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## THE RELATION OF MALAYSIAN MALAY ISLAMIC CULTURE TO NATIONAL IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY "PILLAR OF THE NATION"

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### Abstract

Islam and Malays in Malaysia are inseparable, having undergone a lengthy process of integration and leaving enduring legacies for Malaysia, the archipelago, and beyond. They collectively define the nation's identity, endorsed by the government. As a multicultural country, Malaysia affirms its adherence to Islam and the Malay heritage, with Malays playing a crucial role in maintaining political stability and preventing racial conflicts. Central to this harmony is the steadfast preservation of Malay culture by its people. Malay Islamic culture is preserved not only in the social life of society but also at the stage of constitutionally applicable legislation. The existing culture assimilates previous religions that have stopped and developed in Malay. Amid the onslaught of globalization which is being followed by all countries including Malaysia, Malay Muslim culture remains the characteristic of the Malaysian Malay nation. Malaysia as a democratic country has an ideology to be the basis for determining the direction of development steps. This paper is focused on finding compatibility between Malay Islamic culture preserved from generation to generation with the values of national identity contained in Malaysian legislation and the basic ideology of the state known as "Rukun Negara". It is a concept that binds the state with religious and ethnic entities to enhance the moral integrity of the nation.

**Keywords:** Culture, Islam, Malay, National Policy, Malaysia

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## **Abstrak**

Islam dan Melayu di Malaysia tidak dapat dipisahkan, karena telah melalui proses integrasi yang panjang dan meninggalkan warisan abadi bagi Malaysia, nusantara, dan sekitarnya. Mereka secara kolektif mendefinisikan identitas bangsa, yang didukung oleh pemerintah. Sebagai negara multikultural, Malaysia menegaskan kepatuhannya terhadap Islam dan warisan Melayu, dan etnis Melayu memainkan peran penting dalam menjaga stabilitas politik dan mencegah konflik rasial. Inti dari keharmonisan ini adalah keteguhan pelestarian budaya Melayu oleh masyarakatnya. Kebudayaan Islam Melayu dilestarikan tidak hanya dalam kehidupan sosial masyarakat tetapi juga dalam tataran peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku secara konstitusional. Kebudayaan yang ada mengasimilasi agama-agama sebelumnya yang singgah dan berkembang di Melayu. Di tengah gencarnya globalisasi yang diikuti oleh semua negara termasuk Malaysia, budaya Islam Melayu tetap menjadi ciri khas bangsa Melayu Malaysia. Malaysia sebagai negara demokratis mempunyai ideologi yang menjadi landasan dalam menentukan arah langkah pembangunan. Tulisan ini difokuskan untuk menemukan kesesuaian antara budaya Islam Melayu yang dilestarikan secara turun temurun dengan nilai-nilai identitas nasional yang terkandung dalam peraturan perundang-undangan Malaysia dan ideologi dasar negara yang dikenal dengan "Rukun Negara". Merupakan konsep yang mengikat negara dengan entitas agama dan etnis untuk meningkatkan integritas moral bangsa.

**Kata Kunci:** Kebudayaan, Islam, Melayu, Kebijakan Nasional, Malaysia

## **INTRODUCTION**

If Indonesia's Muslim face is known as the santri or Islamic boarding school, Malay is the most appropriate face to describe Muslims in Malaysia. As a country with a majority Muslim population, Malaysia has transformed into a country with a strong Malay Muslim identity or face. The Malay Muslim identity is very appropriate if you look at Malaysia compared to other countries that have a Malay population. The ethnic Malay population occupies 50.4% of Malaysia's population, this number is very large for a country and could become the main face of a country.<sup>1</sup> The Malay tribe itself is not only in Malaysia but is spread from Vietnam,

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<sup>1</sup> Ali, K. K. A discourse on the Malay cultural identity within the Malaysian society. *Jurnal Penelitian Islam*, 40(1): 2022, pp. 83-107

Cambodia, Southern Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and Southern Philippines.<sup>2</sup> Each country has its distinct characteristics even though it is within the same cultural frame and customs. The Malaysian population itself consists of indigenous Malays and immigrants from Indonesia, India, China, Pakistan, Persia and Turkey.<sup>3</sup>

Malays are not only an ethnicity in Malaysia but have also been transformed into a political party, government, and even a state government system with various laws and policies created. Even though it is a multi-ethnic country, the Malay nation is the dominant nation and has power over the existing government.<sup>4</sup> Islam was indeed born and began to spread from the Middle East, but what is less widely seen by the world is that the largest adherents of Islam are in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia, namely Indonesia and Malaysia.<sup>5</sup> Malaysia as a country cannot be separated from Islam, many of the state's regulations originate from Islam, which is proof of the connection between Islam and the Malay nation.

Islam is not the first religion adopted by the Malay people, but several other religions have already arrived. Islam became the final religion that was accepted and maintained until now. Islam itself entered the archipelago (including Malaysia) through the educational route model brought by intellectual Muslims and Sufis who also worked as traders.<sup>6</sup> This ensured that there was no conflict and bloodshed in the introduction of Islam to Malay.

Islam entered Malay land very quickly after the presence of the first Islamic kingdom in Pasai, namely Samudra Pasai, which then had an influence on the kingdom in Malacca after one of its kings converted to Islam because he wanted to marry the princess of Samudra Pasai.<sup>7</sup> Ulama

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<sup>2</sup> Mohd. Shuhaimi, H. I. and Osman, C. A. 'Islam and the Malay World: An Insight into the Assimilation of Islamic Values', *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 2(2), 2012 pp. 58-65

<sup>3</sup> Herawati, A. 'Eksistensi Islam Di Asia Tenggara', *Ash-Shahab: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 4(2), 2018, pp. 119-129.

<sup>4</sup> Masykuroh, Y. W. R. 'Politik (Legislasi) Hukum Islam di Malaysia', *Asas: Jurnal Hukum dan Ekonomi Islam*, 8(1), 2016 pp. 122-138.

<sup>5</sup> Jeklin, A. 'The Rise of Nerd Politics', (July), pp. 1-23 Jeklin, A. 'The Rise of Nerd Politics', (July), 2016, pp. 1-23

<sup>6</sup> Nurbaiti 'Islamic Education: The Main Path of Islamization in Southeast Asia', *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 2020, pp. 345-374.

<sup>7</sup> Mohd. Shuhaimi, H. I. and Osman, C. A. 'Islam and the Malay World: An Insight

or traders from the Arabian peninsular played an important role in the development of Islam in Malay. In the 1980s, Islam in Malaysia experienced development and revival marked by the rise of Islamic da'wah and study activities.<sup>8</sup>

After independence, it is clear that the pattern of Islamic development continues to be influenced by the authorities (top-down). Because the Malaysian authorities or government have made Islam the official state religion. The legacy of the Malacca law which contains Islamic law based on Qur'anic concepts applies in Malaysia.<sup>9</sup> The establishment of Islam as one of the principles of the state also makes the pride of the Malays one of the things that can elevate their dignity from other ethnic groups with other religions.<sup>10</sup>

The Malay face before Islam of course still had various religious patterns. Before Islam entered Malaysia or other Malay lands, the occupation was dominated by the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Sriwijaya. In addition, many traders came in from India, bringing their strong teachings and influence on Hinduism with a brahmana pattern. The entry of Islam into Malay to replace Hinduism and Buddhism certainly brought about a lot of cultural assimilation among the people.<sup>11</sup>

The Islamic culture resulting from very strong assimilation is the communal feast culture such as kenduri and tahlil.<sup>12</sup> The Malay nation has always been closely related to gatherings (social collectives) which are filled with many Islamic traditions. The existing cultures do not come entirely from Islamic values, even though current readings and implementation are filled with teachings and practices from the Islamic

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into the Assmilation of Islamic Values', *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 2(2), 2012, pp. 58-65

<sup>8</sup> Herawati, A. 'Eksistensi Islam Di Asia Tenggara', *Ash-Shahabah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 4(2), 2018, pp. 119-129.

<sup>9</sup> Herawati, A. 'Eksistensi Islam Di Asia Tenggara', *Ash-Shahabah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 4(2), 2018, pp. 119-129.

<sup>10</sup> Abdul Malik, M. P. Bin *et al.* 'Malay Local Wisdom: An Analysis of Social History of the Malay Literary Saga Books', *Temali: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*, 3(1), 2020, pp. 39-85.

<sup>11</sup> Mohd. Shuhaimi, H. I. and Osman, C. A. 'Islam and the Malay World: An Insight into the Assmilation of Islamic Values', *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 2(2), 2012, pp. 58-65

<sup>12</sup> Mohd. Shuhaimi, H. I. and Osman, C. A., 'Islam and the Malay World: An Insight into the Assmilation of Islamic Values', *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 2(2), 2012, pp. 58-65

religion. Syncretic belief in the form of Sufism which can be said to be a combination of Islam, Hinduism and local beliefs (Sodiqin, 2016) continues to be preserved to this day.

As a country, Malaysia has an ideological basis which is also the basis for the state in behaving and running the government. Rukun Negara is all Malaysians' ideology and identity tied to ethnic, racial and religious diversity. Rukun Negara is present as an effort to strengthen integration and bring citizen nationalism to the State.<sup>13</sup>

The foundation of this state also has a goal which is expected to be a support for various divisive conflicts faced by many countries. This is also reminded of one of the ethnic conflicts that occurred on 13 May 1969.<sup>14</sup> The five basic principles of the state, which are usually called the pillars of the state, are 5 dimensions that have been tried to be developed and reduced into various state laws. One of the articles that is also related to Malay identity in the Malaysian Federal Constitution is Article 160 which touches on the three main elements for the Malay nation, namely the need to be Muslim, speak Malay, and practice Malay customs.<sup>15</sup> This research will focus on searching for correlations and relationships between Malay Muslim culture which has been carried out for generations and the values of national identity and also the foundations of the state (rukun Negara).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing research was conducted by Sohirin from International Islamic University Malaysia which focused on the integration of Malay cultural identity with Islamic religion.<sup>16</sup> This research is about the integration of Malay cultural identity with the Islamic religion. Shohirin found that Malay culture and Islamic religion cannot be separated like two coins that are fused. Islam as doctrine and behavior has become a part of

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<sup>13</sup> Dwijayanto, A. and Multazam, D., 'Pancasila and Rukun Negara: A Relation of Identity, State, and Nationalism in Indonesia and Malaysia', *Tebuireng: Journal of Islamic Studies and Society*, 2(1), 2021, pp. 44-56.

<sup>14</sup> Abdul Rahman Abdul Aziz, 'Rukun Negara dalam Memperkukuhkan Ketahanan Negara', *Seminar on Nasional Resilience (SNAR2010)*, 2010, pp. 443-457.

<sup>15</sup> Baharuddin bin H. Puteh, M. N. B. H. O. 'Islam kebudayaan melayu di era globalisasi dimalaysia', *Sosial Budhya: Media Kamuniikasi Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial dan Budaya*, 10, 2014, pp. 115- 123.

<sup>16</sup> Sohirin Mohammad Solihin, 'Integration of Malay cultural identity with Islamic religion', *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies*, 1(2), 2017, pp. 121-128.

Malay cultural identity. This identity has even become the face of Malays who are closer to Islam than Malays in other countries such as Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei. The difference in this research is that this research will detail Islamic religion to be more specific to Malay Islamic culture regarding the state values of Rukun Negara.

The second literature that researchers tried to find was research conducted by Khalidah Khalid Ali from the Department of Management and Humanities, Petronas Perak Technology University, Malaysia. This research focuses on discourse on the Malay cultural identity within Malaysian society. This discourse has distinguished between Malay culture and the ethical/value system. This also highlights Malay cultural values in identity and traditionally acknowledges that Malay culture and value systems are significantly influenced by the characteristics of animism, Hinduism, and Buddhism.<sup>17</sup>

However, because Islam is their religion, cultural transformation has also been deeply embedded in Islamic religious practices and rituals in the life of a traditional Malay Muslim, as a follower of the Islamic religion. Although animist and Hindu characteristics, as reflected in customary practices, have faded over time, they can still be identified and practiced in Malay culture today. The difference between this research is that the cultural aspects have been explained in detail and specifically but not directed at country values as this research will do.

The third research that we found was the result of Bahruddin bin H. Puteh and Mohamad Nazlibin H. Omar about Islam and Malay culture in the era of globalization in Malaysia. Even though this research is very far from globalization, it was found that with globalization spreading through technological advances, there have been many attacks on traditions and changes in the behaviour of Malays.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before Islam entered the Malay nation, Hindus and Buddhists already had a culture that was expressed in the procedures for communicating with each other. The identity of the Malay community is

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<sup>17</sup> Ali, K. K. A discourse on the Malay cultural identity within the Malaysian society.', 40(1): 2022, pp. 83-107

supported by four historical phases, namely the pre-Hindu-Buddhist phase, the Hindu-Buddhist phase, the Islamic phase, and the Colonialism phase. The pre-Hindu-Buddhist phase is a phase of Malay society known as "Proto Malay" with an estimated date of 3000 years before Christ.<sup>18</sup> Their accommodating attitude means they can easily accept new things from outside them.<sup>19</sup> Cultural assimilation is something that is inevitable and is also considered normal. The assimilation of Hindu Buddhist culture into Islam is not the first thing to happen, several regions in the archipelago have implemented cultural assimilation with several new traditions that accommodate past habits.

The existence of Malay traditions has received many strong protests from religious fundamentalists in Malay lands. Those who have different views or are staunch Salafis feel there is no need to defend things that are not the main teachings of the Islamic religion. This is reinforced by the number of Malay intellectuals who learn from the West by prioritizing Western-style realistic logic.<sup>20</sup> They criticized it as old-fashioned and far from scientific. The development of Islam in Malaysia did not immediately find it easy to spread, because this country had several periods of population and government, each of which had a certain influence. Entering the early 20th century AD, coinciding with the period of British colonial rule, local Malay religious and customary affairs in Malaysia were under the coordination of the sultans and these were regulated through a department, a council or the sultan's office.

At the beginning of the 20th century AD, along with the consolidation of colonialism - British imperialism in Malaysia, many religious matters and local customs of the Malay people in Malaysia were under the coordination of the sultans. A ministry, council or sultan's office was created as a form of direct management of these affairs.<sup>21</sup> The British

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<sup>18</sup> Tarwiyani, T. 'Sejarah Kebudayaan Melayu', *Historia : Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Sejarah*, 6(2), 2021, pp. 86-93.

<sup>19</sup> Prayogi, A., Abidin, R. and Ngaisah, Z. F. N. 'Masuk Melayu: Telaah Konseptual-Praktis di Malaysia', *Jurnal Madaniyah*, 12, 2022, pp. 243-258.

<sup>20</sup> Abd Jalal, A. F., Abdul Rahim, R. A. and Alias, A. W. 'Islam Dan Cabaran Sekularisme Di Tanah Melayu: Analisa Kitab Jawi Terpilih', *Socio Politica : Jurnal Ilmiah Jurusan Sosiologi*, 8(2), 2018, pp. 127-147.

<sup>21</sup> Prayogi, A., Abidin, R. and Ngaisah, Z. F. N. 'Masuk Melayu: Telaah Konseptual-Praktis di Malaysia', *Jurnal Madaniyah*, 12, 2022, pp. 243-258.

occupation had an impact on Malay people, many of whom lived in the outskirts or rural areas, while in urban areas the office and trade sectors were mostly controlled by Chinese people.<sup>22</sup> This provides two positive and negative sides. From a positive aspect, it provides space for Malays to be able to preserve their culture.

On the other hand, the negative impact is also felt to this day, namely the control of the economy which is not controlled by many Malays. Many people with high incomes and successful businesses are Chinese. According to the Islamic view, not all traditional things or old practices are considered bad and outdated. Likewise with focused goals and a strong commitment to adhering to the pure traditional heritage of Islam.<sup>23</sup> Al-Quran education is one of the cultural derivatives that is maintained and developed. Malay people learn the Koran from teachers and also sayyids, currently many Koran education institutions can be found in various places.<sup>24</sup>

Local wisdom as part of Malay Muslim culture is Tahlil, and wait for the grave.<sup>25</sup> There are at least 3 types of Islamic traditions that are still maintained, namely Art, Festivals and Rituals. In the field of arts and culture, Islam has given birth to many new art genres, following its massive development and adaptation in the Malay world. The arrival of Islam did not kill or completely erase the culture of the previous era. Islam perfects Malay culture according to Islamic teachings, especially monotheism towards Allah.

New genres such as *seudati*, *chaman*, *rateb*, *dikie*, *dhikr rapano*, as long as *tray*, *block*, the *desert rhythm*, *berzanjen*, *kuntunlan*, *pebangan*, have the nature of cultural acculturation between Islamic civilization and civil society civilization. Both are closely related to each other in the form of ideas, activities, and different cultural artefacts. On the other hand, the

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<sup>22</sup> Takari, M. *Ronggeng Dan Serampang Dua Belas Dalam Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Seni*. Medan: USU Press. 2014..

<sup>23</sup> Abdul Malik, M. P. Bin *et al.* 'Malay Local Wisdom: An Analysis of Social History of the Malay Literary Saga Books', *Temali: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*, 3(1), 2020, pp. 39-85.

<sup>24</sup> Murihah, A. *et al.* 'Pendidikan Tahfiz di Malaysia: Satu Sorotan Sejarah', *International Conference On Islamic Education And Social Entrepreneurship 2015 (ICIESE2015)*, (October), 2015, pp. 1153-1157.

<sup>25</sup> Vinet, L. and Zhedanov, A. 'A "missing" family of classical orthogonal polynomials', *Journal of Physics A: Mathematical and Theoretical*, 44(8), 2011, p. 2019.



main lines of Islamic civilization also appeared in this area, such as azan, iqamat, marhaban and barzanji, zapin (called zapin or marawis in Arabic and zapin in Malay with various variations such as play, son, bedana son, etc.).<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, in the type of ritual or communal feast event, ritual activities or activities that are classified as customs in the Malay customary system also include Islamic and Malay elements. Various ritual activities such as stomach stretching, safar bathing, skin changing, seven-month ceremonies, earthing ceremonies, circumcisions, and weddings with various stages enrich the treasures of Malaysian Islam and civilization in this archipelago. Islam has contributed to the creation of various forms of dance, for example, the zapin dance. With different standards such as praying or greeting movements, other movements (backwards, elbows), chicks, fish, throwing children, small jumps, tiung dance, knives, snapping fingers, tahto, tahtim and other movements. Likewise, the hadrah genre uses selepoh, humming, rocking, worship and other movements. Various elements of Sufism dance also appear in Malay culture.

Symbolic movements such as alif, mim, and ba, are part of the Sufi tradition of this region. Therefore, continuity and change in Malay dance occur both due to internal changes in Malay culture itself and external changes from outside. However, in facing these external influences, the Malay people are not satisfied with just taking action themselves. The Malay community processes and reorganizes the culture they have absorbed using local wisdom.

### **Compatibility with National Identity**

After the proclamation of independence in 1957, Malaysia then built its identity with two important identities, namely Malay and Islam.<sup>27</sup> This connection makes Malaysia a country with a strong face. This process of searching for identity has been going on for quite a long time, starting before the proclamation of independence, however, it only became clear after independence. This was followed by the latest amendment to article

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<sup>26</sup> Takari, M. Ronggeng Dan Serampang Dua Belas Dalam Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Seni. Medan: USU Press. 2014..

<sup>27</sup> Prayogi, A., Abidin, R. and Ngaisah, Z. F. N. 'Masuk Melayu: Telaah Konseptual-Praktis di Malaysia', Jurnal Madaniyah, 12, 2022, pp. 243–258.

160 which clearly states the three main elements of the Malay nation, namely the need to be Muslim, speak Malay, and practice Malay customs referring to culture.<sup>28</sup> Malays in Malaysia are superior because they are the majority and also hold the government, but this superiority is what makes Malay people in their comfort zone not to make big efforts.<sup>29</sup>

If you look at the 3 existing aspects and adapt them to Malay Muslim culture, certainly, the first point of religion will automatically become one of the most important points in national identity. The close relationship between Malay culture and Islam has become the subject of much study and research. This is proven by many scholars and academic figures who have investigated and analyzed the appreciation and implementation of Islamic laws in the culture of the Malay community.<sup>30</sup> Because Malay cultural traditions cannot be separated from religion, the Malay language heritage is also heavily influenced by Islamic teachings. This, among others, can be understood from certain terms such as fair, safe and secure, and deliberation. Such words are derived from Arabic but are closely related to religion.

The image of Islam as perfect in many circumstances has penetrated and become a practice in Malay society. It is not just an external practice that is attached to appearance and clothing, but it is ingrained in every character and personality of the Malay people themselves, especially in Malaysia.<sup>31</sup>

Talking about the Malay language, which is one of the nation's identities, cannot be separated from the study of the Quran, which is growing rapidly in Malaysia. The positive development of al-Quran education and study centres is increasing and operating in mosques, suraus and palaces. The traditional study of the Quran continued to evolve

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<sup>28</sup> Prayogi, A. 'Dinamika Islam Di Malaysia: Telaah Sosio Historis', *ETNOHISTORI: Jurnal Ilmiah Kebudayaan dan dan Kesenjaraan*, IX(1), 2022, pp. 34–35

<sup>29</sup> Pakri, Mohamad Rashidi Mohd, Grace VS Chin, and Malik Haroon Afzal. "The Modern Malay: A Comparative Study of Katherine Sim's Malacca Boy (1957) and Mahathir Mohamad's The Malay Dilemma (1970)." *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies* 22.4 (2022).

<sup>30</sup> Baharuddin bin H. Puteh, M. N. B. H. O. 'Islam kebudayaan melayu di era globalisasi dimalaysia', *Sosial Budsya:Media Kamuniikasi Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial dan Budaya*, 10, 2014, pp. 115– 123.

<sup>31</sup> Abdul Malik, M. P. Bin *et al.* 'Malay Local Wisdom: An Analysis of Social History of the Malay Literary Saga Books', *Temali: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*, 3(1), 2020, pp. 39–85.

until the establishment of lodge institutions in several states such as Terengganu, Kelantan and Kedah.<sup>32</sup> While the third identity, which is to maintain the Malay tradition, of course, is a significant continuation of the existing Malay culture. Kassim Salleh describes adat as something that becomes a human habit and experiences it in the form of words, actions or abandoning certain actions. That thing happens over and over until it affects the human being by giving satisfaction and that thing is also accepted by reason.<sup>33</sup>

Malay culture becomes the identity of the community because it has become part of the life of the Malay community. History has shown that the Malay-Islamic world is an important centre of civilization, a centre of cultural development and a centre of trade.<sup>34</sup> Islamic values become the basis and characteristics of the Malay community in behaving. In the first part, we have explained that the concept of culture in the Malay world in particular and most of the Muslim world in general is understood in a narrow sense which is limited to certain traditions such as festivals, religious ceremonies and also art. They hardly connect cultural behaviour that covers all aspects of activities. Meanwhile, the culture, Muslims and the Malay race do not reflect cultural behaviour that must be applied in the community.<sup>35</sup>

Conformity with the principles of the country, Rukun Negara is a guideline for all multi-racial Malaysian citizens towards the formation of national unity and ensuring the welfare of society, thereby giving birth to a Malaysian nation and nation that is united, democratic, just, liberal and scientific without discrimination. about race and creed. The principles of Rukun Negara are the key to a pluralistic society to maintain harmony and unity of the people for the welfare of the people and prosperity of the country. 22 September 1970. Through the National Consultative Council,

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<sup>32</sup> Murihah, A. et al. 'Pendidikan Tahfiz di Malaysia: Satu Sorotan Sejarah', International Conference On Islamic Education And Social Entrepreneurship 2015 (ICIESE2015), (October), 2015, pp. 1153-115

<sup>33</sup> Ramli, Mohd Anuar. "Instrumen 'urf dan adat Melayu sebagai asas penetapan hukum semasa di Malaysia." *Jurnal Pengajian Melayu* 17.1 (2006): 253-289.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, L. et al. (2021) 'Sleep problems and mild cognitive impairment among adults aged ≥50 years from low- and middle-income countries', *Experimental Gerontology*, 154

<sup>35</sup> Sohirin Mohammad Solihin, 'Integration of Malay cultural identity with Islamic religion', *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies*, 1(2), 2017, pp. 121-128.

he became a thinker in framing national unity and one of the results was the birth of a national ideology, namely Rukun Negara, which was established as a national philosophy and a new approach towards creating a stable nation-state. This Rukun Negara was officially declared on 31 August 1970 by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.<sup>36</sup> The Rukun Negara principle supports the ideal of achieving closer unity among the entire community and preserving a democratic way of life. The five principles of Rukun Negara need to be lived by Malaysian citizens to create and strive for a just society so that the nation's prosperity can be enjoyed fairly and equitably.<sup>37</sup>

### **Faith in God**

This nation was created based on strong faith in God. This religious belief is what makes this nation and state a sovereign nation. Although the Federation Charter states that Islam is the official religion of the Federation, religions and other beliefs may be professed safely and reliably in any territory of the Federation, and discrimination against citizens based on religion is prohibited. The Rukun Negara editorial team is aware of the importance of religion and belief in God in human life. Lack of religion can destroy not only a person's personality but also a nation or nation. Realizing the importance of community members having a strong understanding of the teachings of their respective religions, this principle was chosen as Principle 1 of the Rukun Negara.

Religion or belief in God is an important element in the process of state development and the formation of people who have morals and noble personalities.<sup>38</sup> The integration of Islam as the official religion in the Federation's Charter reflects a commitment to strong faith in God as a foundational element of the nation. The acknowledgement of religious diversity and the prohibition of discrimination based on faith demonstrate

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<sup>36</sup> Abdul Rahman Abdul Aziz, 'Rukun Negara dalam Memperkukuhkan Ketahanan Negara', *Seminar on Nasional Resilience (SNAR2010)*, 2010, pp. 443–457.

<sup>37</sup> Mohamed Ali Haniffa, Ayu Nor Azilah Mohamad, M. A. A. S., 'Rukun Negara Sebagai Medium Pembinaan Bangsa: Penelitian Awal Terhadap Mahasiswa Dan Mahasiswi Institusi Pengajian Tinggi (Ipt)', *Proceeding of 8th International Research Management and Innovation Conference (8th IRMIC 2021)*, 2021, pp. 14–23.

<sup>38</sup> Vinet, L. and Zhedanov, A., 'A "missing" family of classical orthogonal polynomials', *Journal of Physics A: Mathematical and Theoretical*, 44(8), 2011, p. 2019

a respect for individual beliefs within the broader framework of the state's Islamic identity. The emphasis on religion in the Rukun Negara underscores its crucial role in shaping not only individual personalities but also the collective identity of the nation. It aligns with the idea that a lack of religious understanding can have profound consequences for both individual character and the nation as a whole. The inclusive approach toward various beliefs, combined with the prioritization of a strong understanding of one's religion, highlights a nuanced and harmonious integration of Islam with the cultural fabric of the nation, contributing to a sovereign state that values religious pluralism and individual spiritual development

### **Loyalty to King and Country**

Malaysia applies parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as the head of state. Following the constitutional status of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as king, the monarchy system is applied in every state, with state presidents and state governors in non-monarchical states. His Majesty, the King, and the President are symbols of national unity. Loyalty to the King and Nation means that all citizens must focus on being loyal, honest, and devoted to His Majesty the King. In this state, the people value loyalty to the king who rules the country where they live, without reducing loyalty to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

In the application of Islamic law in Malaysia, the government is the most important part of the application of Islamic law in Malaysia. However many parties have a negative view of the government's role in implementing Islamic Law in Malaysia.<sup>39</sup> The integration of parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy in Malaysia, with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as the head of state, establishes a unique political structure that emphasizes both representative governance and symbolic unity. The monarchy system, extending to state presidents and governors, reinforces the significance of loyalty to the King and the nation as a cornerstone of Malaysian citizenship. The monarch and president serve as powerful

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<sup>39</sup> Masykuroh, Y. W. R., 'Politik (Legislasi) Hukum Islam di Malaysia', *Asas: Jurnal Hukum dan Ekonomi Islam*, 8(1), 2016, pp. 122-138.

symbols of national unity, embodying the values that citizens are encouraged to uphold, including loyalty, honesty, and devotion. The commitment to loyalty extends beyond regional affiliations, emphasizing a collective allegiance to both the local ruler and the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. This political and cultural integration reflects a harmonious relationship between Islamic principles and the governance framework, fostering a sense of unity and allegiance that transcends regional distinctions and contributes to the nation's political stability and cultural coherence.

### **The Entire Constitution**

This principle emphasizes the need for society to accept, obey and uphold the nobility or glory of the state constitution. The national constitution is the highest source of law. Its function is to protect all citizens of this country for their rights and privileges as citizens. Every Malaysian citizen is obliged to respect, appreciate and understand the meaning, content and historical context of the formation of the national Constitution. The national constitution was built based on the consensus of all races and parties in this country. Therefore, this is a social contract of humanity that cannot be doubted or violated by any individual or party. The Malaysian Constitution establishes the political model and socio-economic status of the country's people. It is a reference source for everything related to the government system, law, position and socio-economic rights of the community.

The emphasis on accepting, obeying, and upholding the national constitution as the highest source of law in Malaysia is integral to fostering a sense of civic responsibility and national unity. The acknowledgment of the constitution's role in safeguarding the rights and privileges of all citizens underscores its significance as a social contract that transcends individual or party interests. The Malaysian Constitution, formulated through consensus among diverse races and political entities, stands as a testament to the shared commitment to a just and inclusive society. This constitutional framework not only defines the political model but also shapes the socio-economic status of the nation, serving as a comprehensive guide for governance, law, and the socio-economic rights of the community. The integration of Islamic principles into this

constitutional context further reflects a cultural coherence where the values of justice, fairness, and social responsibility are reinforced, aligning with the principles of Islam that emphasize ethical governance and the protection of individual rights within a broader societal context.

### **Rule of Law**

Justice is based on legal sovereignty, where everyone has the same position before state law. Fundamental freedoms are guaranteed to all Malaysian citizens. State law is based on the Constitution. Therefore, its sovereignty must be accepted and maintained. Without law, life in society and the state will not be safe and stable. Therefore, state law is also guaranteed by an independent and competent judicial institution. Every country needs laws to control and create a safe, stable and prosperous society. The existence of laws will ensure that the lives of members of society run smoothly, orderly and without chaos, where every member of society feels safe. Everyone's rights can be exercised freely as long as they do not violate the law and the guarantees of the State Constitution. The freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution do not include the right to overthrow the government, whether by force or by unconstitutional means.

The articulation of justice based on legal sovereignty in Malaysia, where all citizens share an equal position before state law, underscores the commitment to fairness and the protection of fundamental freedoms. The guarantee of these freedoms to every Malaysian citizen is intricately tied to the supremacy of state law rooted in the Constitution. The emphasis on accepting and maintaining the sovereignty of state law is essential for fostering a safe, stable, and prosperous society. The role of an independent and competent judicial institution becomes paramount in upholding the rule of law and ensuring the smooth functioning of society. The article aptly highlights the necessity of laws in preventing chaos and creating an environment where citizens feel secure. The explicit recognition that constitutional freedoms do not extend to the right to overthrow the government underscores the balance between individual liberties and the need for lawful governance, reflecting a harmonious integration of legal principles with the cultural and societal values, including those influenced by Islam.

### **Decency and Morality**

This fifth principle emphasizes the development of human personality and behavior. The aim is to create polite and ethical citizens in line with the ongoing campaign of good manners and noble values. It is this polite and virtuous individual characteristic that is most meaningful and important in the context of social relations between various races in this country. Polite and Ethical Attitudes Protein which forms highly disciplined and ethical humans and society will help create a harmonious society. This behavior hates and condemns arrogant or insulting behavior or actions of a person or race. Politeness is also very polite in personal and social life. This principle is a guideline so that human behavior is always protected and developed following the personality and pure values of the nation.

The relationship between religion and the state is mutual need, religion needs the state for the development of its religion, while the state needs religion to improve the nation's morals.<sup>40</sup> The emphasis on developing human personality and behavior in line with principles of politeness and ethical conduct outlined in the fifth principle is instrumental in shaping a harmonious and culturally rich society in Malaysia. The focus on cultivating polite and virtuous individuals aligns with the broader campaign for good manners and noble values, contributing to the creation of citizens who exhibit discipline and ethical behavior. This emphasis on politeness and ethical attitudes serves as a bridge fostering positive social relations among the diverse races in the country. The rejection of arrogant or insulting behavior reflects a commitment to mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance among individuals and communities. The article acknowledges the profound impact of these principles not only on personal life but also on social interactions, underscoring their significance in preserving the cultural fabric of the nation. The integration of such principles with Islamic teachings further reinforces the values of humility, respect, and ethical conduct, showcasing a holistic approach to the development of human

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<sup>40</sup> Masykuroh, Y. W. R. 'Politik (Legislasi) Hukum Islam di Malaysia', *Asas: Jurnal Hukum dan Ekonomi Islam*, 8(1), 2016, pp. 122-138.



character in the context of the nation's pure and inclusive values.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the evolution of Malay culture is traced through historical phases, including the pre-Hindu-Buddhist, Hindu-Buddhist, Islamic, and Colonialism phases. The Malay community's accommodating attitude towards cultural assimilation is explored, and the impact of British colonial rule on Malay traditions is discussed. The chapter emphasizes the challenge of preserving Malay culture amid economic disparities, with Chinese control over the economy in urban areas. Despite the influence of external factors, Islam in Malaysia has played a pivotal role in preserving cultural elements, particularly in the realms of arts, festivals, rituals, and dance, showcasing a blend of Islamic and civil society influences. The chapter also delves into the connection between Malay identity and Islam, especially after Malaysia's independence in 1957, highlighting the significance of religion, language, and traditional practices in defining the Malaynation.

Furthermore, the chapter explores how Malay cultural elements align with the principles of the country, as outlined in the Rukun Negara. It underscores the importance of faith in God, loyalty to the King and country, adherence to the constitution, the rule of law, and the promotion of decency and morality. The principles of Rukun Negara are positioned as a guide for fostering national unity and ensuring the welfare of the multi-racial Malaysian society. The chapter concludes by stressing the mutual need for religion and the state, asserting that the relationship between them is essential for both the development of religious beliefs and the improvement of the nation's morals.

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