; of visiting the sick and giving comfort and consolation to the distressed; of relieving the sorrow of those who grieve; of genuine feelings of brotherhood and social solidarity; of respect for the right to life of others; of the right to property and honour, and of accepting mutual responsibility for both the individual and society<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p.109

<sup>59</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.19.

<sup>60</sup> Ishak Mohd. Rejab, *Ulama silam dalam kenangan*, p.42.

<sup>61</sup> Al-Marba'wi, *Bahr*, vol.13 &14.

These two great scholars, then, wish us to learn from these *Ḥadīth* the importance and the virtue of mutual love amongst Malay Muslims. By following the wisdom of the prophetic *Ḥadīth*, Muslim societies will be cleansed of such evils as dishonesty, falsehood, cheating, and forgery, which are widespread in our communities at present. Islam has taught vital principles to its followers, though unfortunately they have neglected them and in consequence are leading a life of 'utter disgrace and moral misconduct'<sup>62</sup>.

### 5.3.i. c) The Merit of Friday Prayer

An important element in this unity (as commanded by Allah (S.W.T) through the Prophet ﷺ) is the religious merit of the Friday congregational prayer. This topic is developed in detail through the commentary of *Bahr al-Mādḥi*. For al-Marbawi Friday prayer is equally important for the unity and solidarity of Muslims, since it rests on a direct command from Allah (S.W.T):

O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed to Prayer on Friday hasten earnestly to the remembrance of Allah (S.W.T), and leave off business. That is best for you if you but knew<sup>63</sup>.

To obey this direct command from Allah the Most High, it is essential to have the spiritual wellbeing of each individual - as a 'building block' in the entire Malay community. This verse therefore emphasised that it is obligatory for every Muslim personally to attend public Friday prayer with the congregation at the mosque.

As a wise, scholarly instructor, al-Marbawi stresses that if the believer does not attend this prayer three Fridays consecutively, Allah (S.W.T) will 'stamp his heart'. This means Allah (S.W.T) will mark that person's heart as 'unbelief', and will (as a warning ) seal the unbeliever's heart against *imān* (that is, 'close his heart' to faith)<sup>64</sup> as declared by the Prophet ﷺ:

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. vol.15, p.130-131.

<sup>63</sup> Al-Qur'ān. 62:9.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.3,p.205



He who deliberately neglects three consecutive Friday prayers, Allah (S.W.T) will make a mark on his heart' <sup>65</sup>(sic)

The key teaching here for Muslim readers is, therefore, that such Friday prayer gatherings are symbolic of the unity in Muslim society, as is commanded by the Qur'ān: "and hold fast all of you together, to the rope of Allah (S.W.T) and do not separate..."<sup>66</sup>. This is cohesion, however, which is only possible if all people of all different areas perform their prayer collectively. Thus, the coming together on Friday of congregations in Muslim communities (both in the villages as well as in the towns and cities) serves as a means of building social cohesion. In this sense, the coming together of believers reflects the cohesion of Islam as a great social order which teaches brotherhood, abhors disunity and discourages evil.

#### 5.4. Critique of Malay Muslim Practice

##### 5.4.i. Forbidden Worship Other Than of Allah (S.W.T)

As spiritual scholars and teachers, both al-Marbawi and Husayn were greatly concerned by the numerous superstitions (*bid'ah*) among the Malays. The numerous superstitions continued to persist even with the coming of Islam, often becoming mixed with (and distorting) the great principles in Islam<sup>67</sup>. These superstitions, as El Edrus observes, spanned a long cultural and religious history where ancient beliefs such as animism, dynamism, Hinduism, Buddhism *et cetera*, all featured in together<sup>68</sup>. Za'ba, in particular (as cited), has expressed his view of these deeply-rooted beliefs (and the practices which accompanied them) that led to a warped understanding of Islam<sup>69</sup>.

As a consequence of animism, for example, traditional societies firmly believed in the presence of their dead ancestor spirits living among them in order to make sure that their living descendants were preserving the customs and beliefs which

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Al-Qur'ān, 111:102

<sup>67</sup> Ishak, *Ulama silam dalam kenangan*, p.42.

<sup>68</sup> El-Edrūs, Syed Muhammad Dawilah, *The role of Kitab Jawi in Islamic thought in the Malay Archipelago with special reference to Umm al-Barahin and the writings on the twenty two attributes*, PhD Thesis, 1995, p.51.

<sup>69</sup> Za'ba letter to O.T. Dussek, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1936, Za'ba Collection, National Archive, Kuala Lumpur.



they had left to them<sup>70</sup>. The frightening feeling which was generated by this firm belief in the great magical powers of these ancestors gave rise to their worship (ancestor cult). In this sense, ancestors were believed to be images of gods and were held in such high esteem that almost all activities centred on their worship<sup>71</sup>.

The act of worshipping and acknowledging their supernatural powers was thus believed to preserve the social balance within the community; indeed, maintaining this balance was dependant on the intensity of worship of its members. Health or disease, good or bad harvest, prosperity or calamity, all was thought to depend on the ancestors' decisions. Maintaining contact with them through rites and other religious media was therefore equally vital<sup>72</sup>.

Clearly, these ancient beliefs and principles come into direct collision with the Word of Allah (S.W.T.) as given to the Prophet as His Messenger in the Qur`ān and in the *Hadith*. Social cohesion and unity among believers, for example (as previously discussed) flows down through the Prophet ﷺ according to the Will of the Most High Himself (S.W.T) as our Creator, and is the responsibility of each one of us to sustain.

To Islam, most of these beliefs (and especially their ritual practices), indeed, are heresy (*shirk*)<sup>73</sup>. Nevertheless, the belief persists amongst some Malay Muslims that other powers could be detrimental to their lives, which may (directly or indirectly) therefore weaken or corrupt their belief in Allah (S.W.T). Such beliefs could lead to false assumptions being made by some Malays, for example, that the principles of Islam played no part in their existence in this life but would guide them only after Death<sup>74</sup>. Thus, a main teaching focus for both scholars is to stress for Malay

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<sup>70</sup> El-Edrūs, *The role of Kitab Jawi*, p.51.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Soejono, R.P., Prehistoric Indonesia, in Soebadio, Haryati. (ed.), *Dynamics of Indonesian History*, Amsterdam, 1978, p.13.

<sup>73</sup> *Shirk* basically is polytheism, i.e., the worship of others along with Allah. It also implies attributing divine qualities to others besides Allah. It particularly implies associating partners in worship with Allah or setting up rivals in worship with Allah or believing that the source of power, harm or blessings is from others besides Allah. See Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *The translation of the meanings of Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.1, New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1984, p.xlix.

<sup>74</sup> Ismail Awang, Tuan Husain Kedah (1863-1936), in Ismail Che Daud, *Tokoh-tokoh Ulama Semenanjung Melayu* (1), Kota Bharu: Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan, 1988, p.197



Muslims that no one has the right to be worshipped but Allah (S.W.T), and that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ alone is the Messenger of Allah (S.W.T)<sup>75</sup>.

Husayn, thus, begins his response regarding this matter by instructing Malay believers in the first five fundamental basic principles of Islam as contained in the *Ḥadīth*. His special attention is to show how the words of the Prophet ﷺ demonstrate the reality of their meaning. This great scholar particularly stresses the importance of testifying to the great truth that there is no God but Allah (S.W.T.) and why we therefore worship Him as devout Muslims. To illustrate clearly, he gives an example of *Ḥadīth* narrated by Ibn ʿUmar, where the Prophet ﷺ declares that:

Islam is based on the following five principles: to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah (S.W.T), and that Muhammad is Allah (S.W.T)'s Messenger; to offer up congregational prayers as commanded dutifully and perfectly; to pay *zakat* (obligatory charity); to perform *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) and to observe the commandment to fast during the month of *Ramadhan*.

These fundamental principles are thus combined to teach that there is no God but Allah (S.W.T.) and that as followers of Islam they should give their faith to, worship and pray to Him only, and via no other belief or superstition<sup>76</sup>. It is forbidden (and heretical) that they should seek the help in prayer of ancient spirits, for example, when it is the Most High who is our Creator (S.W.T) and who has given His Word to his Prophet that he might teach through his example.

#### **5.4. ii. Prohibition of Plastering and Building Over Graves**

Counsel is also given to the Malay people upon spiritual practices which were forbidden by the Prophet ﷺ, such as the widespread activity of plastering over graves:

The Prophet ﷺ declares that it is forbidden to plaster over graves, or sit upon them or build over them<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Husayn, *Jawahir*, p.16.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*. vol.7, p.203.

Another *Ḥadīth* states: Do not sit on the graves and do not pray facing towards them<sup>78</sup>.

The teaching here underlines the danger of ‘glorification’ of the ‘inhabitants’ of these graves as a form of worship, and of dedicating worship to other than Allah (S.W.T), which is in itself an act of *shirk* (heresy). In the same way, the Prophet ﷺ teaches that the practice of building domes over graves is prohibited, as well as plastering over them. These are actions which lead to *shirk*<sup>79</sup>:

My dear brothers! So that you know of these things, this *Ḥadīth* makes it very clear that we are not supposed to build anything over graves; many of the Malay Muslims today build strong plastered graves, but this is against the commandment of the Prophet ﷺ.

Another purpose in citing these *Ḥadīth* is to stress that recitation of the Prophet’s words is a way for Malay Muslims to draw closer in spirit to Allah (S.W.T). It is thus part of al-Marbawi’s technique as an authoritative religious master to use key *Ḥadīth* as a focal point for believers, whereby channels of communication between themselves and the Prophet are opened up for them (through their personal practice) by remembrance of his words<sup>80</sup>.

The emphasis is, thus, upon internal spiritual states, and with instructional warning against purely external forms of devotion. Principally, what is ‘inside’ must be at one with that which is seen ‘outside’, otherwise the believer may fall into *shirk* or *munafiq* (hypocrisy) as the Prophet ﷺ declares:

The characteristics of the hypocrite are three: when he speaks he lies, when he gives his word, he breaks it; and when he is given a trust, he is unfaithful<sup>81</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.202.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p.203.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., vol.18, pp.183-188.



Readers would therefore understand this commentary as a direct critique of the ‘lack of sincerity’ observed amongst Malay Muslims. Here, al-Marbawi issues a challenge, inviting believers to open their hearts and observe the legally required duties of Islam such as praying or fasting with sincerity<sup>82</sup>.

In the same way, the scholarly teaching is that travelling to ‘historical places’ (for example) is important but that the places themselves must not be mistaken as sources of blessing. The example is given of the Prophet’s own visit to the mosque at Medina only to perform prayer, saying that:

A prayer in my mosque (Medina mosque) is a thousand times more excellent than a prayer in any other mosque, except *Masjid al-Harām*”<sup>83</sup>

Al-Marbawi, thus, makes apparent for his readers (through the presentation of the Prophet’s ﷺ words and example) that it is permitted to visit this mosque in conjunction with the *Hajj* pilgrimage, but solely for the act of devotion to Allah (S.W.T) through prayer.

#### **5.4.iii. Prohibition from Animal Fights.**

Al-Marbawi once more stresses that Islam lays down rights for animals entitling them to love and mercy. The teaching for Malay Muslims here is that cruelty to animals is treated with grave contempt in Islam and with severe penalties; indeed, those who dare to be cruel to animals risk the fires of hell<sup>84</sup>. It is for this reason that Malay practices such as hunting or animal fights for games or sports are forbidden:

For your information my brothers; as we see today in our society there are some Malay Muslims who engage in cock-fights or bull-fights which cause harm to animals, this is stupid behaviour and bad deeds<sup>85</sup>. Oh my brothers; our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ forbade blood sport for example cock fighting, bull fighting and animal fighting which is cruelty to animals.

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., vol.3,p.18-19

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., vol.12,pp.84-85

The cruelty of shooting at birds and animals with bows and arrows is especially prohibited. To kill animals for sport therefore goes directly against the teaching that they should be treated with kindness; 'blood sports' were strictly forbidden by the Prophet ﷺ himself, as above.

#### 5.4. iv) Prohibition of *Al-Khamr* (Against the Consumption of Alcohol)

As a wise scholar and teacher, al-Marbawi is also gravely concerned about moral misconduct in the lives of Malay Muslims, particularly the consumption of alcohol (*al-khamr*)<sup>86</sup>. He wished to stress for his readers that this concern was based upon the damaging effects that alcohol has upon the spiritual and moral health of human beings. Drinking alcohol destroys morality since the believer loses self-control, for instance, but most of all he will lose his awareness and reverence for Allah the Most High (S.W.T) Himself. This loss of consciousness of all that is connected with spiritual truth will therefore cause him to fall into evil habits which are the opposite of the words and example of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Prophet ﷺ declares that: Every intoxicant is *khamr* and every intoxicant is forbidden. He, who drinks wine in this world and dies while he is addicted to it, not having repented, will be given nothing to drink in the Hereafter<sup>87</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ also declares that:

What intoxicates in greater quantity is unlawful also in small quantity<sup>88</sup>

Al-Marbawī's particular concern here is to advise against widespread false reasoning amongst Malay Muslims - where it was claimed that they could be excused from this prohibition when drinking only small amounts, since these do not affect the mind. The point, however, is that it is the intoxicant itself which is

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<sup>86</sup> Al-Marbawī states that *al-khamr* cited several products, for example brandy, beer, whisky and wine

<sup>87</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13,p.26.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, vol.13,p.30.



unlawful, no matter what its quantity. This means that the believer should completely abstain, regardless of quantity<sup>89</sup>.

Thus, there are two points here to guide right thinking amongst Malay Muslims:

- a) Anything that causes intoxication is forbidden in Islam, regardless of whether its quantity is large or small.
- b) Secondly, no one can say that since the use of liquor does not cause him to be intoxicated, he is justified in using it. Even if a habitual drinker does not lose control over himself altogether, this does not mean that the liquor ceases to be forbidden.

Similarly, Husayn explicitly stated that the Prophet ﷺ declares:

The law is clear and the prohibition is clear and between them are some unclear issues which most people do not understand. So, whosoever avoids these unclear issues is innocent of any wrongdoing in the eyes of Islam, and has self-respect. But, whoever enters into these unclear issues enters into the prohibited just like the shepherd who grazes his sheep around the royal pasture when they are always about to graze on it (*sic*). Surely, every sovereign has a forbidden zone. Surely, the forbidden zone of Allah (S.W.T) is all that He has made *haram*. Surely, there is one small piece of flesh in the body. If this piece is wholesome, the entire body is wholesome but if this piece is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. Surely, this piece is the heart<sup>90</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13,p.25-30.

<sup>90</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.27.

#### 5.4. v) Prohibited of Bribes

Al-Marbawi also warns Malay readers who take bribes by saying:

The Prophet ﷺ cursed the one who bribes and the one who takes bribes<sup>91</sup>. O my brothers! This is often the practice in our country nowadays, but a bribe should never be given and it is a great sin<sup>92</sup>

#### 5.4. vi) Musical instruments

Al-Marbawi's concern here is to address the effect of music on the Malay believer. Since music affects the emotions, it therefore increases arousal in terms of alertness and excitement, as he demonstrates for his readers. For this reason, musical instruments are prohibited in Islam, particularly the flute, violin and guitar<sup>93</sup>.

The Prophet ﷺ here declares:

From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments, as lawful...<sup>94</sup>

#### 5.4. vii) Reciting al-Qur'ān

Al-Marbawi presents a direct critique of those who recite the Qur'ān to Malay believers without understanding its contents. The point of this critique is that the Holy Qur'an is used to compete with others in public by reciting it loudly for self-glory, but not out of a desire to honour Allah (S.W.T). The purpose of this kind of recitation is also to use verses of the Qur'ān as 'charms', known as (*azimat* and *tangkal*), which goes directly against the words and example of the Prophet ﷺ. This is because (as the Prophet himself demonstrates) the Qur'ān contains the revelations of Allah (S.W.T).

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<sup>91</sup> Al-Marbawī. *Bahr*, vol.10, p.49.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., vol.10, p.19.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., vol.15, p.129.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., vol.15, pp.129-131.



the Creator of the Universe to mankind. Because these are words of Allah (S.W.T), it is therefore of great importance first of all to understand these words exactly, which means that one must study them deeply and in detail, and take them into the heart and spirit.<sup>95</sup> According to al-Marbawi, there are three steps in this process<sup>96</sup>:

- First, receive the message of the Qur'ān, by hearing or reading it;
- Second, understand the message of the Qur'ān by reflecting upon it and studying its meanings;
- Third, apply the message of the Qur'ān by ordering your personal life as well as the life of society according to its message.

Hence, we can conclude here that throughout the writing of al-Marbawī and Husayn, it is clear that Muslims should keep away from any practices which are forbidden in Islamic teaching.

### **5.5 The Importance of Acquired Knowledge**

As stated in the previous topic, both al-Marbawi and Husayn as great scholars themselves wished to instruct their readers in the important role of education, and were especially concerned about the apparent apathy of the majority of Malays with regard to the education of their children. Their texts are thus used as tools to counsel their Malay readers to change from their lazy and negligent attitude to one full of a sense of responsibility for uplifting the status of the nation.

Al-Marbawi's teaching is thus to focus on acquiring knowledge in a holistic manner, relying upon Allah's revelations and upon the Prophetic *Ḥadīth*:

Allah (S.W.T) reveals: And the believers should not all go out to fight. From every group of them, only one party only should go forth, that they (who are left behind) may gain sound knowledge in

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid, vol.15, p.76.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may guard themselves against evil"<sup>97</sup>.

The Prophet ﷺ declares: "If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, God will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise"<sup>98</sup>.

It is clear from Husayn's teaching that he too wished to change the community of Malays from an illiterate community to a learned community. His teaching here is that through knowledge, Allah (S.W.T) was preparing Muslims to carry the great message of Islam. Hence, this great revelation to the Prophet ﷺ is stressed by Husayn in his translation in order to encourage them to learn and seek knowledge:

Read! In the name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists).  
Has created man from a clot (*sic*) Read! And your Lord is the most  
Generous, who has taught (writing) by the pen. Has taught man that  
which he did not know<sup>99</sup>.

To signify to Malay Muslims the importance of seeking knowledge and education, he encourages them to explore both direct and indirect layers of meaning in the following *Ḥadīth* :

While we were one day sitting with the Messenger of Allah (S.W.T), (S.A.W) there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet (S.A.W), rested his knee against his thighs, and said, O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam..... Thereupon the man went off. I waited a while, and then he (the Messenger of Allah (S.W.T) said, 'O! 'Umar, do you know who that questioner was?' I replied, 'Allah (S.W.T) and His Messenger know better. He said, that was Jibrīl. He came to teach you your religion'<sup>100</sup>.

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<sup>97</sup> Al-Qur'ān, 9:122.

<sup>98</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.19,p.7

<sup>99</sup> Husayn, *Jawahir*, p.9

<sup>100</sup> Husayn, *Jawāhir*, p.6



Interestingly, we can infer from the above *Hadīth* that there are several points which Malays can understand regarding the ethics of seeking knowledge: for example:

- sit properly, close to the teacher,
- ask questions for better understanding and
- seek knowledge from the right source or authority.

Both scholars are concerned with the importance of seeking knowledge which is in line with *Hadīth* about ‘seeking Islamic studies or ‘seeking religious studies:

Islamic knowledge is the road to Islamic belief, and leads the person to fear Allah (S.W.T)<sup>101</sup>.

To al-Marbawi, the ‘fear’ (from the above *Hadīth*) that is based on knowledge regulates the person’s deeds. . For that reason, Allah (S.W.T) lifted the position of ‘people with Islamic knowledge’ to different higher ranks according to the level of their knowledge .

Allah (S.W.T) will exalt in degree those of you who believe and those who have been granted knowledge<sup>102</sup> .

Al-Marbawi showed much concern about such phenomena in his country at the time, where studying Islamic studies was not essential, which for him would cause them to be ‘misguided by misguided person’ as he warns:

Allah (S.W.T) will not take knowledge from the hearts of the scholars, but Allah (S.W.T) ‘takes the scholars’ (they die). There will be no more scholars to take their place so people will take extremely ignorant leaders. They will be asked questions and will give *fatwas* without knowledge. They are misguided and they misguide others<sup>103</sup>.

Signifying his concern about the education of Malay Muslims, al-Marbawi expresses that if Muslims truly realised the importance of knowledge and the virtues

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<sup>101</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.19,p.7

<sup>102</sup> Al-Qur’an, 58:11

<sup>103</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr* ,vol.15, p.113.

which Islam ascribes to it, they will definitely be keen to learn and teach others. This is because knowledge is the basis of all good; it generates actions that are based on the commandments of Allah (S.W.T) and the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ.

As wise scholarly instructors, both scholars (al-Marbawi and Husayn) stress that acquisition of knowledge is obligatory to Malay Muslims, male or female, and should not be gender-biased - that is, in the sense that there should be no discrimination between men and women in having formal education<sup>104</sup>. They, hence, were against the practice of many Malay parents at that time to confine their daughters at home (Malay parents at that time believed that life before marriage was exclusively a training period before they became wives and mothers, and that formal schooling was not important for them).

### 5.6 Critiques of Malay Ulama (*Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda*)

As wise scholars for Malay Muslims, al-Marbawi and Husayn called Malay religious scholars (in both the *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda* groups) to keep away from dispute between themselves. Al-Marbawi and Husayn believed that Malay backwardness was equally contributed to by the fact that they are not united and that they did not follow the true path of Islam as outlined by the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*. Therefore, in *Baḥr al-Mādḥi* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, they emphasised the importance of Malay *ulama* in being respectful towards other Muslims regardless of difference in opinions.

During this specific century, conflict between these two groups dominate a great deal throughout religious discussions, for example, on the self-sufficiency of scripture' in interpreting the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*, the rejection of an oral formulation of the *niyya* (intention) before performing the daily ritual prayers<sup>105</sup>, prayer before

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., vol.7,p.91-92

<sup>105</sup> A.H.Johns, from coastal settlement to Islamic school and city: Islamization in Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and Java, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol.IV, No.4, pp.3-28; Robert W. Hefner & Patricia Horvatic, Islam in an era of Nation-States, University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p.14; William Roff, *Origins of Malay nationalism*, Singapore: University of Malaya Press, p.85; Howard M Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam: Islamic reform in twentieth century Indonesia*, Ithica: southeast Asia program, 1970,p.46.



Friday prayer (*qabliyah al-Jum'ah*), wearing the turban, and the use of a kind of wooden drum (*ketuk-ketuk*) to call to prayers<sup>106</sup>.

One distinguishing feature between *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda* is the 'Sufi orientation' of *Kaum Tua*. As Sufis, *Kaum Tua* were tolerant of local practices in the Malay world such as the celebrations of *kenduri* (party), and *mawlid* (the Prophet's birth). *Kaum Tua* believed that these practices had become part of the Islamic tradition<sup>107</sup>. They also believed that the truth expressed in the teachings of Islam by scholars such as al-Ghazali and the scholars of the Schools of Thought did not need to be disputed since it was not altered by the change in time and conditions<sup>108</sup>. According to this group, re-examination of the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* not only is unnecessary but also dangerous since this could easily lead to misinterpretation and error.

Close scrutiny of *Kaum Muda* shows that apart from belonging to the same School of Thought (that is, Shāfi'ī) their progressive views were sought after because they were more relevant to contemporary problems. *Kaum Muda* stressed that it was obligatory for Muslims to believe in the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*, but not the classical texts written by medieval scholars<sup>109</sup>. This indicated that they believed that there was a need to return to the traditional sources of Islam.

In addition, the *Kaum Muda* group had in fact introduced the reforms of Islamic beliefs and practices through the following: First, purification of Islam from unwarranted innovations ; second, opening the gate of personal religious decision

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<sup>106</sup> Following an intense controversy, therefore, a gathering of *ulama* was organised to discuss the issue. One opinion suggested that the use of *ketuk-ketuk* was permissible not forbidden, because it was entirely different from the *naqus* used by churches. This opinion, however, was not accepted by other scholars of *Kaum Tua*.

<sup>107</sup> Abu Bakar Hamzah, *Al-Imām: Its role in Malay society 1906-1908*, Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1991, p.37.

<sup>108</sup> Howard M Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam: Islamic reform in twentieth century Indonesia*, Ithica: southeast Asia program, 1970, p.46

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.78.

(*ijtihād*); and third, adoption of modern approaches to modernize Muslims, particularly through education, health and other social services<sup>110</sup>.

In discussion of the ‘self-sufficiency of scripture’ (in interpreting the Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth*) in the ideas of *Kaum Muda*, Husayn emphasised the importance of learned interpretation. The translation of Husayn’s *Jawāhir*, therefore, develops an indirect evaluation of the *Kaum Muda* position - that is, it is the duty of individual Muslims to interpret the Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth*. In this sense, Husayn argues that most Muslims do not have sufficient knowledge to undertake this enterprise. Husayn explains that errors arising from uneducated exegesis can lead even pious Muslims into sin<sup>111</sup>.

In this way, Husayn teaches us that a ‘scholar of the *Ḥadīth*’ can be labelled as ‘a *khalifah* (associate) of the Prophet’ (if they disseminate *Ḥadīth* to their community)<sup>112</sup>. He used the term ‘*khalifah*’ to identify those scholars who learnt and acquired sufficient knowledge responsible for conveying the Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth*, and to teach the *Ḥadīth* to Muslim community<sup>113</sup>. By this, he emphasised that the Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth* required wised scholarly interpretation. He appeals to the Malay Muslim to return to ‘pure’ and ‘pristine’ Islam as practiced by the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. At the same time, Husayn clearly opposed unwarranted innovations and superstitions<sup>114</sup>.

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<sup>110</sup> Hefner, *Islam in era nation-states*, p.14.

<sup>111</sup> In understanding his ideas, it is important to recall that he was a critic of Haji Wan Sulaiman Wan Sidek (one of the prominent scholars) who was preaching *Tariqah Naqshabandiyah* to all Malay communities. He argued that the spreading of *Tariqah* without deeper knowledge would cause danger and since it could lead to misinterpretation and error. For further details information see Wan Shamsudin Mohd. Yusof, *Haji Wan Sulaiman bin Wan Sidek (1874-1935) in Bibliography Ulama Kedah Darul Aman*, Vol.1, Lembaga Muzium Negeri Kedah Darul Aman, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1996p.123

<sup>112</sup> Husayn *Jawāhir*.p.6

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Wan Shamsudin Mohd. Yusof, *Haji Wan Sulaiman bin Wan Sidek (1874-1935) in Bibliography Ulama Kedah Darul Aman*, vol.1, Lembaga Muzium Negeri Kedah Darul Aman, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1996.p.123



Husayn's argument regarding the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* requiring scholarly interpretation is aligned with al-Marbawī's comments on the 'biography of 'Umar'. According to al-Marbawī:

'Umar was the most prominent companion of Prophet and it should be remembered how he realized his value and so he put in an unbelievable amount of effort to be with the Prophet to record and to revere everything of Prophetic *Sunna*.

Al-Marbawī used the term '*membesarkan peninggalan sunnahnya*' (to revere everything of Prophetic *Sunna* ) as a symbolic critique for Malay readers. This passage leads us to conclude that *Ḥadīth* analysis requires scholarly interpretation. Here, religious scholars are due the respect accorded to the companions, that is, the *al-tabī'īn* (followers of the companions) and the family of the Prophet, since they hold the key to understanding his legacy<sup>115</sup>, as declared by the Prophet ﷺ:

Religious scholars' are the heirs of the Prophets<sup>116</sup>.

There are some arguments regarding 'supererogatory prayer before Friday prayer' between these groups. Here, *Kaum Muda* claims that the Prophet ﷺ never offered any prayer before Friday prayer as in the following *Ḥadīth*:

The Prophet ﷺ never offered any prayer after the *adhān* and before the Friday prayer and no one has ever related such an act from him. There is no evidence to show that the Prophet ﷺ, prayed in his house before going out to the mosque on Friday. He did not specify any time for any prayer before the Friday prayer<sup>117</sup>.

*Kaum Tua*, on the other hand, strictly opposed this view.

In this case, al-Marbawī however, clearly affirms that the 'supererogatory prayer before Friday prayer' is recommended or desirable, and no punishment upon

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<sup>115</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.15, p.15-16; M.R. Woodward, textual exegesis, *Journal of Asian Studies*, pp.565-583.

<sup>116</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.19, p.5.

<sup>117</sup> Wan Saghir, *penutup perdebatan Islam alaf ke dua*, p.6

any negligence (those who neglected the act), but those who performed it will be rewarded. He notifies that:

Al-Tabrani reported that the Prophet ﷺ used to pray four *raka'at* before Friday prayer and four *raka'ats* after Friday prayer<sup>118</sup>.

Another issue which shows conflict of views between *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda* is regarding 'Western-style customs'. *Kaum Tua* had a negative view towards the West, stating that any foreign values and education that were not Arabic-based exercised influence on Muslims by corrupting the spiritual values of Islam<sup>119</sup>. *KaumTua's* negative attitude towards Western-style customs went to the extent that any adaptation of Western methods, for example in the education system, and following any practices that resembled Western customs, was considered as *haram* (forbidden)<sup>120</sup>.

In certain cases, *KaumTua* issued *fatwas*<sup>121</sup> that discouraged Malay Muslims from assimilating westernised practices, for example:

The *Mufti* of Johor ( Sayyid Alwī bin Tahir al-Hadad) in his ruling stated that there were *Hadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ which recommended wearing the turban or *songkok* (and that the Prophet himself wore *serban* or *songkok*), as reported from Bukhārī: 'Wear the turban as it is a sign of *Islam* and distinguishes between a Muslim and an unbeliever'. Thus, Malay Muslims in Malaysia were religiously discouraged from wearing Western clothes such as coats, trousers, neckties and hats. He stated that if Muslims wore clothes like the clothes of infidels, such as neck-ties and hats, and 'love infidelity', they will be polytheists. If Muslims wore clothes like the clothes of infidels but they did not 'love

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid. vol.3.p.230.

<sup>119</sup> Mehmet, O. *Islamic identity and development*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1990, pp.102-103

<sup>120</sup> Noer, D, *the modernist Muslim movement in Indonesia*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973,p.303.

<sup>121</sup> A legal term indicating a pronouncement by a qualified religious scholar on an issue of belief or practice. See Howard, M. Federspiel, the usage of traditions of the Prophet in contemporary Indonesia, in Mark Woodward, ed. *Monographs in Southeast Asian Studies*, Arizona State University, 1993. P.140



infidelity', they were nevertheless committing reprehensible or prohibited acts<sup>122</sup>.

Al-Marbawi, in emphasising his commentary upon the *Hadīth* of 'wearing a turban', develops an indirect critique of these groups. He affirms his position by citing an example shown by the Prophet ﷺ :

Reports by Jabīr that on the occasion of *Fath* of Mecca (The Conquest of Mecca), the Prophet ﷺ entered Mecca while wearing a black turban<sup>123</sup>.

*Hadīth* concerning 'wearing turbans' (as an example of a critique) are used by al-Marbawi to uphold the purity of the Prophet ﷺ example rather than entering into scholastic dispute. It is for this reason that al-Marbawi points out that wearing a turban is recommended and desirable according to the Prophet ﷺ example. At the same time, he stressed that this is an act for which there is no punishment for neglect, but for which performance comes reward.

Thus, through *Bahr al-Madhī*'s commentary, al-Marbawi concludes that those who love the Prophet ﷺ should fully accept everything contained in the Holy Qur'ān and *Sunnah*; nonetheless, believers are discouraged from following Western attitudes or wearing Western clothes/costumes. However, it is not prohibited for believers to, for example, wear the neck-tie or to wear a hat instead of a turban – that is, there will be no punishment.

From the above discussions, it is confirmed that al-Marbawi always encourages the Malay Muslim community to emulate the way that the Prophet ﷺ has taught. To al-Marbawi, Malay Muslims should have the intention and determination to follow and uphold the Prophetic *Sunnah* through their physical appearance as well

<sup>122</sup> Johor, J.A.I, *Fatwa-fatwa Mufti Kerajaan Johor yang difatwakan oleh Sayyid Alwi bin Tahir al-Haddad, 1356-1381/1936-1961*, vol.2, Johor Baharu: Department of Johor Religious, 1981. p.311, cited by Rahimin Affandi Abd. Rahim, traditionalism and reformism polemic in Malay-Muslim religious literature, *Islam and Christian – Muslim Relations*, vol.17, no.1, January 2006, pp.93-104.

<sup>123</sup> Al-Marbawī, vo.12,p.118

in their spiritual aspects (which links their body with their heart, mind and soul) in everything they do and in every area of human conduct.

Thus, a clear understanding of the *Ḥadīth* (as a source of legal knowledge and a model for Muslim piety and social conduct) is vital for the Malay Muslim. From this perspective, al-Marbawi indirectly uses exegesis as a tool to reconcile polemical dispute between groups (whether *Kaum Tua* or *Kaum Muda*) concerning assimilation into westernisation (western customs).

According to al-Marbawi, in building the unity of Muslims<sup>124</sup>, the two groups (*KaumTua* and *Kaum Muda*) and the Malay Muslim community, therefore, should comprehend that whenever they discuss a disputed matter, they must behave in a civilized, open minded and kind way to other Muslims. Moreover, whenever they argue a disputed matter they should acquire in-depth knowledge of both side's point of view<sup>125</sup>.

The Malay readers should understand that they have to be positive and respectful towards other Muslims regardless of differences in opinion. What they supposed to do is preach and spread Islam, not their sectarian beliefs. If a dispute arises during the interpretation of a verse in the Qur'ān or *Ḥadīth* (or about certain actions) they must then follow the consensus of the scholars of Islam. If there exist any disagreements upon specific issues (splitting themselves into groups) then one can follow who ever they like but must never deem others as wrong<sup>126</sup>.

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<sup>124</sup> Al-Marbawī, *Bahr*, vol.13, pp.60-215.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* vol.15,p.19-21.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*



## 5.7 Summary

The texts of al-Marbawi and Husayn illustrate what is a perfect Muslim society, in which they analyse ‘*adāb*’ which includes kinship, authority, and obligations towards neighbours, the poor and orphans. From this perspective, al-Marbawi and Husayn use the concept of relationship in a symbolic sense to discuss social structure and human relations in the life of the Malay Muslim.

Therefore, the translation and commentary of *Bahr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhāri* take into accounts the significant of unity, neighbours, brotherhood and seeking knowledge; since they paint a picture of an ideal Muslim society. The texts describe that in order to be an ideal society, therefore, the scholars (whether they are members of *Kaum Tua* or *Kaum Muda*) must bring Malay Muslims together and avoid among themselves disputed topics which do not bring any good to the community.

Moreover, the scholars of Islam must not interpret any verses of the Qur’ān or *Ḥadīth* according to their own opinions and preferences. They must follow the consensus of Islamic scholars upon any issue, and they should not spread hate amongst Muslims, particularly those who disagree with them. In this, both groups should follow the interpretation of the Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth* from an authentic scholar of Islam.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up: importantly, this study confirms the significance of written work on the *Ḥadīth* by Malay scholars in Malaysia during twentieth century as well as yielding significant relations with the earliest *Ḥadīth* work done in the previous period (that is, the early Islamic period of the Malay region). In line with the aim of the study (see the Introduction) the study reveals that *Ḥadīth* have been highly valued both as sources of legal knowledge and as models for Muslim piety and the well-being of the social life of the Malay people ( as discussed in chapter four and five).

This study also demonstrates (as mentioned in chapter one) the importance of studying the works of *Ḥadīth* by early Malay scholars (before the twentieth century) linking it with the event of *Ḥadīth* compilation (that is, how the *Ḥadīth* compilation were transmitted into Malaysia by the early Malay scholars [pre-nineteenth century]) and illustrates how such activity spread through the Malay world, and Malaysia in particular. Examinations of *Ḥadīth* works produced by early scholars in the Malay region (from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries) offer a clear description of related networks such as the relationship amongst scholars and the link between the written works of early Malay scholars (pre-nineteenth centuries) and scholars who existed later on (post- nineteenth century).

Malaysian *Ḥadīth* scholars, particularly al-Marbawi and Husayn (who were involved in the twentieth century scholarly network) indeed had traceable connections with networks of earlier *Ḥadīth* scholars around the world. It is important to note that (as discussed in chapter two) although they did not have direct connections as student-teacher with either al-Raniri or al-Sinkili for instance, yet their link (and understanding of al-Raniri and al-Sinkili's knowledge and scholarly works, as prominent pre-17<sup>th</sup> century Islamic scholars in the Malay region) derives from the fact that their own teachers in



Mecca and Medina were among the prominent figures in the transmission of Islamic learning in their period, and who had direct connections with earlier scholars to whom al-Raniri and al-Sinkili had also been linked.

This study has pursued a detailed examination of the history of Malay students in Mecca and Medina and the textual materials that they produced and taught from. It was evidenced that (as explained in chapter two) these students hold major lines of intellectual tradition between Malay and Middle Eastern Muslims. Investigations (as illustrated throughout the study), not only demonstrate the nature of the religious and mutual intellectual relationships between Malay Muslims and Middle East Muslims, but also illustrates the development of Islam in the Malay world. The lives and experiences of these students (see in details in chapter one and two) presented a clear picture of the various connections that existed between them and Middle Eastern scholars.

In addition, and as a result, the foregoing chapter on the social background of al-Marbawi and Husayn, in their written works and their intellectual journey (in seeking knowledge) for example, demonstrates that they were the most prolific Malay authors in Malay-Muslim history and that the key purpose of their written work was to lead the Malay community to an understanding of Islamic disciplines. Indeed, the publication dates of their books clearly indicate that the height of their career was in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It was found (as discussed in chapter three) that al-Marbawi and Husayn were acutely aware of the socio-political changes taking place in their society. With a sense of urgency they made an attempt to urge the Malay people, through educational and journalistic efforts, to be well-prepared and to strengthen themselves to face such changes and challenges. The sensitivity and responsibility that they showed here may reflect from their personal characteristics (and socio-educational background) as intellectual and spiritual figures and traditional scholars steeped in traditional Sunni scholarship.



Interestingly, this study showed that even though al-Marbawi and Husayn were educated in a traditional mould, yet they were still aware of (or sensitive to) numerous prevailing issues, even regarding the international scene. Indeed, they possess a fine combination of 'old' (traditional or conventional) and 'modern' thought: an appearance of men of the 'old school', yet 'modern' in their intellectual awareness. Their concerted spiritual collectiveness, kept them on track - unswayed by challenging external events in their social and cultural lives.

Al-Marbawi and Husayn were, without doubt, the most prominent Malay *Ḥadīth* scholars in this century; not only because of their scholarly connections, but because of their importance in the light of *Ḥadīth* studies in the Malay world, which lies in their involvement in the 'Islamic learning' networks and also, more importantly, in their writings. Al-Marbawi's written works especially were widely used in the Malay world, particularly in the *ulama* circles, in the *pondok* school and other Islamic institutions.

It is suggested here that recognising this process of transmission of Islamic knowledge from the centre of the Islamic world in general to Malaysia in particular is of paramount importance. The number of teachers they studied with, and the learning they gained from them, verifies that al-Marbawi and Husayn's education was complete and comprehensive. They, hence, possessed sufficient knowledge to earn fame as major Malay scholars of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. In other words, there is no doubt that al-Marbawi and Husayn are among the most important Malay authors in the Islamic history of the Malay world. Their contribution to the education of the Muslim populace of the archipelago, both generally and in Malaysia in particular, proved to be a significant and vital one, as shown by the numbers of Malay Muslims in those areas.

Although, the *Bahr al-Mādihī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* are translations and commentaries on Arabic texts (see in details in chapter three), they occupy the Malay world as significant texts for several reasons. Firstly, these texts were restored to their



former status as clear and authoritative guides for human conduct, as their contents do not only concern specific rituals such as prayer, fasting and *hajj*. Their perspectives, indeed, are wide-ranging and include various important aspects of human life such as law, politics, social matters, economics, culture and education. Secondly, these texts yield the author's personality as well as their mastery in *Ḥadīth*. Thirdly, their written methodology has been influenced by written works of the great *Ḥadīth* scholars – al-Tirmīdhī and al-Bukhārī – and therefore were esteemed accordingly. Finally, although these works were written during 20<sup>th</sup> century, they inherit the teaching of earlier *Hadith* scholars in the Malay region and continue to be widely-used up until the present day.

In my opinion, the most significant contribution of the texts is that these works provide the clearest examples of the use of exegesis as a tool for religious, social and political teaching for Malay Muslims. It is clear, throughout the above discussions, that the clarity with which al-Marbawī and Husayn have dealt with all areas of human conduct makes their teachings a vital tool for religious, social and political discourse in Malaysia. Thus, the use of *Ḥadīth* texts for teaching and instruction serves a social and political as well as religious function, with the three strands interlocking.

As discussed above, these two texts elucidate a complete course of Islamic teaching and represent a vital resource for the purposes of educating the Malay people on the subject of the *Ḥadīth*. It is also for this reason that these two great scholars use this teaching method to make the Malay Muslims capable of recognising the truth as received directly from Allah by the Prophet ﷺ. In particular, their mission emerges as one of structuring an ideal Muslim society based on the purity of fundamental principles derived directly from sayings of the Prophet ﷺ, as contained in the *Ḥadīth*.

It should be noted here, however, that this study focuses on the broad principles of such a society. It is beyond its scope to separate the religious, political and social aspects specifically, and to examine the implications for human conduct in detail. Nevertheless,



this study points out brief references to juristic debate on broader issues, such as reciting *al-Fātiḥah* in prayer, the prohibition against the taking of alcohol, and so on.

The translation and the commentary of *Baḥr al-Mādḥī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* can be understood as a scriptural justification of the political stance of Malay's current leadership. Its discussion of a just society, leadership, rulers, and the sultan establishes a textual basis for some of the central principles of Islamic political teaching. In addition, the clear guidelines across all areas of human conduct contained in these two great texts represent a vital resource for the purpose of constructing an ideal Islamic state. Its principles are based on the purity of the Prophet's ﷺ example as contained in the *Ḥadīth*.

Analysis made of these texts, therefore, affirmed that a return to these principles is vital to rectify the current political departure from the fundamental truth discussed, such as the drinking of alcohol, the taking of bribes at leadership level, and so on. The written works of al-Marbawi and Husayn, thus, have a vital role to play as transmitters of authoritative *Ḥadīth* teachings to the Malay community, as set out with clarity by these two great scholars.

The texts of al-Marbawi and Husayn illustrate the perfect Muslim society, in which the analysis of 'adāb', for example, includes clarification on kinship, authority, and obligations towards neighbours, poor people, elderly people and orphans. From this perspective also, al-Marbawi and Husayn employ the concept of relationship in a symbolic sense to discuss social structure and human relations in the life of the Malay Muslims.

As aforementioned, both al-Marbawi and Husayn as religious scholars urge spiritual development through good moral conduct in all areas of human activity. Their texts suggest that as a significant part of this development each individual should know his own ability and weaknesses, and react responsibly to correct and nurture his or her spirituality. In this, self-discipline and effort are crucially important to prevent evil deeds

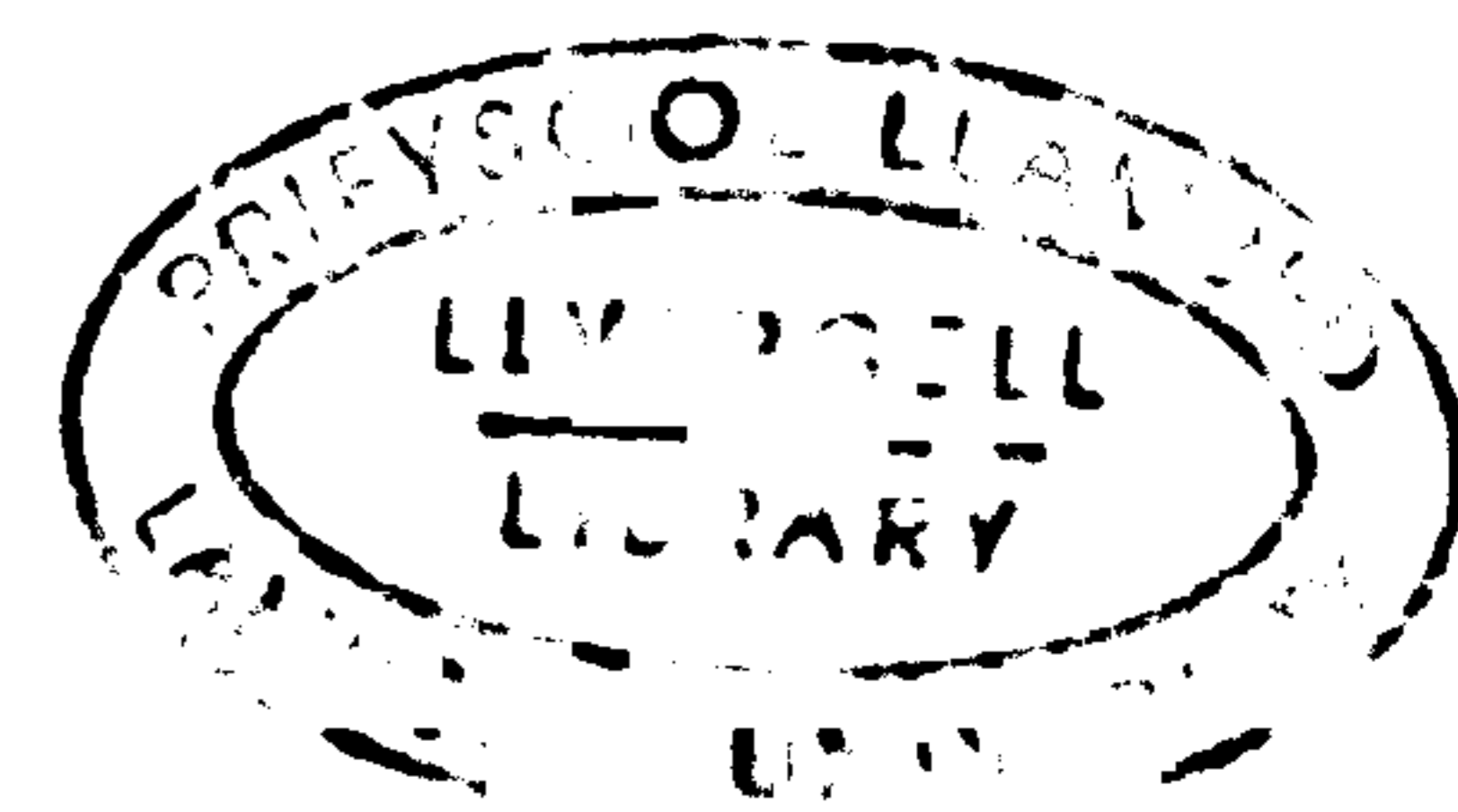


and negative acts, towards one self as well as towards other people. As a whole, it is evident *via* the works themselves that they really intended to deliver advice and guidance to Malay Muslims who wanted to follow the path of Islam. It appears that they wrote their works to provide a text of religious guidelines for the public on matters concerning Islamic teaching.

The translation and commentary of *Bahr al-Mādhī* and *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, including accounts of such matters as unity, neighbours, brotherhood and seeking knowledge, therefore, are significant because they portrait a picture of an ideal Muslim society. In the same tone, the texts expressed that in order to be an ideal person of an ideal society the scholars (be it *Kaum Tua* or *Kaum Muda* group members), must bring the Malay Muslims together and stay away from disputed topics (as mentioned in chapter five). In addition, the scholars of Islam must not interpret verses of the Qur'ān or the *Ḥadīth* according to their own opinions and preferences alone. They must always follow the consensus of Islamic scholars upon any issue, and they should not spread hate for other Muslims who disagree with them as long as both groups follow the interpretation of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* from an authentic scholar of Islam.

To summarize, these texts provide a religious, social and political model which is rooted in the purity of the truth as commanded by the Prophet ﷺ. Taken as whole, therefore, the commentary acts as a clear and authoritative guide for political leadership in the modern context of polemical debate. Returning this text to its status as a point of reference for such polemics would thus 'legitimize' the concepts of 'unity' and 'brotherhood' as advocated in Malay Islamic literature and would, however, ensure that such concepts do not depart from the Prophet's ﷺ teachings as contained in the *Ḥadīth*.

To conclude, then, I have set out my humble contribution towards a critical analysis and understanding of Malay *Ḥadīth* texts, so that it will be significant to the modern mind, and at the same time encourage others to venture boldly into the intellectual heritage of Malay society which has not been sufficiently explored and has not been fully appreciated.





## GLOSSARY OF ARABIC TERMS

A number of references have contributed to the compilation of this glossary such as Ibn Salah in *‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, and Kamali in *Ḥadīth Methodology: authenticity, compilation, classification and criticism of Ḥadīth* as well as the writer’s own translations.

<i>akhlāq</i>	proper manners
<i>al-fātiḥah</i>	the opening chapter
<i>‘alīm</i>	knowledgeable man
<i>‘amal</i>	good deeds
<i>‘ilm</i>	knowledge
<i>fiqh</i>	Islamic jurisprudence
<i>gharīb al- ḥadīth</i>	unfamiliar expressions in <i>ḥadīth</i>
<i>hajj</i>	annual pilgrimage
<i>halaqah</i>	circles
<i>Haramayn</i>	The city of Mecca and Medina
<i>Ḥadīth</i>	Prophet’s traditions
<i>ibn</i>	the son of
<i>ijāzah</i>	permit someone to transmit a tradition
<i>ikhlas</i>	sincerity
<i>‘Ilal al- ḥadīth</i>	hidden defects
<i>imān</i>	faith
<i>isnad</i>	chains of transmitters
<i>iṣlah</i>	correction and purification
<i>jāmi‘</i>	these are <i>ḥadīth</i> collections contain a broad range of topics
<i>jannah</i>	heaven

<i>jihad</i>	striving in the path of Allah
<i>kitāb</i>	books
<i>kuffār</i>	unbelievers
<i>khudūf</i>	self-effacement
<i>madhab</i>	schools of thought
<i>madrasah</i>	schools
<i>Masjīd al-Harām</i>	Holy Mosque
<i>matn</i>	text of the traditions
<i>mukhtalif al- ḥadīth</i>	conflict in <i>ḥadīth</i>
<i>mufti</i>	an Islamic scholar who is an interpreter or expounder of Islamic law
<i>mujaddid</i>	the reformer
<i>mukhtaṣar</i>	summarized
<i>musnad</i>	such <i>ḥadīth</i> as were supported by a complete uninterrupted chain of authorities going back to the Prophet via a companion
<i>mustakhrāj</i>	these are collections of <i>ḥadīth</i> in which a later compiler collects new <i>isnads</i> and additional <i>isnad</i> to add to those cited by an original compiler.
<i>muʿjam</i>	collections refer to books of <i>ḥadīth</i> which the contents arranged in alphabetical order.
<i>nār</i>	Hellfire
<i>niyyah</i>	intention
<i>qadīm</i>	old
<i>qariʿ</i>	reciters
<i>qawl</i>	said



<i>raka'ah</i>	refers to one unit of the prayer
<i>rihla 'ilmiyya</i>	searching for knowledge
<i>rūh Muḥammad</i>	the Light of Muhammad
<i>ruku'</i>	bowing down
<i>s.a.w</i>	represents the standard Muslim invocation placed after the prophet's name: "May God bless Him and grant Him peace"
<i>shari'ah</i>	Islamic law
<i>sharḥ</i>	commentary
<i>ṣifat</i>	features
<i>sūrah</i>	chapters
<i>sujūd</i>	prostrates
<i>sulṭan</i>	royal kings
<i>Sunnah</i>	the way Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lived his life.
<i>ṣahīh</i>	authentic
<i>ṣalat</i>	prayers
<i>ṣarf</i>	studies of morphology system
<i>ṭabaqat al-ruwat</i>	classes of narrators
<i>tafsīr</i>	exegesis or commentary
<i>takbīr</i>	saying Allah is the Greatest
<i>taqrīr</i>	the Prophet's affirmation of an action done by someone other than him
<i>taṣawwuf</i>	studies of the inner or mystical dimension of Islam
<i>taṣwīr</i>	pictures creating a likeness
<i>tawhīd</i>	studies of Islamic conception

## of monotheism

<i>ʿulama</i>	religious scholars
<i>uṣul fiqh</i>	principles of jurisprudence
<i>wudu'</i>	ablution
<i>zaḥīd</i>	an ascetic
<i>zakat</i>	alms



**GLOSSARY OF MALAY TERMS**

<i>Kaum Muda</i>	the Reformist group
<i>Kaum Tua</i>	the Traditionalist group
<i>pondok</i>	the Islamic traditional schools
<i>surau</i>	small building used for religious worship purposes
<i>kitab kuning</i>	a yellow book
<i>ketuk-ketuk</i>	wooden drum
<i>semangat</i>	spirit
<i>tok guru</i>	a great teacher
<i>jubah</i>	gown or dress

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