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MALAY NATIONALISM REFLECTED FROM NEWSPAPERS

1900 - 1920's.

MOHAMAD IDRIS SALEH

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

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Mohamad Idris Saleh,
Department of Modern History,
University of Glasgow.
23/5/1989.

Abstract.

The aim of this thesis is to estimate the importance of Modernizers in creating, developing, spreading and contributing towards active Malay nationalism until it eventually succeeded in gaining independence. I wish to determine if it is true that the reformist movement carried on by Modernizers has no connection at all with Malay nationalism, that is to say as a religious movement or perhaps nationalism still in the stage of religion. Modernizers were sometimes categorized like that because they seemed to talk too much about religion and because most of them received religious education and tried to bring modernization based on Islamic teaching.

We could only reach a conclusion about this matter by doing our own investigation of the type of modernization carried out by Modernizers. We have tried to discover whether they were only interested in religious matters rather than more general questions concerning development, freedom, and more important the independence of the Malay race. This investigation is divided into several chapters with specific concerns, namely - religion, education, the economy and politics.

This thesis consists of seven chapters. The introductory first chapter tries to give a general description of Malay society in social, political and economic aspects, especially before and during the time of the British arrival. It is followed ^{by} a short discussion about British intervention in Malaya as a turning point in the emergence of Malay nationalism. Such a background is

necessary to enable us to understand subsequent issues in Malay development.

The second chapter on the Origin of Malay Nationalism up to the time of Independence, tries to give a general treatment of this phenomenon in relation to Chinese and Indian movements during the same period. An attempt is made to investigate which group is more influential in Malay nationalism. Many views have been expressed concerning this matter. Some writers argue that Malay nationalism started in the late nineteenth century as can be seen in the early Malay uprising against colonialism. On the other hand, some suggest that the real Malay nationalism only existed when UMNO was formed in order to abolish the Malayan Union proposal. The reform movement carried on by Modernizers in the early twentieth century is investigated in the light of these arguments.

Chapter three specifically concerns religion and the views on it advanced by Modernizers. What were the factors which caused Malay backwardness?. Was it true that a misunderstanding of and errors in carrying out Islamic practice was the major factor in contributing to Malay backwardness?. Were there any other factors which also caused this backwardness, such as influence from animism and some elements of waste in Malay culture? We consider how Modernizers used religion as a tool to make Malays more aware and discuss how Malay society reacted to their proposals.

Education becomes the main topic in chapter four. Modernizers believed poor education or complete lack of it also became a

major factor in hindering Malay development. We consider what Modernizers believed to be the explanation for this and low standards of education. That is followed by a discussion of the initiatives made by Modernizers in order to develop Malay education to enable Malays to compete in the modern world.

Malays were also always being said to be left behind in the economy, especially compared with immigrants. Chapter five looks at this question in detail. Malays were discontented when they still had to stay in the villages with their traditional occupations. Malays were denied a place in the new economy, especially the rubber and tin industries. Apart from the British, the immigrants became the wealthiest group in Malaya. We consider the reaction of Modernizers in this matter, and discuss their proposals to help Malays improve themselves.

Chapter six asks how far there was any political consciousness among Modernizers. What was their perception of the Colonial power and the Malay ruling class?. If there was political consciousness, how important was the role of the Modernizers in contributing to Malay nationalism. The final chapter consists of a summary and general conclusion.

Malay Society up to the British Intervention.

Before our discussion goes into further detail, I would like to stress that our discussion of Malay society concentrates on its common features even though there are naturally some differences between parts of the country (1).

The words Malay, Malayan, Malaya, Malaysia and Malaysian (2) often cause confusion. The word Malay means a person of the Malay community or race, and language. It also used for Indonesians and aborigines (3). Malayan refers to a person of any race who has become a resident and citizen of Malaya (4). The word Malayan was created by the British to distinguish between the Malay and non-Malay population. However, with few exceptions most of the non-Malays do not want to use the word Malayan. Most of the Chinese called themselves Hua Chiao (overseas Chinese) and still considered themselves as Chinese citizens (5). The word Malayan was only frequently used after the 1940's. For example, Crozier made his estimate of the Malayan population in the following

1. Malays divide according to the ^{State} from which they come. The Malay Kingdom consists of 11 states such as Selangor, Pahang, Perak, Negeri Sembilan etc. Most of the Malay States practise the same custom except Negeri Sembilan. "Adat Perpatih" is their custom. Malays are also segregated into several clans and speak several dialects.

2. For example, E.H.G. Dobby, Southeast Asia, University of London Press Ltd., eleventh edition 1973, p. 107.

3. C.B. Kheng, "Asal Usul dan Asas Nasionalisme Malaya", in Nasionalisme Satu Tinjauan Sejarah, C.B. Kheng & Abd. Rahman Ismail (ed), Fajar Bakti, Petaling Jaya 1985, p. 88.

4. J.M. Gullick, Malaysia and Its Neighbours, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1967, p. 4.

5. Ibid, p. 88.

terms: "its seven million people include more than two and a half million Chinese and 750,000 Indians or Pakistanis. Together with the Malays, they are called Malayans (or Malaysians if referring to the citizenship of the new Federation)" (6). On the other hand the Malays themselves, did not want to be called Malayan. This concept was criticised widely in several newspapers and magazines at that time, such as "Majalah Guru", "Majlis" and "Suara Benar" and many more (7). Malaya is used to describe the peninsular region originally of sultanates south of the Thai border and organised into the federation of Malaya. Malaysia is the political combination of Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak into the Federation of Malaysia, and Malaysian is any national of the Federation of Malaysia.

Before British intervention the total population in Malaya was not clearly known. However, it has been estimated by several writers at a quarter of a million before 1800 (8). G. Wint estimated during British administration initially about 300,000 people which later increased to more than two million, apart from immigrants from Indonesia (9). Ness describes the population of Malaya as follows;

6. Brian Crozier, South East Asia In Turmoil, Penguin Books, revised edition 1968, p. 30.

7. C.B. Kheng, op. cit., p. 89.

8. J.C. Caldwell, "The Demographic Background", T.H. Silcock & A.K. Fisk (ed), The Political Economy of Independent Malaya, Angus & Robertson Ltd., London 1963, p. 59.

9. G. Wint, The British in Asia, Faber & Faber Ltd, London 1947, p. 115.

" a century ago there were less than a million people in the country, the overwhelming majority of whom, were Malays or Indonesian" (10).

Naturally the same position exists for the Malays themselves. Before the twentieth century we do not know how many they were exactly. Again we have to use estimated figures. Practically before 1786 Penang was uninhabited, and in 1868 was estimated to have 150,000 inhabitants including Province Wellesley (11). The Singapore population was estimated at about 100,000 people of whom 60,000 were Chinese (12).

In the year 1891 the population of Perak was estimated at around 96,700 and Selangor 26,500 (13), Sungai Ujong 9,300, Negeri Sembilan 35,300 and Pahang 50,500 (14). And the estimated figures for rest of the other Malay States population can be seen in the table in the following page.

10. C.D. Ness, Bureaucracy and the Rural Development in Malaya: A Study of Complex Organizations in Stimulating Economy Development in the New States, University of California Press, Berkeley 1967, p. 39.

11. C.N. Parkinson, British Intervention in Malaya 1867-1877, University of Malaya Press, Singapore, 1960, f/note in p. 7.

12. Ibid, p. 12.

13. E. Sadka, The Protected Malay States 1874-1895, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur 1968, p. 3.

14. Ibid, p. 4. See also P.G. Begbie, The Malayan Peninsula, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1967, p. 272. He estimated Pahang Population at around 59000 people in 1833.

Estimated Population in Malaya, 1835-1836.

State	Total Population	State	Total Population
Perak	35,000	Johore	25,000
Selangor	12,000	Kedah & Ligor	50,000
Rembau	9,000	Kelantan	50,000
Sungei Ujong	3,600	Trengganu	30,000
Johol	3,080	Kemaman	1,000
Jempol	2,000	Patani	10,000
Jelebu	2,000	Pahang	40,000
Sri Menanti	8,000		-----
		total	280,680 (15).

Based on the above estimates, we can come to the conclusion that the population of Malaya before British intervention was not dense and most of them were Malays.

Generally, the physical appearance of Malays closely resembled the other peoples in the Southeast Asian countries. One English writer described the physical appearance of Malays as follows;

" Brown skinned people, medium height, with round heads and straight or wavy hair. They are lithe and graceful in manner but with a quick wit and sense of humour" (16).

15. Quote from Ooi Jin-Bee, Land, People And Economy In Malaya, Longmans, London reprinted 1964, p. 106.

16. J.M. Gullick, op.cit., 1967, p. 4; see also L.R. Wheeler, The Modern Malay, Allen & Unwin Ltd., London 1928, discussed in depth

Until the British arrival, basically Malays lived mainly along the river banks and the river valleys which are situated on the east and west coasts of the Malay Peninsula. They lived in the riverine areas because of the importance of the rivers and seas for communication, agriculture and the nature of political control. At that time, land communication was very poor. Three quarters of Malaya was covered with dense jungle. Rivers and seas became natural highways along which all goods and men had to pass.

And, given the importance of the rivers to the Malay settlements, we note that every state was based on its own river system and indeed the river system can be said to determine the states. Each state consisted essentially of one or more river systems. For example, the Pahang river system, the largest in the peninsula, formed the main settlement area of the state; Selangor comprises the settled valleys of the Bernam, Selangor, Klang and Langat rivers (17).

Rivers were not only important as highways for men and goods, but also as water sources for daily life such as cooking, and bathing. Rivers also functioned as the political base and revenue sources for the ruling class (18). They gained very big cash

under "Physical Qualities of Peninsula Malay", and R.O. Winstedt (ed), Malaya: The Straits Settlements And The Federated And Unfederated Malay States, Constable & Co. Ltd., London, Bombay and Sydney 1923, pp. 86-92.

17. E. Sadka, op.cit., pp. 2-3. The center of Sungei Ujong lay in the upper reaches of the Linggi, and the settlements in Negeri Sembilan followed the upper Muar and its tributaries.

18. J.M. Gullick, Malaysia: Economic Expansion and National

revenues by tax collection at the river mouth. All goods passing had to pay taxes and by this way chiefs or the Malay ruling class were able to establish states on the major river mouths and later extend their influence to the interior.

The Malays lived in "Kampung" villages on the banks of rivers. Each village comprises several houses made from wood. The size of the each village depended solely on how many houses were in the village. The more houses were built the larger the village was. Nonetheless a distinction has been made between the small and larger villages. The larger village had a resident headman or "Penghulu". To be entitled to have a headman together with a mosque complete with its officials, a village had to have at least forty houses (19). As a leader, the headman managed affairs and became the mediating authority between the peasants and the chiefs. The maximum size of the village was limited by the availability of suitable land for rice and cultivation especially areas which planted the wet rice. Wet rice required level and well watered land, but the Malay cultivators relied merely on rain water for irrigation. Therefore, good places for planting wet rice were very limited.

How the Malay settlements were established had a connection with the immigrant flow from Indonesia. This process is described by

Unity, Westview Press, Toronto 1981, p. 34; also see general picture of Malay Political System in J.M. Gullick, The Indigenous Political System of Western Malaya, Athlone Press, London reprinted 1965.

19. McNair & Wilkinson, under "Mukim" cited in J.M. Gullick, 1965, op.cit., p. 28.

Gullick as follows;

" a century ago they travelled into the interior in search of a new home by polling boats along the winding rivers. Their main concern was to find a place where they could plant rice, their staple food crop, and so support themselves. Land was abundant and the local ruler to whom they would pay taxes, made them welcome. They found perhaps a hundred acres alongside the river or one of its tributaries which they could irrigate for rice with brushwood dams and short channels dug to the fields. Here they settled and a Malay village began" (20).

The next party of immigrants would move on past them since it was easier to clear a new site than to enlarge the area of the existing village by taking in more land at a different level.

20. J.M. Gullick, Malaysia and its Neighbours, 1967, op.cit., p. 5.

The Malay Economy.

The economy of the Malay was based on subsistence agriculture. They planted wet rice "Padi sawah/bendang" in the irrigated and flooded fields. "Padi bukit/huma" dry-rice was grown in shifting patches on cleared hill slopes. There was also considerable fishing which used the very simple techniques from the rivers and seas (1). Fish was of considerable importance as a major source of protein. Their other crops included bananas, coffee, tobacco, maize, sugar cane, tapioca, pepper and gambier which they grew in rotation. Fruits were also grown around their houses and they kept livestock such as chicken, ducks and buffaloes, the latter could also be used in the fields. All these fruits and livestock were grown and kept only on a small scale and partly for domestic consumption. They only used very simple techniques and relied heavily on the natural resources like rain water, rivers and fertilizer together with human and animal muscle.

Besides that, Malays also collected jungle products such as rattan, bamboo and "damar". All these things were traded in exchange for imported textiles, Javanese tobacco, salt and iron tools. In addition there was a valuable export in tin from several of the Malay States and a much smaller one in gold (2).

Although Malaysia today is not considered to be an important source of gold, in early times the Malay Peninsula was best known

1. Raymond Firth, Malay Fishermen: Their Peasant Economy, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London second edition 1966, pp. 41-54, see detail of types and cost of equipments.

2. B.W. & L.Y. Andaya, A History of Malaysia, Macmillan, London 1982, pp. 10-13.

as "Golden Kherosonese" by early Greek geographers because there were gold deposits in the Malay Peninsula (3). Malay small gold mines mainly were operated at Selinsing, Kechau, Pujum and Sungei Muntan in Pahang, Batu Bersawah and Sungei Luit in Negeri Sembilan, the Kedana mine at Mount Ophir in Johore, and the biggest one was at Pahang, around Raub. The production of gold in the three states at the end of the First World War gives an idea of the scale:

<u>State</u>	<u>Year (ounces)</u>		
	<u>1918</u>	<u>1919</u>	<u>1920</u>
Perak	1,237	1,091	1,338
N. Sembilan	38	33	9
Pahang	17,034	15,278	11,476

(4).

Doi states that the Raub mine in Pahang, produced 700,000 ounces of gold in the fifty years since production started in 1899 (5). All mines operated in Malaya have now closed down because it has been found uneconomic to carry on production.

Tin, less valuable than gold, was far more extensively found. Small tin mining industry had been started in the early years but with primitive techniques, the most famous being "mendulang".

3. Andaya, Ibid, p. 12; about Golden Kherosonese, see P. Wheatley, The Golden Kherosonese: Studies in the Historical Geography of the Malay Peninsula Before A.D. 1500, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur reprinted 1966.

4. Quote from R.O. Winstedt (ed), op.cit., p. 185.

5. Doi Jin-Bee, op.cit., p. 314.

The technique of the "mendulang" was to dig out the "pay dirt" (karang) and they used trays to shovel it into a stream of running water. The heavy particles of ore fall to the bottom while the soil (earth) was carried away by the stream. The ore was then smelted in a charcoal furnace and cast into ingots.

The tin mining industry is of great antiquity and even now it still makes a major contribution to the Malaysian economy. In this industry Malays worked on a part-time basis or worked as their chiefs required (6). Chinese workers were to be found widely working with Malay chiefs and later the industry ^{was} taken over by the Chinese and Europeans.

The Malay economy was basically closed and self-sufficient and petty trade was in the hands of the local nobility. Until the nineteenth century the monopolies of the trade in imports and exports were in their hands. They also acted as entrepreneurs but alongside foreign Malays (Indonesians) or Arabs or later the Chinese. The carriage of tin was also in their hands. It has been noted that the Sultan of Kedah carried on large tin trading expeditions. He carried a very large amount of tin to the Coromandel coast of India in the seventeenth century (7).

6. See corvée system under "Malay political system" in the following essays.

7. E. Sadka, op.cit., p. 18.

The Malay Political System.

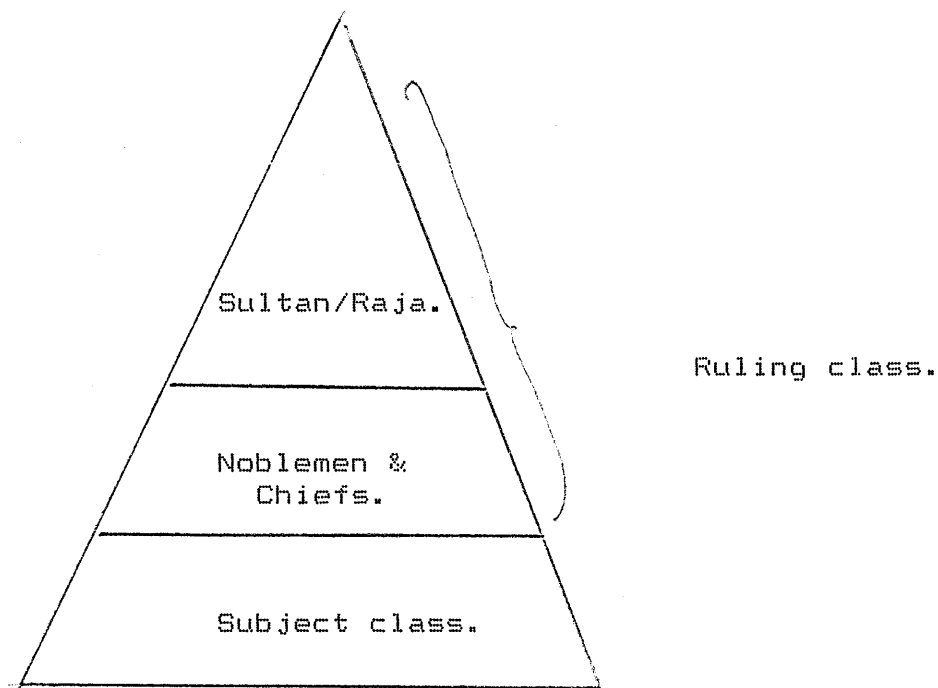
The largest political unit in Malaya was the state. The word "negeri" meant state and before the nineteenth century the state was in practice a city, usually a port-city, especially in political systems which derived from the Malacca Sultanate. However, after the nineteenth century, the states were either ^{formed} by conquest or by the allegiance owed to the Sultan by independent chiefs (1). The state was typically the basin of a large river, forming a block of land extending from the coast inland to the central watershed. The capital of the state was the point at which the main river ran into the sea. At this point the ruler could control the movement of all persons who entered or left his state. He could defend it from external attacks and he could levy taxes on its imports and exports.

The Sultan was head of the state assisted by several noblemen "pembesar" and territorial chiefs. The group of the ruler was simply called the ruling class (Golongan pemerintah) and the rest of the community was subject class "rakyat" (2). The Ruling class comprised the Sultan, noblemen and the chiefs who gave instructions and the rest who had to obey them. This position can be seen from diagram in the following pages.

A ruling class and subject class was one of the basic elements of

1. J.M. Gullick, The Indigenous Political System of Western Malaya, op.cit., p. 26.

2. Ibid, under "the ruling class"; see also L.R. Wheeler, The Modern Malay, Allen & Unwin Ltd., London 1928, under "Malay type section 1, 11 & 111"; R.O. Winstedt (ed), op.cit., pp. 102-107.



Malay political and social structure. The subject class was very loyal to their chiefs. In consequence, most people had no initiative. They only did whatever they were instructed to do.

" I was one of the Maharaja Lela's followers.

I must do what he bids me. I am his rakyat.

I would not dare to resist him (3).

The two classes, the ruling and subject class rarely intermarried and there was a gap between them. Subject class had to pay absolute respect to the ruling class. The subject class referred to themselves either as "patek" when speaking to a prince, or as "hamba datuk" when addressing a non royal aristocrat. If they met on a path the man of the subject class squatted down to put himself on a lower level. Sultan or Raja was ^{the} title in all states except Negeri Sembilan where Yang Di Pertuan Besar or Yam Tuan was used (4).

3. quote from Gullick, Ibid, p. 65.

4. M.G.S. Swift, Malay Peasant Society in Jelebu, Athlone Press,

Malaysia had a close contact with India and Islam over a long period, and therefore had assimilated the Hindu and Islamic ideas of kingship. The word Raja was used as a result of Hindu influence until, with the coming of Islam, it was replaced by Sultan.

The Sultan was the centre of power and was supported by a number of noblemen and territorial chiefs who acted as his advisers. His obvious role was to symbolize unity and order in the state. The Sultan was theoretically the owner of the soil and the arbiter of life and death; appointments to office, concessions and revenue monopolies were in his gift, and theoretically transferred no permanent or hereditary right. But ownership of the soil had only a symbolic importance in a country where land was much more plentiful than people; appointments and commissions were usually confirmations of power already established, and were in practice if not principle hereditary. Furthermore, custom secured to the chiefs a degree of control over the sultanate, giving them a share in the determination of the succession, and requiring their consent to all important state decisions and to foreign treaties (5). The Sultan strengthened his position in various ways (6).

London 1965, pp. 12-22. Generally, the Yang di Pertuan Besar's position was the same as the Sultan.

5. E. Sadka, Ibid, p. 11.

6. J.M. Gullick, op.cit., discussed in depth under the Sultanate. Also see, D.J. Steinberg et.al, In Search of South East Asia, Pall Mall Press, London 1971, under "Malay Sultans"; W.W. Skeat, Malay Magic: An Introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsula, Macmillan, London 1900, under "Sanctity of the Body".

Some of them ^{were} taken from the principles of Hindu kingship, and it was believed ^{the} Sultan was vested with "daulat"; majesty. He was also sacrosanct. It was said that if any one committed treason against the Sultan he would suffer inevitable retribution. Several things were reserved to him and used as a means of separating him and ^{the} royal family from the subject class. Nobody except ^a member of the royal family was allowed to wear yellow clothes and royalty also used a special vocabulary. The greatness of the Sultan also can be seen in his regalia (kebesaran) which consisted of weapons, musical instruments, various insignia of office including historic jewels, robes and other accoutrements, ritual ornaments and vessel articles of magic workmanship (7). The details of the royal regalia were different in each state but the principle of separation was the same (8).

Obviously ^{the} Sultan was supported by the chiefs (pembesar) who acted as advisers to him. Closest to the Sultan were the first rank chiefs who held offices which derived from the Malacca Sultanate. The offices of the state were chief minister (bendahara), commander of troops and police (temenggong), harbour master and collector of customs (shahbandar) and treasurer (penghulu bendahari). The above officials served in the palace (istana) or at least in the port town itself. In some states, chiefs were arranged in groups of four (orang besar berempat), eight (orang besar berlapan) and sixteen (enam belas) (9).

7. E. Sadka, op.cit., p. 8.

8. W.W. Skeat, op.cit., pp. 24-27.

9. E. Sadka, op.cit., pp. 11-16; J.M. Gullick, 1965 op.cit., pp.

The next political unit was a district (jajahan or daerah). A district was governed by the district chief who was appointed by the Sultan. As with the state itself, the territorial chief was usually based on a particular stretch of river. The chief was entitled to obtain revenues from the district he commanded. Up to ^{the} nineteenth century their revenues came mainly from the passing trade. In certain districts which were rich in tin, the chief became richer and more powerful than the Sultan and the chief was often largely independent of the capital (10). His advice was always asked for in important matters of foreign policy or when trade relations were being discussed.

The economic resources of the chiefs were extremely varied, but their revenue derived mainly from the two sources, firstly services extracted from slaves, bondmen and secondly taxes on production and trade. Chiefs also could demand free labour from the subject class through village headmen in the district, called the corvée system or "sistem kerah". This labour would carry out tasks such as clearing the river, building houses or mosque etc, and the services could be required at any time. Nevertheless, in practice there were limitations. Chiefs could only ensure enough labour when they were able to provide food and asked for workers at the right time. For example, labour was more easily available out the harvest season. Swettenham helpfully gives the following

89-94.

10. For example, Ngah Ibrahim was a very powerful chief in Larut, Perak. See C.D. Cowan, Nineteenth Century Malaya: The Origins of British Political Control, Oxford University Press, London 1961.

description:

" When a chief wanted labour for any public or private work such as the clearing of a river, the building of a mosque or house, the manning of boats for a journey all the men within reach were summoned, through the village headmen, to come and undertake this forced labour, for which no payment was ever made, and though the labourers were supposed to be fed as long as the work lasted, that was not always done (11).

The smallest political unit was the village "kampung". The head of this type of village was a headman "penghulu" (12) who was also appointed by the Sultan. The headman might have an aristocratic connection with the district chief, but very often, he was a member of the subject class. The appointment of the headman to the office was made by the Sultan only as a confirmation, as I mentioned earlier, so the real facts leading to the appointment of headmen were obviously determined by several factors. These important factors were (13): the headman

11. Quote by J.M. Gullick, 1965 op.cit., p. 108.

12. Ibid, p. 36, in modern times the "penghulu" is responsible for a "mukim" (sub-district which may include several villages) the headman of single village is called "ketua kampung" or in some areas "penggawa" and "sidang".

13. Ibid, they will be discussed in depth under "authority in the

often inherited his office from his father or other patrilineal relatives, he was a member of a numerous and groups in the village, he was related to a considerable number of his fellow villagers, he was relatively wealthy, and he had the support of his superior in the political hierarchy and he had prestige arising from his personal abilities.

The headman became the mediating authority between the peasants and the chief and was generally responsible for the maintenance of peace within the area, for organizing labour for ^{the} corvée system and for contributing men and money to the chief's defence force (14). The headman ^{was} also responsible for arresting criminals and delivering them to the district chief for trials and exercising a small judicial function, ^{for} solving various small problems (15) and fulfilling various other requirements of the district chief. Although the headman enjoyed high status within his village and held responsibility, he was still a member of one family group in the village.

In order to exercise his duty in the village, the headman was assisted by several officials. The most important person next to

village".

14. S.S. Bedlington, Malaysia and Singapore: The Building of New States, Cornell University Press 1978, p. 28.

15. S. Husin Ali, "Social Stratification In Kampong Bagan: A Study of Class, Status, Conflict and Mobility in a Rural Malay Community", JMBRAS 1964, pp. 22-23. Two examples how headman succeed to solve problems existed, the first one quarrel between Malay and Chinese parents because of child and the other quarel between six members in the family concerning inherited a piece of land.

the headman in the hierarchy of the village was the "Imam" (vicar) of the mosque.

The "Imam" was concerned with religion and probably magic at the village level (16). His importance in religion came from the fact that he led public prayers and had responsibility for the administration of the mosque. At the same time, he probably also acted as a religious teacher. In comparison with the village headman, the office of the "Imam" was easier to achieve. The "Imam" was supposed to know more about Islamic learning although great knowledge was not required. Obviously he was a haj who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The "Khatib" is next to the "Imam", whose responsibility it was to give the admonitory address (in Arabic and in between in Malay) at the Friday prayers. The lesser officer of the mosque is "Bilal", who made the daily call to prayer also in Arabic.

Finally, the magician or "pawang"^{was the} (not least important figure in the village. He performed the seasonal rituals necessary to placate the forces of nature, to ensure good crops or catches, or to cleanse the village of accumulated malignant spirits (17). In certain areas the magician was also known as the spirit doctor "bomoh" or "dukun". The "pawang" doctored the sick because he had an esoteric knowledge of physical and mental illness, together with causes and remedies (18).

16. J.M. Gullick, The Indigenous Political System of Western Malaya, op.cit., pp. 138-143. See Islam and magic.

17 W.W. Skeat, op.cit., pp. 56-61.

18. Ibid, pp. 408-457.

"Pawang" or "Bomoh" were normally men but women could be a "Bomoh". For example, in Jenderam Hilir village, in the state of Selangor, there were two women "bomohs" and one of them was believed to be able to relieve depression caused by spirit bewitchment (19).

19. P.J. Wilson, A Village and Malaysia: Social Values and Rural Development, Hraf press, New Haven 1967, p. 43.



British Intervention.

In 1786, British (East India Company) occupation began in Malaya when it received Penang (Pulau Pinang) from the Sultan of Kedah in return for military support. Later in the early nineteenth century, Singapore (1819) and Malacca (1824) were put under British control, and were known as the Straits Settlements (Negeri-negeri Selat).

Generally, in the nineteenth century the British were satisfied with a non-intervention policy in the Malay States. The British were not anxious to spread their influence and extend their power further inland into the Malay States before 1874. This policy reflected their belief that if they tried to extend their power, it might cause the intervention of other major powers such as Russia, Germany or France who also wished to develop colonial empires in the east (1) and even ^{the} ^{were also} British aware that intervention in Malay states might lead to war with Siam. However, beyond that their prime concern was trade (2). The importance of the Straits Settlements was as the strategic location between India and China. Cowan described British policy as follows,

" British government had never been, and were not in 1873, interested in the Malay States for their own sakes. Their prime

1. N. Tarling, "British Policy in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago 1824-1871", JMBRAS, vol. XXX, part 3, 1957, pp. 9-18.

2. L.A. Mills, "British Malaya 1824-67", Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, London, New York and Melbourne, permission from JMBRAS reprinted 1966, The Malayan Policy of the East India Company, 1786-1867, pp. 174-188.

concern was British trade, especially trade with China, and their interest in the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea was strategic, not colonial" (3).

Even in the early stages, the reason why the British took Penang from the Sultan of Kedah can illustrate the non-intervention policy which they carried out. Penang was not only important in trade between England and China, but helped to protect India and her commerce by providing a base for naval units (4).

In practice, the intention to keep a non-intervention policy in the Malay States was complicated by the position of Siam, later known as Thailand. Prior to the British intervention, Siam was already establishing its influence and regarded the North Malay States as vassal states - Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Terengganu. Moreover, the uprising of the Chao Phaya of Ligor, the semi-independent governor of the Siamese state of Patani after 1812 was the beginning of an intensive campaign to assert effective control over the Malay States to the south and this threatened the British position. The British tried to prevent Siam from extending its authority southward. This led them to a policy of supporting the threatened states like Perak and Selangor, so as

3. C.D. Cowan, Nineteenth Century Malaya: The Origins Of British Political Control, Oxford University Press, London 1961, p. 269.

4. R. Heussler, British Rule in Malaya: The Malayan Civil Service and its Predecessors, 1867-1942, Clio Press, 1981, p.1; N. Tarling, British Policy In The Malay Peninsula And Archipelago 1824-1871, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur & Singapore, London & New York 1969, Introduction.

to erect a buffer between themselves and Siam (5). The British were also involved in the affairs of the Malay States when they signed several treaties with the Siam government and local chiefs - the treaty between Henry Burney with Siam in 1826, that with Perak which was signed by W.S. Cracroft in 1818, by J. Anderson in 1825 and Captain James Low in 1826; and Selangor was also included in the treaty which was signed by Cracroft in 1818 and Anderson in 1825; in 1831 and 1832, the ^{district of} Rembau came to an agreement with R. Ibbetson on a basis of friendship (6).

The British changed their policy and later on became more aggressive when Malay States became chaotic and unstable instead of peaceful and stable as a result of several conflicts in the late nineteenth century. Disputes especially in Perak and Selangor about succession and the struggle for tin mines caused this instability. Disturbances which occurred in Perak were also caused by a struggle for the succession to the throne between Raja Abdullah, Raja Ismail and Raja Yusof. All of them wanted to be a Sultan after the death of Sultan Ali. In Selangor on the other hand, conflict was caused by competition over the rich tin mine areas at Lembah Klang and Kuala Lumpur. The struggle for the tin mines in Selangor was led by Tengku Kudin and Raja Mahadi. The disturbances in the Malay States were also made worse by the activities of the Chinese secret societies under the leadership

5. C.D. Cowan, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

6. W.G. Maxwell and W.S. Gibson (ed), Treaties and Engagements Affecting the Malay States and Borneo, London 1924, pp. 77-81, 20-23, 30-34, 43-48.

of Ghee Hin and Hai San. Both groups were competing for the tin concession in Larut, Perak and in Lembah Klang and Kuala Lumpur, Selangor. For example, Chinese tin miners in Larut had clashes in 1861 and 1865 and this recurred in 1872 with considerable loss of life (7). All the conflict mentioned above was directly affected by the growth of trade. Malay States tin imported into the Straits Settlements was badly hit and the value of imports at Penang during 1872-1873 decreased^{by} (nearly 1,000,000 dollars (8), but also the colonial government had a natural fear that these disturbances might spread to Penang and Singapore, which had suffered from Chinese riots in the past (9).

Generally, the chaotic condition of the Malay States was pushing politicians and administrators in London to take forward action in order to prevent a breakdown of trade and avoid foreign powers putting their feet in the Malay Peninsula. The condition of the Malay Peninsula, Lord Kimberley wrote, "is becoming very serious. It is the old story of misgovernment of Asiatic states. This might go on without any very serious consequences except the stoppage of trade, were it not that the European and Chinese capitalists, stimulated by the great riches in tin mines which exist in some of the Malay States are making suggestions to

7. For the account of rivalries of Ghee Hin and Hai San, see V. Purcell, The Chinese In Southeast Asia, Oxford University Press, London, New York and Toronto 1951, pp. 316-324.

8. Mohamed Amin & Malcolm Caldwell (ed), Malaya: The Making Of A Neo-Colony, Russell Peace Foundation, Nottingham 1977, p. 19.

9. R. Allen, Malaysia: Prospect and Retrospect, the Impact and Aftermath of Colonial Rule, Oxford University Press, London 1968, p. 44.

native princes that they should seek the aid of Europeans to enable them to put down the disorders which prevail. We are the paramount power on the peninsula up to the limit of the states tributary to Siam, and looking to the vicinity of India and our whole position in the east I apprehend that it would be a serious matter if any other European power were to obtain a footing in the peninsula" (10).

This situation became reality when Clarke was appointed in November 1873 as a Governor in the Straits Settlements. He took full advantage from a Colonial Office - authorized forward policy on the west coast (11). In addition, he was also known as a strong imperialist and it is not surprising that intervention took place during his time in office (12). Moreover, Clarke's forward movement was accelerated by the pressure from the Straits Settlements merchants to restore peace and order, and most important of all was the request for Residents in the Federated Malay States made by the rulers themselves.

The first case of intervention in the Malay States was Perak, where Raja Abdullah sought British help in order to solve the succession dispute between him and Raja Yusuf. He wrote to Clarke inviting him to send a Resident to Perak and asking in return for recognition as Sultan (13). It was this offer which resulted in

10. quote from C.D. Cowan, op.cit., p. 169.

11. N. Tarling, 1969, op.cit., p. 84.

12. C.D. Cowan, op.cit., under "Sir Andrew Clarke & the introduction of Residents".

13. R. Emerson, Malaysia: A Study in Direct and Indirect Rule,

the well-known Pangkor Treaty of 22 January 1874, which recognized Abdullah as Sultan in return for his agreement to accept a British Resident whose advice had to be asked and acted upon on all questions other than touching Malay religion and custom (14). Whatever views or arguments there are concerning the factors which encouraged Britain to take forward action in the Malay States, (all writers cannot escape from this particular incident) (15). It can be seen as a turning point when J.W.W. Birch became British Resident in Perak. After 1874, the British used similar methods to expand their influence in the Malay States, and for comparable reasons. By the end of 1874, Residents and Subordinate officers had been posted to all three west coast states which comprised Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and ^{Perak.} Later, in 1888, the state of Pahang came under British protection. The Malay States were united by the British in 1896 in order to increase administrative efficiency. Before this, Residents in each state were free to act without proper guidance. Now a common civil service with a central bureaucracy in Kuala Lumpur was formed in the Federated Malay States led by the Resident General. He had responsibility for supervising the administration of the states through the individual Residents, and was officially answerable to the Governor who was also High Commissioner for the

Macmillan, New York 1937, p. 119; B.W. & L.Y. Andaya, A History of Malaysia, Macmillan, London 1982, p. 155.

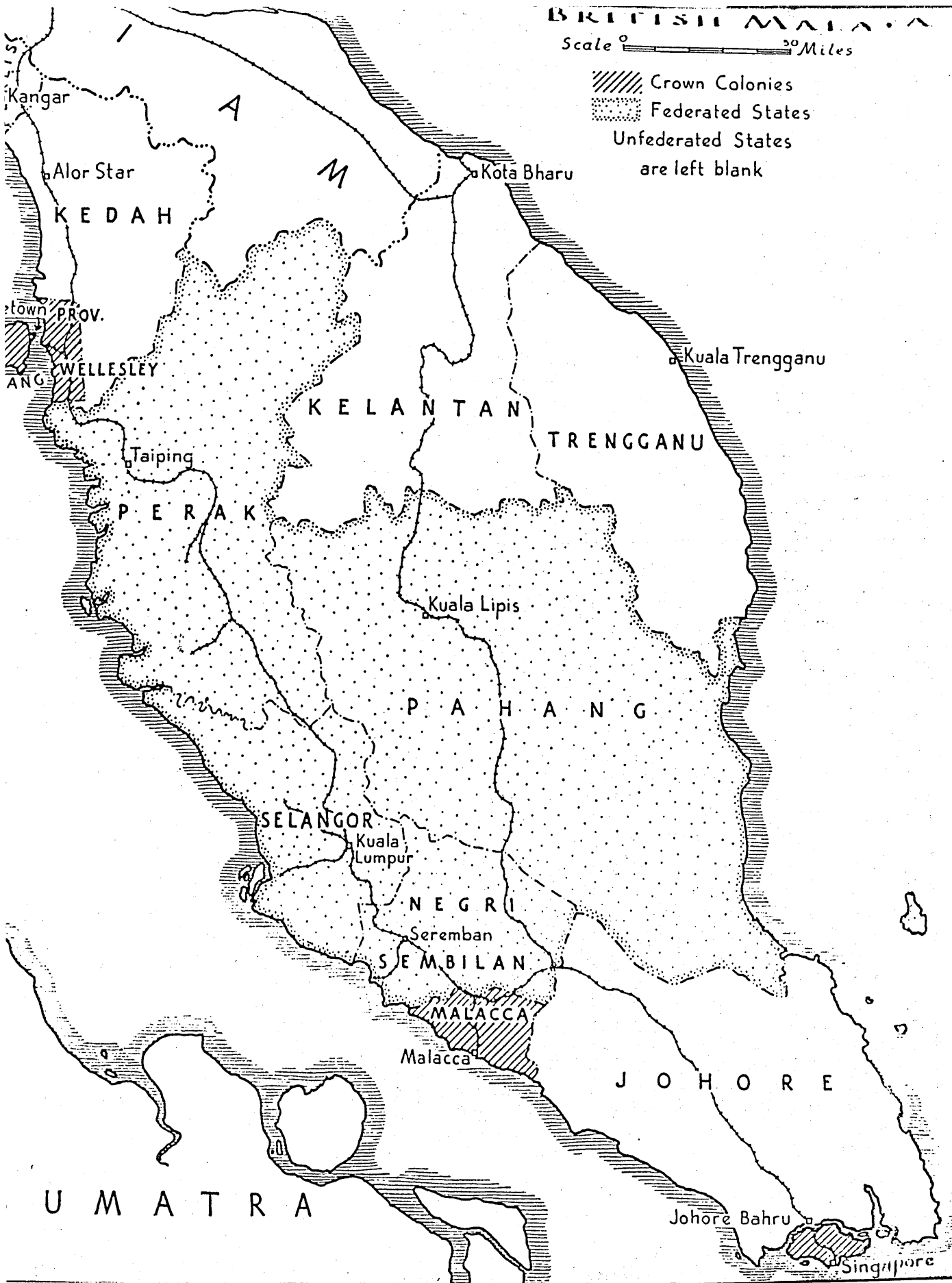
14. W.G. Maxwell & W.S. Gibson, op.cit., p. 28. See article 1 & 6.

15. For examples, C.D. Cowan; R. Emerson; N. Tarling; C.N. Parkinson; M. Caldwell and E. Sadka.

BRITISH MALAYA

Scale 0 50 Miles

- /// Crown Colonies
- Federated States
- Unfederated States are left blank



Federated Malay States.

Before ^{the} early twentieth century, British influence on the Malay States was limited in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, and there was little involvement in the Unfederated Malay States - Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu, also known as the Northern Malay States.

All four Northern Malay States traditionally acknowledged Siamese overlordship and the British recognized that situation on the basis of the 1826 treaty until the twentieth century, though the situation in Kelantan and Terengganu was ambiguous (16). This ambiguity only existed in European eyes, especially on the British side, because the treaty did not formally recognize Siamese overlordship. Whereas from Bangkok's point of view, Kelantan and Terengganu were vassal states who acknowledged their tributary status by sending the "Bunga emas" and "Perak" (gold and silver flowers) every three years (17). Despite the usual sending of "Bunga emas" and "Perak", the Siamese also interfered in internal affairs. For example, Siamese help was asked in order to settle a throne dispute in Kelantan between Tuan Senik and Long Zainal in 1837. With Siamese help, Tuan Senik was succeeded in defeating Long Zainal. Although Siamese rule was not directly implemented, Tuan Senik had an obligation to send a political report together with "Bunga emas" to Siam (18).

16. W.G. Maxwell & W.S. Gibson, op.cit., pp. 77-82.

17. B.W. & L.Y. Andaya, op.cit., p. 118.

18. K.K. Kim, "Semenanjung Tanah Melayu Dalam Kurun Yang Ke Sembilan Belas - 111", Zainal Abidin Abd. Wahid (ed), Sejarah

Generally, the British recognized all four Northern Malay States as Siamese vassal states until the point when both sides agreed to begin consultation about transfer into the British sphere from Siamese overlordship. There were many factors which led to British interest in the affairs of the Unfederated Malay States. Among those factors were disturbances in the north of Perak, Sai and other districts which could affect the British economy in the peninsula (19). The most important factor, however, which encouraged direct British involvement in the Northern States was the danger of Siam falling into the hands of foreign powers, such as Russia, Germany or France. One British administrator had expressed his view as follows,

" Our true policy is to extend our influence over all the Malay States of the peninsula up to British Burmah, so that in the event of Siam falling under French influence, we should be in the position of demonstrating that interference with Malay States would be a breach with us " (20).

There was the example of Behn Meyer, a German entrepreneur who attempted to lease Pulau Langkawi from Siam (21), and German activity in the railway department. Financial problems and issues

Malaysia Sepintas Lalu, D.B.P., Kuala Lumpur 1983, p. 86.

19. Zahari Hj. Adam, "Zaman Peralihan Di Perlis 1909-1940", K.K. Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Moden, Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1984, p. 64.

20. R. Emerson, op.cit., p. 223.

21. Zahari, op.cit., p. 65.

of land concession in Kelantan were among the important factors to make British feel it imperative to interfere in the Northern Malay States. Through the Anglo-Siam treaty in 1909, Siamese authority over Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis and a nearby island was officially transferred to British overlordship, protection, administration and control (22).

Basically, after the Anglo-Siam agreement in 1909, the administration of the Malay States can be roughly divided into three categories. Firstly, Straits Settlements which comprised Penang, Malacca and Singapore. Secondly, Federated Malay States namely Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang, and finally Unfederated Malay States such as Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu and Johore.

Johore was located in the south of the peninsula and its position was very different from two categories of Malay States; Federated and Unfederated. It is a state which it is most difficult to characterize and describe in any simple and straightforward way. There were several elements which gave Johore a very special character among the Malay States (23). As regards its population, Johore had a vast majority of immigrants, whereas in the Unfederated States the majority of the population was Malay. Johore also had a long established relationship with the British, and yet it was the last state to accept a British adviser. Johore only received a British adviser in 1914 but then, as

22. W.G. Maxwell & W.S. Gibson, op.cit., p. 88.

23. R. Emerson, op.cit., pp. 197-198.

elsewhere among the Malay States in the peninsula his advice had to be asked and acted upon in all matters other than those touching Malay religion and custom.

The Johore treaty was totally different from the other Malayan treaties which were signed by the Governor of the Straits Settlements. In the case of Johore, however, it was signed by the Colonial Secretary in London and it was made for purposes of friendship (24). The Residential system which had been established elsewhere on the peninsula did not extend to Johore until the 1914 agreement was signed, and this agreement actually was a continuation of the 1885 treaty which appointed a British officer to live in Johore but whose functions were to be only those of a consular agent.

24. W.G. & W.S. Gibson, *op.cit.*, pp. 132-133, treaty 1885 was signed by F.A. Stanley, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the colonies. *Treaties 1885 & 1914*, see pp. 132-136.

The Origin of Malay Nationalism up to the independence.

Nationalism has taken many forms and expressions, and it is impossible to define exactly. Nationalism comprises several basic elements of which strong group feeling, common race, language, religion, tradition and past historical achievements, works of art, characteristics of the people, political ideologies and propaganda are most important. Other factors like history, geography, and economic advance helped to develop the idea of nationalism (1). Nationalism may be defined as a sentiment, loyalty or sympathy which binds a group of people together through common institutions and culture and thus creates a unity among them (2). Or, in other words, nationalism is a sentiment which binds a group of people together on the basis of common ideals and beliefs.

It is also difficult to determine the origin of the nationalism in many countries. In the case of Malay nationalism that is also the case and it is hard to say when Malay nationalism actually began. Many writers suggest that Malaya nationalism only began between the years 1946-1957 and onwards (3). Some think 1946 was very significant because then UMNO (United Malays National Organization) was formed to abolish the Malayan Union proposal. Others emphasize the later co-operation by Malays, Indians and

1. C.R. Chavan, Nationalism in Asia, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi 1973, pp. 63-68.

2. Royal Institute of International Affairs, Nationalism, Oxford University press, London 1939, pp. xvi-xx.

3. See C.B. Kheng, "Asal Usul dan Asas Nasionalisme Malaya" in R. Suntharalingam & Abd. Rahman Hj. Ismail (ed), Nasionalisme Satu Tinjauan Sejarah, Fajar Bakti, Petaling Jaya, 1985, pp. 81-101.

Chinese in an attempt to gain independence which was achieved in 1957 and extended to form Malaysia in 1963. The Chinese and Indian migration influx resulted in the growth of rubber and tin industries in Malaya, and in consequence Malaya became a multi-racial country. Every race tried to perpetuate its own values and no contact occurred between them. Malays stayed in the villages, the Chinese in mines and towns and Indians in the rubber estates. Differences in interests and values among them prevented the existence of a united national movement until 1942. But that does not mean that there was no nationalist movement in Malaya before the second world war at all. Nationalism started here on a racial basis, and in comparison, it was Chinese nationalism which was the most active movement in Malaya (4). The activeness of the Chinese movement seemed to swamp other movements especially that of Malays. The direction of the Chinese and Indian nationalist movement before 1942 was towards their home countries. Most of them in the early stage came to Malaya for work purposes. After they retained some money, they intended to go back to their home countries. On the other hand, the Malay nationalist movement was still not united as a result of the different education Malays received. The education system divided Malays into several groups. One group received British education through English medium schools mostly located in towns. This Malay group had a mentality bias towards the British in all aspects of life. The

4. See W.L. Holland, Asian Nationalism and the West (ed), Macmillan, New York 1953.

group who received a religious education, especially from the Middle East, had a bias toward a modernization movement based on Islamic thinking. The remaining group was passive and less sensitive toward political development. They were influenced by traditional values and they were preoccupied by the concerns of their daily life, except in the case of a very small number who took part in politics, particularly those who received Malay education. However, their political values were isolated from both of the other two groups. There was also ^{a third group} known as ^{the} left wing Malay nationalist movement.

But, if we consider nationalism in the context of Asian history, the word "nationalism" is the idea of revolt against foreign political domination, economic exploitation and the principles of racial discrimination or inequality (5), or in general description, nationalism is a political movement depending on a feeling of collective grievance against foreigners (6). If we define nationalism as an anti-foreign movement, there is no doubt that Malay nationalism had begun for a long time. Their struggle, as declared by the leaders themselves, was anti-foreign. This can be clearly seen in many events. The most open resistance was led by Datuk Maharaja Lela in Perak and in consequence J.W.W. Birch (British Resident) was killed in 1875. There was the Naning war between Dol Said and the East India Company in 1830-1832, and the uprising led by Tok Janggut in Kelantan in 1915. There was also a

5. C.R. Chavan, op.cit., p. 461.

6. K.R. Minogue, Nationalism, University Paper back, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London 1969, p. 25.

peasants revolt in Terengganu in 1928 which was on the same scale as the earlier incident in Negeri Sembilan in 1875 (7). In addition, we could argue that the anti-foreign movements in the Malay Peninsula began even earlier than the events mentioned above. For example, Malay resistance against the Portugese and Dutch in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Malacca (8). These acts of resistance were important but they were very local in character and cannot be said to have involved the entire Malay people in a common struggle. Moreover the leaders of these struggles came from the elite groups who had their own interests, and feared that they would lose economic and political power as a result of the British intervention. In other words, the uprising was only carried out by the leaders in their own interest, and the ordinary people had no concept of a Malayan nation (9). For example, the sentiment of dissatisfaction which led to the anti-British movement in Perak by Datok Maharaja Lela arose because he was not allowed to collect taxes after J.W.W. Birch's appearance in Perak as Resident. Taxes were most important as an income resource for the chiefs and also symbolized their political power

7. Abdullah Zakaria Ghazali, "Kebangkitan Anti-British di Semenanjung Tanah Melayu", K.K. Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Modern, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1984, pp. 1-12; Mohamed Amin, "Appendix: British 'Intervention' and Malay Resistance", M. Amin & M. Caldwell (ed), Malaya: The Making of a New Colony, Russell Peace Foundation, ^{Nottingham} 1977, pp. 64-71; P.J. Begbie, The Malayan Peninsula, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1967, about Nanning war see pages 231-260 and L.A. Mills, op.cit., pp.115-128.

8. See Hj. Buyong Adil, Perjuangan Orang Melayu Menentang Penjajahan Abad 15-19, D.B.P., Kuala Lumpur, 1983.

9. W. Shaw, Tun Razak: His Life and Times, Longmans Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. 1976, p. 29.

and this situation was not changed until 1874.

The resistance in the other areas, which I have mentioned above, basically derives from a common Malay dissatisfaction with the unstable situation brought about by foreign especially British intervention.

Whatever interpretation we give concerning Malay resistance, the development of Malay nationalism in Malay society certainly happened over a long period, but the struggles only slowly produced a sense of national consciousness in Malay society. After the attempts by Malays to resist foreign domination failed, no more planned uprisings against colonial rule were ever made by the Malays until 1946. It seems that Malay nationalism disappeared together with any Malay movement. This was because Malays at the time did not have any concept of national consciousness. Resistance only occurred among Malay aristocrats who were losing their power and economic importance. But then Malay aristocrats seemed happy to live under colonial protection. However, anyone who taught that there was no nationalist movement in the early twentieth century until ^{the} second world war might be wrong because nationalism is not only illustrated by revolts. And indeed in Malay society this period does reveal the beginning of Malay nationalism. In this case the leading place in the movement was taken by a comparatively small group of native intellectuals and middle class people, who had received an education on Islamic lines instead of the elite groups who had carried on local struggles before. They were followed by another group some of whom received an education along Malay lines and some on Western

lines. We argue that the character of Malay nationalism is the same as nationalism in other Asian countries where the national movements start first with cultural and religious activities and then they develop into economic and political movements as there was a gradual growth of national consciousness among the people (10).

Malay nationalism in the early twentieth century was ^{not} very apparent in politics though it did exist, but nationalists paid more attention to religious, social and economic questions. The consciousness which appeared before the 1920's was led by groups of teachers and Muslim students through local magazines and newspapers such as Al-Imam. Al-Imam (leader) was first published in 1906 in Singapore on the initiative of several people, namely Sheikh Tahir Jalaludin Al-Azhari, Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hadi, Hj. Abbas Mohd Taha and Sheikh Salim Al-Kilali (11). They appeared as an intellectual group who wanted to change their society. They were popularly known as Modernizers (Kaum Muda), because of their braveness and determination to bring new ideas. Modernizers were influenced by the Islamic modernization movement from the Middle East led by Jamal ad Din Al-Ahgani and his famous disciple Muhamad Abduh. They gave special emphasis in their modernization programme to attempting to revise the Islamic religion in the correct way. Their ambition was to unite and develop a Muslim community based on modern thinking but also guided by the Islamic

10. C.R. Chavan, op.cit., p. 448.

11. W.R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, Yale University Press, New Haven 1967, pp. 59-64.

religion. Education should be modernized ⁱⁿ Muslim society in order to prevent Islam from being overcome by western influences, which accompanied western political control (12).

Modernizers discussed at length all aspects of the Malay way of life especially religion, and other aspects such as society, education, economy and politics ^{were} frequently published by the newspapers and magazines start^{ing} with Al-Imam. That is ^{why} Roff points out that " Al-Imam's first concern was with religion and not directly with social even less with political change " (13). Modernizers attempted to spread their influence in the Malay States but did not succeed because there was strong resistance from Conservatives (Kaum Tua) compared with Straits Settlements like Singapore, Malacca and Penang, Modernizers had most success in those areas. Their movement operated freely because Conservative influence was not strong, comparatively. Religious administration was put directly under Sultans in the Malay States. In the Straits Settlements, the British seem not to have worried about Islamic movements and saw religion as unimportant and therefore took little action as regards it. The success of the Modernizers in spreading their influence in the Straits Settlements can be seen by the formation of many religious schools such as "Madrasah Al-Iqbal", 1907 in Singapore, "Al-Hadi" 1913 in Malacca and "Al-Masyhur" in Penang.

12. C.C. Adam, Islam And Modernism In Egypt, Oxford University Press, London 1933, pp. 13-15.

13. W.R. Roff, op.cit., p. 57.

New ideas brought by Modernizers always led to disputes with Conservatives who still carried on the old traditional values. Modernizers attacked customs and superstitions which kept Malay society backward, and they worked out a reformulation of Islamic practice which would better enable them to compete in the modern world. Modernizers not only attacked the bad Malay customs and superstitions but they also attacked religious authorities in the Malay States who had received the mandate from the Sultans to be responsible for Islamic religion. The Islamic education of these men was poor and many were influenced by animism. Friction between both groups always led to direct conflict.

"The reformist came into direct conflict with the state religious authorities on a wide range of ritual, doctrinal and social questions " (14).

They failed to get as much support as they would have liked not only because of resistance from Conservatives but also because there was no participation from the middle class. Although Modernizers were not involved directly in politics their appearance corresponded with a desire to see Malay society rise as a modern and independent society.

Talking about freedom, in practice Malay society itself was not confident about self government because not only were there weaknesses but, most important, there was no attempt to remove internal differences and create a united front. The deeper we look

14. Ibid, p. 78.

the more it appears that Malays were not united as a big society to form a single Malay race. They were segregated into different groups because they held different ideologies. They belonged to different kingship groups, states and spoke different dialects, and had different political views. Together with the dispute between Modernizers and Conservatives about Islamic principles unity in such circumstances was impossible. Modernizers condemned Conservatives because their beliefs and practices were wrong and their principles completely diverged from real Islamic teaching, whereas Conservatives called Modernizers irreligious because of the reforms they tried to introduce. Besides that, Malays also divided on the basis of the states they came from. Malays referred to themselves as Malay according to their home state - Pahang, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and so on. It was the same with Malay associations which were formed later on with each state having its own association such as Persatuan Melayu Singapura (Singapore Malay Union), Persatuan Melayu Pahang (Pahang Malay Union) and so on.

Intermarriage also became an issue, when local females and foreign males were involved. Their sons or daughters would be classified as of mixed blood descent and to belong to the race of the father. If the father was Indian so his child would be classified as of Indian-descended blood (darah keturunan keling) or Arab-descended blood (darah keturunan Arab) if the father was an Arab. Malay people did not accept as real Malays those who were of mixed blood and denied them the right to take part in Malay organizations.

" for we real Malays feel very great sympathy toward our relatives who we isolated from our organization and we cry if we remember their bad luck, but what can we do, because the mistake was made by their ancestors in allowing intermarriage with foreign people to take place?" (15).

The Malay movement in politics can be divided into left and right wing movements. The left wing movement was radical and wanted to unite with Indonesia. Their ambition was to create a Greater Malaya (Kesatuan Melayu Raya). Right wing movements, on the other hand, wanted to perpetuate the Malay Sultans and self government. Generally a national consciousness can only be seen in the small group of Malay society which I have mentioned above. This group was influenced by the Islamic modernization ideas from the Middle East led by Muhamad Abduh with Malay students at the University of Al-Azhar as intermediaries. At this stage, they paid much attention to religious, social, education and economic questions. They saw the weakness of Malay society as caused by deficiencies in education and failure to understand Islamic teaching. Malay society was too fanatical in religious practice and followed without question whatever was taught to them. This blind acceptance was condemned by the Modernizers. Al-Imam in its very first issue urged Malays to follow God's (Allah) commandments and his prophet in an article entitled " open letter

15. Quote from Abd. Rahman Ismail & Sutharalingam, op.cit., p. 44.

to "all ulama" (surat terbuka kepada segala ulama) (16). Despite that, religious teachers, orthodox ulama and Islamic authorities became the target of criticism by Modernizers because they were responsible for influencing Malay mentality and attitudes exclusively towards the after-life (Akhirat).

Modernizers also realized that Malays lacked education. Religious schools (Sekolah pondok) played an important role in providing education before the British arrival. Even into the twentieth century a small number of such schools still existed. These institutions were conducted by the teacher who was selected by the parents or chosen by the students themselves. This system of school emphasised religious matters. Besides religious schools, Malay vernacular schools were also available but only at the primary level and located in the villages. Whereas, in towns English-medium schools were provided rapidly by the government and missionaries, especially in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States. Modernizers saw Malay education as unhelpful to Malays because religious schools emphasised religious matters, and the level of education in the vernacular schools was very low. They urged the government to develop Malay education by increasing the number of schools and, more important, by establishing a new curriculum, in order to enable school leavers to become more competent in the modern world.

In addition, Modernizers did not forget to give attention to the education of girls. They encouraged Malay parents to send their

16. Al-Imam, 23, July 1906.

daughters to school, and on the other hand, they urged the government to provide education for girls together with boys. This criticism and an increased awareness of how important education was to the Malay child resulted in many schools being built. The most important were the Malay College of Kuala Kangsar (MCKK) in 1905 and Sultan Idris Training College (SITC) in 1922. The MCKK was built to serve the interests of the colonial power itself because this college functioned to train Malay-born administrators who could act as intermediaries between the colonial power and subject class. The colonial power tried to create the situation whereby Malay aristocrats became satisfied with their position because their rights were safeguarded. The British perpetuated their position and offices as Sultans ^{and} chiefs and many of them were appointed into the Malay administrative service (MAS). In this way ^{the} colonial ^{power} not only succeeded in strengthening their position but also succeeded in using it for their own benefit.

"The British only worked to satisfy the Malay ruling class's desires and hope they will happy and keep quiet while directly they exploit the rich resources in the Malay States" (17).

Even so, the Malay intelligentsia who left the Malay college and SITC ~~are~~ very important in contributing to the development of Malay nationalism later on.

The Indian migration influx resulted from development of the

17. Chew Hock Thye, Masalah Perpaduan Nasional, D.B.F., Kuala Lumpur 1979, p. 35.

rubber industry and the used to increase the labour force on the rubber estates. By 1911 the Indian population had increased to 270,000 and in 1921 it was up to 470,000 and by 1931 it reached 625,000 people. The Chinese migrants came to meet the labour requirement in the tin industry. It has been estimated that around 6,000,000 Chinese in the thirty two years between 1895 and 1927 came to Singapore alone, though most of them went back to China (18). The same situation happened in Malaya, and in consequence, although some returned to China also the number of Chinese immigrants in Malaya compared with the total population increased very rapidly. This can be seen in the table in the following pages.

The population balance in the Malay States and Straits Settlements was such that Malays and immigrants almost equalled each other and in 1921 immigrants became the majority.

Population in the Malay Peninsula

(Malay states and Straits Settlements)

Race	1921
Malays	1,627,108
Chinese	1,173,354
Indians	471,628 (19).

Malay society felt very nervous when faced with this new situation. It was not only a question of the number of foreign

18. K.G. Tregonning, A History of Modern Malaya, London 1964, p. 174.

19. Ibid, p. 185; see also R. Emerson, op.cit., p. 22.

people but they also succeeded in dominating the economy. Malay people were not involved in the commercial economy and also suffered because they lost their lands by leasing and selling to foreign people, especially as a result of the development of rubber estates and new tin mines.

Chinese Compared with Total Population in Malaya

State	1921		1931	
	Total Population	Chinese	Total Population	Chinese
Penang	294,215	133,234	341,375	169,985
Malacca	153,691	45,853	186,877	65,302
Pahang	146,267	34,254	180,117	52,291
Johore	282,594	97,397	505,589	215,257
Kedah	338,707	59,476	429,691	78,415
Kelantan	309,574	12,875	362,517	17,612
Terengganu	153,979	7,325	180,074	13,360
Perlis	40,087	3,602	49,296	6,500
Perak	611,169	227,602	785,660	332,584
Selangor	401,103	170,726	533,535	241,496
N. Sembilan	178,828	65,219	85,418	92,371 (20).

This situation appeared to jeopardize the future of the Malays and therefore Malays protested and forced the government to take

20. V. Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia, Oxford University Press, London, New York & Toronto 1951, pp. 278-280.

action. As a result the government first introduced a Malay reserve enactment in 1913 (Undang-undang Tanah Simpanan Melayu) and the enactment was altered in 1933 to prevent the alienation of Malay land. Of course, it was the economic development in the Malay states which caused the influx of Indian and Chinese migration. Population increased sharply especially in the Straits Settlements and in the Federated Malay States up to 1930's, and most of them settled in the new towns opened near the centres of the rubber and tin industries, and this situation has continued even until today (21). Their position further upset Malays not only because of that number of foreigners and their domination of the economy but also they still maintained a close contact with their home countries. Their purpose seemed to be to come to Malaya, earn money, and then go back to their home countries (22). They simply saw Malaya as ^a place to get wealthy. It was for this combination of reasons incomers struggled on a group basis and formed their own associations, such as the Central Indian Association of Malaya (CIAM) set up after Nehru's visit ^{to} Malaya in 1938, and in 1941 the Malayan Indian Association (MIA) was formed for Indian people who were born in Malaya. It was the same with Chinese who formed branches of Kuomintang (KMT) in 1927 and later on the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) in 1930.

21. A. Rabushka, Race and Politics in Urban Malaya, Hoover Institution Press, Stamford 1973, pp. 21-25.

22. L.Y. Fong, "Permulaan Kesedaran Perburuhan China di Tanah Melayu 1920-1940", Malaysia Sejarah dan Proses Pembangunan, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1979, p. 193.

Malay intellectuals who received education from the Sultan Idris Training College and the Malay College Kuala Kangsar were aware of the critical position of Malays caused by their lack of involvement in the economy and the increase in foreign people and tried to promote Malay awareness. Although they came from a different background they still wished to unite Malays and to upgrade Malay prestige and morale. Malay awareness led to the formation of Malay societies in towns such as Singapore. The Singapore Malay Union (SMU) was formed in 1926 by Mohd. Eunos Abdullah. Malay awareness first appeared in the towns because in the towns Malays became a minority group especially in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States. This awareness encouraged the development of Malay nationalism. Later on, every state had its own association such as Selangor Malay Union (PMS), Negeri Sembilan and Pahang Malay Union in 1937 and 1938 respectively. Most of the Malay associations were led by Malay aristocrats who received an English-medium education. There ~~was~~ some suggestion that the formation of the Malay Union was an indication of the beginning of Malay activity in politics. However, the association was not especially active in politics and its emphasis was more on social matters, and sport, such as football, was very popular (23).

Newspapers also gave special attention to sporting activities, especially football, and published reports together with competition tables. There was so much concentration on sport that

23. See chapter politics.

Malays did not seem interested in politics. Many criticism of the Malays and Malay associations were made because they allowed sport and social activities to become their priorities and forgot their responsibility to develop the Malay race. Warta Malaya, for example, urged the Pahang Malay Association and the Malay people to co-operate in order to develop the Malay race,

" the Pahang Malay Association needs leaders, but what is most needed is followers. This association was not founded for sport therefore it really should be of benefit to all the community (24).

1934 saw the formation of what was to be the biggest Malay association - the "Persatuan Sahabat Pena" (Pen Friend Association). Its membership was drawn from all over the Malay Peninsula and also Borneo and Siam (25). This association was formed on the initiative of a twice weekly newspaper in Penang called the "Saudara" which encouraged readers to write letters to each other and exchange ideas.

Although the Pen Friend Association was formed simply on a social and friendship basis, it had the consequence of creating a self-

24. Quoted from Abd Latif Abu Bakar, "Akhbar, Desentralisasi dan Persatuan Negeri Melayu", K.K. Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Moden, Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1984, p. 152.

25. Md. Salleh b. Md. Ghaus, "Pergerakan Politik Melayu Negeri Pulau Pinang Sebelum 1945", Jebat, Bil. 10, U.K.M., April 1980, p. 157. Members from Pulau Pinang (29), Seberang Prai (1), Singapore (4), Perak (88), Selangor (30), Perlis (7), Negeri Sembilan (8), Pahang (14), Johore (28), Kelantan (25), Terengganu (5), Kedah (6), Labuan (4), Sarawak (3) and Siam (1).

consciousness among Malay people. Roff correctly suggests that though the "Sahabat Pena" was not a political organization in the ordinary sense of the term, and still less a secret society, it was rapidly acquiring the characteristic of a national movement (26). Since the Pen Friend association's members came from all over Malaya it succeeded in narrowing the gap between Malay people. Ideas put forward by their members helped the Malay people to understand what was happening around them. Malay people began to be aware of their position in society. This awareness also helped the development of Malay nationalism. This association made further progress and stimulated the national movement when it succeeded in holding the first meeting of Malays from all over Malaya in Taiping in 1934. Further meetings were held in Kuala Lumpur in 1935, Pulau Pinang 1936, Singapore 1937, Ipoh 1938 and Seremban in 1939.

In 1938 "Kesatuan Melayu Muda" (Young Malay Union/YMU) was formed led by Ibrahim Hj Yaacob. Other persons who were also involved in the formation of the YMU were Hassan Manan and Abd Karim Rashid. All of them graduated from the Sultan Idris Training College. The YMU can be described as the first political association in the Malay States determined to represent Malays as a whole, and this association was the first directly involved in politics. The YMU was active both before and during the Japanese occupation. They refused to give their allegiance either to Malay Sultans or the British. They wanted freedom and

26. W.R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, Yale University Press, New Haven 1967, p. 214.

to unite with Indonesia through "Melayu Raya" (Greater Malay) or "Indonesia Raya" (Greater Indonesia). They believed all aborigines in the Malay archipelago had common roots. This concept was used to create a sense of kinship between the Malay population and Indonesia on the basis of alleged historical fact (27).

The idea to unite with Indonesia was made in order to make Malays stronger especially in numerical terms and thus prevent themselves from being overwhelmed. The idea of uniting with Indonesia was taken over by the Malay National Association of Malaya (Persatuan Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya), which was formed after the YMU was wound up at the end of the war. The unity idea was highly desired by the Malay National Association of Malaya. Warta Malaya which acted as the official mouth piece of the Malay National Association of Malaya stated that,

" Our ambition is to cross the Selat Melaka (Straits of Malacca) and raise our independence flag - red and white. And by this act revive the greater Malay empire " (28).

The attraction of unity was also influenced by the feeling of fear as foreign groups gradually increased in strength and influence. If the Malay people did not unite with Indonesia, political and economic power would fall into foreign hands.

27. K.K. Kim, "Panji-panji Gemerlapan Satu Perbincangan Sejarah", Historia, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur 1984, p. 187.

28. Quote from Ahmad Masjidin, "Malayan Union Dari Kaca mata Warta Negara", K.K. Kim (ed), op.cit., p. 203.

Malays would lose their rights as had happened to the Red Indians in the United States (29). Moreover, Indonesia was very similar to the Malay Peninsula. People from Indonesia, with small exceptions, had common roots and were nearly same in all aspects as the Malays in the Malay Peninsula. However, this concept did not receive full support from the Malay people, especially UMNO which believed the problems of Malay society in the Malay States should be settled without foreign intervention. For example, UMNO opposed Malayan Union by relying on co-operation between Malays and Malay Sultans alone. The confidence of the UMNO leaders can be seen in Datuk Onn's words,

"Don't be worried! Between Malaya and Indonesia the sea which separates us will not be closed. The people share one language and customs, and at some time in the future will obey the call of blood unity. My advice is let Malays work hard, and have a desire to improve themselves in order to prevent what belongs to them being lost in seeking that objective" (30).

Despite Datuk Onn's speech, the concept of Greater Malaya failed because Malays retained their loyalty to their ruler. Malays were still not ready to accept such a fundamental change, and political activity remained in its early stages. Ibrahim Yaacob was too radical in struggling for the concept of Greater Malaya

29. Ibid, p. 204.

30. Ibid.

without taking account of the Malay readiness.

" his struggle was for Greater Malay Association in the Malay peninsula and Indonesia together namely Greater Malaya or Greater Indonesia (Indonesia Raya) but his claim was too advanced" (31).

The failure of this plan was also affected by the Japanese defeat in the second world war. With Japanese assistance, Indonesia and the Malay left wing nationalists planned to declare joint independence. But unfortunately, in the unsettled conditions as the Japanese were defeated, Indonesia declared independence and left Ibrahim Yaakob without direction. Before ^{the} second world war, the Pen Friend Association was unique, ^{because} other associations formed in the first two decade of the twentieth century were based on the name of each state. They did not represent Malays as a whole but only small groups of them.

Until 1945 when Japan was defeated, there was no evidence of a Malay nationalist uprising. The British administration did not suppose that either left or right wing Malay nationalists endangered the colonial authority until UMNO was formed to undermine the Malayan Union scheme. This proposal whereby the British tried to change the administration of the Malay States from protected states into a new formed-colony greatly upset Malays. The Malayan Union was to consist of all Malay States in the Malay Peninsula except Singapore put directly under the administration of a Governor. This scheme would mean that the

31. C.B. Kheng, "Evolusi Sebuah Negara Persekutuan Malaysia: Satu Perspektif Sejarah", Zurina Majid (ed), Masyarakat Malaysia, U.S.M., 1982, p. 4.

Malay Sultans would lose their power and only be needed as advisers on Islamic religious affairs (32). In addition, the simple citizenship, namely "Jus Soli", caused Malay anger and hatred towards the colonial power. Citizenship was to apply to all immigrants who had been resident in Malaya or in Singapore for a period of ten out of the fifteen years preceding 15 February 1942. The gift of simple citizenship angered Malays because foreigners not only got citizenship, but at the same time they were still oriented toward their home countries, and many of them were anxious to go back to their countries of origin. Ishak Hj. Muhammad a very famous writer, expressed many opinions about this and many other issues concerning the Chinese and Indians and the "Malayan" concept (33). Malay anger reached great heights not only because of ^{the} Malayan Union itself but the way it was introduced also led to much dissatisfaction on the part of the Malay Sultans. They were forced to accept without being given much time to think. Harold MacMichael was the person responsible for getting signatures of the Malay Sultans. He forced them to do so by threatening that if they refused, they would be replaced by other persons appointed by the colonial power.

This dissatisfaction on the part of Malay Sultans can be seen for example in the letter written by Sultan Badlishah of Kedah:

32. B. Simandjuntak, Malayan Federalism: A Study of Federal Problems in a Plural Society, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur & Singapore, London & New York 1969, pp. 39-41.

33. Abd. Latiff Abu Bakar, Ishak Hj. Muhamad: Penulis dan Ahli Politik Sehingga 1948, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur 1977.

"I was presented with a verbal ultimatum with a time limit, and in the event of refusing to sign what I called the instrument of surrender, my successor who could sign would appoint members of the state council ^{who} were competent to sign, undertaking they would advise me to sign. I was told the matter was personal and confidential, and I was not allowed to tell my people what had taken place " (34).

Sultan Abdul Aziz from Perak also wrote about their dissatisfaction with the implementation of Malayan Union. On March 1, 1946 a large meeting was held which was attended by forty one Malay associations and ended with agreement to form a Malay congress. From this congress resolution appeared a very strong combined Malay resistance. Malay resistance came from all over Malaya and the replacement of Malayan Union by the Malay Federation indicated that Malays could be successful in preserving their national image and character and the independence of the states.

The Federation ^{of Malaya} replaced ^{the} Malayan Union in 1948. The Malay Sultans regained their powers, but unfortunately their success led to dissatisfaction on the other side, especially the Chinese. They protested without violence and co-operated with the "Putera-Pmcja" (a merger between Malay left wing associations and the

34. H. Miller, Prince and Premier, Eastern University Press (M) Sdn. Bhd., 1980, p. 76.

workers union which was influenced by communists) in putting forward a memorandum namely the "Perlembagaan Rakyat" (The People's Constitution Proposals) in October 1947. It contained ten articles (35), but was turned down because it was too idealistic and impracticable from a colonial view (36). The unsettled conditions and the failure of the united front to take power in peace pushed the Malaya Communist Party (MCP) into launching a rebellion and the government declared an emergency in 1948 (37).

Many steps were taken in order to stop the rebellion such as introducing identity cards, setting up new villages, establishing a home guard and so on (38), but the most important efficient step in dealing with the emergency was to promise independence, although the races in Malaya needed to unite first. To fulfil this requirement UMNO (United Malays National Organization), MCA (Malayan Chinese Association) and MIC (Malayan Indian Congress) worked together and formed "perikatan" (alliance) to get independence and indirectly to weaken the communist movement. Most of the Malayan Communist Party membership was Chinese and when the MCA was formed and worked together with other races towards

35. Details about articles, see B. Simandjuntak, op.cit., pp. 48-49.

36. C.B. Kheng, "Asal Usul Nasionalisma Malaya", op.cit., pp. 96-99.

37. T.C. Kheng, "Pemberontakan PKM: Mengapa Berlaku", K.K. Kim & Adnan Hj. Nawang (ed), Darurat 1948-1960, Muzium Angkatan Tentera, Kuala Lumpur 1984, pp. 27-42.

38. M. Caldwell, "From 'Emergency' to Independence", M. Amin & M. Caldwell (ed), Malaya: The Making of a New Colony, Russell Peace Foundation, Nottingham 1977, pp. 221-222.

independence. Many Chinese were attracted to join it. In this way the communist movement was being weakened.

Datuk Onn earlier on had been aware of the advantages of inter racial co-operation and this led him to open UMNO membership to the Chinese and Indians. But Malays refused to accept this suggestion, and he resigned from office. He had been the first UMNO chairman and now formed a new party, namely the Independence Party (Parti Kemerdekaan). The British promise to give independence moved one step further, when ^{the} 1955 election was held (which in turn followed the town council election held in 1952). Inter-racial co-operation was tested by these elections, especially in the case of UMNO. UMNO agreed to give additional seats to MCA and MIC, each party receiving 15 and 2 seats respectively, though not eligible to receive so many.

Total Registered Voters

1955	1240,058
1959	2177,000
1964	2939,631 (39)

Voters Percentage According To Race

Race	1955	1959	1964
Malays	84.2	56.2	54.1
Chinese	11.2	35.9	38.0
Indian	4.6	7.8	7.9 (40)

39. Quote from R.K. Vasil, "The 1964 General Election in Malaya", International Studies, Vol.1, No. 1, July 1965, p. 57.

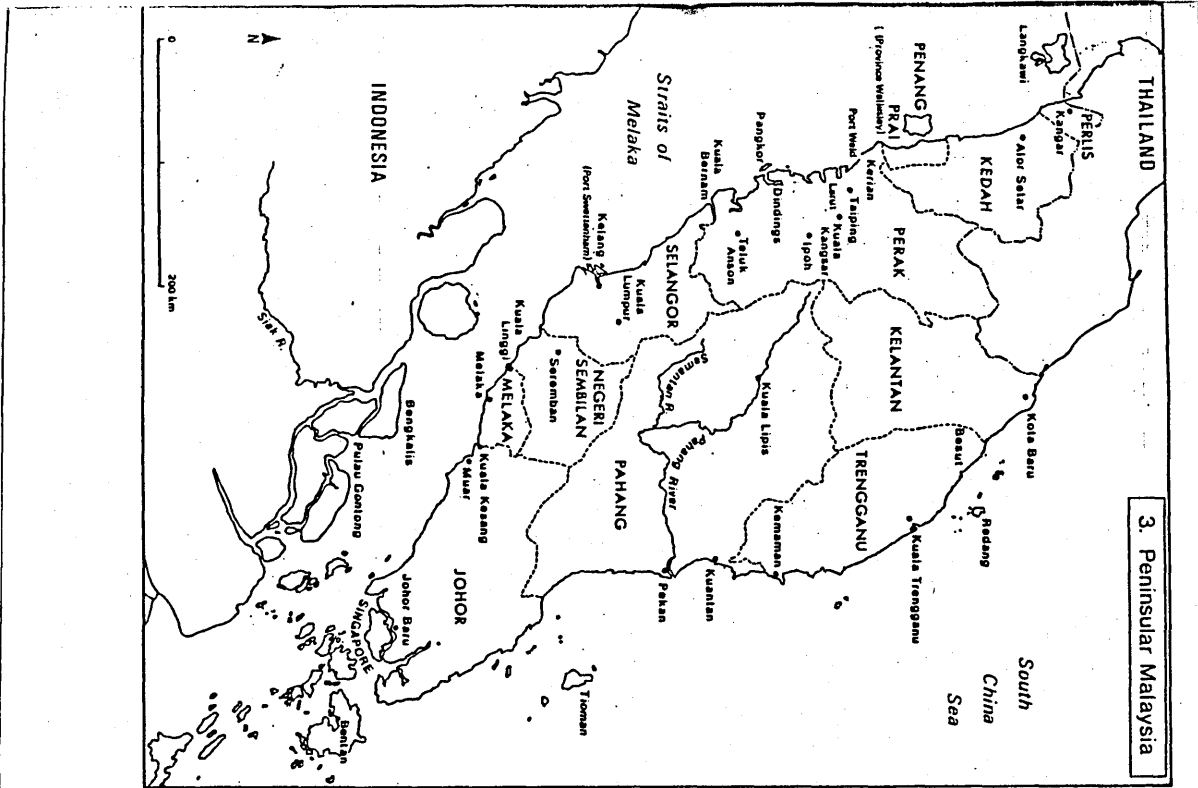
40. Ibid, see also K.J. Ratnam, Communalism and the Political

If we analyze the total voters in the year 1955 it is clear that the percentage of Malay voters far outstripped the other races.

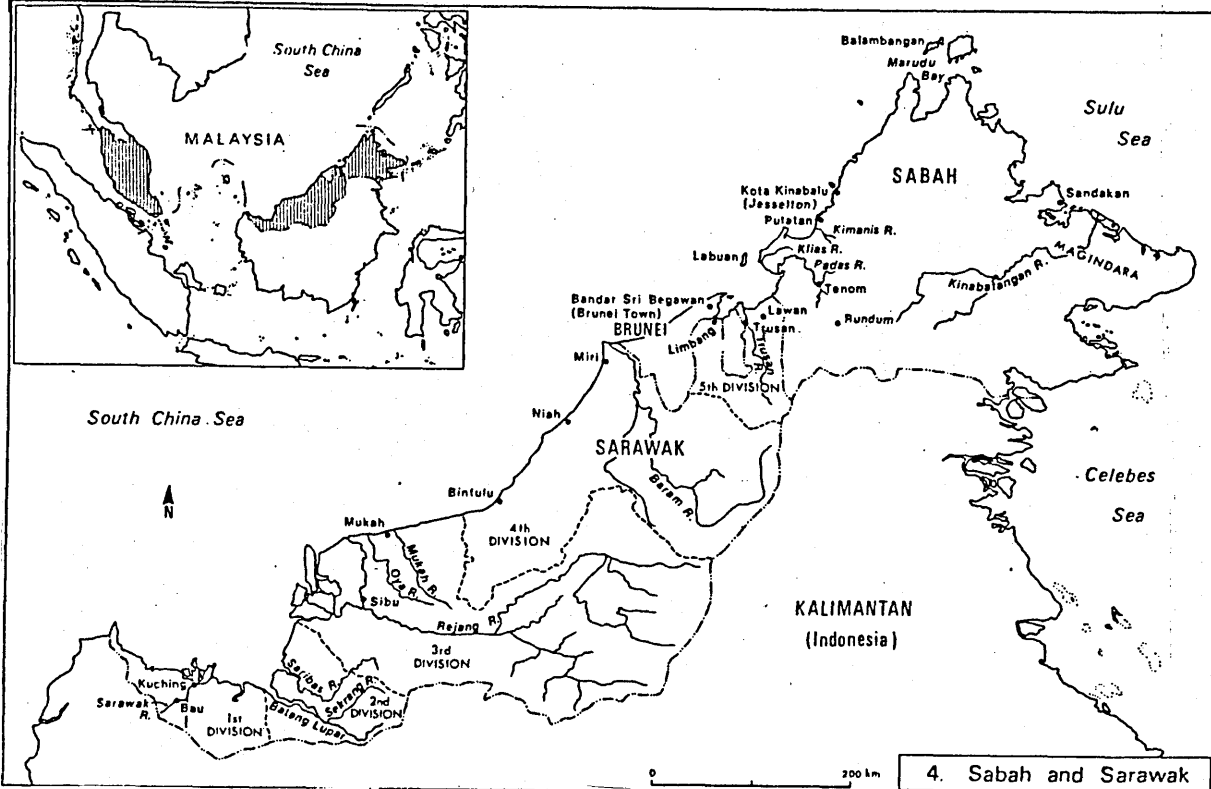
The UMNO leaders were aware that they could win the election without co-operating with the MCA and the MIC, but wanted to display unity in order to make the British confident and ready to give independence. They were therefore ready to make sacrifices. The readiness of the Malay leaders in UMNO and Malays generally, to give 15 and 2 seats to the MCA and the MIC was done by UMNO in order to get independence and share power. The alliance which comprised UMNO, MCA and MIC won 51 out of 52 seats contested. For the first time there was inter-racial co-operation to achieve independence, and the British agreed to give independence on August 31, 1957.

As a matter of fact, therefore, Malaya nationalism did not exist until all races united to seek independence but Malay nationalism had existed for several decades. The most important contribution to Malay nationalism was the reformist movement which gradually stimulated discussion and which subsequently became the Malay nationalist movement.

Process in Malaya, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur 1965, pp. 186/7-200.



3. Peninsular Malaysia



4. Sabah and Sarawak

Religion

Up to the early twentieth century, the condition of Malay life, especially in the villages, was very bad. It was backward in all aspects such as the economy and social and educational provision. There was little political consciousness. However, new towns grew rapidly, especially near the areas of the tin industry and the rubber plantations accompanied by transport developments, such as road and railway construction, to meet the requirements of the rubber and tin industries. Malay villages, even so, were rather by-passed.

The small group of Malay intellectuals who saw and were aware of what was happening around them realised that Malay society was being left far behind. These individuals, namely the Modernizers (Kaum Muda), knew that Malays should have proper guides and leaders from the Malay ruling class, but sadly that class seemed not to care about their people. So, in this situation, the Modernizers themselves assumed the responsibility for stimulating the Malay people (1). They thought hard about how to spread their reformist ideas and how to express criticism to the government.

The Modernizers thought this could best be done through periodicals such as newspapers and magazines together with novels, poems and essays used by intellectuals who received a Malay education. Many newspapers were published in Singapore and Penang because both towns could provide printing facilities, and they were also more developed compared with other towns in the

1. Al-Imam, 23 July, 1906.

Malay States. There more people could read, especially the small elite groups who were well educated. In addition, numerous schools were built in both towns and newspapers were widely used as teaching media in Malay schools (2). This indirectly encouraged newspaper publication. Orthodox ulama influence was not strong in both towns because they could not receive firm backing from Malay Sultans as happened in the Malay States. Moreover, in the Straits Settlements, which were directly administered under the British, the government saw religious movements as unimportant and it is therefore not surprising that many periodical advocated reform. However, earlier Malay periodicals did not concern themselves much with Malay public life except Al-Imam. Actually there were many Malay periodicals published after 1900 which could be used to spread reform ideas, namely Al-Imam, Neraca, Idaran Zaman, Saudara and so on. The importance of having a medium to spread reform ideas and for other purposes in Malay development was strongly proclaimed by Al-Imam as "a call to our brothers" (bagi menyampaikan seru kepada segala saudara kita) (3).

Al-Imam was first published in Singapore in 1906. It was an initiative taken by Sheikh Jalaludin Al-Azhari, Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hadi, Hj. Abbas Mohd Taha and Sheikh Salim Al-Kilali. Sheikh Tahir was the first editor, Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hadi a

2. W.R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, Yale University Press, New Haven 1967, p. 51.

3. Al-Imam, 23 July 1906.

contributor and Sheikh Salim was the director of Al-Imam helped for two years by Hj. Abbas Mohd Taha as second editor (4). Al-Imam used Arabic script (Jawi). It appeared every month and altogether there were thirty one issues from when it was first published until it ceased in December 1908. Al-Imam means leader (Pemimpin), and this name was suitable for the purposes or aims of the publication. The aim of Al-Imam, expressed in Sheikh Salim's introductory editorial, was "to remind those who are forgetful, arouse those who sleep, guide those who stray, and give a voice to those who speak with wisdom" (5).

Neraca (literally 'Scale' or Weighing machine) was founded in Singapore in 1911. There is no clear trace of who was involved in the formation of Neraca. It was started to carry on the principles initially struggled for by Al-Imam. However, it seems likely that Hj. Abbas Mohd Taha, who was second editor in Al-Imam, was responsible for the formation of Neraca (6) as a way of continuing his reformist movement. In addition, Neraca was published in the same place as Al-Imam, Tanjong Pagar, Singapore (7). Neraca, unlike Al-Imam appeared weekly instead of monthly. It ceased publication, as Al-Imam had done, for financial reasons, in mid - 1915.

4. W.R. Roff, op.cit., p. 59.

5. Al-Imam, 1 July, 1906.

6. W.R. Roff, op.cit., pp. 63-64.

7. Mohd Sarim Hj. Mustajab, "Gerakan Islah Islamiyyah di Tanah Melayu 1906 Hingga 1948", Malaysia Sejarah & Proses Pembangunan, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1979, p. 154.

There is no clear evidence about the size and nature of its readership, but there is little doubt that a majority of its readers came from the intellectually and socially more sophisticated element of the towns and from those religiously educated who had received some initial training in Islam.

Utusan Melayu (Malay Newsletter) was founded by En. Mohd Eunos Abdullah (8) in Singapore ^{in 1907} and lasted until 1922. He was the first editor, and selected and published a generous selection of local news (Mainly Singapore), obviously chosen with urban Malay interest in mind. Editorially he provided intelligent but always moderately expressed comment on a wide range of public issues. Occasionally mildly critical of the government where its Malay policies were involved, it was equally anxious to place upon the Malays the responsibility for helping themselves (9). Utusan Melayu was published three times a week. Each issue ordinarily consisted of four pages, three in 'Jawi' and one in the Roman script. The Roman page, at the back of the paper, reproduced the main news (and editorial) given in 'Jawi' on the front and was specifically designed to meet the needs of readers of those two scripts. Utusan Melayu survived a long time in comparison with Al-Imam and Neraca because it had a highly developed distribution organization and could reach an increasingly wide public.

Idaran Zaman (The circle of the time) was published in Penang

8. For early activities, see W.R. Roff, *op.cit.*, pp. 159-161; Zulkipli b. Mahmud, Warta Malaya Penyambung Lidah Bangsa Melayu, Jabatan Sejarah U.K.M., 1979, p. 111.

9. *Ibid*, p. 160.

between 1925 and 1930, and appeared weekly. It was founded and edited by Mohd Yunus bin Abdul Hamid, who had migrated to Malaya in 1924 from Langkat in East Sumatra (10). Idaran Zaman, in comparison, was a newspaper rather than a primarily religious publication such as Al-Imam and Neraca, but the strong reformist views of its editor, doubtless developed by association with Syed Sheikh Al-Hadi were frequently evidenced in its columns. Idaran Zaman circulated and was distributed fairly widely throughout the peninsula, especially in the northern states.

One interesting point which we can observe here is that nearly all the founders of these publications were not really Malay, with the exception of Hj. Abbas Mohd Taha (Singapore born) and Mohd Eunus Abdullah. The rest of them were of foreign descent - Arab, Indian and Indonesian. This situation created some suspicions and led certain people to observe that since they were not "real Malays" (local Malays) how could they be regarded as Malay leaders?. To answer this question, the answer came from the founders themselves. According to them, they loved their new country and adopted it as their homeland. They were assimilated into Malay society, and even married Malay people and presumed themselves as members of Malay society; Sheikh Mohd Salim added

" we have drunk its milk, and our flesh
and blood has grown from its soil, and
our lives have prospered. We are therefore

10. Ibid, p. 165.

indebted to it, and our children as well" (11).

However, such an explanation was not really necessary since Malay society never asked who the reform leaders were and even accepted them voluntarily. For example, Zaaba, who was a very famous Malay writer, discussed Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hadi as a reformer even though he was not a "real Malay". He wrote about him as follows, describing him as

" one who was not a real Malay but who adapted himself with his whole heart and total commitment. "Melayu" a real Malay such a person is very rare in this country and he was very sad and conscious of Malay backwardness in all aspects of development in this world and the next" (12).

The four publications like other journals, published many items of local and foreign news. In addition, they also published many columns, like correspondence columns and most importantly, editorials. They also published many advertisements for shoes, magazines, cars, medicines and so on. Advertisement was not only important to the readers in order to gain information about new things, but income from the advertisement also helped to finance publication.

The editorial column was the most important. It was written by the editor either from his own ideas or on the basis of many

11. Al-Imam, 23 July, 1906.

12. Saudara, 24 February, 1934, quote from Mohd. Sarim, op.cit., 1979, p. 157.

translated articles from foreign newspapers and magazines, particularly English and Arabic. Most of the articles had a bias to reform ideas in order to develop Malay society. The correspondence column also allowed published articles sent by readers. It is of great interest to read the views of the readers who sent in their ideas about current issues and showed their reaction towards what was happening around them to the correspondence column. The editorial column was sometimes strongly supported, but on other occasions strongly attacked. Whatever the reaction, the opportunity for controversy represented a contribution towards Malay development. At least both columns persuaded other readers, and the Malay community generally, to think about their future and the position of the Malay race. Many subjects were discussed by editors and readers involving almost every aspect of the Malay community - religious, social, educational, economic and not least political questions. The Malay community was urged to reform its position and always asked why it permitted the existing situation. Ways forward were suggested. The writers sadly concluded that the Malay community was not united and did not know how to use money, and held the wrong principles in religion and so on. The influence of custom and a negative attitude led to the lack of education, and ^{of} political consciousness. The British colonial government was also a target for criticism. It was accused of causing Malays to be left behind in all aspects. However, in contrast, the writers were always respectful towards Japan because of its successful modernization, and hoped Japan would help them throw off

colonialism and become a free and developed community (13).

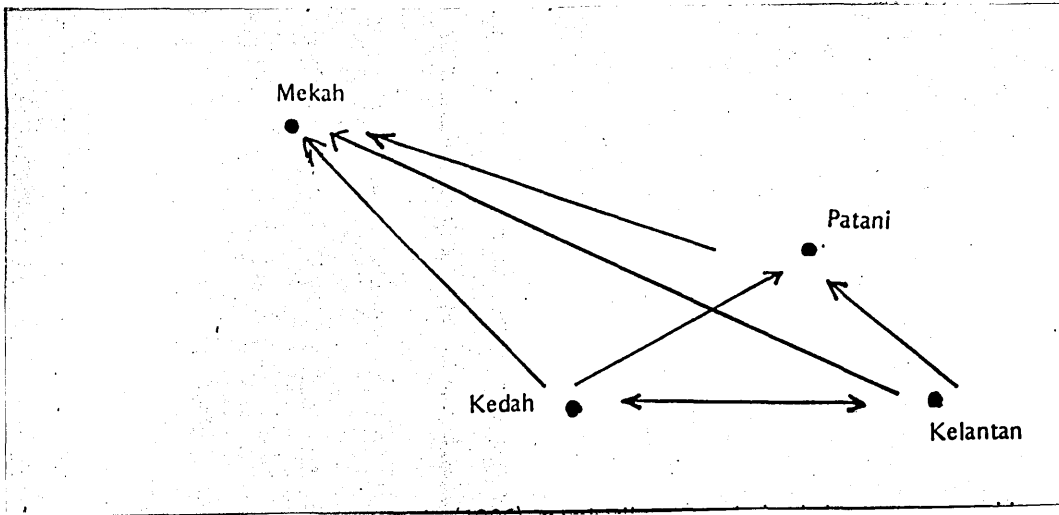
All the publications so far mentioned except Utusan Melayu, were created by small groups of interested men who had received religious education from the Middle East. Later, however, the work of these Modernizers was followed by a group who received a Malay and English education, especially from MPSI and MCKK respectively. They represent a group of people who knew what was happening around them, and wanted to see their race become developed by introducing reform ideas.

These Modernizers not only had the new ideas of reform, but most importantly they wished to benefit Malay development without being opposed to Islamic values. In other words they were "Muda" (young) in outlook rather than in age. Among the most famous were Sheikh Tahir Jalaludin and Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hadi who were very active in Malay reform in the early twentieth century.

The relationship between Malaya and the Middle East was long established. The Middle East was not only a place for the Haj pilgrim but many Malay parents sent their children for further religious education in Mecca and Kahirah. The Middle East always became the favourite destination for religious students to pursue their study. The stream of the religious students movements can be shown in the diagram below.

Modernizers realized that a vital factor in Malay backwardness was the failure to understand and follow Islamic teaching correctly. Therefore they urged the Malay community to work and

13. Utusan Melayu, 28 June, 1913.



(14).

improve their future based on Koran and "Hadith". They believed Malays failed to accept proper guidance especially from religious teachers and religious authorities such as from the "Imam" (prayer leader), "Kathi" (Islamic magistrate), and so on.

Sheikh Tahir published his first articles entitled "Surat terbuka Kepada Segala Ulama" (open letter to all Ulama), and in them he strictly urged the Malay community to follow Allah (God) and the commands of his prophet (15). Generally reformist ideas as expressed by the Modernizers aimed to develop the Malay community, which at the time was backward in comparison with other races, on the basis of Islam. The Malay community was unable to compete with other races because it could not understand Islamic teaching in its real sense.

The backwardness of Malays also derived from their own weaknesses. Many Malays were not educated, and as a result

14. Awang Had Salleh, "Institusi Pondok Di Malaysia", Zainal Kling (ed), Masyarakat Melayu: Antara Tradisi dan Perubahan, Utusan Publication, Kuala Lumpur 1977, p. 40.

15. Al-Imam, 23 July, 1906.

depended too much on traditional values. The failure to understand Islamic teaching and follow it in the proper way put them in an under - developed situation. Based on this consciousness, Modernizers expressed many reform ideas but always related them to Islam.

The community "Umat" of Islam was always urged to follow Allah's command and not to ignore his prohibitions in order to become successful. Modernizers criticized many Malays because they did not practice many religious commands, such as daily prayer. Modernizers believed if someone wanted to get success he must work hard and not forget to fulfil religious duties in order to get "Rahmat"; blessing from God.

" at this time many people (Umat) have forgotten their religion in their daily life and as they forget Allah so Allah will forget them" (16).

However, Modernizers realized that Malay negligence towards religious commands, was caused by misunderstanding about the correct Islamic teaching. Responsibility for the failure of Malays to understand Islam in the proper way was placed substantially on the teachers who placed more emphasis on life in the next world "Akhirat" without considering the situation in the present world and the real Islamic teaching. They assumed that life in "Akhirat" is very important and for that reason many Malays had to concentrate in this world on preparing for life in

16. Ibid, 12 July, 1907.

the next. They did not emphasise the importance of the life in this present world because they believed it would be left behind after death. The attitude of the such religious teacher who gave special emphasis on the importance of "Akhirat" was a cause of the backwardness of Malays. For example, Neraca made the following comment:

" certain teachers when they instruct many Malays about religious subjects urge them to recite (Kitab) religious books and (Hadith). Such people in the (Masjid) mosque or in other places, condemn the life of the world and confer (Pahala Akhirat) religious reward in order to persuade people to hate a worldly life" (17).

Besides the religious teacher, religious authorities including orthodox Ulama (religious scholars) were also important in influencing the mental outlook of Malays. They too placed little emphasis on anything except "Akhirat". They were a very influential group especially in the Unfederated Malay States where they received strong support from the administration, namely from Malay Sultans who had religious power in their hands. Modernizers accused this group of people of cheating. They made Malays careless by their interpretation of Islamic teaching and brought Malays into the dark valley of ignorance. The style of this group was described by Al-Imam as,

17. Neraca, 12 May, 1912.

" people who wear a big turban and sell (tangkal) talisman and cheat, and walk about carrying a (Tasbih), and walk with long walking stick" (18).

This group of people were also known as Conservatives and consisted of an old group of people who refused to change (especially their minds), but stuck to the old values and customs, some of which Modernizers believed to be opposed to the Koran and "Hadith". These Conservative beliefs and values were maintained by other factors such as poor education and customs associated with animism. For example, the "Imam", as head of the mosque, had special responsibility for Friday prayers. At the village level, alongside the headman, he was very important and therefore his influence was great among the Malays. To be an "Imam", one should have higher religious education (though it was not vital), but in the case of the Malay community most of the "Imams" had obtained only lower religious education. Nevertheless, most of them had been pilgrims to Mecca and had the title "Haji". The impact of poorly-educated "Imams" was bad on the Malays. Some of their teachings were opposed to Islamic principles, such as giving more priority to "Akhirat" rather than worldly matters, whereas both should be treated as equal. This unbalanced priority led Malays not to be aggressive in finding worldly wealth and pleasures "Kemewahan". The carelessness was spread widely in ^{the} Malay community, and this kind of "Imam" can

18. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

still be found to exist even in the recent years. For example, this speech was described by Swift in 1960's in Jelebu, Negeri Sembilan.

"..... . in sermon after sermon, I have heard the preacher begin with a short admission of the rightness of enjoying this world, and trying to prosper in it, only to launch into what is in effect, a denial of these opening remarks. He stresses that too great a concern with riches and pleasures in this world would endanger one's chances of eternal happiness in the next. And the tone and vocabulary used is so strong as to imply that it would be better not to concern oneself with this world at all, for our life here is only a time of testing, and however great and wealthy a man may be, when he dies he leaves his wealth and fame behind him, and has only religious work he performed during his life to his credit. Indeed, what seems to be good fortune in life, wealth and fame corrupt the heart and can damn the man who is the envy of all his fellows" (19).

Despite criticising this group for corrupting the Malay mind, Malays were also reminded by the Modernizers to use their intelligence when they received instruction. Malays were told

19. Quote from Mohd Fauzi Yaacob, "Kemunduran Masyarakat Melayu - Satu Tinjauan Sosio-Budaya", in Zainal Kling, op.cit., p. 168.

"don't depend too much on teachers, but use intelligence and adapt what is taught" (20). Beside this misunderstanding about religion, Modernizers also touched on the basic principles of religion, such as prayer. The Islamic community was warned of the importance of daily prayer, especially Friday prayer. Malays were urged not to forget to perform their prayers and were reminded that ^{praying} relates closely to practice (21). In addition, assembling for prayer could create social benefit for Malays. They could meet each other and exchange ideas after prayer, and by this good relationship could create unity. To understand what was the disease of the Malay community and how to overcome it in the best possible way, Modernizers believed it was necessary to understand Islamic teaching. Islam should be examined deeply, otherwise one could get wrong perceptions. Islam had a universal application, touching on the economy, social life and politics as well. Because the majority of Malays at the time lacked education, it was therefore not surprising if they saw Islam from a narrow perspective. For example, Al-Imam published articles on how Malay youth were taught to perform Islamic practices. One article noted that "a man who practices religion spends all his time in the mosque and is isolated" (22).

Some Malay youths were reluctant to observe Islamic commands because they did not understand the real principle. It was not

20. Idaran Zaman, 12 September, 1929.

21. Neraca, 20 January, 1915.

22. Al-Imam, 23 July, 1906.

vital to recite religious instruction, and pray at a certain time and certain place. They could pray anywhere as long as the place was clean. Nevertheless a mosque was a better place because a group of people were involved (Berjemaah).

The Malay attitude and negative mentality in these matters were criticised by the Modernizers. Muslims were asked to use their intelligence (Akal) in order to determine and choose which was good and which was bad, because men had been given the gift of intelligence. For example, men should not simply trust a new and unknown person. This kind of attitude would endanger Malay unity and hinder Malay development, and this kind of person was described by Al-Imam as follows;

" all communities in the East who follow Islam, are cheated by artificial elements from the West (Saduran Barat), and they are diverted from religion and cheated by the men who wear burnouse (long coat), because they teach that everyone who wears burnouse must therefore be pious "Alim". Actually such people cause divisions among Malays" (23).

This group of people was accused by the Modernizers of responsibility for Malay darkness. In addition, they took advantage of Malay indifference. Men who always wore burnouse came from the Middle East. Some of them claimed descent from the prophet Muhammad, ^{and} because of this ^{they} received much respect from Malays. Gullick puts it clearly when he notes that;

23. Ibid, 12 July, 1907.

" in Malay society putative descent from the prophet is recognized by the honorific titles "Syed" or "Syarifah" which confer status equal to that of a "Raja" of a royal descent" (24).

Such irresponsible people were criticised by Modernizers in articles published by Al-Imam which urged the Malay community to stick together and called all Muslim people to unite and develop whatever they needed to prosper in this world as well as in the "Akhirat". The specific illustration the article gave was a school building programme (25). In addition to achieve development, Malays were urged to help each other. The importance of mutual support could prevent Malay disunity and hostility amongst themselves. Malays would get benefit if they co-operated and practiced mutual help, and such unity could strengthen Malay forces or voices in making a deal with government. For example, by making a claim for the "Hari Raya" feast after a fasting month as a holiday if it fell on a working day. This Malay sadness was expressed by Utusan Melayu as follows:

" it is very sad for the Muslim community if (Hari Raya) cannot be celebrated merely because this country is put under colonial administration" (26).

24. J.M. Gullick, Malaysia: Economic Expansion and National Unity, Westview Press, Toronto 1981, p. 40.

25. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

26. Utusan Melayu, 16 September, 1913.

Modernizers also urged the Malay community to follow developed countries such as Japan and ⁱⁿ Europe. They argued that any races could achieve success if they worked hard and had the confidence to accept modernization. The Japanese modernized their country in political, economic and defence aspects, but still obeyed their religion. Whatever religion was followed by the Japanese, they still succeeded in achieving development - as can still be seen even today. In other words, religion was not a factor to stop development. Meanwhile Modernizers accused Malays themselves of lacking the confidence to accept modernization, because they saw western civilization as the enemy of Islam. Modernizers denied this belief and described it as a wrong and narrow perception. Furthermore, Al-Imam explained, Japan needed contacts with foreign countries for the following reasons: (27).

- a. As markets for their goods.
- b. As places for training their students, tutors and teachers.
- c. As allies for defence purposes and to expand their power.

If someone changed his religion, but did not at the same time change his attitude and mentality, he and his state would stay at the same level. For example, "Raja Habsyah" changed his religion and became a Christian but his state was still under developed compared with Europe, added Al-Imam (28).

Actually many factors shaped Malay beliefs. There was too great a dependence on "Takdir" (destiny) which resulted from a

27. Quote from Abdullah Hj. Jaafar, "Al-Imam", K.K. Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Moden, Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1984, p. 89.

28. Ibid.

misunderstanding of Islamic principles and had bad effects for the Malays. They believed "Takdir" controlled their lives and this made them a passive group. They just waited to see what would happen, and believed whatever happened was determined and fixed by God (29). As a result they did not need to work hard, because it would not make any sense to them. They believed their situation would not change if it was destined by God. This wrong perception discouraged Malays from working hard, whereas in fact Islam urged its followers to work hard equally for life in the real world and in the "Akhirat". Malays therefore ought to work hard and only rely on "Takdir" after everything they could do had been done.

God asked people to work hard equally for life in this world and the next, and after they had done their best they should "Bertawakal" and hope God would give good luck to them after their prayers, but they shall not to be sad if God determined otherwise. Muslims should not be desperate if they failed, but continue to try until success was achieved. However, in practice this situation was not often different for the Malays, and therefore Neraca frequently made his indirect attacks on those people who shared this misunderstanding. "They taught if someone wanted ^{to be} wealthy he should only "Bertawakal" to the God who could confer wealthy to him without fulfil the way which could bring wealthy" (30). This situation become worse for Malays when it was

29. Neraca, 18 April, 1915.

30. Ibid.

mixed with animism. This practice required the performance of several spiritual ceremonies before starting work whether in agriculture, building a house, a wedding, "Mandi Safar" (a Bath to avoid disaster which usually took place in the beach) and so on. They believed such things, which were clearly without power, could affect their lives, and believed someone would meet with disaster if he broke the rule. For example, if someone was ill, he was disturbed by a ghost or devil, or he had made the ghost angry by doing something forbidden. Moreover, such people did not want to see the doctor but preferred a "Bomoh" or magician (31). Modernizers advised Malays to use hospitals and doctors, because this was much better than magicians. Utusan Melayu wrote that "the aims of government and doctor are good, they want to decrease disease and mortality in our country" (32). Malay reluctance to go to hospital to seek treatment was referred to again a few years later. It was noted that Malay reluctance to go was because of the rigid procedure used in hospitals and fears of Christian influence (33).

A further problem existed when such magicians not only failed to cure the patients but sometimes took advantage and cheated them. A magician was an important person in the village and his function was always associated with spiritual ceremonies. The institution of magician was long established in the Malay

31. See chapter 1.

32. Utusan Melayu, 24 September, 1910.

33. Ibid, 31 May, 1913.

community. How much Malay mentality was influenced by animism and "bomoh" duties can be summarized as follows:

" in all agriculture operations such as sowing, reaping, irrigation works, and the clearance of jungle for planting, in fishing at sea, in prospecting for minerals, and cases of sickness his assistance is invoked. He is entitled by custom to certain small fees..." (34).

Modernizers argued that such beliefs were wasteful and opposed to Islamic teaching. The Malay community was asked to forget and not to practice that nonsense any more, because it caused Malay backwardness. The initiative to sweep out all this nonsense was clearly taken by Al-Imam, when it declared itself to be the most fierce enemy of all "bidaah" and "Kurafat" (beliefs and practices which opposed to the Islamic teaching) and wasteful customs which people mix up with religion. And the work of Al-Imam was to call all Muslims to unite to build whatever was important for life both in this world and the next (35). This practice upset some Muslim hearts. However, Modernizers complained about " all our dear people ~~who~~ hold stupid attitudes and maintain a stubborn mentality which refuses to change old beliefs" (36). The reasons why individuals made difficulties about changing or refused

34. W.W. Skeat, Malay Magic: An Introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsula, Macmillan, London 1900, p. 57.

35. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

36. Utusan Melayu, 24 September, 1910.

absolutely to change, related to the fact that these practices were very old. Moreover, Hindu customs had been established long enough to influence Malay life before the arrival of Islam. Naturally, too, there were 'impurities' of custom and belief derived from Malay tradition itself.

Modernizers not only criticised religious matters and misunderstanding by the Malays, but they never forgot to touch on other aspects of Malay backwardness. Malays were urged to be well-behaved in doing work and the results would be good too. Severe criticism was expressed of a section of the Malay community who liked to waste time and didn't want to work hard (37). They liked to talk to each other in the coffee shop about non-beneficial matters. What was even worse about their attitude was that they never tried to do anything except to complain or criticise, "when we find our brothers trying to do good work particularly for our development, we refuse to help and simply criticise and after we have finished criticising do not try to do better " (38). To achieve development, Malays should co-operate otherwise their standard would sink below the human level said Neraca, "if we do not help each other we will become worse than ants (semut) and where could we put our hope if we fell below the ant " (39).

In order to improve the Malay community, Modernizers suggested

37. Neraca, 17 February, 1915.

38. Ibid, 19 January, 1912.

39. Ibid, 10 July, 1910.

that Malays must work hard and sweep away negative attitudes and values together with wasteful customs and realise the importance of religion. However, Modernizers were aware that Malays had to be educated first especially in the concepts of Islamic religion. Modernizers suggested that the people who should bring back the purity of Islam were the Ulama, the religious leaders. In addition, teachers who taught religion should be responsible for teaching Islamic children. This situation was very important because Malays had to be taught in the proper way and at an early age in order to get satisfactory results and if there was to be a good new generation (40).

Modernizers believed that a new small group of people which received education especially from ^{the} Middle East would be able to sweep away Malay beliefs and behaviour which caused their failure in all aspects of life. Modernizers were aware that if they failed to carry out reform, Malays would stay at the same level or even worse, because they could not compete with immigrants. However, Modernizers believed that if Malays were ready to change according to Islam, there was no doubt that the Malay community would succeed. If they succeeded,

" our community will regain its past glory
and place of honour "Kemulian" (41).

Modernizers believed the illness faced by the Malay community was

40. Al-Imam, 12 July, 1907.

41. Ibid, 23 July, 1906.

caused by many factors, but the most important one was religion. Malays misunderstood both learning and practicing the Islamic religion. This was emphasized as follows,

" perhaps it may be said that we most need the skill of craftsmanship and agriculture, or knowledge of how to rescue us from the slough of apathy and indolence, or that we must learn to unite for the common good All this is true, but the one thing that will strengthen and realise all our desires is knowledge of the commands of our religion. For religion is the proven cure for all the ills of our community" (42).

Reform ideas carried by Modernizers received a strong challenge from the Conservatives group which included religious authorities in the states such as the "Kathi" or religious magistrates, and the Ulama who were very powerful in each state and could inspect, administer and produce "Fatwa" (Legal ruling by a jurist). Modernizers therefore concentrated their attempts to spread reform ideas in the Straits Settlements, because Conservatives ^{were} not very strong there in contrast to the Malay States. Conservatives received strong support from the reigning Sultans and Islam was placed under their control. The influence of Modernizers in the Straits Settlements spread widely because the

42. Ibid, 1 July, 1906.

British administration did not interest itself in Islamic affairs. British administration policy in such matters was a consequence of the Pangkor treaty which was signed in 1874 between the British and Malay chiefs. In the treaty, the British promised not to involve themselves in Islamic affairs and Malay customs in return for the appointment of a British Resident in Perak. Furthermore, the British administration believed disturbances within Islam were issues among Malays themselves, and did not involve British interests.

Modernizers had success in spreading their influence as a result of the building of many "Madrasah" religious schools such as Madrasah Al-Iqbal in Singapore 1907, Al-Hadi in Malacca, 1913, and Al-Mashyur in Penang, 1918 and together with several publications of newspapers and magazines, such as Al-Ikhwan and Saudara, published in Penang in 1926 and 1928 respectively, in addition to Al-Imam, Neraca and Lembaga Melayu which we have already noted in Singapore.

Reform ideas advocated by Modernizers can be found widely in newspapers, magazines and through teaching given in the "Madrasah". In order to stop and prevent reform movement from spreading, Conservatives tried to stop distribution of newspapers and magazines which published reform ideas in the Malay States. Some states prevented the entry of Modernizer periodicals and other publications and imposed penalties for anyone printing or publishing literature concerning the Islamic religion without written permission of ^{the} Sultan (43). Before this, an Islamic

43. W.R. Roff, op.cit., p. 80.

enactment for the same purpose was made in 1904. The enactment forbade any person, except in his house and family, to teach any religious doctrine unless he had obtained written ^{permission} from the Sultan (44). However, Modernizers advocated many reforms which they believed improved Malays and were not opposed to Islamic values. They also urged their countrymen not to be worried about simple matters such as whether they were allowed to pray without "Songkok" (cap/tarboosh), wear a neck-tie, or not wear a turban if they have been to Mecca, whether to take photographs or go to the cinema. Whereas for the Conservatives, these things were vital. Conflict between both groups became clear when some Modernizers tried to demonstrate in front ^{of} Conservatives.

This conflict became serious especially after 1920's, though the argument only focussed on a sub-problem or "Furu/cabang" in Islamic religion (45). Discussion continuously took place everywhere to try to overcome the problems which existed between them but the discussion always ended in tension. For example, the "Ketuk-ketuk" (instrument used in the mosques to determine the beginning of prayer time) became an issue. In Malacca it was reported to have been stolen by Modernizers because they believed the use of "Ketuk-ketuk" was associated with the bell used in a Christian church. Hostility between both groups became more directly expressed when many articles and views were published in

44. Ibid.

45. W.R. Roff, op.cit., pp. 75-87; Mohd Sarim Hj. Mustajab, op.cit., pp. 149-163; Nik Abd Aziz, " Pendekatan Pengajaran Islam di Kelantan Antara Tahun 1860-1940", Malaysia Sejarah & Proses Pembangunan, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1982, p. 55.

order to support both sides. Idaran Zaman, Al-Ikhwan and Saudara, were published in Penang and gave strong support to the Modernizers. On the other hand, Lidah Benar was used by the Conservatives to channel their views. Lidah Benar was published in Kelang by Raja Bon. Besides Lidah Benar, Suara Benar and Panduan were published in Malacca and Kuala Kangsar respectively, and also supported the Conservatives. They accused Modernizers of irreligion because of their reform movement. This accusation was denied by Modernizers who emphasised the principle that man must use his "Akal" (reason) to determine the true religion rather than "Blind acceptance". The Conservatives, wrote Al-Ikhwan in 1929,

" behave as though it was obligatory to believe all the law books of the Ulama, and every word in them, as though they were the Koran itself.... while the "Kaum Muda" (Modernizers) hold that the Koran and "Hadith" alone have this authority, and that as none of the Ulama are free from error, God has given us reason, or intelligence, with which to examine what the Ulama say" (46).

The Conservatives also criticized Modernizers because of their initiative in showing concern about worldly matters. What was most important to them was religion. Man need religion to live especially in the "Akhirat", therefore whatever man did in the

46. Quote from W.R. Roff, op.cit., p. 77.

world other than for religious purposes, was a waste of time. For example, the building of Madrasah Al-Iqbal in Singapore was criticized by the Conservatives. Some of them argued that if pupils were put in schools and hostels their intelligence would not develop because they would use too much time for studying and become worse children ^{and} less pious (47). However, Modernizers defended themselves by attacking Conservatives who were ^{afraid that they} would lose ^{are} their position, "the more people ^{are} educated the less influence they will have" (48). And their behaviour always described by Modernizers as follows:

" they don't want to spend money to educate their children, but are more ready to spend much money for unimportant purposes such as wedding ceremonies, gambling, parties and so on " (49).

The reform movement used religion as a means to solve problems in the context of its ambition to see the development of the Malay community. Sheikh Tahir Jalaludin tried to define the religious movement as an attempt to correct religion, not to lessen or add anything which was not taught by the prophet. What was needed was to correct religion and return to easier and simple forms. Thus from the early twentieth century until the 1920's the tendency of their movement can be said to aim to *create* more self-awareness

47. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

and to
develop and strengthen the Malay community by using the concept of purity of Islam on the basis of the Koran and "Hadith". Much emphasis was placed at this stage on religion and its impact on Malay behaviour. The implications for the economy, education and politics will be discussed later on.

EDUCATION

The importance of education is always stressed by the newspapers alongside the economy and religion, and they believed that Malays were also falling behind in this sphere. Modernizers argued that education could improve and develop Malay society. Their confidence that education could play an important role can be seen as follows,

"the European community could not expand their administration from the West to the East unless they had knowledge, and the Japanese community with its population not exceeding fifty million could not defeat a community which had a population of a hundred million (China and Russia) unless it possessed knowledge" (1).

This statement confirmed the view that a community could only develop and succeed when it was educated. The confidence that education could help to contribute to Malay development was stressed again by Idaran Zaman which stated that "to develop our race we need education" (2).

The awareness of the importance of education by Modernizers was used by them to constantly urge Malays to develop education. They also believed that in addition to misunderstandings about religion and negative attitudes towards life held by Malays,

1. Al-Imam, 23 July 1906.

2. Idaran Zaman, 4 March 1926.

education was among the factors which made them backward.

" if someone asks why our race in this location declines, it is just enough if we say with a short answer that it is because they are poorly educated or not educated at all" (3).

Religious schools certainly existed in Malay society, but Modernizers stressed the need to introduce and develop modern education (secular).

Before the British arrival, the religious school education system was conducted by religiously educated teachers, chosen by students or parents. There were two types of religious schools offered in Malaya, "Sekolah Pondok" (literally means hut school) and sometimes just called "Pondok", and the other "Sekolah Ugama/Quran" or religious/Koran school. From the physical aspect "Sekolah Pondok" comprised a teacher's home, a study room, whether in the teacher's house or in a "surau" nearby and small houses around the teacher's house and "surau" where students lived (4). "Sekolah Pondok" were very obvious and frequently found in the northern states. Religious/koran schools were established in the rest of the country. Education given in the "Sekolah Pondok" placed more emphasis on religious matters. It can be summarized as follows,

3. Neraca, 22 January, 1913.

4. Awang Had Salleh, "Institusi Pondok di Malaysia", Zainal Kling (ed), Masyarakat Melayu Antara Tradisi dan Perubahan, Utusan Publication, Kuala Lumpur 1977, p. 34.

1. Morning prayer (Subuh).
2. Morning Lecture (from seven until ten o'clock in the morning).
3. Revision or private work.
4. Afternoon prayer.
5. Evening lecture.
6. Evening prayer.
7. Night prayer (maghrib).
8. Late night prayer (Isyak) followed by revision (5).

While education given in the religious/koran schools also paid much attention to religious matters, including reciting the Koran, little was learned about how to write. Gullick describes the instruction in the traditional system of the Koran School as one;

" in which Malay children learn a little Arabic and recite the Koran as a form of religious instruction" (6).

Education in religious schools was conducted by a teacher in his house, mosque or "surau" and always students stayed with the teacher during the period of study. In addition to following the education given by his teacher, the student also had a responsibility to work for the teacher, such as look after his orchard or collect firewood. When the students become adult, they were taught self-defence (silat), carpentry, agricultural techniques and some of them learned how to be magicians (7).

5. Ibid, p. 17.

6. J.M. Gullick, Malaya, London 1964, p. 202.

7. Quote from Mujeini Amat, "Sejarah Awal Persekolahan Melayu di

Student responsibilities towards their teacher varied in different schools, and with different teachers. It depended on the needs of the teacher. Generally, students had to work to provide teachers with income. For example, one student in Johore who attended a religious school said that he was selling cake for the teacher (8).

Generally, the Malay system of education was very basic and placed more stress on religious matters. It was not well-organised, especially before 1900. For example, Ahmat Adam argued that instruction was

" given in an improper way and was unsatisfactory. Education for Malay children was merely reading and writing in "jawi" Arabic script and reciting the Koran" (9).

After the British arrival in Malaya, Malay and English schools were established rapidly with government assistance in the late nineteenth century. The system in the Malay school can be briefly described as follows. It was,

" open four hours per day from 8.00 in the morning until 12.00 noon, and operated

Pulau Pinang", Malaysia Dari Segi Sejarah, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1982, bil. 11, p. 40.

8. Fauzi Basri, M.A., "Perkembangan Pendidikan di Negeri Johor 1856-1939 Satu Tinjauan Ringkas", K.K. Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Moden, Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1984, p. 17.

9. Ahmat Adam, "Pertumbuhan Kesedaran Sosial Orang-orang Melayu di Melaka Pada Tahun-tahun 1920an dan 1930an", Jebat, bil. 10, U.K.M., April 1980, p. 16.

six days per week. It was closed for five to six weeks because of the fasting month, and for two weeks holiday in every first, second and third term. In addition, it became obvious that the Malay schools allowed short holidays to enable students to help their parents in the fields" (10).

The education given in the Malay school included agricultural exercises, geography, mathematics and some writing (Roman) (11). Despite the existence of the Malay school, English schools were built by the government in towns, and some were established and conducted by missionaries.

After 1900, Malay educational opportunities expanded. And in towns Malays had an opportunity to send their children to English schools. However, there were still not enough places to provide adequate education, and there were many Malays who did not go to school, especially in the villages because schools were not available and because of their poverty (12). In consequence many Malays were inadequately educated or not educated at all. The development of secular education was very slow in Malaya. In 1872 there were 19 English schools with 2,641 pupils, and 28 Vernacular schools were provided with the enrolment of 818 students. These numbers increased into 39 and 171 schools with

10. Mujeini Amat, op.cit., p. 48.

11. Ibid, p. 41; Fauzi Basri, op.cit., pp. 23-28.

12. Utusan Melayu, 19 June, 1913.

7,528 and 7,404 students respectively in the Straits Settlements alone in 1900. No English and Vernacular schools were provided in the Federated Malay States until 1872. There were only 24 English schools with 1,629 students and 234 Vernacular schools with 6,494 students established in 1900 (13). The number of Malay students in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States was very small. In 1900 there were only 13,898 students in the Vernacular schools. The exact number of Malay students in English schools is unknown, but it must be relatively small.

Modernizers express their sadness that many Malays were not able to read and write in their own language, and were even worse in reading a foreign language (14). For example, according to the 1911 census, the number of people (male and female) who were able to read and write in four selected districts was very low.

District	can read and write		who knows alphabet out of 10,000	
	male	female	male	female
K.Kangsar	4532	432	2790	236
U.Langkat	956	23	1722	62
K.Pilah	2348	144	1835	96
Temerloh	658	11	559	11

Source: The census of Federated Malay States 1911, Mohd Sarim Hj Mustajab, "Neraca 1910 Jun 1915 Penyambung Nafas Al-Imam, Jurnal Budaya, Jilid 3. vol. 1, 1978, p. 106.

From the data above, it was found that in no district was the

13. J.S. Furnivall, Educational Progress in Southeast Asia, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York 1953, p. 32.

14. Neraca, May 1915.

number of people (male or female) who were able to read and write more than 5000. In other words, less than half of the total. This situation was even worse in Temerloh where it was found that only a very small number was able to read and write, especially among females. Al-Imam described the lack of Malay education as very serious and provided its own figures.

"In the Islamic community in Malaya, only one out of a thousand has some competence in religious education and only one in a hundred knows how to write his own language" (15).

Idaran Zaman agreed with the argument expressed by the Al-Imam that the development of the Islamic community was falling behind because the people were not adequately educated. It was "very rare to find a highly educated person" (16). The importance of education led Modernizers to take the initiative, and they expressed their views on the importance of education for Malays frequently. Modernizers urged all parties, including the government, to build more schools,

" Stimulate every group, open several colleges and schools, because there is a need to spread knowledge. we find that a few government and private schools

15. Al-Imam, 16 March, 1907.

16. Idaran Zaman, 21 February, 1929.

are not enough" (17).

Other than urging the government to assist Malay education by building more schools, Malays were also reminded to take the initiative, especially rich people, and not just depend on government. Malays should unite and work together and copy other races in order to develop education,

" work has been done by the Chinese race here which can be used as a guide. For example, the building of the medical school in Singapore. Is there any rich man from our race - Arab descended, Malay or other race who can co-operate" (18).

Malays should take up the challenge to develop their education. To achieve this, everyone should contribute to the development, especially rich and noblemen. They should contribute in terms of money and providing school facilities. This kind of responsibility and co-operation had been shown by the Chinese community, and Malays should follow them, urged Al-Imam,

" rich men and noblemen should work together to establish buildings to be used both for assembly and as schools, places for educating their children in this country" (19).

Malay Sultans and aristocrats also did not escape from criticism

17. Al-Imam, 7 November, 1907.

18. Utusan Melayu, 5 January, 1911.

19. Al-Imam, 1907; Idaran Zaman, 31 November, 1929.

by Modernizers who wrote critically that they "simply don't want to think and give a future for their citizens by providing education" (20). Malay Sultans and aristocrats were often criticised because they themselves also lacked experience and education. They lived in wealth themselves and did not take their responsibilities seriously. Modernizers constantly argued in favour of action and were not afraid to urge Malay Sultans and aristocrats to develop Malay education, especially for poor and backward Malays.

" there is no evidence that Malay Sultans and aristocrats show that they think about the rights of their poor and backward brothers" (21).

The big handicap faced by Malays was inadequate education or none at all. Modernizers believed that money was vital to develop education. Malay Sultans and aristocrats and rich men, were constantly urged to take the initiative and give both specific assistance and strong encouragement. Quite apart from financial issues, however, the Malay attitude toward education needed to be transformed. The attitude of Malay parents was attacked by Modernizers for their indifference towards the importance of education. Only some Malay parents were ready to send their children to school. Most parents preferred that their children should work in the padi field instead of spending most of their

20. Ibid, 17 September, 1906.

21. Ibid, 16 March, 1907.

time in school (22). Parents also refused to send girls to school. Malay parents believed there was no use in educating their daughters because, however highly educated a woman was, in the end she would stay in the kitchen (23). Girls were also expected to help their mothers to do house work such as cooking, cleaning, washing and sometimes to look after young children. A helping hand from their children for Malay peasants was a very obvious need, because they depended so much on human and animal power and used only simple technology to do work in the field. As a result, they were less aware of the importance of education, and therefore they refused to spend their money in educating their children, but more ready to use it in ways that were not beneficial. Modernizers described parental attitudes as follows,

" some of them connected engagement and marriage with things which ^{were} forbidden by (maksiat), religious teaching such as gambling and so on and with excessive eating and drinking" (24).

Modernizers always stressed that education was very important and valuable,

"knowledge and cleverness can bring our

22. L. Manderson, Women-Politics and Change: The Kaum Ibu UMNO Malaysia 1945-1972, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1980, p. 20.

23. Ibid.

24. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

community to a higher place of respect and honour" (25).

Therefore, Modernizers believed education could improve the Malay position, and asked Malays to take care about it. Writings stressed this theme, as the following further example shows,

" the biggest investment in the life of this world is useful education. One community will not advance and develop unless it has knowledge and education" (26).

Therefore, Modernizers never gave up urging Malays to educate their people until the highest level, both males and females.

" to find knowledge is a necessity for either male or female" (27).

For Malays who were capable and intelligent, Modernizers urged them to pursue study, even to go to Europe and be able to hold government posts when they come back (28).

However, the development of girls schools was very slow, and the enrolment was also very low. Strong criticism was expressed by Modernizers of the Malay parents, because of their neglect to educate their children, especially girls. Utusan Melayu stressed

25. Neraca, 17 February, 1915.

26. Ibid, 16 April, 1913.

27. Ibid, 21 April, 1915.

28. Utusan Melayu, 11 June, 1908; Idaran Zaman, 4 March, 1926.

education for girls as a necessity, " our weakness is in not encouraging our daughters to study" (29). And this sentiment was constantly expressed by Modernizers in the form of novels after ^{the} 1920's and poems. Modernizers continued to urge Malay parents to give greater freedom for women to receive education. For example, Syed Sheikh Al-Hadi, one of the most famous Modernizers argued that society would only flourish when the status of women improved, for " it is the women who are the foundation of whoever desires the progress of the people and the nation" (30). However, the freedom movement for women's education actually emphasised religion, handicrafts and domestic skills. Therefore, in general the appeals for women's education were based on an acceptance of a woman's role in her home and family.

" however highly educated a woman is, she cannot be called a woman if she does not know how to manage a happy home, for a woman's glory is her home (31).

In addition to this attitude and ignorance of the importance of education, Conservatives also played an important role in preventing Malays from improving the standard of their education. Conservatives claimed that it was a waste of time and money to educate children. It was of more benefit if they worked in the

29. Utusan Melayu, 2 July, 1908.

30. W.R. Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, Yale University Press, New Haven 1967, pp. 20-21.

31. Quote from L. Manderson, op.cit., p. 21.

fields and, for girls, in the kitchen. Moreover, Conservatives accused Modernizers of cheating by encouraging Malay parents to send their children to school. In this way, children would become less pious (32). In reply to these Conservative charges, Modernizers accused them of being the real group who wasted money in unnecessary ways and places.

" our people withdraw a thousand dollars (ribu ringgit) to build mosques or "Surau" in the places which already have mosques and "surau", but are afraid to withdraw a few for education development, although education makes people go to the mosque (33).

In addition to several wild accusations made by the Conservatives, they also denied the value of new schools built by Modernizers, such as "Madrasah Al- Iqbal" in Singapore, and believed they wasted money. In that school, children were trained to wear smart clothes. Some of them taught that students became more stupid because they stayed in the hostel all the time and studied instead of being free. However, Modernizers launched a counter attack on the Conservatives. Conservatives opposed the formation of new school because they feared,

"losing the advantage that they hold and use to cheat all our community. If there

32. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

33. Neraca, 19 June, 1912.

were many educated people, all their cheating would not work anymore " (34).

But, despite much activity by Modernizers, Malay parents still refused to send their children to schools, especially those established by the government and missionaries. They feared their children would be influenced, and, even worse, they might change their religion.

" the government had the initiative and could try to convert children into Christians because of the influences around them" (35).

In addition to fears that their children would turn into Christians, most English schools were built in towns. On a location basis, it was impossible for Malay parents to send their children to school because they lacked transportation and because of their poverty.

Modernizers went so far as to say that the only way to ensure that Malay parents sent their children to school was by force. Such a step should be taken by respected leaders, otherwise it would not work.

" nobody can force them except Rajas/
Sultans or the government or their respected

34. Al-Imam, 1 June, 1908.

35. Utusan Melayu, 5 November, 1908.

leaders" (36).

As well as urging every group to take action, Modernizers also did not forget their responsibilities to build and improve religious schools. For example, Syed Sheikh Al-Hadi established "Madrasah Al-Hadi" in Malacca and "Al Mashyur Al Islammiyah" in Penang in 1913 and 1919 respectively. Later, many more "Madrasah" were formed such as "Madrasah Muhammadiyah" in Kota Bharu (1917), "Al Diniah" in Kg. Lalang, Padang Rengas (1924) and "Daeratul Maerifal Wataniah" in Kepala Batas (1925). These religious schools were based on the traditional system, but they were updated and improved in terms of buildings and most importantly in the subjects taught. "Madrasah Al- Iqbal" (1907) in Singapore is an example. This school was built complete with hostels where students could choose to stay, ~~and free medical facilities were also provided,~~ and free medical facilities were also provided, with one special doctor. Subjects given in this school included Islamic religion, English and Malay, Mathematics, Geography, History, Public Speaking and composition (Karang-mengarang). However, students had to pay \$300 per year for those who stayed in the hostel and \$24 outside. This modern school for Malays and conducted by Malays was described by Abdul Jalil b. Raja Abdul Rahman (Riau) in his speech on the opening day when he referred to a "feast day for starting to spread knowledge with this new system of education" (37).

Modernizers also conducted a campaign to persuade Malays to give

36. Al-Imam, 18 December, 1906.

37. Ibid, 4 February, 1908.

their views on how to improve and develop Malay education. Persuasion was also carried on by Modernizers through newspapers and received a good response. For example, one local writer from Muar, Johore, proposed to all village elders or headmen in the Malay States that they should plead with both governments, the British in Malaya and the Dutch in Indonesia, to improve education. Among the requests were (38);

Firstly, the government should build one or more school in each state for the use of local students, and instruction in that school should be given either in Malay or an other language according to the race and its official language and English if the state was under British control and Dutch if the state was under Dutch control, and Arabic. Secondly, the government should pay all expenses including the salary of teachers and all facilities needed by students for studying. Because most schools were built in towns, government should pay for travel such as trains and other transport. In this way writers believed they could encourage Malay parents to send their children to school. Thirdly, government should impose heavy punishment on those who were reluctant to send their children to school whether rich or not. Fourthly, government should also impose punishments on lazy or careless students. Fifthly, if students passed in the three subjects mentioned above, the government should take and appoint them as trainee officers and give a resonable salary. Sixthly, after they were fully trained and able to do administrative work,

38. Ibid, 18 December, 1906.

the government should give them the vacancies and the government should not show bias between ordinary and noble people. They also should receive the same rate of salary with other same rank European officers. And finally, in the case of children who had passed from that school, and whose parents were capable of supporting their children's study, the government should force them to send their children to pursue study in medicine, engineering, shipping, economics, military science, law and other studies offered in Europe.

By this means, Malay writers were confident enough that Malays could wake up and develop like other races. They had to be given enough opportunity and good education. Malays had become weak and backward because they had poor education or no education at all, and not because they were lazy. His proposal was strongly supported by Hj. Tahir b. Hj. Ahmad Bunjal, who was a Malay school teacher at Pulau Tawar, Kuala Lipis, Pahang. According to Hj. Tahir, good education should be controlled by parents and conducted by government compulsorily from the lowest to the highest level. In his proposal, Hj. Tahir suggested four categories of education should be provided as follows; (39).

Primary School

This type of school should be built, at least two or three in each territorial unit (mukim), by the government when there were fifty or more children. To ensure teaching efficiency, each teacher should teach not more than thirty children. Every school

39. Ibid, 14 May, 1907.

should have one headmaster and several ordinary teachers, including religious teachers, to ensure students would get proper religious instruction as well as modern education. However, Hj Tahir proposed limited education for girls. He suggested the girls class should be provided until standard three, the purpose here was just to produce educated mothers, especially with regard to religious education. On the other hand, boys should have more opportunity than girls. After they had passed standard four, students should continue study into a second category of school - a category, according to Hj. Tahir, which did not as yet exist.

Second Category of School.

This type of school could be a school for standard five and six or probably seven in the modern sense. Schools should be built one in each district (daerah) under the supervision of the District Officer. Two headmasters (it could be a headmaster and his assistant) should be appointed in this school and several ordinary teachers, and all of them must be Muslim. Hj. Tahir further suggested, that the English language should taught during four and the half hours a day from 7.00 in the morning until 11.30. At noon, Arabic language should be taught for three hours a day from 12.30 until 3.30 in the evening. Before that, students needed to go to pray in the mosque or "surau" and school would finished every day after evening prayer (Asar).

Third Category of School:

What Hj Tahir tried to suggest concerning a third category of school is definitely a secondary school. This school should be

built in each state as a big school or centre for pursuing study for students who had passed from the Second Category of School. Actually, said Hj. Tahir a school of this type was built by the government in Perak, namely the Malay College of Kuala Kangsar. One British or Dutch headmaster should be appointed, together with one Arabic teacher, and several Muslim teachers.

Fourth Category of School:

Hj Tahir's original idea here seems to be that this school should be associated with a college or university overseas. He proposed students who has passed from the Third Category of School should be sent to pursue study a Fourth Category of School.

From the above proposal, it clearly can be seen that Hj. Tahir and his friends were putting forward very advanced ideas toward the development of Malay education. For Malays there is no surprise that Hj. Tahir expressed such dramatic ideas, because he had wide experience in education. Moreover, he was himself a school teacher. Modernizers urged the Malay community to give strong support and channel the proposal to the Malay Sultans and British High Commissioner to take action, such as providing a special budget for education development. In order to develop Malay education, Modernizers stressed the need for a sense of responsibility from both sides - the Malay community and the government. For Malays, they should act as a pressure group to stimulate awareness of the importance of education. As far as the government was concerned, Modernizers also wanted it to take action. For example, they suggested how money might be raised to

establish an education budget from several sources: (40). Government officials (and their private counterparts) should donate one percent from their monthly income (including pensioners). In order to standardize and make the payment easier, one percent of their income should be deducted directly by government. Merchants also should pay one percent from monthly profits. The way to calculate how much merchants should pay was to make one percent equal to ten percent of a merchant's total capital. Once again, government should deduct it directly. As far as the general public was concerned, one percent from every \$50 total income should be taken from each man. For example, 50 cents should be paid for every \$50. Women would pay one percent from every \$25. The Malay public and peasants would be only required to pay once a year instead of the monthly amount paid by government and public officials and merchants. However, Modernizers did not explain how to determine the total income of the Malay public and of peasants.

In order to see Malay development, Modernizers not only suggested more schools should be built and provided with more facilities, but it was even more important to change the curriculum. Although they proposed a new curriculum, that did not mean that religious education would be abolished or left behind. Religious education would stay and be offered together with modern education (secular). Religious education was vital the Modernizers said;

" we could not deny the benefit from religious

40. Ibid.

schools, because religious education is needed for the early training of our Muslim children" (41).

In other words, they proposed a new and well-organized curriculum which could create students who were able to understand the modern world, alongside traditional religious matters. The changing of the curriculum meant that religious education should be given in a proper way under qualified religious teachers, together with secular education.

"the benefits to be gained from foreign language (education) should be taught to our children in our own language" (42).

However, the initiative proposed by Modernizers was in their opinion spoiled by government policy. They accused the government of providing basic education for Malays, such as writing and reading, only for government purposes and in order to meet requirements in low level employment (43). And, although Malay children were given education to meet employment requirements at a low level, it did not mean that all of them would get jobs, especially boys who left Malay schools. For example,

" of 2900 boys who left Perak vernacular

41. Neraca, 24, February, 1915.

42. Ibid.

43. Mohd Sarim, op.cit., p. 98.

schools in 1903, only twenty four become officials or domestic servants, ten Malay school teachers, one a policeman and one a clerk" (44).

Vernacular schools did not seem to have economic value. They were provided to meet the requirements for the lower level of jobs, and in practice it was not easy for Malay school leavers to find job. As a result there was a tendency for Malay parents to send their children to English schools instead of vernacular schools. "they voluntarily sent their children to the Muslim schools for their spiritual welfare or to English schools for their material welfare, but the official vernacular schools offered them nothing in this world or the next" (45). However, once Malay children went to an English school it did not mean that Malay students would be treated fairly in comparison with the other colonial officials. For example, in 1935, an educated Malay who held a bachelor degree with honours from Oxford was offered a post in the M.A.S. (Malay Administrative Service) with only \$150 starting salary, whereas colonial officials in the M.C.S. (Malayan Civil Servants) received \$300 with the same qualification (46).

44. W.R. Roff, op.cit., p. 77.

45. J.S. Furnivall, op.cit., p. 53; Fauzi Basri, op.cit., p. 29, stated that students who left the English schools in Johore would received a higher salary in clerical service and have a huge opportunity for promotion, and even Muar railway service in Johore only needed staff educated from English schools.

46. Kashnor Johan, Dr., "Perkhidmatan Tadbir Melayu: Tradisi dan Peranan Dalam Konteks Kerajaan Penjajah", in Malaysia Sejarah & Proses Pembangunan, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1979, p. 144.

Because of the lower standard of education given to Malay children few of them could get even lower levels of job. It seemed that the government was denying the obligation to educate and develop the Malay community. Since it was,

" not ready to produce Muslim local people as lawyers, doctors, engineers or any kind of carpenters (tukangan)" (47).

Modernizers also accused the government of lack of faith in not providing education for Malay children. This lack of faith extended to overseas schools. For example, the American commercial school was accused of trying to "sell education" by Al-Imam (48). Furthermore, there was criticism of government policy because it seemed to do little more than "to make the son of a Malay peasant a better peasant rather than to prepare him to any alternative occupation. Al-Imam, attacked government policy in providing Malay education. It only tried to provide;

" knowledge which did not exceed what was necessary to appreciate "pantun" (one of Malay poem) and its elements" (49).

In addition, the failure percentage of Malay students was also criticised. Very few passed. Out of 11935 students in Perak only

47. Al-Imam, 27 Sepetmber, 1908.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid, 17 September, 1906.

five percent could continue study until standard seven (50).

Because the number of failures was very high, Modernizers did not forget to advise the pupils in the column entitled "study guide" on how to succeed in study by saying,

" anyone who wants to study does not easily give up what they learn, because that attitude could cause carelessness" (51).

In order to help Malay school leavers to get jobs, Modernizers urged the government to build new schools which could bring benefit for the Malays beyond religious education. The benefits envisaged by Modernizers were "carpentry, gardening and a bigger intake for Malay children to English schools" (52). They encouraged Malays to imitate foreign people, especially the Chinese, in the way which they co-operated to develop their education by building many schools. Modernizers admired the success of Chinese in introducing a new curriculum, and therefore encouraged Malays to follow them.

" during 1904, the Chinese built schools which taught geography, history, mathematics, physical education and so on. Moreover, the education given is free" (53).

50. Utusan Melayu, 19 June, 1913 & 29 November, 1913.

51. Idaran Zaman, 3 June, 1928.

52. Utusan Melayu, 19 June, 1913 & Idaran Zaman, 4 July, 1929.

53. Idaran Zaman, 31 November, 1929, Student world column entitled "When it happened?".

Modernizers also expressed their dissatisfaction with failure to use the Malay language. The Malay language was not used widely in the schools. Moreover, there were no valuable books in Malay. This situation was criticised severely by Modernizers, and they claimed that this situation was brought about by "ulama". "Ulama" said the Modernizers,

" only used and read books in Arabic;
that explains the poverty of the Malay
language" (54).

In addition to expressing criticisms and dissatisfaction concerning Malay education and the lack of help given to Malay children to get jobs more easily. Modernizers made certain positive proposals to government on how to create jobs for Malays and how to develop Malay education. They adapted some proposals suggested by Hj. Tahir primarily. Among the suggestion were:
(55).

Firstly, students in Primary school who were incapable of pursuing study in the Second Category of School should be taken on as office boys, clerks, headmen, merchants clerks and assistants to teachers in Primary School. Secondly, students who could not enter into the Third Category of School, should be taken on as headmen, Malay clerks in government offices, surveyors, headmasters in Primary Schools and so on. Thirdly,

54. Al-Imam, 14 May, 1907.

55. Ibid.

students from the Third Category of School, if not able to go overseas for further studies, should be taken on as clerks in the kind of posts held by Ceylonese, Chinese and "Serani" Eurasians who already knew the English language. And finally, students who qualified overseas should be taken on as officials in the kind of posts held by British and Dutch officials at the time.

The importance of education for Malays encouraged the publication of this topic in newspapers and magazines widely, and it can be said that almost every day this topic has been discussed, especially after 1920's.

ECONOMY.

The state of the Malayan economy was discussed by newspapers and magazines in the years from 1900 until the 1920's. These articles expressed an awareness of the Malay people's condition, their backwardness, weakness and poverty and their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs.

Malays were aware that they lacked a place in the developing economy and were being left in the agriculture sector, especially as subsistence padi cultivators and considerable numbers of fisherman. Their role was affected by the specialization by race in the economy introduced by the colonial power. The Chinese were concentrated in the tin - mines, Indians in the rubber plantations and the Malays themselves in the uneconomic agricultural sector. Malays were asked to act as providers of food for a large and growing number of people engaged in the non-agricultural sector (1). The recruitment of a large number of Chinese and Indian labourers in tin and rubber industries was one factor which held Malays in their old traditions. The new comers were not interested in padi cultivation because of the uncertain return. Also, wages were higher in rubber and tin - mining (2).

British officials envisaged that not only the Malay peasantry, but the Indonesian immigrants would be able to cater for the new

1. Lim Teck Ghee, Peasants and Their Agricultural Economy in Colonial Malaya 1874-1941, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, 1977, p. 16.

2. Ibid, p. 20.

requirements. They believed these people shared a common background of subsistence agricultural activity which fitted in conveniently with the British design for peasant agriculture. Despite this, the British administration's policy was to absorb Malay aristocrats as new bureaucrats who concentrated on administration problems. This indirectly stopped the participation in economic life of a group which had previously played a large part in it (3). Malays also could not make much use of the facilities provided by the colonial power such as road and railways for communication. Transport and communication served substantially the needs of the rubber and tin industries rather than linking Malay villages.

The inflow of foreign immigrants caused instability among the Malays, because they were not involved in the commercial economy, and they felt their future in jeopardy, especially when the Chinese gained in wealth. For example, referring to the Chinese, one reader sent his view to the correspondence column, stating that he always "heard talk about big merchants (taukeh) and very popular rich men either from store or mines or other sectors" (4). The success of the Chinese could be seen in commercial life. Malays could not compete with them, although the majority of the population was Malay. The Chinese appeared to survive and succeed in their business anywhere they settled.

3. Malek Munip, "Perancangan Pentadbiran kolonial Inggeris : Kesannya ke Atas Ekonomi Melayu", Zainal Kling (ed) Masyarakat Melayu: Antara Tradisi Dan Perubahan. Utusan Publication & Distributors, Kuala Lumpur 1977. pp. 130-131. Also see chapter 1 under section economy.

4. Utusan Melayu, 26 May, 1917.

" Malay traders could not compete with Chinese even in Malay villages where the majority of the buyers were Malays (5).

The success of the Chinese was conspicuous when compared with Malays. Malays only gained a part of what the Chinese were gaining. Some Malays were also rich but very few and wealth was not as great as the Chinese. "It was like comparing earth and sky" (6). Malays were said to be incompetent because they did not have knowledge of business (7), for examples, book-keeping, short-hand and typewriting. That was why Malays could not start business and if they did try no wonder they faced failure (8). Besides that, the Malays who did start up in business showed less initiative and lacked the ambition to develop and expand their business. Therefore they stayed at the same level and were unable to compete with the Chinese (9).

From the statement above, it clearly can be said that Malays felt themselves in poverty compared with other races in Malaya. The majority of Malays were involved in the agriculture sector,

5. Idaran Zaman, 20 May, 1926.

6. Ibid, 3 December, 1925; Utusan Melayu, 27 June, 1916.

7. Idaran Zaman published a good deal about Malay lack of business knowledge and experience, for example, see the issues of 14, January, 1926; 20 April, 1926; 20 May, 1926; 3 and 10 December, 1925.

8. Zabedah Awang Ngah (ed), Antologi Essei Melayu 1914-1941, D.B.P., Kuala Lumpur 1964, p. 56.

9. Idaran Zaman, 3 December, 1925.

which was not very prosperous, especially the padi sector. These tables make the point statistically;

FMS Agriculture Population 1901 (by race)

<u>State</u>	<u>Malay</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Indian</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
Perak	65217	9678	719	163	75777
Selangor	13766	9089	5720	80	28655
N.Sembilan	26102	6374	2829	23	35391
Pahang	14730	437	28	64	15259
Total	119815	25578	9349	330	155082 (10).

Most of the Malays who were engaged in agriculture, were actually involved in the not very prosperous padi sector. Rudner has estimated that 97% of Malay peasants were involved in padi cultivation (11), and it automatically held number one ranking among Malay occupations.

TEN LEADING MALAY OCCUPATIONS

<u>Occupation</u>	1911 (FMS only)		1921	
	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Employment</u> (000)	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Employment</u> (000)
Padi planters	1	108.2	1	452.0
Agricultural labourers	2	29.2	2	94.8
Agricultural owners & managers	3	18.3	4	29.8

10. Lim Teck Ghee, op.cit., p. 58.

11. M. Rudner, "Value and Issues in Malaysian Development", J.C. Jackson & M. Rudner (ed), Issues In Malaysian Development in Malaysia, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, Singapore, reprinted 1980, p. 8.

Atap makers & sellers	3	18.3	4	29.8
Coconut cultivators	6	4.6	-	-
Tailors & seamstress	6	3.9	-	-
Fishermen	7	3.2	3	35.0
Labourers (unspecific)	8	2.9	8	8.2
Planters (unspecific)	9	2.4	5	26.3
Weavers	10	2.1	6	11.2

(12)

Malay peasants were dominant in padi cultivation and have remained so even until recent years. It is subsistence farming and less profitable compared with other major occupations in Malaya such as rubber in term of quantity. Rice cultivation was not only less in terms of volume, but also less profitable in cash returns.

Actually, the Chinese success in the Peninsula and in South East Asia generally, was not a surprise, because they were not ordinary people. They came from far away and had overcome many obstacles on the way. The hard conditions they faced in their homeland caused them to have a competitive spirit.

The administrative system which existed in the Peninsula under the British implemented a capitalist economy which encouraged enterprise.

12. D.R. Snodgrass, Inequality and Economic Development in Malaysia, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1980, p. 32.

**COMPARISON BETWEEN RUBBER AND PADI AS A MEANS
OF SECURING A GIVEN QUANTITY OF RICE (13).**

Year	Pounds of husked Padi obtainable with proceed from one acre of rubber.	Pound of husked padi obtainable grown direct from one acre of rubber.	Balance in favour of rubber (in pound of husked padi).
1929	2184	424	1760
1930	1200	344	856
1931	912	568	344
1932	688	640	48

**Comparison of Cash Returns From Padi & Rubber
Cultivation in Krian. (14).**

Year	Average yield of padi per acre (gantangs)	Price per gantang (cents)	Gross proceeds from padi (\$ per acre)	Average yield of rubber (lb. per mature acre)	Price per lb. (cents)	Gross proceeds from rubber (\$ per acre)	differ ence in favour of rubber (\$).
1922	260	13	33.80	400	25	90.00	56.20
1924	260	13	33.80	200	43	86.00	52.90
1926	260	13	33.80	200	75	150.00	166.20
1928	230	13	29.90	200	33	66.00	36.10
1930	200	13	26.00	460	16	73.60	47.60

Everybody could become wealthy and because of their background the Chinese became the wealthiest group in the Peninsula. Chinese initiative and spirit was described clearly by Al-Imam as

13. L.C. Yah, Economic Development of Modern Malaya, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1967, p. 176.

14. L.T. Ghee, op.cit., p. 258.

follows;

" look at the Chinese, they have left their own country and come to our country. Most of them arrived only with a roll of mat^{ting} and pants. They have come here because they want to avoid their hunger at home. They work to ~~be~~become a landlord and have a store and in town carry on a banking and a store business" (15).

Awareness of non-Malay wealth not only existed, but was obviously much discussed. Too much Malay dependence on non-Malays was described for example in a documentary entitled (Poverty and the development of Malay race) which noted that "nearly all goods had to be purchased from non-Malays such as clothes, food, house tools and so on" (16). The Malay dependence on non-Malays was not a new position. Non-Malays, especially Chinese, acted as intermediaries, buying up Malay agricultural products and selling finished products. As a result, Malays gained nothing, and the middleman became richer. Thus Malays were not only poor, but they were also too dependent on foreign people. In his speech, Syed Abdul Aziz described the situation as follows,

"if we stand in front of a mirror we can surely see in all the clothes we wear every day that they were all produced by a foreign

15. Al-Imam, 23 July, 1906.

16. Idaran Zaman, 10 December, 1925.

race, and if we could not get hold of such garments we would have nothing to wear" (17).

Malay backwardness could be seen clearly in all aspects including property and trading. Malays were urged to become aware "open your eyes and see around us" (18), Al-Imam constantly reminded Malays of the need to improve their position, to work hard especially to "involve themselves and expand in trading together with craftsmanship (pertukangan)" (19) or probably industry. Malays also were asked to show caution, and not be relaxed towards what was happening around them. There was criticism, however, not only of non-Malays who gained profits but of Malays who would not copy the success of non-Malays. Malays were not only asked to follow the Chinese example but also all successful races in the world, such as the British, in order to disprove the belief that Malays were lazy (20). "The important ^{thing} is hard work, otherwise people would think Malays are lazy" said Neraca (21). Hopefully, with hard work, Malays also could enjoy the wealth which existed in Malaya. It was estimated that "sixty five percent of the world's tin is deposited in Malaya amounting roughly to 40,597,935 piculs. There are around one million rubber trees and they are worth ninety million pound sterling with the

17. Utusan Melayu, 7 June, 1913, Syed Abdul Aziz was a Tunisian and he gave his speech in Muslim assembly in Muslim Federal House.

18. *Ibid*, 27 June, 1916.

19. Al-Imam, 17 September, 1906.

20. Utusan Melayu, 14 August, 1913.

21. Neraca, 13 August 1913.

price at £ 2.25 per lb, and there was also a considerable number of coconut plantation as sources of the wealth of Malaya" (22). Talking about wealth, Utusan Melayu also commented " Malaya has now become richer compared with ten years ago especially after the introduction of the rubber industry" (23). The whole character of Malay economy was changed when the British introduced commercial agriculture in the form of rubber and by taking over (with assistance of the Chinese) and expanding the small native tin-mining industry. Malaya soon became the world's largest exporter of natural rubber and tin, the position she holds to^{the} present. This position can be seen in the tables below;

**World Production of Natural Rubber
(thousand tons)**

Year	Malaya	Indonesia	Thailand	Ceylon	Other	Africa	South	Total
1910	6	3	-	?	?	?	?	-
1921	151	72	-	39	14	5	21	302
1925	211	193	5	46	33	8	33	529
1929	456	255	5	81	43	6	23	869

Sources adapted :

a. G.C. Allen & A.G. Donnithorne, Western Enterprise in Indonesia & Malaya : A Study in Economic Development. Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 2nd impression 1962. p. 295.

b. L.T. Ghee op. cit., p. 253.

22. Utusan Melayu, 9 February, 1911.

23. Ibid, 27 June, 1914.

**Percentage Distribution of Natural Rubber
of Principal Rubber Producing Countries.**

Country	Year		
	1910	1920	1930
Malaya	6.7	51.0	53.6
Indonesia	2.9	22.1	29.2
Ceylon	1.7	8.6	9.2
Thailand	0.001	0.1	0.5
Africa	21.4	1.6	0.6
Others	26.0	1.2	2.0

Source adapted from L.C. Yah op. cit., p.94.

**World Tin Production By Countries
(Thousand tons)**

Country	Year				
	1900	1905	1913	1919	1929
Malaysia	43	51	51	39	72
Indonesia	18	12	21	21	36
Bolivia	9	16	26	27	46
Thailand	4	5	7	8	10
Nigeria	-	-	4	6	11
Congo	-	-	-	-	1
U. Kingdom	4	4	5	3	3
Australia	4	5	8	5	2
China	3	4	8	9	7
Others	-	2	4	4	8
World total	85	99	134	122	196

Sources adapted from :

- a) L.C. Yah op. cit., p. 319.
- b) Wong Lin Ken, The Malayan Tin Industry to 1914: With special reference to the states of Perak, Selangor, N. Sembilan and Pahang. University of Arizona Press, Tuscon 1965, pp. 246-247.
- c) Allen & Donnithrone, op. cit., p. 297.
- d) L.T. Ghee, op. cit., p. 252.
- e) J.B. Serivenor "mining". R.O. Winstedt (ed), Malaya: The Straits Settlements and Unfederated Malay States, Constable & Co Ltd., London 1923, p. 193.

Modernizers expressed their views on why Malays were backward in the economy. Their weakness was caused by several factors, one of which was their social behaviour. For example, Idaran Zaman published an article entitled "Why our race declines" and wrote

"There is no co-operation between them.
They waste and don't know how to spend
money" (24).

Furthermore, among the factors suggested in contributing to backwardness were the following,

1. Deviousness (sangka yang tidak betul).
2. Uneducated women (tiada pengetahuan orang perempuan).
3. Lack of knowledge (miskin pada "kitab") (25).

This negative assessment helped to explain the failure of contemporaries to compete with non-Malays. Many criticisms were made by Modernizers in order to create Malay awareness of the

24. Idaran Zaman, 23 April, 1926.

25. Ibid.

problem and overcome Malay weakness. Malays, it was said, were not interested in commerce and industry, as compared with non-Malays especially Chinese. In contrast they paid much attention to unbeneficial activities such as sport. For example, for the Singapore Malays, football was very popular and had special priority.

"the size of the Malay community (Singapore) is less than the Chinese community, but soccer news is more widely spread, whereas in the Chinese community they feel much anxiety about industry and seeking wealth" (26).

The importance of and interest in soccer on the part of the Malays there was also reflected in the number of football clubs there (27).

This attitude could be dangerous to the Malays, especially the young generation. Young Malays were urged to be aware of the importance of time and fill it with self-improvement and leave such bad attitudes behind. How young Malays wasted their time was described as follows;

"Malay young people like to assemble in the billiard centre and the place of hoop-la (menyumpit gelang) and other wasteful location centres" (28).

26. Al-Imam, 5 September, 1908.

27. See chapter Politics.

28. Mohd Dahari Osman, "Akhbar Cahaya Pulau Pinang 1900-1906", Jebat, U.K.M., 77/78/79, p. 17.

Unlike in the towns, the young generation who stayed in the villages used their time by "playing soccer and talking to each other in the coffee shop and just slept" (29).

Nevertheless, it was suggested that the negative attitude among young Malays was actually indirectly caused by the way Malay parents treated their children.

" Malay children in this state were ignored by their parents and were free to play in the village and they were then married off early, but even so parents still looked after them and supported them with food and clothes" (30).

Malays were also said to be lacking in effort. They were reluctant to try new fields which could improve their position, especially in commerce. Very few Malays were involved in commerce and a majority of them were engaged in the agriculture sector. But when we ask why they were not involved or interested in business, the obvious reply is that they had small or no capital to start business. Malays had to be persuaded to get involved and start businesses like the Chinese who were successful, though they also had small capital when they started business. The secret behind the Chinese success has hard work (31). The fact that Malays lacked business experience was also

29. Utusan Melayu, 19 June, 1913.

30. M. Dahari, op.cit., p. 17.

31. Idaran Zaman, 20 May, 1926.

among the causes of Malay failure (32). They could not compete with the Chinese who had several advantages even in the Malay villages.

Religion and belief also affected the Malay way of life and attitude. The failure to understand religion in a proper way was the cause of Malay weakness and backwardness (33). Strong criticisms were made of Malays who refused to work hard, believing that their destiny was fixed by God (34). Moreover, most of them believed that the world was merely a place for stopover, in which people were prepared religiously before going to their permanent destination. This was as a result of lack of education and a misunderstanding in religion. The situation became worse when teachers and religious authorities were not sufficiently responsible in giving their teaching. They gave special priority to life in the after world and seemed to forget responsibilities in this world, where man should work equally either for religion or daily life (35).

If we look to the Malay way of life, there were many factors other than religion which might have influenced it. How proverbs affected the Malay life has been studied by Thye in his comparison between Malay and Chinese proverbs (36). In his study,

32. Ibid; Neraca, 16 April, 1913.

33. See chapter Religion.

34. Idaran Zaman, 26 May, 1926.

35. Neraca, 12 May, 1912.

36. C.H. Thye, Masalah Perpaduan Nasional, D.B.P., Kuala Lumpur 1979, pp. 52-54.

he found the difference between proverbs in the two languages was clear. In terms of fortune, for example, Malay proverbs are negative. For example, "rezeki secupak takkan jadi segantang" (if you get "secupak" ^(a unit of measurement of rice) it is impossible to get "segantang" ^(a bigger unit)), Chinese proverbs on the other hand were more positive such as "wealth and respect are gained from working hard and saving". About wealth, Malay proverbs say, "wealth cannot be carried to the grave" (harta tak boleh dibawa mati) and "only white clothes can be brought to the grave" (hanya kain putih dibawa ke kubur). For the Chinese, the concept of wealth is more important, like "if we get money, whatever we say is correct, but not otherwise" (kalau ada wang cakap kita dianggap betul, kalau tidak dianggap salah). He also showed that Malay proverbs praised initiative less than Chinese. The Chinese said "if you refuse to work hard when young don't regret when you are old" (tidak mahu rajin berusaha semasa muda sia-sialah merasa duka nestapa semasa tua).

However, there were many good Malay proverbs such as "little by little become a mountain" (sikit-sikit, lama-lama jadi bukit). Some Malay negative values, however, not only made them backward, but even contributed to a decline from what they already had established and some of them completely lost the ability to maintain themselves. They were not even trying to maintain what they had, ^{and were then} even far ^{they} from developing what ^{they} already had.

" we can see much evidence that our race used to have many handicrafts, but these have not expanded and indeed are

declining and slowly disappearing" (37).

Realising that situation, Malays were urged to work and to use their expertise again, in other words to resume their former activities, such as craftsmen. Popular Malay craftsmanship could be seen in goods made from gold and silver (38).

As regards the other group of Malays who were dependent on land, namely peasants, they were urged not to depend solely on one major source. To increase income, they were encouraged to grow a variety of crops and do various other jobs as a precaution if anything went wrong. Growing rubber was one of the ways to solve ^{the} problem. For Malays who stayed in the town, they were encouraged to learn other useful occupations such as carpentry, or clerical work in a firm or government department (39). Malays were also urged to unite and work together in order to cut out middlemen by forming a "company" which would operate in the same way as a co-operative. Mohd. Nuradin b. Ali in editorial column entitled "The development of a successful Malay race" urged the building of "a place for Malays to stay and do business - a co-operative for marketing producers" (40).

Other than acting to replace the middleman, a co-operative also could act as a body to give credit facilities to peasants. This kind of co-operation could create the spirit of working together

37. Neraca, 13 August, 1913.

38. Utusan Melayu, 28 February, 1914.

39. Ibid, 6 March, 1909.

40. Idaran Zaman, 31 December, 1925.

and lead to most improvement in their position and make Malays united. It also could revive the values of (semangat gotong royong) or "mutual help" which existed long ago in Malay custom (41). In addition, Malays women were encouraged to work to increase their standard of living. Modernizers argued that women in other countries, especially developing countries, very obviously went out to work, even sometimes doing the same job as men. Modernizers gave as their example America where women "work in construction companies and big stores, carry heavy bricks, wood and construction tools which no Malay women have ever done before" (42). Actually in a peasant community which relied on human and animal muscles, the assistance of women was important. Women had to play a role and this role had been taught to them since earliest times. Swettenham has described how at about five or six - a girl "was expected to assist her mother in the preparation of meals, in cleaning the house and in washing the clothes. She began to assume some responsibility for the care of younger children, and sometimes also helped in the rice field" (43). For the fishing community, the same situation happened where daughters "would draw water, chop wood and generally help in the house, while the men only go to sea" (44). Women were

41. Neraca, 18 July, 1912.

42. Al-Imam, 6 December, 1907.

43. F.A. Swettenham, quote from L. Manderson, Women, Politics and Change: The Kaum Ibu UMNO Malaysia 1945-1972, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur, New York & Melbourne 1980, p. 15.

44. R. Firth, Housekeeping Among Malay Peasants, Athlone Press, University of London & Humanities Press Inc., second edition 1966, p. 17.

expected to help since their husbands worked.

" When the fisherman comes in wet and tired after a day's fishing he expects his wife to be down on the beach, to throw skids for the boats, help in the sale of fish, and carry back the husband's fishing gear to the house" (45).

However, the case of Kelantan's women was a special one. They rather than men were active in the economy (46). They were frequently found trading and a majority of them did business in the market even until recent days.

In general, it was argued in the past that all the factors which caused Malay backwardness had to be solved if Malays wanted to develop. The position was summed up by Idaran Zaman as follows;

" if we still like to be lazy,
(Selagi kita suka pemalas),
surely we get less rice and tools.
(Tak dapat tiada kurangnya beras dengan perkakas).

If we do not work,
(Selagi kita tidak berusaha),
we cannot succeed forever.
(Selama-lamanya tak boleh berjaya).

If we don't have good sense,
(Selagi kita tak berperasaan),
we shall not develop.
(Tentulah kurang daripada kemajuan).

If we do not co-operate,
(Selagi kita tiada bermuafakat),
it will be difficult to make profits.
(Tiap-tiap keuntungan susahlah dapat).

If we like quarrels,

45. Ibid, p. 25.

46. Ibid, pp. 29-34.

(Selagi kita suka bergaduh),
every promise we make will not last.
(Tiap-tiap persetiaan tak dapat kukuh).

If we don't love each other,
(Selagi kita tak mahu berkasih-kasih),
we shall have less blessing from God.
(Kuranglah rahmat daripada Tuhan).

If we like disputes,
(Selagi kita suka bermusuh),

our development will be like a bamboo.
(Kemajuan kita seumpama buluh).

If we do not show loyalty,
(Selagi kita kurang persetiaan),
we all cannot succeed.
(Serba tak boleh kejayaan).

If we are careless,
(Selagi kita kurang cermat),
we are far away from prosperity.
(Jauhlah daripada nikmat).

If we don't have self consciousness,
(Selagi kita tak mahu berinsaf),
we don't draw the right lesson from our difficulties.
(Kesusahan kita tak makna apa).

If we don't have knowledge,
(Selagi kita tiada berpengetahuan),
we will be ashamed forever.
(Selama-lamalah kita dalam keaiban).

If we like gossip,
(Selagi kita suka mengumpat),
we cannot work together.

(Tiap-tiap hal tak dapat semuafakat).

If we refuse to stay under the sun,
(Selagi kita tak mahu berjemur),
it is difficult to get prosperity.
(Susahlah kita mendapat makmur).

If we don't have self-respect,
(Selagi kita tiada bermalu-maluan),
every work will not multiply.
(Tiap pekerjaan tidaklah bergandaan).

If we behave arrogantly,
(Selagi kita suka kesombongan),
we cannot get on with each other.

(Susahlah kesenangan di dalam pencarian) (47).

Although many factors were thus described in order to explain Malay weakness and backwardness, together with some advice on how to improve the position, everyone was aware of the fact that (it could not be denied) Malay peasants lacked capital and technology to develop their agricultural activity. They used simple and poor quality tools and were dependent too much on human and animal power to do work. In order to help peasants to upgrade their living standard, the Modernizers also criticised government policy. Government contributed to Malays poverty because ^{it} did not encourage the development of initiative among Malay peasants. The government was asked to assist Malay peasants by establishing a "bank" to provide credit facilities. They believed that Malay peasants could get considerable benefit if the government was willing to take this step.

" Prosperity would increase if the government established a bank which could lend some money to Malays for improving their farms, buying animals or tools for agriculture, or anything which related to agricultural purposes" (48).

In addition, the government was also inactive in developing rice production because of the policy of importing rice. Among major countries supplying cheap rice for Malaya were Thailand and

47. Idaran Zaman, 2 May, 1925.

48. Utusan Melayu, 20 July, 1908.

Burma, and it seemed that the obligation to maintain domestic rice production was neglected, though there was still some carried on by government.

Rubber was introduced by the British, and the size of the production rapidly increased after 1900 in term of acreage. Arasaratnam has calculated the following figures: in the year 1900 there were 50,000 acres, 543,000 acres in 1911 and 3,272,000 acres in 1938 (49). With this amount, automatically Malaya become the major natural rubber producer. In conjunction with the expansion of rubber plantation, many Indian labourers were brought in to meet labour demand on the rubber estates and this led to an increased Indian population in Malaya from about 270,000 in 1911 to 470,000 in 1921, and to 625,000 in 1931 (50). In 1937, 300,000 Indians were employed on the British owned estates only (51). The rapid growth of rubber production naturally led to the development of the Malayan economy —, "we supposed ^{to be} more prosperous now" (52). — but this development was criticised by Modernizers on the grounds that all the rubber trees in Malaya belonged to the European companies and the labour came from India (53). The rapid expansion of rubber plantation

49. S. Arasaratnam, Indians in Malaysia and Singapore, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1980, see p. 35-36.

50. Ibid, p, 29.

51. H. Thinker, The Banyan Trees: Overseas Emigrants From India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1977, p. 98.

52. Utusan Melayu, 8 February, 1908.

53. Ibid, 27 June, 1914.

was necessary because of the expansion of the new motocar and electrical industries. Further interest was stimulated in its production by new land regulations in the Federated Malay States which introduced low quit rents for land granted for rubber planting (54). This rapid expansion also existed because rubber rose in price. As a result of this rapid rise in price, rubber became one of the most profitable fields of investment.

London Yearly Average Natural Rubber Price

Year.	Price.	
	s.	d.
1901	2	3.00
1903	2	6.00
1905	3	8.00
1907	4	7.50
1909	7	1.00
1911	5	5.50

Source, L.C. Yah, p. 253.

Malay interest slowly changed when they saw the rapid expansion of rubber and its profit, but sadly many obstacles existed to prevent Malays from taking part in the rubber industry. Government preferred that Malays should concentrate on planting rice which was considered as the less profitable return. The government tried to keep Malay peasants on the land as unprofitable padi cultivators in several ways. The restriction

54. P.P. Courteney, A Geography of Trade and Development in Malaya, Bell & Sons Ltd., p. 214.

for new land and higher taxes were imposed on the land which was planted with rubber. For example, Malays had to pay \$3.20 for every acre of land planted with rubber, together with other payments, and during the first five years that rubber was planted, Malays needed to pay \$17.00 per acre whereas \$7.00 to \$8.00 per acre was paid by non-Malays (55).

Malays continued to grow rubber, though many obstacles were imposed by government to discourage them. The Director of Education commented " I suggest that restriction on English Schools is rather more simple than restriction of rubber " (56). Further strict action was taken in 1917 when the Padi Land Enactment act was approved in order to prevent padi land being planted with other crops. In other words this enactment tried to stop Malays from planting rubber on their padi land (57).

Rubber expansion naturally had an impact on the development of the economy, but it hit Malays badly. They lost their land by selling at high prices offered by non-Malay entrepreneurs. They parted with their land in various ways, such as selling, leasing and mortgaging. If this new phenomenon did not stop, Malays might not have any land to stay and plant.

" it will be a mistake if Malays in

Malaya don't have any land, indeed all

55. Abd. Ghafar Harun, "Undang-undang Tanah Simpanan Melayu: Tinjauan Ke atas Dasar British dan Implikasinya Kepada Masyarakat Melayu Negeri Sembilan Hingga Perang Dunia Kedua", Jebat, Bil. 11 U.K.M., 1981/2, p. 84; see also L.T. Ghee, p. 77.

56. Quoted from L.C. Yah, op.cit., p. 176.

57. Abd. Ghafar Harun, op.cit., p. 85.

land inside the country should belong to them" (58).

Many criticisms were expressed about Malay land alienation. Not only Malays were aware about this situation, but also the government itself and it was pushed in to taking action.

Finally, after lengthy discussion the government came to the decision that Malays had to be protected by legislation and in 1913, the Malay Reservation Enactment was passed. The motive of this enactment was to protect Malay holdings of land and their interests.

Although the enactment was not completely satisfactory, for Malays the action taken by government at least decreased the tension. Their agitation concerning losing their land became less intense when the government introduced and implemented the Malay Reservation Enactment. The relaxation of Malay tension because of this action was described in Utusan Melayu,

" by this way Malays can avoid poverty forever and in Singapore many people moved from town and stayed in the jungle to build new houses and plantations (59).

The awareness of Malay backwardness in the economy was constantly discussed, especially after 1920's. Despite urging Malays to develop their economy, they also urged them not to forget the

58. Utusan Melayu, 25 October, 1913.

59. Ibid, 11 June, 1914.

importance of education. Modernizers believed education could help Malay improve and develop their race. The importance of education for Malays was also given much attention by Modernizers. And their views on this topic will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

Politics.

Modernizers were naturally aware that colonialism occurred throughout the Malay Archipelago; Malaya was under British rule and Indonesia under Dutch control. They expressed their sadness that the Malay race was totally under European power in such expressions as,

" a thing which can bring tears and melt the heart" (1).

Foreign powers came to Asia for economic reasons and, competing against each other, acquired colonies by using their military power and strength. After the British succeeded in taking over administration from the Malay Sultans and their aristocratic supporters, they carried on government without considering local people (2). They introduced and implemented a new political system which brought Malay aristocrats into a new bureaucracy. To ensure that their political system succeeded, they used Malay aristocrats. They believed that this could make the administration efficient. Aristocrats were asked to act as bridges to the Malay community. The colonial power, in the eyes of the Modernizers was described as " always acting according to its own wishes" (3). Malays who worked with the colonial power were said to be slaves, " to be a slave is to be like a dog guarding a horse" (4).

1. Al-Imam, 17 September, 1906.

2. Ibid, 14 April, 1907.

3. Ibid, 9 September, 1907.

4. Ibid, 12 July, 1907.

Modernizers also accused the colonial administration of not paying much attention to the local people, especially in terms of welfare, after their success in establishing their power. The colonial administration just simply did whatever it wanted to do without taking into account Malay views. They did "not consider what was thought by the owners of the land" (5).

Furthermore, Modernizers urged the colonial power to reconsider what it had done to local people "remember what they have done, and abandon toughness" (6).

Modernizers also urged the Malay community to become aware of the effect of colonialism upon them and to carry out new initiatives for their freedom. This kind of urging became more optimistic since they got inspiration from the success of Japan in defeating China and Russia in 1894 and 1905 respectively. The Japanese success proved that it was not impossible now to defeat colonial or European power. Overall Malays now admired the Japanese and believed that the only way to achieve their own aspirations was by getting their support (7). Moreover, they admired Dr. Sun Yat Sen who similarly tried to develop an awareness campaign in China and free his country from domination. His activities gave them strong encouragement (8). After British success in consolidating power, they introduced a commercial economy by taking over and

5. Ibid, 14 April, 1907.

6. Ibid.

7. Utusan Melayu, 28 June, 1913.

8. Al-Imam, 27 September, 1908.

developing small Malay mines with Chinese assistance. They also introduced rubber plantations. To meet the labour requirements, the British encouraged the inflow of Chinese and Indian immigrants for both sectors of the commercial economy in Malaya. This kind of policy unsuitably led to an increase in the total number of immigrants, and it was criticised by Modernizers. Such people were used to seize Malay rights and dominate the wealth of the country claimed the Modernizers (9).

The presence of the foreign immigrants to Malaya could endanger the native population, because Malays could not compete with them. Serious action should be taken to prevent Malays from losing everything, first in the economy and then in politics. This unrest was expressed as follows,

" the presence of a foreign race seeking to find wealth made Malays weak. Malays never got what they were looking for but slowly lost what they already had, until our government become a burning stick (kayu yang dimakan api) and what is left to us is only a little land at the end of a promontory (hujung tanjung)"(10).

In addition, it was also said that Malays could not live happily alongside the immigrants because of important differences. These

9. Accusation and criticism was expressed hardly by Modernizers in chapter economy.

10. Mohd. Dahari Osman, "Akhbar Cahaya P. Pinang", Jebat, Jld. 7, Bil. 23, U.K.M. 1978/79, p. 4.

differences such as religion, custom and so on could create difficulties, "if they stay near to each other, health and character will be destroyed" (11).

Malay feeling for and love of their homeland can be seen when they urged government to recruit more Malays to be soldiers. They believed that in this way they could protect and defend their homeland. Their loyalty would not be in doubt, because it would be an obligation for them to protect their homeland. Modernizers asked,

" why the Federated Malay States government did not think to use Malays as soldiers in their own country. There is a right and responsibility for everyone who has a homeland to protect his state's security, together with its wealth and also his own relatives" (12).

In addition, they said such a step could save a lot of money. Malay soldiers did not need a high salary, whereas Indian soldiers needed one because they had to send money back to India to support their families. The outflow of a lot of money was a waste. Besides that, if the government used Malay soldiers, they would not only be loyal to their own country, but they also knew more about their country than any foreigner could. Therefore they

11. Utusan Melayu, 11 June, 1908.

12. Ibid, 14 March, 1912.

could provide better service (13). The objective commitment of Modernizers in this matter can be seen in the way in which they gave acknowledgement to the Sultan of Johore, because of his initiative in forming a volunteer regiment in Johore (14).

Talking about security, Modernizers again showed their belief that security must be put under Malay control by suggesting that Malays should be policemen. To achieve this aspiration, they urged the government to recruit more Malay police. However, the government made a statement in reply that Malays themselves refused to be policemen. Utusan Melayu published the statement from the chief of police of Federated Malay States in 1912, who said that Malays refused serve in the police force and gave his reasons for their non-recruitment as follows: (15).

1. They could gain more money in other jobs compared with the wages of a policemen. They could get around 50 - 80 cent per day or more by tapping rubber.
2. They liked to be free to go anywhere.
3. They did not want to be under discipline and order such as parading (berbaris).

In order to overcome this problem, because of their desire to see security matters in Malay hands, Modernizers went so far as to suggest that Malays should be "encouraged" to join the police by

13. Ibid.

14. Al-Imam, 6 December, 1907, quote from Abdullah Hj. Jaafar, "Al-Imam", K.K. Kim (ed), Sejarah Masyarakat Melayu Modern, Persatuan Muzium Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1984, p. 100.

15. Utusan Melayu, 10 July, 1913.

legislation which would force them to join the force. They wished to,

" provide an enactment with the consent of noblemen and headmen to force every Malay male, aged between 25 -30 to become a policemen for five years and then become a "reserve", that is to say people who were ready to be called back into police forces" (16).

Modernizers also had things to say about state and administration affairs. For example, about Kelantan and Terengganu. Both states were under - developed compared with the Federated Malay States. Therefore, Modernizers fully supported the idea that Kelantan and Terengganu should join FMS, because the advantages to be gained by joining were, that both states would get the benefit of expert administrators and financial assistance.

" this is the reason why we hope very soon it will be heard that Kelantan and Terengganu are joining the FMS" (17).

In order to modernize and prepare Malays for the step of freedom, Modernizers urged government to train Malays to be administrators. Malays could take over the job from foreign officers when they were fully trained and capable of doing the jobs. In this way, Modernizers believed Malay aspirations could be achieved more easily. And Modernizers always took Japan and

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid, 13 August, 1908.

Turkey as examples of successful states in the world (18). It was in this context that they suggested that Malays should take over the jobs from "foreign officers". We are not sure whether they had in mind British officers or lower level officers - Ceylonese, Indian, "Serani" (Eurasian) and some Chinese. But if we consider how far the nationalist movement was carried by Modernizers, we might have the answer that the 'foreign officers' referred to by Modernizers were other than British officers. It is clear that nationalism at this stage is only just beginning among the Malays, though there are some elements of dissatisfaction with colonialism.

Modernizers published many items of news and articles concerning foreign affairs, especially concerning Ottoman Turkey. For example, Utusan Melayu from 22 February 1912 until 12 October 1912 constantly published almost entirely news of the war and only a few items of local news. The reason why Malays were very anxious to know how the Turks were getting on, and wanted to see them win the war, was because of membership of the Islamic community and perhaps also because Malays recognized the Sultan of Turkey as Caliph (19). Neraca, also took an initiative in this matter when it suggested that Muslims in Malaya who supported the Turks should donate at least one dollar in order to help the Turkish armed forces to buy weapons and bullets (20). To

18. Al-Imam, 10 August, 1907.

19. K.K. Kim, "Suasana Politik Di Tanah Melayu Perang Dunia Kedua", Malaysia Sejarah dan Proses Pembangunan, Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1982, cetakan ketiga p. 176.

20. Mohd. Sarim Hj. Mustajab, "Neraca 1910 - Jun 1915 Penyambung

the Malays, Neraca sent a message asking them to show their sympathy to the Turks by this sign of support.

"stop~~ping~~ playing football for a while
because our brothers are in sadness" (21).

Solid support from Malays towards Turkey can be seen in Teluk Anson (Intan), Perak. Neraca in November 1912 published a report that Malays assembled in Madrasah Ihsaniah and made a feast asking God to bless the Sultan of Turkey and his territory (22).

The Malay community, especially in towns, felt unrest when they felt unable to compete with foreign immigrants in the economy. As a result many clubs and societies were formed by the Malays. For example, "Jamiul Seni Wal Behr" in Tengkerah, and "Darul Akhir" in Banda Kaba were formed in 1910 and 1915 respectively (23). However, it seems that Malays were still not aware of the importance of politics and the need to unite to overcome problems which existed at this time. This awareness only existed amongst town Malays and was only just at a very beginning stage. Therefore the clubs and societies seem not much concerned about political affairs, but were biased towards social purposes. Modernizers angrily described all these clubs and societies as useless except for social activities such as sport. They believed that the clubs should be concerned with political affairs.

Nafas Al-Imam", Jurnal Budaya, U.K.M., Jilid. 3. vol. 1. 1978, p. 96.

21. Neraca, 1 January, 1913.

22. Mohd Sarim, op.cit., p. 96.

23. Ahmat Adam, op.cit., p. 20.

" now many clubs were formed among Malays, but only for sport (permainan) except one or two federations (persekutuan) for other purposes, and we still don't know what is the real reason why its members have formed them" (24).

This accusation made by the Modernizers was quite strong, but there was truth in what they said if we examine Malay sporting activity. Sport became the priority for Malays, especially football. Many items of soccer news were published in Singapore such as competition tables, reports and so on. For example, the competition table for Malaya Football Association was published as follows (25).

1. 27 / 2 / 1916 - Fathul Munir 11 vs Police.
2. 4 / 3 / 1916 - Babul Aman vs Darul Bahr.
3. 5 / 3 / 1916 - Straits Indian vs Kota Raja 11.
4. 11 / 3 / 1916 - Persenangan Setia 1 vs Fathul Zaman.
5. 12 / 3 / 1916 - Kota Raja 1 vs Fathul Karib 11.

There were also news items about football and footballers. Much was published on the Tuan Syed Omar bin Mohamed Alsagoff Cup, named after the president of the Malaya Football Association (26). Football became favourite among the Malays who seemed obsessed with it all the time. For example, in 1920's Idaran

24. Utusan Melayu, 5 January, 1911.

25. Ibid, 23 February 1916.

26. Ibid, February, 1916.

Zaman published under the sub-heading "local news", a description of Malay football as follows,

" on Saturday and Sunday evenings many people go to the field to watch football matches, some by walking and some by vehicle" (27).

Malay enthusiasm for football also can be illustrated by how many football club were formed at this time. Among football clubs registered were (28).

1. British Malaya.
2. Simpulan Muhibbah 1.
3. Straits Settlements.
4. Singapore Peranakan 1.
5. " " 11.
6. Fathul Karib 1.
7. Darul Afi'af.
8. Pensenangan Setia 11.
9. Fathul Munir 11.
10. Geylang club.

And in fact, prior ^{to} 1913, there were at least forty football clubs in Singapore alone (29). The fact that Malays gave special priority to football was criticised by Modernizers. This enthusiasm made them seem to forget important matters such as politics and the economy at this time.

27. Idaran Zaman, 10 September, 1925.

28. Utusan Melayu, 12 March, 1916.

29. Neraca, 2 July, 1913.

It was the same with the economy where Malays seemed not to care. Malays emphasized football, whereas the Chinese ^{were} (more worried about business and always seeking wealth (30). It was argued that "such clubs and playing football are not the main way to advance Malay development. We think the real way is education" (31). Nevertheless Modernizers could not simply reject Malay social clubs and societies, because at least they played a role in helping to create Malay awareness by meeting and exchanging ideas and, in time, led to the formation of well-organised Malay political parties.

This struggle for ^{the} Malay future only existed when the Singapore Malay Union (S.M.U) was formed by En. Mohd Eunus b. Abdullah in 1926. He was also responsible for the Utusan Melayu newspaper (32). S.M.U was not a political party in the real sense, but its struggle shows a strong commitment to issues involving Malay welfare, such as education (33). Other groups said that among the purposes of S.M.U were (34).

- a. to encourage all members to be active in state administration.
- b. to develop the position of Malays in education, including higher learning and technical education.
- c. to struggle for the rights and freedom of Malays by making an

30. See the chapter on the economy.

31. Utusan Melayu, 5 January, 1911.

32. See chapter three.

33. Zulkifli Mahmud, op.cit., p. 111.

34. See W.R. Roff, op. cit., pp. 191-197.

application to the government on these issues.

The formation of the S.M.U which had different purposes from previous Malay clubs and societies was to be an inspiration for the Malays to take part in politics, though it was moderate in the first place. The importance of S.M.U. was reflected when Idaran Zaman encouraged Malays to follow and form another union, or branch of S.M.U, in the Peninsula,

"we hope in every nook and corner of the Peninsula will exist branches of the union (S.M.U) and the committee members in Singapore hope to involve all Malay heads and representatives from the Peninsula in order to get agreement for the spread of welfare measures" (35).

After the formation of S.M.U, many Malay State Association were formed by Malays especially after 1930's. Among these associations were Selangor Malay Association, Pahang, Negeri Sembilan, Penang Association and so on. The next important step after the formation of Malay State Association was the Malay Youth Union (M.Y.U) in 1938 led by Ibrahim Hj. Yacob. M.Y.U was the first political party in the real sense, because its membership was open throughout Malaya and it struggled for all Malays.

Beside criticising Malays in general, Modernizers also did not forget to criticise the Malay aristocrats, that is to say the

35. Idaran Zaman, 11 September, 1926.

Sultans, noblemen and all the ruling class who administered the country. They did not carry out their responsibilities correctly and caused Malay backwardness. Al-Imam wanted to

"ask our Rajas or Sultans and noblemen, and rich men to carry out their responsibilities for ~~their~~ community" (36).

After the British arrival, the Malay ruling class's position was not disturbed. Aristocrats were absorbed into the new bureaucracy and acted as mediators between the government and the Malay community. They were accused of irresponsibility, they did not work to improve Malay conditions, but made them worse by exploiting their people more than the colonial power did.

"our noblemen went further than the exploiters and the subject class suffered" (37).

Furthermore, Modernizers criticised Malay noblemen for neglecting Malay welfare. They did not care to bring benefits for the Malays (38). This irresponsible attitude caused Malays to fall behind, and fail to develop political awareness. Malay noblemen just took care of their own affairs without considering the impact on the Malays. Their negative attitude became worse when they engaged in corruption (39). This irresponsible action became very

36. Al-Imam, 17 September, 1906.

37. Ibid, 9 September, 1907.

38. Ibid, 4 February, 1908.

39. Ibid, 25 November, 1908.

obvious among them. They lived in wealth, therefore they forgot to carry out their responsibility to improve the Malay position. It was important for them only to have money (40).

Malay Sultans also could not escape from criticism by Modernizers. Modernizers criticised Malay Sultans for always making wrong decisions and not giving priority to Malay development. For example, the suggestion made by the Sultan of Perak to donate a warship for the British government in the Malay States government council meeting was criticised by the Modernizers as wasteful, and many other things should be done first:

" the needs of the subject class should be given priority, such as education. Although giving a present is good, it should be done after basic needs have been met otherwise it cannot be said to be welfare" (41).

According to the Modernizers, the subject class could do nothing to change or attack Malay ruling class. They could prevent attacks and protect themselves, because they had power and money (42). However, if we look at the Malay community, they already lagged behind in every aspect and were far from having political awareness, especially those who lived in the villages. The Malay ruling class on the other hand, irresponsibly lived in wealth and

40. Ibid.

41. Utusan Melayu, 12 November, 1912.

42. Al-Imam, 25 November, 1908.

seemed unaware that they were used by the British to establish their power. The question now ^{was} how to solve the Malay problem and by whom?. Modernizers suggested among the ways of solving the problem was to introduce history education. The importance of history could be a guide and lesson for Malays together with ^{the} Malay ruling class in working together.

"from history could be taken lessons and it could be a guide for the future" (43).

In addition, Modernizers also urged people to learn Islamic history, especially the ruling class, and make use of it for the benefit of Malays. They could learn how the prophet Muhammad and his successors spread the Islamic religion and established an Islamic empire, for instance. The importance of Islamic history was that it could be a good guide especially for Malay ruling aristocrats in carrying out administration. This was stressed again by Modernizers as follows;

" from history Rajas and aristocrats who were indifferent to civilization and who neglected to provide benefit for their community could take a lesson" (44).

In criticising all groups, Modernizers did not forget to acknowledge what had been done for the benefit of Malaya and the Malay community generally. For example, the colonial power

43. Ibid, 23 July, 1906.

44. Ibid, 4 February, 1908.

introduced a new transportation system and a new commercial economy, and so on.

"we have not denied what they have done" (45).

About Malay aspiration to seek freedom and the hopes for Japanese assistance, Utusan Melayu published its belief that Japan was not ready to help and give support to the Malays. It presented several reason why Japan would refuse to do that. Among the reason were: (46).

- a. geographical factor - Malaya far from Japan.
- b. Japan would have to spend much money.
- c. Japan didn't want to break her relations with other powers, particularly Britain, as a result of which she was recognized as the Asian power.

At the same time, Modernizers seemed to like the British administration and to have considerable confidence in it. This can be illustrated by the fact that they were blamed by one Malay teacher (En. Ahmad b. Ambak) who taught Malay language in Japan. He made a speech to attack the badness of British administration. In his speech, he also hoped that Japan would give assistance to the Malays. However, Utusan Melayu accused En. Ahmad of being an ungrateful person, and argued that Japan would not faithfully help.

" you forget the British goodness (tak kenang budi) if British did not help how

45. Ibid, 17 September, 1906.

46. Utusan Melayu, 28 January, 1913.

could you be a teacher in Japan?. And Japan would only come to Malaya to seek profit not to help" (47).

Now, if we make an analysis from the beginning there is a contradiction in the principles of the Modernizers. In the first place, they were aware of colonialism and expressed sadness and criticism of it. They discussed much about freedom, and showed their desire to see Malays become a modern, developed and independent community. They also criticised the Malay community, however, for its lack of interest in politics, and wasting time by playing football. They also did not forget to criticise Malay ruling class, because it did not take a responsible attitude to develop the Malay community. On the other hand, Modernizers seemed to like aspects of colonialism. Although there was some national consciousness, Modernizers realised that Malays were still not ready to accept fundamental changes especially in politics. They were not confident to set up self government, and also not ready to accept independence if the British were to give it to the Malays, because they were not confident enough that the Malay traditional ruling class would be able to administer in the correct way (48). Moreover, the Malay ruling class was also happy to accept British administration, especially after the British succeeded in restoring order in the Malay States. As a matter of fact, the Malay ruling class including Rajas and Sultans (though

47. Ibid, 21 June, 1913.

48. Abdullah Hj. Jaafar, op.cit., p. 90.

not all), wanted the British as a protector in the Malay States. For example, Raja Abdullah of Perak sent a letter to Singapore at the end of 1873 seeking British assistance to improve conditions. And he added;

"if all these dissensions are brought to an end, and the country is restored to peace, we and our great men desire to settle under the sheltering protection of the British flag" (49).

The lack of confidence of the Modernizers towards the Malay ruling class also can be seen in the way the Malay ruling class behaved. This was described as;

" although the administration was in the hands of the British, Malay Sultans still can take action to protect Malays and take care about the situation in the Malay States. But sadly there is no initiative by Malay Sultans to develop Malay society. They spend their time in enjoyments, gambling, keeping mistresses and receive their monthly allowance" (50).

Such attitudes towards colonial administration actually existed until after the 1930's when Malays started to discuss politics more seriously. This situation existed was common among aristocrats even amongst some of the educated ones. For example,

49. R. Emerson, A Study in Direct and Indirect Rule, Macmillan, New York 1937, p. 119.

50. Abdul Latiff Abu Bakar, Ishak Hj. Muhamad: Penulis dan Ahli Politik Sehingga 1948, University of Malaya Press, Kuala Lumpur 1976, p. 76.

in the speech made by Tengku Ismail concerning the purpose or function of the organization proposal, he said;

" that no people in the world are as just and modest in their rule as the British are, and we must indeed be thankful that we live under their protection" (51).

Lack of confidence concerning self government continued unless Malays were first prepared for it. Utusan Melayu declared "although we have several educated princes such as Raja Chulan and Raja Taufik and others, but to govern ourselves that is not enough, and because of that Malays should realise the importance of education" (52). Malays should taught about their education, and if necessary it should be extended or changed in order to achieve their aspirations (53). At last Modernizers realised the facts of the Malay situation, and therefore urged the Malay community to be ready to develop education and the economy on the basis of Islam as the vital step towards freedom and independence.

51. W.R. Roff, "The Persatuan Melayu Selangor: An Early Malay Political Association", JSEAH, No. 1. March, 1968, p. 125.

52. Utusan Melayu, 29 November, 1913.

53. Ibid.

Summary and Conclusion.

Our chapters have made it clear that Modernizers were very active in expressing their reform ideas after they became aware of the weakness of the position of Malays. All the reform ideas were channeled through local media in the form of criticism, suggestions and sometimes even satire.

The reform ideas developed by the Modernizers involved all aspects of Malay life such as religion, the economy, education and politics. However, according to the Modernizers, the religious factor was the one vital cause of Malay backwardness. Malays misunderstood the real principles of Islamic teaching. Religion discouraged Malays from working hard in daily life. They believed the world was only a temporary abode which gave an opportunity to prepare for a permanent place in the next world. Therefore, people should not work hard in this world because it would be left behind.

In addition, they also believed that their destiny was fixed by God. As a result, they showed less initiative. They were simply satisfied by whatever conditions they had, and refused to improve them because they believed that it was not for them to change things. This misunderstanding of Islamic principles among the Malays was criticised by the Modernizers as "blind acceptance". Malays simply received whatever instruction was given to them by religious authorities and religious teachers who were blamed by the Modernizers for the misunderstandings about Islamic religion among the Malays. Modernizers urged them to improve the situation and work hard as long as they did not

oppose the Koran and "Hadith". All the mistakes should be forgotten and left behind, but unfortunately reform ideas continued to be treated with hostility by the Conservatives. Conflict between both groups became serious, especially after the 1920's.

However, Modernizers realised that Malays lacked adequate education. Without exception Malays, including religious teachers and authorities, were poorly educated or not educated at all. It was no wonder that Malays misunderstood Islamic principles. Because of the importance of education for Malays, Modernizers urged them to improve their education in order to develop the Malay community. The weakness of Malay education had been located by Modernizers in the limited number of schools and in low standards. There was much criticism of the restricted curriculum. The problem was made worse by the attitude of Malay parents, general poverty and the role played by Conservatives. Much criticism had been expressed by the Modernizers about the limited places at which Malay children could be educated. This strong criticism was directed at the government, and the Malay Sultans and aristocrats. They were accused of being negligent and irresponsible towards Malay education. Mostly the government was urged to assist by building more schools, especially in the villages. The concentration on building schools in the towns hindered Malays from sending their children to school, because of a lack of transport and poverty. Besides the government, Malay Sultans, aristocrats and rich men were also encouraged to help by making contributions for Malay education.

For the Modernizers, what was most important about Malay education was the curriculum. They considered that the curriculum on offer in the Malay schools was very limited. It aimed at little more than just making children know how to read and write. In religious schools, on the other hand, the emphasis was more on religious matters rather than modern (secular) education. The result was that Malay school leavers had difficulties in finding jobs compared with those who came from the English schools. Government was accused of being insincere in its attitude to Malay education, and it was claimed that the aim of the government education system was to make them better peasants rather than to prepare them for alternative jobs. Therefore, Modernizers urged government to show sincerity towards Malay education by building more schools, improving the curriculum and teaching quality and so on.

However, the Modernizers also did not forget to criticise the attitude of Malay parents who refused to send their children to school. Such parents wanted their children to work in the padi fields and helping their mother in the kitchen rather than spending much time in school. Moreover, they believed that Malay parents' minds were corrupted by the Conservatives. Conservatives, on the other hand, argued that children would become less pious and even change their religion and become Christians if they went to English schools, as a result of the influence^s around them. However, in this respect Modernizers did not only express strong criticism, they also knew their responsibility towards Malay education. Many contributions were

made by the Modernizers. Among the most important ^{as} ~~were~~ the setting up of the modern religious school, in terms of buildings and curriculum. For example, the formation of Madrasah Al-Iqbal in Singapore in 1907. Strong initiative towards the development of Malay education was shown by the Modernizers with the building of such historic institutions for Malays, as the Malay College of Kuala Kangsar (MCKK) in 1905 and Sultan Idris Training College (MPSI) in 1922. Both institutions later on succeeded in producing Malay nationalists who continued the work started by the Modernizers. Though they were different in ideologies, their aims were the same - independence.

Another interesting issue to the Modernizers was the economy. They were aware that Malays were in poverty, especially peasants. The majority of them were engaged in an unbeneficial sector, namely subsistence^e farming. The reasons for Malay poverty and how it might be overcome were discussed in depth by the Modernizers. They believed that the fact that Malays still stayed at the same level and were unable to improve their condition was a reflection of government policy. Malays were not involved in the new commercial economy. Colonial policy was to encourage the inflow of foreign labour to meet requirements in the tin and rubber sectors. It seemed that the colonial power preferred Malays to continue their traditional jobs. In other words, Malays were asked to act as suppliers for ^a large and growing ~~of~~ ^{force} foreign labour. However, this aspiration failed. Because of the "cheap import policy" - rice could be found cheaper ⁱⁿ Thailand and Burma.

The inflow of large numbers of immigrants was strongly criticised by the Modernizers who accused them of seizing the wealth in Malaya. Malays became restless when immigrants became the majority, especially in the Federated Malay States and Straits Settlements. The unrest of Malays came to a climax when they were unable to compete with the immigrants, especially with the Chinese. The serious implication, for the Malays, of the new commercial economy and recruitment of foreign labour was to be seen in the alienation of Malay lands. Malays often lost their land because they were unable to pay debts to Chettiars (money lenders). They then sold because they were attracted by the high price offered by the entrepreneurs for the new rubber plantations and tin-mines. Strong criticism came from the Modernizers and from government officers about the extent of Malay alienation and this forced the government to pass the Malay Reservation Enactment in 1913 and revise it later in 1932.

Compared with other aspects, politics as such was very little discussed by the Modernizers. However, this does not mean that Modernizers lacked any political consciousness. They were well aware of the colonial system in the Malay Peninsula, and even throughout the Malay Archipelago. They expressed their sadness about colonialism, and wanted to see Malays become an independent, developing and respected race. The attraction of freedom increased further when they saw nationalist movements in other countries in Asia. In order to achieve their aspirations, they hoped Japan would give assistance, especially after they saw the Japanese succeed in defeating China and, more significant,

Russia in 1905. Colonial or European powers were no longer unbeatable. However, though there were some elements of freedom always taught by the Modernizers, they realized that the time was not ripe. Malays had to be prepared first before they would be ready to talk about and receive freedom and independence.

How could Malays set up self government, if they were poorly educated, backward in economic life and had negative attitudes towards the world caused by the misunderstanding in Islamic principles?. Malay sultans and aristocrats also could not escape from strong criticism because their position caused problems on the path to self government. The attitudes of Malay Sultans and aristocrats caused Modernizers to lose confidence in the Malay ruling class. They did not believe that the rulers could handle their responsibilities in the proper way. They were accused of indifference towards the welfare of Malays while they themselves lived in wealth. Moreover, colonial policy preserved the Malay Sultans and absorbed aristocrats into the new bureaucracy. This made them felt happy under colonial protection, because it seemed that their position and rights were untouched by the colonial power.

The reform movement in politics also can be illustrated by publications relating to foreign and local affairs. Many items of war involving Turkey were published. This is because of the connection between Turkey and Muslims who recognized the Sultan of Turkey as their caliph. In local affairs, they urged the government to recruit more Malays into the army and police forces. In administration, very few Malays were employed. It was

dominated by immigrants, mostly Indians and some Chinese. The Modernizers realised the importance of improving this situation if Malays were to achieve their aspirations. Therefore, they urged the government to train more Malays as administrators by taking them on as administrative trainees. Modernizers also suggested that the government should employ them when they were fully trained, and replace foreign officers. As for the immigrants, Malays were not only worried about their success in the economy, but they also could endanger Malays if they succeeded in politics. The Modernizers wanted to prevent this happening.

However, it might be argued that the reform movement developed by Modernizers was too simple, moderate and showed no real sign of nationalism. Their movement failed to create the feeling of nationalism and far from threatened the colonial position. If we turn back and observe the history of the Malay struggle, we would accept the suggestion that the colonial power never felt threatened by Malays. Other than the controversial uprisings which we have discussed earlier, there was no real anti-colonial movement carried on by the Malays which could threaten the colonial position before 1946. Indeed, more surprisingly Malays seemed to co-operate with the colonial power, especially the Malay ruling class. This situation reflected the success of colonial policy. The British succeeded in consolidating their position by using a divide and rule policy which separated all ethnic groups in Malaya. They safeguarded their position amongst Malays by preserving the position and privileges of the ruling

class, some of whom were appointed to the new bureaucracy. The first time, a big, united and powerful threat from the Malays was faced by the colonial power was in 1946 when they rejected the suggestion of Malayan Union (M.U). Malayan Union, to which they were opposed, was replaced by the Federation of Malaya in 1948.

In other words, it might be said that because no major elements of anti-colonial action or uprising against colonialism occurred there was no nationalism. However, it would be wrong to suggest that Malay nationalism did not exist before 1946. There are many other factors which can be considered as elements of nationalism. We must take note of attempts to create national feeling and bind people together. Of course, it may still be argued that nationalism must have the element of an uprising against colonialism. There were uprisings as we have noted, but they occurred early on and it is questionable whether we call that kind of uprising "nationalism". Such uprisings had personal rather than national causes. Modernizers criticised Malays in order to educate, stimulate and unite them to face a large and growing number of immigrants. More than that, they criticised colonial power and extended their hopes to include freedom and self government.

If we consider the tone of criticism directed by the Modernizers especially to the government, it does not appear very strong. However, that does not mean that Modernizers liked and had confidence in the colonial power. They expressed much strong and hard criticism of it and were very sad that colonialism had occurred. However, their criticism was not very clear because it

was expressed in language much influenced by the style of classical Malay and was often mixed with Arabic and English expressions. As a result it was often difficult to understand their real ideas. Moreover, their criticism was very often found in the form of satire which made their meaning even more complicated. That was the way they managed to escape being traced by the colonial power. In addition, it was very early for them to move openly where Malays actually still did not show themselves ready to accept the fundamental changes especially in politics. The tone adopted by Modernizers does not appear very strong. They accepted this and declared "of course advice and guidance is not enough to be used as a tool to develop Malay race. But, at least it could create the awareness of Malay position compared with other races, but this advice and guidance can hopefully upgrade the Malay position" (Al-Imam, 23 July, 1906). We also should be aware that the movement of the Modernizers occurred in the early twentieth century in a situation very different from the present. So, it is important not to judge their efforts from a later standpoint. A fair assessment can be made only by looking at the movement in the right context.

Most of the Modernizers received religious education and used Islam as a guide in introducing their reform ideas. As a result, many people supposed that the Modernizers were only concerned with religious matters and their movement had no concern with nationalism at all. Alternatively, people tried to categorize the Modernizers movement as "religious nationalism". However, if we analyse their reform ideas there is no doubt that they did not

only touch religious affairs, but moved beyond them to discuss the economy, education and even political consciousness.

Modernizers taught that Islam was the vital factor which caused Malay backwardness. So, they used Islam as a tool to overcome the problem. In other words, they believed that Malays should correctly understand and carry out Islamic principles in order to develop themselves. Islam was not a religion which prevented development. However, in expressing their views, suggestions and criticisms they did not include good evidence to support them, such as accurate figures and so on. As a result it was possible for their ideas to be overlooked subsequently.

Whatever our estimate of the precise significance of the Modernizers, they succeeded in having a tremendous influence on the mentality of Malays. Their awareness and bravery in putting forward reforms to stimulate the Malay struggle must be appreciated. They can, therefore, be recognized as the major influence behind the early Malay nationalist movement, even though that movement still had a long way to go to achieve emancipation.

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