

The Influence of Middle East on the Development of Islamic Education in Kelantan, Malaysia

^{1,2}Ezad Azraai Jamsari, ^{2,3}Noor Inayah Yaakub, ^{1,2}Wan Kamal Mujani, ⁵Adibah Sulaiman, ⁶Kamaruzaman Jusoff, ³Wan Mohd Hirwani Wan Hussain, ⁴Zinatul Ashiqin Zainol, ²Mohd Zulfazdlee Abul Hassan and ¹Mohd Rozimi Mat Arifin

¹Department of Arabic Studies & Islamic Civilisation,

²Institute of West Asian Studies (IKRAB),

³Graduate School of Business, ⁴Faculty of Law,

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43650, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

⁵Centre for Core Studies, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia,

71800, Bandar Baru Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

⁶Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract: This article seeks to examine the development of Islamic education in Kelantan and the *pondok* education in particular. The system of *pondok* education is regarded as having the ability to create an Islamic atmosphere in Kelantan and as such, it became an intellectual centre from the 16th century to the 20th century. From the study, it shows that the traditional system of *pondok* education is still in existence until today, even though it has to compete with the modern system of education. It implies that the system of *pondok* education has its inherent strength to ensure its long survival. It suggests that a new research on the challenges that the *pondok* meets to maintain its survival and the role that the *pondok* plays in the religious development of the Malays needs to be considered.

Key words: Islamic education • *Pondok* • State of Kelantan • Malay world • History of education

INTRODUCTION

According to history, Islam first gained a foothold in the Malay world in the 13th century A.D. The earliest territories whose inhabitants embraced Islam were Perlak, Pasai and Samudera, which have now become parts of Aceh and North Sumatra in Sumatra, Indonesia. According to Marco Polo, a renowned Italian traveller, in his sojourn to the Far East in the 13th Century A.D., inhabitants of Perlak had embraced Islam as early as 1292 A.D. Malikul al-Saleh (Merah Silu), the King of Pasai was the first to embrace Islam had died in the year 1297 A.D. [1].

According to a Chinese sea traveller, in the Malay Peninsular since 1409 A.D., the inhabitants of Malacca were already Muslims. The earliest to bring Islam to the northern Sumatran territories were the merchants of Gujerat, which is situated north of Bombai (Bombay, now Mumbai), India. They were followed by 'keling' merchants from south India as well as Muslim missionaries and Persian scholars. It is said that from these two places of

northern Sumatra and the kingdom of Malacca, Islam had spread to the entire Malay Archipelago, that is, the islands of Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan (Borneo), Bugis land (Macassar, South Sulawesi) and Maluku. The spread of Islam to the Malay world in the 15th century A.D. was simultaneous to the coming of the Europeans or Western powers to the East. According to some historical evidence, Islam had first gained a foothold in the east coast of the Malay Peninsular earlier than in Malacca, probably between the 12th and 14th centuries A.D. [1].

The system of *pondok* education is regarded as having the ability to create an Islamic atmosphere in Kelantan and as such, it became an intellectual centre from the 16th century to the 20th century. This article seeks to examine the development of Islamic education in Kelantan and the *pondok* education in particular.

History of the Arrival of Islam in Kelantan: Kelantan had received Islam as early as the 12th century A.D. There are many opinions which state that Kelantan received Islam from Champa and also those which say that Islam came

through Pattani. Kelantan received Islam earlier than Pattani. Ever since Islam arrived in the Malay Peninsular in the 13th century A.D., it was clear that the development of intellection, writing and knowledge became seen as part of everyday life. This development was evident in the presence of prominent scholars who tirelessly worked to elevate the status of knowledge and to change the mentality as well as attitude of the Malay *ummah* based on the teachings of Islam. It was the scholars who channeled Islamic teachings through the palace and educational institutions to the rest of the society. These educational institutions were known as *pondok*. The outcome of this scholarly activity was that Islamic *dakwah* (preaching) became more intense in the Malay society.

Kelantan is a state well-known as a centre for Islamic studies, apart from its role as an established centre for intellectual tradition since long ago. It is also known as the verandah of Mecca, 'Serambi Mekah', a description which portrays a picture that the development of learning or knowledge in Kelantan is as is happening in Mecca itself. This implies that Islam is embedded in the identity of the Kelantan society. This statement seems accurate as Kelantan had several times made Qur'anic teachings the base of its legislation as had happened during the rule of Sultan Ahmad (1886-1889 A.D.), even though not all the laws were executed [2].

Early records on Islam in Kelantan are based on the artifact *al-Julus* Kelantan dated 577H/1181 A.D. The discovery of this coin has cast a new light on the history of Kelantan and the development of Islam. This gold coin known as gold dinar was discovered in the year 1914 A.D. at an old site of Kampung Kubang Labu. A similar coin had also been also discovered at Kampung Hangu, Kadok. On both sides of the coin are Arabic words *al-Julus* Kelantan on the top side and on the other side, *al-Mutawakkil 'Ala Allah*. In Arabic *al-Julus* means sit and *al-Mutawakkil 'Ala Allah* means submit to Allah. When put together, the expressions form a sentence *al-Julus* Kelantan *al-Mutawakkil 'Ala Allah* which means Submit to Allah Kelantan Kingdom. The discovery of this coin proves that Kelantan had long existed and had received Islam as early as the 12th century A.D. The gold coin with the Arabic inscription had been used as exchange currency in commerce during the glorious reign of the Kelantan Kingdom and the greatness of Islam in the Nusantara or Malay Archipelago [3].

Records are also obtained from the book *Rihlah Ibn Battutah*. In the year 1342 A.D., he had arrived at Kailukari (Kuala Krai) and had appeared before a queen named Urduja and had introduced himself as a Turkish-

speaking Muslim and had written *Bi ism Allah al-Rahman al-Rahim*. The following was as recorded [4]:

On the day of our arrival at Port Kailukari, this princess invited the nakhuzah, that is the captain who was also the ship owner, karani that is the scribe, merchants and nobles as well as the tandil that is the infantry soldiers and sabar salar that is the archers to attend a feast prepared for them, according to their custom. The captain wanted me to go together with them but I declined as they were kafir (unbelievers) and I could not eat their food. When all the people had arrived and were by the queen, she asked them, "Is there among you who is not here?" The captain replied, "There is one man, a Baksyi (which means kadi or judge in local dialect). He does not eat the food of the people here". Princess Urduja then said, "Summon him here!". The sentries so then came with the captain to me and said, "Accept the invitation of the princess". So I accepted the invitation of the princess who was merrily and greatly celebrating. In front of her there were women who held her bridles and stretched them for her. Whereas around her sat women who were her ministers. They sat below the bed which was a chair made from sandalwood. And in front of the princess was a group of men. The seat for the princess was covered with silk and above her were silk curtains. While the wood was sandalwood and there were also gold strips on the seat. Besides that, there were benches of carved wood. On them were wares made of gold and big in size as well as small in size such as teapots, small decorations such as cups. The captain told me that it was filled with a drink made of sugar mixed with herbs. Many of the people drank it after eating and it had an aroma and tasted sweet. In addition, the drink rejuvenated the body, sweetened the breath, helped digestion and was an aphrodisiac.

When I greeted the princess with salam, she replied in Turkish, "Hasan misan yakhsya misan (khusyisan yakhsyimisani)", which meant, "How do you do and how are you?". She sat me down near her. Princess Urduja could write Arabic well. She bade one of her servants, "Dawat wabitka katuz". Katuz means ink and paper. Ink and paper were brought to her and I wrote, "Bismillahirrahmanirrahim". Princess Urduja then asked, "What is this?". I informed her, "Tandarinam", meaning "name of Allah". She replied, khasyan which means "good". Then she asked me, "Where did you come from?". I told her, "From India". She asked again, "The land of black pepper?". I said, "Yes, your Highness!". She then asked me about that country and stories about it. So I told her everything. She then said, "I must make war on that country and make it mine because I am

impressed with its treasures and big army". I then said, "Then do so, Your Highness!" She then presented me with gifts of clothes, rice twice as much as can be carried by an elephant, two buffaloes, 10 goats, four ralt (receptacles) of rose-scented water and four marhaban that is, big urns filled with ginger, chilly, lime and mangoes. All of which have been put aside and were among the things to be prepared for sail.

The ship captain told me that Princess Urduja owned a group of women, female servants and female slaves who go to war with the men in her army. The princess herself took part in battle with her army of men and women when she launched an attack on her enemies. She would engage in a one to one fight with the soldiers. The captain also related that a fierce battle had broken out between her and several of her enemies and many have died. Her army had nearly lost until she advanced to the forefront and fought through the ranks. Finally she had come near the king of the enemy. She then threw her spear killing him and his army was then defeated. She then had brought home the head of the king on her spear and the royal family had it taken off for a very high price. When she returned to her father, the king appointed her as the ruler of the city which was before under her brother's rule. The captain also said that there were some among the princes who proposed to marry her but she replied, "I would not marry unless to someone who can fight and defeat me". None among them accepted the challenge for fear of the misfortune which would befall them should they lose to her.

In the Chinese records of 1411 A.D., a man from Kelantan named Kumar (Engku Omar) went to China on a friendship mission. In the year 1610 A.D., Cik Siti Wan Kembang was coronated Queen of Kelantan. She ruled from her throne in Gunung Cinta Wangsa, Ulu Kelantan. During her reign, many foreign merchants had traded in Kelantan so much so that the name Wan Kembang became renowned in many countries. Arabs merchants came and spread Islamic teachings there, they named her as Paduka Cik Siti. This title became so well-known that even Kelantanese themselves referred to her as 'Cik Siti' [5].

Islamic teachings can be said to have gained a good foothold in Kelantan and began to be well received by the inhabitants then. This is evident by the construction of Masjid Kampong Laut, a mosque believed to be more than 300 years old and the oldest mosque in Malaysia [1]. Even though its date of construction has not been ascertained, historians are of the opinion that it was built not less than 300 years ago.

Historical Development of Islamic Education in Kelantan:

Islamic education or studies in Kelantan is believed to have begun at the earliest in the 16th century A.D. At this early stage, the teaching of Islam was held in the palace and also in the surau (prayer hall) for princes and princesses, sons and daughters of nobles and the public. As there were no printed books at that time, teaching was only orally conducted. The Arabic books used were those brought from Mecca or India, either by merchants or Kelantanese who could afford to go to Mecca for Haj. There were also original books which were printed [1]. At the same time, the *Jawi* alphabet which was based on the Arabic alphabet could only be complemented by the addition of letters according to the Persian lettering. The Malays had to add four letters, 'c' (cha), 'g'(ga), 'nga' and 'ny'(nya) in order to adjust to the Malay tongue and phonetics.

Following the formation and development of the *Jawi* alphabet and the existence of a group of learned and intelligent Malays who were proficient in written *Jawi*, there began the active translation of particular Arabic books on Islam teachings into *Jawi*. The Arabic books were related to the *Rukun Islam* (Principles of Islam), *Rukun Iman* (Principles of Faith) and other Islamic teachings. Islamic teachings or studies then had stressed on *Fardu 'Ain* (Compulsory Individual Duties), Principles of Islam and Principles of Faith as well as everyday prayers obligatory on Muslims to know and practice. As regards the teaching and learning of the al-Qur'an, students were taught to read it turn by turn one to one. Additionally, students were taught to write and read verses from the al-Qur'an.

The earliest organized place of Islamic education or studies in Kelantan was the palace. Later, the studies were conducted in *surau* (prayer hall), *madrrasah* (religious school or in Kelantanese dialect, *balaisah* or *balasah*) and in *masjid* (mosque). It is not known when *surau*, *madrrasah* and *masjid* began to appear in Kelantan. As regards mosques in Kelantan, there are three old ones. Masjid Kampung Laut is believed to be more than 300 years old and is the oldest mosque in Malaysia. In the year 1968 A.D., its building was moved from its original site to a new site in Nilam Puri, Kota Bharu. Masjid Kota Bharu or Masjid Muhammadi which exists now was built in the year 1925 A.D. replacing Masjid Kayu Lama, which was built at about the year 1867 A.D. and is said to have been built during the reign of Sultan Muhammad I (1800-1835 A.D.). Masjid Langgar was built around mid-19th century A.D.

In view of Masjid Kampung Laut being at least 300 years old, it can be concluded that Islamic education or

studies had begun in Kelantan since 300 to 400 years ago. It is believed that the earliest person who had taught Islamic studies was Syeikh Haji Abdul Halim. He was also the foster son of Long Yunus, the ruler of Kelantan (1762-1794 A.D.) and had begun teaching at the end of the 18th century A.D., after completing his studies in Mecca. He was said to have taught princes and princesses, sons and daughters of nobles and members of the public at the Kelantan palace and in the surau. At that time, the capital city of Kelantan was at Kota Lama (Kampung Sireh) [1]. He was said to be the first to have taught Muslims in Kelantan in a systematic way and earnestly covered the essential areas of study, particularly that related to the *Rukun Islam* and *Rukun Iman* as well as issues relating to obligatory daily prayers.

Pondok System: The system of education meant by traditional Islamic education is the halaqah (circle) system. The term is taken from the situation and form of teaching whereby the teacher sits and reads in the middle while the students in front form a semi-circle receiving instructions. This was the way of teaching in Islamic education in the old days, before the Muslim society knew the school system. However, the al-Azhar University established in 359H/970 A.D. still subscribes to this system as one of the branches of Islamic studies, even though it has developed into a modern university [6].

Side by side with Islamic education in other areas of the Malay Archipelago (Nusantara), education in Peninsular Malaysia or Tanah Melayu began to appear since the 15th century A.D., that is, when the Malays, particularly from the palace began to receive Islamic education through teachers of al-Qur'an. These teachers were of Sayyid descent and were available in many villages. While acting as imam in the surau and masjid, they also instructed children in religious education. They taught subjects such as *Tajwid* (Rules of Qur'an Reading), *Fardu 'Ain*, *Rukun Islam*, *Rukun Iman* and writing of Arabic letters and *Jawi* writing. This tradition spread until the 17th century A.D. In the 18th century A.D. the development of Islamic education in Peninsular Malaysia began to accelerate with the migration of several Muslim scholars from the Middle-East.

The traditional Islamic education also known as the *pondok* system of education was an institution which had a great potential and was a big influence in the Malay society. This system began in the 18th century A.D. and developed until the 20th century A.D. After the Bangkok Treaty between Siam and the English was sealed in July 1327H/1909 A.D., the *pondok* system spread widely in Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis [7].

The *pondok* system is the oldest religious educational institution in Kelantan. It consists of a madrasah as a place of teaching, surrounded by small huts where the students reside. The house of the *Tuan Guru* or the most senior of the teachers is also built in the same compound. The madrasah or the masjid is usually built with funds collected as donations or sponsorships from the villagers. The huts where the students live are built with their own hands and belong to them.

This system is no different from the way of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Sahabat (Prophet's Companions) in Medina. The latter had their houses around Medina Mosque. This means that the environment of the *pondok* system in Kelantan is not dissimilar to what was practiced during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). From the aspect of lectures, the students gather as close as possible to the respective books being taught to them. The teachings of the *Tuan Guru* is audible to all the students. The teacher is normally aware of anyone's absence from lectures and absentees are required to give a complete explanation and excuse for their non-attendance [8].

The *Tuan Guru* wears a *sarong* (sewn cloth covering for lower part of body), Malay *baju* (shirt) and on the head, a cap with a turban wrapped around it. The students were required to shave their heads, but after the 1950's, this was no longer emphasized. During lectures, students note down what is necessary and forward their questions to the teacher on whatever doubts or whatever he did not understand. Then, the students conduct a discussion (*mutala'ah*) among themselves based on the lecture. The students are raised and guided not to deny or contradict anything written in the books. This attitude prevents students from forwarding ideas which may be more concrete and more reasonable and also restricts students from developing their own opinions.

The *pondok* system may be divided into two levels. The first is the memorization stage, which usually takes about four years for students with capability. It requires the students to memorise and remember with accuracy especially in *Nahw* (Syntax) and *Sarf* (Morphology) of Arabic language. Students are also made to write down verses given by the *Tuan Guru* and normally copy from Arabic and *Jawi* books. This is because a number of the students cannot afford to buy the books, besides the books being difficult to obtain. In the subjects of *Nahw* (Syntax) and *Tafsir* (Exegesis), each word must be read and memorized earnestly. This is to train students to read Arabic books of a lower level. Apart from these, they must also memorise *wirid* (expressions in remembrance of God), *doa* (prescribed prayers) and *Surah Yasin* (Qur'anic

verses), which are often useful in religious functions, especially when invited to village functions. The second stage is *menadah kitab* (receiving the book) which usually takes more than ten years. Students have to buy their own books. This is necessary because the teacher will read every sentence in the book to the students and elaborate each sentence in detail. The language usually used by the teacher is the old Malay language spoken in Kelantanese dialect with a certain rhythm. The reading is preceded with praises to Allah (SWT) and for the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), likewise for the closure.

When the students have sufficiently mastered *Sarf* (Morphology) and other subjects deemed necessary to master the Arabic language, they proceed to study *Fiqh* (law). Next, they study the Hadith (the Practices the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH]). It can be said that the *pondok* system of education is similar to that of an Islamic University, except that in the *pondok* the students have to complete studying certain books, whereas in a university, students can choose aspects they are interested in. Nevertheless, the quality of knowledge is similar for both and, sometimes, *pondok* students are more pious, even if deprived of many facilities such as libraries, which are found in universities.

Studying in the Masjid and Madrasah: Masjid and madrasah are two places of worship important in the preaching of Islamic knowledge. They form the base for the Muslim *ummah* to unite and build a harmonious society. They are not solely for prayers, but are also places for the pursuit of knowledge, meetings and the like. The function of the mosque has been emphasized by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) when the Muslims entered Yathrib (Medina). The first thing that the Prophet did was to build a mosque, known as Masjid Nabawi. This shows the important function of a mosque in a Muslim society. It is also the symbol of the strength, greatness and unity of the Muslim *ummah*. The development of Islamic education in Kelantan was enhanced during the reign of Sultan Muhammad II from 1839 to 1886 A.D. The Sultan played a prominent role in building many masjid and madrasah to give his subjects the opportunity to acquire Islamic education. The Sultan also ordered the construction of a large mosque in Kota Bharu, much needed to accommodate the Friday prayers and the increasing number of people who came to attend religious classes. The mosque was known as Masjid Kayu and was completed in 1867 A.D. It also replaced an old mosque that was affected by floods. It became the biggest centre for Islamic learning in Kelantan in the 20th century A.D. Masjid Muhammadi now stands on its site after it was demolished [9].

In the *pondok*, the principal (*mudir*) plays a role in determining aspects of teaching covering the time schedule, syllabus and books to be studied. In Madrasah Ahmadiyah and Diniyatul Badriyah for example, the students are not divided into distinct classes or grades (*darjah*) or courses by years. As there are three *madrasah*, all of them are utilized at one time for study. The study hours begin after subuh prayer until eleven in the morning, then from two to four in the afternoon. And then study hours are continued after Maghrib prayer to ten at night. On Tuesdays, lessons are only for half the day, whereas on Fridays there are no classes (weekend holiday) [10]. The schedule, for example, from seven to eleven in the morning: Madrasah A for senior students taught by the principal himself; whilst Madrasah B for students who have reached a certain level taught by an assistant teacher or the leader of the *mutala'ah* (discussion); while Madrasah C is for new students. Sometimes, in the afternoon, the senior students also study at Madrasah C. The lessons and books are arranged so that all students can follow the lessons in all areas taught by the teacher in that particular *madrasah*. There are also some senior students who attend lessons they have studied before to recapitulate them.

The History of Pondok in Kelantan: The first *pondok* in Kelantan was set up in 1820 A.D. by Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Samad bin Abdullah. He preached in Pulau Chondong, which is situated at Jalan Kuala Krai, 28 kilometers from Kota Bharu. He acquired his early education in Pattani and went on to complete his studies in Mecca [9]. Haji Abdul Samad who was known as Tok Pulau Chondong had become a proponent for the setting up of a *pondok* style system of education in Kelantan. He had endowed (*wakaf*) his land for the purpose of building a *pondok* for his students. He had also built a mosque as a place of learning. Near the mosque, he had built a tower made by boring through a trunk of chengal wood. The tower has become a symbol of the development of Islamic studies in Pulau Chondong and still stands firm even though it has endured a period of one and a half centuries [9].

Tok Pulau Chondong began teaching a little earlier than Haji Yaakub who taught in Kota Bharu. The difference between them was that Haji Yaakub did not introduce a *pondok* form of set-up whereas Tok Pulau Chondong encouraged his students to build a *pondok* as living quarters. His students were increasing in number and among them were those from Kampar, Sumatra, Kampuchea and Pattani, as well as from other states in

Peninsular Malaysia. The number of students was still increasing when his son, Haji Muhammad Arshad, took over his task as a teacher there. In the year 1880 A.D., the student population was nearly 500 and among them was the renowned Tok Kemuning (Syeikh Abdul Hamid Senigal 1809-1938 A.D.), who later set-up a *pondok* in Kemuning, Machang in early 20th century A.D.

The rapid development of *pondok* in Pulau Chondong in the 19th century A.D. lost its vigour when Tuan Guru Haji Arshad passed away. There was no one who would carry on the effort of Tok Pulau Chondong. Although there were able students, they had decided to return to their own places to set-up their own *pondok*. In the year 1909 A.D. this institution did make a comeback and continued to develop until the Second World War, especially when Arabic books could be obtained. After 1939 A.D., however, efforts to revive this system failed and it was left to its own neglect [10].

The beginner's level of study covers the subjects such as *Tawhid* (Unity or Oneness of God), *Fiqh* (Law), *Akhlak* (Good Character) and al-Qur'an. Most of the books used are in *Jawi*. When Tuan Haji Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad Kenali returned from Mecca, the development of *pondok* education became more dynamic. This was followed by the setting up of Pondok Bunut Payong in the year 1931 A.D., known as the Madrasah Ahmadiyah. It was followed by Pondok Lati, Pondok Lubok Tapah, Pondok Kubang, Bemban and Pondok Pak Su Wel. Students came from all over the Peninsular as well as Cambodia and Pattani. The success of these institutions at this second level was due to several factors. First, there was a dearth of educational institutions in the form of Malay, Arabic and English schools. Second, the Malay society had a strong sense of religious consciousness. Hence, their children were sent to *pondok*. From the aspect of education, *pondok* provided quality education. At this level, the subjects taught include *Fiqh* (Law), *Tawhid* (Unity), *Tasawuf* (Mysticism), *Tarikh Islam* (History of Islam), *Nahw* (Arabic Syntax), *Sastera Arab* (Arabic Literature), *Usul Fiqh* (Jurisprudence), *Wirid* (Remembrance of God), *Qawa'id* (Arabic Grammar), 'Arud (Methods of reading Arabic Poetry). These subjects used Arabic books in depth.

Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan (MAIK), the Kelantan Council for Islam and Malay Customs formed in the year 24th December 1915 A.D. with the assent of Sultan Muhammad, was very much due to the influence of the *pondok*. It shows the important role of the *pondok* in Kelantan then. On the formation of the Federated Malay States in the year 1948

A.D. and the rapid development of Malay and English education under the colonial British, the *pondok* institution began to decline. The modern Malay society began to send their children to secular schools. This was because employment opportunity was brighter for school leavers of Malay and, especially, English schools. This rendered the teacher to fall short in his income to support his family as his source of income depended on the public support. He thus was forced to do other jobs and teaching then became a second priority. As *pondok* was not government aided and the number of students decreased, *pondok* teaching became not as energetic as before.

In the old days, teachers could survive just by teaching without doing other jobs, but not so now. The sources of *zakat* which used to be paid to *pondok* teachers are now collected by the Majlis Agama Islam (Islamic Religious Council), so that teachers are left unsupported [10]. As a consequence, *pondok* closed down one by one, as in the cases of Pondok Bunut Payong has been converted to Arabic educational school and Pondok Pasir Tumbuh is now known as Madrasah Diniyatul Badriyah. This Madrasah, situated about 11 kilometers from Kota Bharu, was founded in 1948 A.D. by Haji Abdul Aziz bin Abu Bakar and has a student population of 750.

The Development of Pondok School in Kelantan: The *pondok* school system of Islamic education or studies first emerged in Kelantan in the early 19th century A.D. The term *pondok* originates from the Arabic word meaning houses of lodging or small houses, which can accommodate three or four people per house.

The Period Before 1910 A.D.: Before 1910 A.D., aside from being a place of religious instruction and developing good character in children, the *pondok* was also a school of learning to read and write *Jawi* and Arabic. The system of learning then was not so organized and there were no tables and chairs. The students learn all the knowledge from the *Tuan Guru* while simply sitting cross-legged on the matted floor holding their books. There were not many subjects, study was limited to *Tawhid*, *Fiqh*, *Tasawuf* or *Akhlak*, aside from memorizing *wirid* and *doa* to be read at funerals, Maulud (Prophet's PBUH birthday) and 'Ashura (The day Prophet Moses PBUH, was saved from the Pharaoh). The medium of instruction was Malay with Arabic influence in the areas of *Nahw*, vocabulary and way of expression. This is not surprising as the books used then were Malay books which had been directly translated word for word from Arabic.

Among the *pondok* which were set up in Kelantan before the year 1910 A.D. was Pondok Tok Pulau Chondong founded by Haji Abdul Samad bin Abdullah in the year 1820 A.D., Pondok Tok Bachok in Bachok founded by Haji Othman bin Haji Muhammad in the year 1900 A.D., Pondok Haji Abdul Malek, Kampung Sungai Pinang, Tumpat founded by Haji Abdul Malek bin Hassan in the year 1907 A.D., Pondok Haji Yusof, Pulau Ubi, Getting, Tumpat founded by Haji Yusof in the year 1908 A.D., Pondok Kubang Pasu, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Nik Abdullah bin Haji Wan Abdul Samad in the year 1900A.D., Pondok Sungai Budor, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Ibrahim bin Haji Yusof, Pondok Kampung Banggol founded by Haji Wan Ismail, Pondok Tuan Padang founded by Haji Taib Tuan Padang and Pondok Kampung Tok Semian founded by Haji Wan Abdul Samad bin Mohd Salleh (Tuan Tabal).

Among the renowned scholars in Kelantan in the period pre-1910 A.D. were:

- Syeikh Abdul Halim (lived during the reign of Long Yunus (1775-1794 A.D.) and Sultan Muhammad I (1980-1835 A.D.).
- Haji Yusof bin Syeikh Abdul Halim.
- Haji Yaakub bin Syeikh Abdul Halim. Better known as Tuan Padang or Tok Guru Tuan Padang.
- Haji Wan Abdul Rahman bin Wan Othman. He became Mufti of Kelantan (1840-1845 A.D.).
- Syeikh Daud bin Syeikh Muhammad al-Bahrain, of Arabic Hadramaut descent. He became Mufti of Kelantan (1845-1855 A.D.).
- Syeikh Abdul Hamid Seniegal. Better known as Haji Abdul Hamid or Tok Senik or Tok Kemuning (born 1809; died 1938 A.D.). Founder of Pondok Kemuning (Machang).
- Haji Wan Abdul Samad bin Muhammad Salleh. Better known as Tuan Tabal. Born in Kampung Tabal (now Tak Bai, Narathiwat Province, Southern Thailand) in 1816, died in 1891 A.D.
- Haji Wan Ishak bin Abdul Kadir. Born 1835, died 1925 A.D. at age 90 years.
- Haji Wan Muhd Ali bin Wan Abdul Rahman. Better known as Haji Wan Ali Kutan. Born in Kampung Kutan, Pasir Pekan in 1837, died in 1912 A.D.
- Haji Ismail bin Haji Muhammad (father of Haji Nik Mahmud, Datuk Perdana Menteri Paduka Raja, Chief Minister of Kelantan 1920-1944 A.D.) Contemporary of Syeikh Daud bin Syeikh Muhammad al-Bahrain [1].
- Haji Wan Daud bin Haji Abdul Halim. Mufti of Kelantan 1885-1908 A.D. Died in 1908 A.D.

- Haji Nik Zainal Abidin bin Nik Ismail. Better known as Haji Kono or Tok Kono. Contemporary of Tuan Tabal (Haji Abdul Samad bin Mohd. Salleh).
- Haji Abdullah bin Muhd. Salleh. Better known as Imam Haji Abdullah. Distinguished Adviser to Sultan Muhammad III (1889-1900A.D.). Died in 1912 A.D.
- Haji Awang bin Muhd Zin. Born in Kampung Atas Banggol, Kota Bharu. Better known as Haji Awang Alim or Haji Awang Gemuk. Died in 20th century A.D. Founder of Pondok and Surau kampung Atas Banggol famous as *Surau Kemboja* [1].
- Haji Tuan Abdul Mutalib bin Tuan Pakeh, kampung Kota Bharu. He was teacher at Mecca.
- Haji Nik Muhammad bin Nik Daud. Better known as Haji Nik Mat Api. Father of Haji Nik Muhd. Adib.
- Haji Abdul Malik bin Hassan, Kampung Sungai Pinang. Born in 1813, died in 1928 A.D. at age 115 years. Better known as Haji Abdul Sungai Pinang [1].

Period Between 1910 to 1945 A.D.: The years 1910 to 1945 can be said to be the golden age in the development of *pondok* schools in Kelantan. The practice of building *pondok* was widespread in Kelantan. *Pondok* had made excellent progress so much so that there were *pondok* which had as many as 1,000 students. The peak of progress and excellence lasted until the end of the Japanese occupation, that is, the year 1945 A.D. After that, the status of *pondok* and *pondok* education met with difficulties and decline [1].

During this period *pondok* teaching developed rapidly. At *pondok*, there was taught not only subjects such as *Tawhid* (Unity), *Fiqh* (law), *Tasawuf* (Mysticism), reading *wirid* (remembrance of God) and *doa* (prayer), but also additional subjects such as *Hadith* (Practice of Prophet), *Tafsir* (Exegesis), *Mustalah al-Hadith* (Hadith Terminology), *Usul al-Tafsir* (Sources of Exegesis), *Nahw* (Syntax), *Sarf* (Morphology), *Balaghah* (Rhetoric), *Mantiq* (Logic), *Usul al-Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) and *Tarikh Islami* (History of Islam). Although a variety of subjects were taught and read at *pondok* then, the primary focus was on *Nahw* and *Sarf* as well as *Fiqh*. *Nahw* and *Sarf* are two essential subjects in *pondok*.

Among the renowned *pondok* between the years 1910 and 1945 A.D. were Pondok or Surau Kamboa, Kampung Atas Banggol, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Awang bin Muhd Zain or better known as Haji Awang Gemuk, Pondok Tok Kenali at Kubang Kerian founded by Haji Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad or Tok Kenali about the year 1910 A.D., Pondok Tok Selihor, Kampung Berangan, Tumpat founded by Haji Abdul Rahman bin

Haji Othman or Tok Selihor about 1912 A.D., Pondok Pulau Pisang later known as Madrasah al-Falah, Kampong Padang, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Ali bin Awang or Haji Ali Sallehuddin bin Awang in 1930 A.D., Pondok Padang Jelapang, Kampong Lemai, Pasir Mas founded by Haji Wan Abdul Halim or Tok Padang Jelapang about 1925 A.D., Pondok Ahmadiyah Bunut Payong, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Abdullah Tahir bin Haji Ahmad in 1931 A.D., Pondok Ketereh founded by Haji Hassan bin Haji Ismail or Haji Hassan Ketereh in 1939 A.D. and Pondok Lubok Tapah founded by Haji Abdul Rahman bin Che Wan in 1932 A.D.

Among the renowned scholars in Kelantan between the years 1910 and 1945 A.D. were:

- Haji Othman bin Haji Muhammad. Born in Kampong Tok Burong, western Bachok in 1860 A.D., died in 1935 A.D. at age 93 years. Better known as Tok Bachok.
- Haji Wan Ahmad bin Haji Wan Abdul Halim. Born in Kampung Palekbang in 1861, died in 1934 A.D. at Kampung Sungai Golok, southern Thailand. Better known as Tok Guru Padang Jelapang.
- Haji Awang @ Haji Muhammad Yusof bin Ahmad. Born at Kampung Kenali, Kota Bharu, in 1836, died in 1933 A.D.
- Haji Muhammad bin Ismail Nuruddin. Born at Kampung Atas Banggol, Kota Bharu in 1865, died in 1946 A.D. Better known as Haji Muhammad Sungai Keladi.
- Haji Wan Muhammad bin Abdul Samad. Born in Kampung Kubang Pasu, Kota Bharu in 1868, died in 1920 A.D. He was the eldest son of Haji Abdul Samad Tuan Tabal. Became Mufti of Kelantan from 1906 to 1920 A.D.
- Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Othman. Better known as Tok Selihor. Born in 1871, died in 1935 A.D.
- Haji Wan Musa bin Samad. Born in 1874, died in 1939 A.D. Became Mufti of Kelantan from 1908 to 1916 A.D.
- Haji Ismail bin Haji Abdul Majid. Born in 1876, died in 1946 A.D. Lived in Pontianak (now West Kalimantan, Indonesia) and became Mufti there before 1937 A.D. Better known as Haji Ismail Pontianak.
- Haji Nik Abdullah bin Zainal, died in 1927. Better known as Haji Nik Lah Hakim.
- Haji Ahmad bin Haji Idris. Died in 1927 A.D. [1].
- Haji Umar bin Ismail Nuruddin. Born in 1886, died in 1946 A.D.
- Haji Assad bin Haji Daud. Born in 1886, died in 1941 A.D. Better known as Haji Saad Kangkong or Haji Saad Tok Wali or Tok Wali Haji Saad.
- Haji Ahmad Sallehuddin bin Awang. Born in 1899, died in 1968 A.D. Better known as Haji Ali Pulau Pisang.
- Haji Muhammad bin Haji Said Khatib. Born in 1888, died in 1930 A.D. He was called by the title Datuk Laksamana. He was the father of Datuk Hashim (Datuk Wira Jaya) and Datuk Abdul Malek.
- Haji Yaakub bin Ismail. Born in Legor (now Nakhon Sri Tammarat, southern Thailand) in 1892, died in 1971 A.D. He was a renowned scholar in Kelantan. Better known as Haji Yaakub Legor. He came to Kelantan in 1913 and returned to Legor in 1971 A.D.
- Haji Yaakub bin Haji Ahmad. Born in Kampung Sireh, Kota Bharu in 1895, died in 1957 A.D. Better known as Haji Yaakub Lorong Gajah Mati.
- Haji Abdullah Tahir bin Haji Ahmad. Born in Kampung Sireh, Kota Bharu in 1879, died in 1961 A.D. Better known as Haji Tahir Bunut Payong.
- Haji Awang bin Haji Umar. Born in Kampong Padang Merbau, Lambor, Wakaf Bharu in 1900, died in 1963 A.D. Better known as Haji Awang Lambor.
- Haji Wan Abdul Kadir bin Lebai Sulaiman. Born in 1902, died in 1958 A.D. Better known as Haji Wan Abdul Kadir Melor.
- Haji Mat Tuboh or Haji Mat Kudong. Born in Kampung Pancur, Kota Bharu in 1904, died in 1970 A.D.
- Haji Abdullah bin Awang Noh. Born in 1905, died in 1947 A.D. Better known as Maulana Haji Abdullah Noh.
- Haji Idris bin Haji Hassan, Mufti Kelantan (1920-1927 A.D.)
- Haji Ibrahim bin Haji Yusof, kampong Penambang, Kota Bharu, Father of Haji Muhd Nur (Mufti Kelantan). Haji Ibrahim became Mufti of Kelantan (1927-1938 A.D.) [1].
- Haji Wan Adam bin Wan Abdullah. Born in 1909, died in 1957 A.D.
- Haji Ahmad bin Haji Ismail. Born in 1909 A.D. Better known as Tok Kemuning.
- Haji Abu Abdullah Sayyid Hassan bin Nor Hassan. Originated from India and came to Kelantan in 1927 A.D. Better known as Tok Khurasan.
- Haji Hassan bin Ismail. Born in 1909, died in 1977 A.D. Better known as Haji Hassan Ketereh.
- Haji Ayub bin Haji Hussin Kamboja. Died in 1927 A.D.

- Haji Ahmad Mahir bin Haji Ismail. Born in Kampung Kemuning, Machang in 1910, died in 1967 A.D. Became Mufti of Kelantan from 1945 to 1967 A.D.
- Haji Hussin Pulau Pisang. Died in 1945 A.D.
- Haji Nik Abdul Rahman bin Haji Nik Yaakub. Born in Kampung Sungai Budor, Kota Bharu in 1910, died in 1960 A.D. Better known as Haji Nik Man Sungai Budor.
- Haji Nik Abdul Rahman bin Haji Nik Abdullah. Born in Kampung Tok Semian, Kota Bharu in 1911, died in 1968 A.D. He was Imam Besar of Masjid Muhammadiyah Kota Bharu.
- Haji Nik Abdullah bin Haji Wan Musa. Born in Kampung Kubang Pasu in 1900, died in 1935 A.D. [1].

The Period Between 1945 to Date: *Pondok* education in Kelantan began to decline from the year 1945 A.D. Among the reasons for the decline were several changes in the development of education in Kelantan. During this period, public religious school using Arabic as the medium of instruction began to emerge. This was followed by the emergence and development of Malay schools and state government religious schools [1]. Nevertheless, *pondok* education in Kelantan still continue to exist. In this regard, it must be mentioned that *pondok* schools have played their own role in upgrading the level of Islamic studies in Kelantan. *Pondok* teachers not only teach at their respective *pondok* schools, in fact, they also teach adults in villages in the vicinity of their *pondok*. They also act as preachers, teachers and carry out other religious duties such as being the *Imam* (Lead prayers), *Bilal* (Call to prayer or Adhan) and *Khatib* (preach sermon) in *masjid* and *surau* [1].

Among the *pondok* which were built after 1945 A.D. were Pondok Haji Muhd Noor at Kampung But, Jalan Kuala Krai, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Muhd Noor in 1946 A.D., Pondok Darul Ulum al-Ahmadiyah at Kampung Kolam, Bachok founded by Haji Muhammad bin Abdullah in 1950 A.D., Pondok Terusan Pasir Tumbuh, Kota Bharu founded by Haji Abu Bakar bin Haji Abdul Latif in 1945 A.D. and Pondok Muhammadiyah Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai founded by Haji Abdul Rahman bin Sulaiman in 1958 A.D.

In the 1950's *pondok* declined further because of the decreasing response from the society. This was due to the great competition from religious schools. Since then, there were *pondok* in Kelantan which attempted to adjust to the school system, for example, in the year 1958 A.D., Pondok Bunut Payong, Kota Bharu was converted to become Madrasah Islamiyah and Pondok Haji Muhd Noor in Kampung But was changed to become Madrasah Sa'adatul Qura in 1970 A.D.

Besides that, there were many *pondoks* scattered in every district in Kelantan. In the year 1967 A.D. for example, there were 55 *pondok* schools in Kelantan. Since independence in 1957, *pondok* education had faced great competition from secular schools and they also faced shortage of financial sources to secure development. In spite of this setback, there were 54 *pondok* schools in Kelantan which continued with Islamic education for as many as 3,152 students in total in 1973 A.D. [9]. There are currently three renowned traditional *pondok* in Kelantan. Even though the founders teacher of these *pondok* have passed away, they still manage to successfully conduct learning activity. The reason for this is the presence of charismatic echelon teachers and successors. The *pondok* referred to are the Pondok Terusan or Pasir Tumbuh (Kota Bharu District), Pondok Lubuk Tapah (Pasir Mas District) and Pondok Sungai Durian (Kuala Krai District).

Pondok Terusan was founded in the year 1954 by Haji Mustafa bin Haji Abu Bakar and his brother, Haji Abdul Aziz Hashim bin Haji Abu Bakar as well as their brother-in-law Haji Hashim bin Haji Abu Bakar Kedah. The *pondok* had accommodated thousands of students from all over the country, about half of them came from Kelantan. Haji Mustaffa died on 19th April 1984, followed by the demise of Haji Abdul Aziz Hashim on 18th June 1987. It is now headed by Haji Hashim Kedah together with 22 assistant teachers, including Haji Atiqullah bin Tuan Guru Haji Yaakob Gong Serai, that is, Haji Abdul Aziz's own son-in-law.

Pondok Lubuk Tapah was founded in the year 1932 by Haji Abdul Rahman bin Che Wan, assisted by his in-law, Haji Abdul Rahman Haji Ngah, as al-Quran teacher. At the end of the 1960's, his son, Haji Abdullah returned from his studies of 14 years in Mecca. This increased the confidence of the public in his *pondok*. Haji Abdul Rahman died in Lubuk Tapah on 4th February 1989, while his in-law, Haji Abdul Rahman Haji Ngah, died in Mecca on 8th October 1983. Currently, Tuan Guru Haji Abdullah is not only responsible for Pondok Lubuk Tapah, he has also to commute to teach at Pondok Kubang Bemban, the legacy of his father-in-law, Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Ghani bin Haji Awang Kechik who died on 15th June 1985. Pondok Lubuk Tapah has rapidly developed with a current student population of 700 [2]. Whereas Pondok Sungai Durian was founded on 25th August 1958 by Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Sulaiman and led by him until the end of his life on 20th August 1988. It is now continued by his son, Haji Ahmad Shukri assisted by his brother, Pak Su Wail or Haji Ismail Sulaiman [11-15].

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, knowledge developed simultaneously with the birth of Islam in Kelantan. The Islamic concept of knowledge is characterized as integrated and interrelated among the sciences with the objective of driving someone to do good to serve Allah s.w.t. It is clear that Allah s.w.t. the Cherisher is the divine source of all knowledge and to learn or study is an indisputable duty. An individual without knowledge not only complicates his life to obtain material advancement, but also complicates his pursuit for a higher level of perfect faith. In this connection, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was exhorted to deliver knowledge regardless of difficulties in the way. This holy deed was emulated by his *Sahabah* (Companions) and *Tabi'in* (Followers of the Companions) as well as later Muslim intellectuals. *Pondok* is the oldest educational institution and had rapidly developed as the forerunner Islamic educational institution in Kelantan. A modest *pondok* system is able to give birth to wise and competent Muslim intellectuals. The *pondok* institution unifies the three essential elements of Islamic education, namely worship to embed faith, preaching to spread knowledge and practice to realize Islamic teachings in the life of the Muslim *ummah*. This study shows that the traditional system of *pondok* education is still in existence until today, even though it has to compete with the modern system of education. It implies that the system of *pondok* education has its inherent strength to ensure its long survival. It suggests that a new research on the challenges that the *pondok* meets to maintain its survival and the role that the *pondok* plays in the religious development of the Malays needs to be considered.

REFERENCES

1. Nik Mohamed Nik Mohd Salleh, 2001. Perkembangan pendidikan atau pengajian Islam di negeri Kelantan. *Warisan Kelantan*, 4(2): 95-120.
2. Ismail Awang, 1986. Sejarah masuknya al-Quran ke Kelantan. *Warisan Kelantan*, 5(2): 76-83.
3. Perbadanan Muzium Islam Negeri Kelantan, n.d. Kedatangan dan perkembangan agama Islam di Kelantan.
4. Ibn Battutah, 2003. Pengembaraan Ibn Battutah. Translated by Syed Nurul Akla Syed Abdullah and Adi Setia Mohd Dom. Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.
5. Alias Muhammad, 1975. Kelantan politik dan dilema pembangunan. Penerbitan Utusan Melayu, Kuala Lumpur.
6. Wan Zahidi Wan Teh, 1992. Pengemaskinian sistem pengajian pondok di Pulau Pinang. In: Ismail Ab. Rahman, (ed.), Pendidikan Islam di Malaysia. Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, pp: 105-107.
7. Abdullah Jusoh, 1990. Pengenaln tamadun Islam di Malaysia. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur.
8. Ismail Awang, 1987. Pengajian dan tafsir al-Qur'an. Dian Darulnaim Sdn. Bhd., Kota Bharu.
9. Abdul Halim Ahmad, 1982. Pendidikan Islam di Kelantan. *Warisan Kelantan*, 1(2): 1-28.
10. Rahim Abdullah, 1983. Pelajaran pondok di Kelantan. *Warisan Kelantan*, 2(1).
11. Karakelle, Sibel, 2010. The Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS): Evaluating Music Teachers' Classroom Effectiveness. *Middle-East J. Scientific Res.*, 6(3): 276-280.
12. Bayindir, Nida, 2010. Proficiency Perceptions of Teachers about Their Student- Centred Teaching Methods. *Middle-East J. Scientific Res.*, 5(1): 39-43.
13. Ihsan, D., 2010. Knowledge Level of National Education Managers upon In-Service Education Conceptsuch as: Holiday Activity Logic, Expectations Difference, Concept Visibility, Attitude of Workers and Upper Stage Managers. *Middle-East J. Scientific Res.*, 6(1): 08-14.
14. Noor Inayah, Y., W.H. Wan Mohd Hirwani, A.R. Mohd Nizam, Z. Zinatul Ashiqin, M. Wan Kamal, J. Ezad Azraai, S. Adibah and J. Kamaruzam, 2011. Challenges for Commercialisation of University Research for Agricultural Based Invention. *World Appl. Sci. J.*, 12(2): 132-138.
15. Noor Inayah, Y., M. Wan Kamal, Wh. Wan Mohd Hirwani, Z. Zinatul Ashiqin, M. Mohd Nasran, J. Ezad Azraai, J. Kamaruzaman and S. Adibah, 2011. Evaluation of the Egyptian Agricultural Development During the Mamluk Era. *American-Eurasian J. Agric. and Environ. Sci.*, 10(1): 01-08.