
【Summary】**Introduction: The Importance of *Qalam* Studies**

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Qalam, a monthly magazine written in *Jawi* (the Arabic alphabet for the Malay language), was published in Singapore from 1950-1969. *Qalam* appealed exclusively to Muslims and represented the thoughts of intellectuals who were oriented to Islam. The magazine had many Muslim writers of non-Malay origins, including its editor Edrus, who was of Arab ancestry and born in Banjarmasin, Kalimantan. These contributors often severely criticized mainstream Malay nationalists, such as the UMNO (United Malays National Organization), and offered alternative visions to Malay Muslims. Unfortunately, *Qalam's* lucid view of Islamic thought and movements in the 1950s and 1960s has not been fully explored.

Therefore, the Jawi Research Society in Japan and the Centre for Integrated Area Studies of Kyoto University, have conducted a joint research project on *Qalam*. One of its main activities is to digitalize the contents of the journal and construct a database. Almost entire volumes have been digitalized and are now open to the public through a website. In addition, the transliteration of articles from Jawi to Romanized Malay is taking place in cooperation with Malaysian counterparts, thus making possible various ways of searching the database. The other main activity of the project is to further research on *Qalam*. The following four articles are written by the project's joint researchers in their respective fields: Islamic thought, politics, education, and legislation.

Qalam is unique for two reasons. First, *Qalam* stressed the unity of Muslims, regardless of their nationalities. The magazine's content suggests that Muslim intellectuals tried to organize transnational Islamic movements, even after new nation states, such as Indonesia and Malaya, had taken shape. Second, *Qalam* had a modern perspective. It tried to modernize and strengthen the Muslim community and to incorporate it into modern state institutions, although the magazine sometimes criticized secular nationalists as being excessively Westernized.

During the age of *Qalam*, various activists from several nations expressed their opinions with the pen (*qalam*). The relations of Islam with Western modernity in various fields, such as politics, administration, and social institutions, are still discussed by contemporary Muslims in Southeast Asia. In this sense, *Qalam* studies offer a wider perspective on the historical development of Islamism, Malay journalism, multi-ethnic relations, and other important themes.

【Summary】

Islam and Modernity:
Modernist Thought in the Serial Column “The Secrets of the *Qur’an*”

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This article explores an aspect of modernist Islam in 20th-century Southeast Asia through the analysis of a serial column, “Secret of the *Qur’an*: from perspectives of knowledge and philosophy”, that “Qalam” published from 1951-53. This serial column, which was written by an *ulama* from Singapore, Abdullah Basmeh, propagates modernist thought by introducing the *Qur’an* interpretation of an Egyptian *ulama* of the early 20th century, Tantawi Jawhari.

I take up four important topics of the serial column. The first is the explanation of the contents of the *Qur’an* itself. Abdullah Basmeh emphasizes that the *Qur’an* has guided the development of human society in many ways, including language, society and ethics, and that modern Western civilization matured through the inheritance of Islamic civilization.

The second topic is the development of science. For Basmeh, science and scholarship are the human endeavours that permit the discovery of the secret of the *Qur’an*; they are thus indispensable for the development of society. Referring to Islamic scholarship in the past and contemporary Western science, he asserts that Muslim society should introduce and build on the achievements of the latter for its future development.

However, Basmeh does not simply promote the acceptance of modern Western civilization. Thus, in his third topic, he stresses the importance of the *Qur’an* as a moral guide in the modern world. Basmeh points to moral and ethical problems of the British Malaya society at that time, such as drinking alcohol, gambling, and the weakening ties of husbands and wives. He considers these phenomena as the negative aspects of modernization, and presents the teachings of the *Qur’an* as the only remedy for them.

Similarly, Basmeh discusses the problems of Islamic Law as his fourth topic. As an *ulama*, he takes it for granted that the administration of Malaya after independence should be based on Islamic Law. At the same time, he accepts that an independent Malaya should be led by elites who have received Western educations. According to him, since the modern values such as liberty, equality, and democracy are already indicated in the *Qur’an*, Islamic Law is consistent with modern society.

Basmeh promotes the acceptance of Western science, technology and political institutions, but he also criticizes the moral decline of society as a negative consequence of modernization. Thus, he points to the need for the *Qur’an* as a moral guide in modern society.

【Summary】**Institutionalization of Islam or Institutionalization of the Nation?
Qalam's Strategy toward Malayan Politics during the 1950s**

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This paper examines the strategy of Islamic intellectuals in Singapore during the process of Malayan decolonization by reviewing the *Qalam's* articles on current affairs in the early 1950s.

The early 1950s were a historical watershed in the thinking of Malay Muslims. Islamists, such as Edrus, wrote articles for 'Homeland Affairs' in 1950 and 1951, but a new author of the column seemed to be rather a mainstream Malay nationalist after 1952. This change probably reflected the setback of Islamic factions on the Nadrah issue in Singapore. The watershed was not so remarkable from a Malayan perspective, but it must to be examined more carefully from that of intellectuals who were oriented toward Islam.

However, Edrus continued to insist on Malay Muslim unity, even after Islam-oriented intellectuals lost power following the Nadrah riot. His opinions in the journal are partly radical, such as his criticism of the UMNO and Islamic officials, but he did not hastily insist on abandoning the existing colonial framework to realize an Islamic state. He realistically proposed the strengthening of Islamic institutions in the existing social order and of their management in order to enhance the status of Muslims in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious public sphere. His strategy was to insert individual Muslim networks into the framework of the modern state institutions.

Meanwhile, *Qalam* adopted multiple strategies with regard to the changing situations of Malaya and Singapore. After 1952, Edrus moved from 'Homeland Affairs', which dealt with general matters, to more specific columns. Discourses of Edrus and "Homeland Affairs" were at conflict at first sight, but they shared modernist perspective and their methodology was institutionalization. In Malaya, ethnic and religious groups were framed into state institutions in various forms. While Edrus sought to institutionalize Islam, the nationalists wanted to institutionalize the Malay community. *Qalam's* strategy contained both approaches in different columns.

Qalam reflected the strategy of Islamic intellectuals who responded to an ever-changing Malayan situation. Although the writers were oriented to Islamic state, they were realistic rather than idealistic for the interests of Muslims in their opinions. A focus on their activities may clarify the heterogeneity of the Malay community and its dynamics at that time. An analysis on *Qalam* thus places the activities of its contributors in a broader perspective.

【Summary】

The Discussion of Education in the Malay Community
during the Establishment of National Education

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This study considers the discussion of education in the Malay community during 1950s with special reference to *Qalam*. *Qalam* still existed when the national education system was established in Malaya (after 1963, Malaysia). The establishment of national education has been examined by many previous studies, most of which have focused on policy making and have indicated that national education seems to have been designed to serve the interests of Malay society. Therefore, the various viewpoints on this subject have been less examined. This study probes these perspectives on education by focusing on the two key words, national education and Islamic education.

The articles of *Qalam* on the national education share the view that Malay schools faced difficulties and that their educational standards were low. They aspire to solutions that take two different directions. One is the argument that Malay society should change in order for students to acquire contemporary knowledge and skills and to improve the economic and social level of the population. Based on this view, its proponents argue that education in English has equal or more value than that in Malay. The other opinion is that the national education system should be based on the Malay language and schools. Hence, these commentators emphasize the need to maintain the Malay school system.

The establishment of the national education system affected traditional the Islamic religious schooling of local communities. Hence, many articles express anxiety about the future of Islamic education as secular instruction expands. Some criticise the secular values of modern education and worry about its impact on belief and values. Many articles seek to secure the survival of Islamic learning within the framework of the national education system. Therefore, realistic discussions on the institutionalisation of Islamic Education in the modern state system are found in *Qalam*.

During the establishment of the national education system in Malaysia, one of intense unease and marked change, the contributors to *Qalam* engaged in thoughtful and realistic discussions of the appropriate course for education in the new nation. From diverse perspectives, they sought to ensure that the Malay community progressed and undertook the road to sustainable development in a newly independent modern state.

【Summary】**Muslim Legislation and the Women's Charter:
Muslim Marital Law Reform in Singapore**

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Singapore's legislation of Muslim law developed rapidly from the 1950s to the 1960s. The Muslim Ordinance was enacted in 1957 and the Administration of Muslim Law Act, in 1966. The first law came into effect during the period of decolonization and the latter after the Singapore's painful separation from Malaysia. These pieces of legislation, which were codified in parallel with the Women's Charter of 1961, the codes of marriage and divorce for non-Muslims, mirror the urgent administrative task of reinforcing the status of women status in matrimonial relationships. In other words, the two Muslim laws were integral to the social reforms of Singapore in the days before and after independence.

Muslim laws placed marriage and divorce of the Muslim population under the control of newly established *Shariah* Court. Since the public was concerned about the prevalence of divorce among Muslims and the miserable conditions of divorced wives, Muslim leaders at first welcomed these laws. However, opinions on this matter were not monolithic, since the divorce was not merely a matter of social reform but touched the core norms of Islamic law. The *Qalam* was one of the leaders in the debates over the legislation. At one point, *Qalam* criticized the laws as an 'intrusion' of the Women's Charter or Christian law. However, Ahmad Ibrahim, a lawyer trained in common law and a drafter of the bills did not concur with such criticisms. He advocated the legislation as a framework make the status of Muslims equal to that of non-Muslims in Singapore.

The paper examines the debates of two Muslims who supported modernisation, Ahmad Lutfi, an editor and writer of *Qalam*, and Ahmad Ibrahim, the then Attorney General of Singapore, to determine the diverse visions of and the rationales for Muslim marital reform.