

Reclaiming the Conversation

Islamic Intellectual Tradition
in the Malay Archipelago



Edited by

ROSNANI HASHIM

with a Foreword by

MOHD KAMAL HASSAN

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Mohd Kamal Hassan

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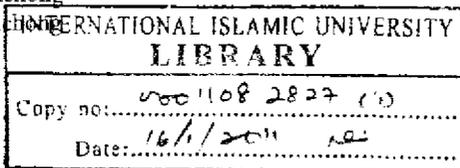
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Sayid Shaykh al-Hadi

Reform of Islamic Education in Malaya

Ibrahim Abu Bakar & Rosnani Hashim

ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN MALAYA (PRESENTLY known as Peninsular Malaysia) experienced significant changes in the early twentieth century. It had evolved from a system of Qur'anic classes held in the homes of *lebais*, *suraus* and mosques, into a system of *pondok* especially in the Unfederated Malay States of Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu and Perlis in the late nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century, the system of *pondok* then evolved into *madrasah*. Each phase of change has its own uniqueness, was progressive and dynamic with the later phases improving on the system and attempting to adapt to the changing time. The system of Qur'anic classes focused on efforts to introduce proper Qur'an recitation according to the rules of *tajwid* and was useful in preserving the Qur'an as the Muslim Holy Book and also its spirit among the Muslim community in Malaya. It also ensured the continued supply of teachers of the Holy Qur'an. The *suraus* and mosques were non-formal educational institutions where the Islamic religious teachers taught the Qur'anic exegesis and other Shari'ah subjects such as Islamic jurisprudence and law (*fiqh*), Islamic theology (*tawhīd*), the Prophetic tradition (Ḥadīth), Islamic history (*sīrah*) and Islamic ethics (*akhlāq*). The *pondok* system expanded the coverage of the Shari'ah subjects and also its depth because of its more