

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STUDIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA

The Hadhrami Diaspora in Southeast Asia

Identity Maintenance
or Assimilation?



Edited by

Abdullah Ibrahim Abushouk & Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim

BRILL

The Hadhrami Diaspora in Southeast Asia

Identity Maintenance or Assimilation?

Edited by

Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk
Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim



BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2009

On the cover (top to bottom):

- 1) The city of Hadhramaut, Yemen. Used by permission of the Ministry of Tourism, Republic of Yemen.
- 2) and F Genealogical tree of the Alawi Sayyids of Hadhramaut. Courtesy of Dr. Anne Katrine Bang, University of Bergen, Norway.
- 3) Hadhrami seamen. Courtesy of Prof. Daniel M. Varisco, Hofstra University, USA.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Hadhrami diaspora in Southeast Asia : identity maintenance or assimilation? / edited by Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk, Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim.

p. cm. — Social, economic, and political studies of the Middle East and Asia v. 107.

Based on papers presented at the international conference, held in Kuala Lumpur on August 26–28, 2005.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-90-04-17231-9 (hardback : alk. paper):

I. Arabs—Southeast Asia—Congresses. 2. Hadramawt (Yemen : Province)—Emigration and immigration—Congresses. I. Abushouk, Ahmed Ibrahim. II. Ibrahim, Hassan Ahmed. III. Title. IV. Series.

DS523.4.A73H33 2009

305.892'75335—dc22

2009001096

ISSN 1385-3376

ISBN 978 90 04 17231 9

Copyright 2009 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Hotot Publishing,
IDC Publishers, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.
Fees are subject to change.

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	vii
Foreword	ix
<i>Dato' Seri Syed Hamid Albar</i>	
A Note on Transliteration	xv
Introduction	1
<i>Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk and Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim</i>	
I. Reflections on the Longevity of the Hadhrami Diaspora in the Indian Ocean	17
<i>Ulrike Freitag</i>	
II. Arabophobia and <i>tarekat</i> : How Sayyid Uthmān Became Advisor to the Netherlands Colonial Administration	33
<i>Nico J. G. Kaptein</i>	
III. Arab Hadhramis in Malaysia: Their Origins and Assimilation in Malay Society	45
<i>Abdul Rahman Tang Abdullah</i>	
IV. Tea and Company: Interactions between the Arab Elite and the British in Cosmopolitan Singapore	57
<i>Nurfadzilah Yahaya</i>	
V. Economic Crisis and State-Building in Hadhramaut, 1941–1949: The Impact of the Decline of Southeast Asian Remittances	81
<i>Christian Lekon</i>	
VI. The Decline of Arab Capitalism in Southeast Asia	109
<i>Rajeswary Ampalavanar Broien</i>	
VII. Entrepreneurial Strategies of Hadhrami Arabs in Southeast Asia, c. 1750s–1950s	135
<i>William Gervase Clarence-Smith</i>	

VIII.	<i>Al-Manār</i> and the Hadhrami Elite in the Malay-Indonesian World: Challenge and Response	159
	<i>Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk</i>	
IX.	The Ins and Outs of Hadhrami Journalism in Malaya, 1900–1941: Assimilation or Identity Maintenance?	191
	<i>William R. Roff</i>	
X.	Sayyid Shaykh Ahmad al-Hādī's Contributions to Islamic Reformism in Malaya	203
	<i>Hafiz Zakariya</i>	
XI.	Hadhramis within Malay Activism: The Role of al-Saqqāfīs in Post-War Singapore (1945–1965)	225
	<i>Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied</i>	
XII.	In the Name of Fatimah: Staging the Emancipation of the Hadhramis in the Netherlands East Indies	245
	<i>Huib de Jonge</i>	
	Glossary	263
	Archival Sources and Bibliography	267
	List of Contributors	287
	Index	291

CHAPTER EIGHT

AL-MANĀR AND THE HADHRAMI ELITE IN THE MALAY-INDONESIAN WORLD: CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE¹

Ahmed Ibrahim Abushouk

Al-Manār was an Arabic and reformist journal founded by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā in Cairo in 1898, and its primary objectives were to examine the decadence of Muslim political institutions, underline the danger of European colonialism in the Muslim world, and promote the idea that Islam was compatible with modernity and reason. The present chapter attempts to examine the intellectual influence of *al-Manār* among the Hadhrami elite in the Malay-Indonesian world, and critically assess its role as the mouthpiece for the propagation of Abduh's doctrines and the accomplishment of his reforms. It first addresses the mission of *al-Manār* as a reformist journal that worked towards the promotion of social, religious and economic reforms in the Muslim world. It secondly examines the religio-cultural background of the Hadhrami elite who were influenced by the reformist mission of *al-Manār* and subscribed to its ultimate goal. The study finally highlights the impact of *al-Manār* on the religio-political and social structure of the Hadhrami diaspora in the Malay-Indonesian world, and discusses how this impact resulted in the establishment of a revivalist movement that rejected the conservative attitude of blind imitation (*taqlīd*) of the four schools of Islamic law,

¹ This chapter is a part of a research project on the publications of *al-Manār* Journal (1898–1935) on Southeast Asia. The research was conducted during the last two years at the Main Library of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and that of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), of the same university. The outcome of this research project has been published in two volumes entitled: *Al-Āthār al-Kāmila li-Mujallat al-Manār 'an Janūb Sharq Aṣyā* [The Complete Works of al-Manar Journal on Southeast Asia]. Kuala Lumpur: Research Centre (IIUM), 2006. The research project was partially funded by the Research Management Centre of the International Islamic University Malaysia, whose support I gratefully acknowledge. I am also indebted to my colleagues, Prof. Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim, Prof. Syed Nasir Kazmi and Dr. Wan Suhana Wan Sulong, who read this chapter in various drafts and offered constructive remarks. The chapter is also published in *The Royal Journal of Asiatic Society*, vol. 17/3, 301–22.