



SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF ISLAMIC LOCAL TRADITION IN MALAY COMMUNITY, INDONESIA

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Abstract

Religion in the Malay community is not only seen as something related to belief but also concerns issues of identity and symbols in other community groups. This study intends to look at the social construction of Islamic local tradition in the Malay community. This study argues that it turns out that the social construction of religion builds a cultural concept in Islamic religious values as an identity through the customs of the Malay community. In response to that argument, the question arises: How is the form of social construction of religion in the Malay community? And how does the social construction of religion affect the social life of religion in the Malay community? This research uses a media approach and literature review that explains the social construction of Islamic traditions in Malay society. The results of this study indicate that the social construction of religion in the Malay community has several important conditions. (1) religion-based tradition orientation, (2) close solidarity in religious social construction, (3) the existence of religion-based legal norms in the Malay community, and (4) a proud identity that is superior to the Malay community. These findings conclude that religious social construction in Malay society shows that religious and tribal identities develop as a religious social construction.

Keywords: Social, Construction, Islamic, Local Tradition, Malay Community.

Abstrak

Agama dalam masyarakat Melayu tidak hanya dilihat sebagai sesuatu yang berkaitan dengan kepercayaan, tetapi juga menyangkut persoalan identitas dan simbol pada kelompok masyarakat lainnya. Penelitian ini bermaksud untuk melihat konstruksi sosial dari tradisi lokal Islam pada masyarakat Melayu. Penelitian ini berargumen bahwa ternyata konstruksi sosial agama membangun konsep budaya dalam nilai-nilai agama Islam sebagai identitas melalui adat istiadat masyarakat Melayu. Dengan itu, penelitian ini merumuskan sebuah pertanyaan bagaimana bentuk konstruksi sosial agama pada masyarakat Melayu? Dan bagaimana pengaruh konstruksi sosial agama terhadap kehidupan sosial keagamaan pada masyarakat Melayu? Penelitian ini menggunakan media dan studi literatur yang menjelaskan tentang kehidupan sosial dan agama dalam masyarakat Melayu. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konstruksi sosial agama pada masyarakat Melayu menunjukkan bahwa; (1) adanya orientasi tradisi berbasis agama; (2) adanya solidaritas dalam konstruksi sosial agama; (3) adanya norma hukum berbasis agama pada masyarakat Melayu; dan (4) adanya kebanggaan akan identitas yang lebih unggul pada masyarakat Melayu. Dengan hasil ini, disimpulkan bahwa konstruksi sosial keagamaan dalam masyarakat Melayu menunjukkan bahwa identitas agama dan kesukuan berkembang sebagai konstruksi sosial keagamaan.

Kata Kunci: Socail, Konstruksi, Islam, Tradisi Lokal, Komunitas Melayu.

Background

Social construction in religion creates a community's relationship between people, identity and culture. In addition, social construction shapes customs and culture in Malay society. These customs are part of the social construction in introducing Malay identity at large. In social construction, religion is built based

on the concept of culture, customs, and traditions that include everyone's ethical values. Schilbrack says that social constructionists about religion are social forms of religion that incorporate values and boundaries in a culture.¹ These values and boundaries make *adat* (custom) a cultural and legal element set against the Malay people's identity, such as the foundation of Malay ethics and value

¹ Kevin Schilbrack, "The Social Construction of 'Religion' and Its Limits: A Critical Reading of Timothy

Fitzgerald," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157006812X634872>.



systems that describe ethics and morals.² These values are demonstrated in both tangible and intangible ways through traditional Malay lifestyle environments, which are attached to Malay life values and place symbolism.³ The social construction of religion builds culture within the religious community.

So far, studies on the social construction of religion in Malay society are still very few. In fact, there is still no one who explains explicitly the role of religion in the Malay customs community, such as human-nature relationships,⁴ strategy survival,⁵ and religious identities in Malay communities.⁶ Only three of the studies that can emphasize the social construction of religion focus on culture, customs, and traditions in social communities. First, Adeponle said that a person's identity and personality include cultural differences.⁷ Second, Susanto revealed that changing social structures in society as a result of changing power dynamics have contributed to knowledge and shaped people's awareness of the environment as a custom.⁸ Third, Dressler reveals that religion must consider the implications of social, historical, embodied, and material structures in producing knowledge about religion.⁹ The tendency of the three studies of social construction of culture, customs, and religion explains that the social construction of religion can be ideological and a

source of religious identity in the practice of customs in Malay society.

This study focuses on explaining the social construction of religion in Malay society. The social construction of local Islamic traditions turns out to build a cultural concept in Islamic religious values as an identity through the customs of the Malay community. This research complements the shortcomings of existing studies to see how the social construction of Islamic local traditions in Malay society is formed. In addition, the case study in this research focuses on explaining that Malay has the concept of customs that are guided by Islamic teachings. Islam has an important role in advancing the development of Malay society and nation in the aspects of culture, thought, philosophy, science, and the Malay language.¹⁰ For Al-Attas, the progress of Islamic civilization and the Malay world can be done by building various aspects of Malay Islamic civilization, improving the education system, and applying the concept of Islamization of science.¹¹ Overall, this paper answers how the social construction of religion is formed through Malay traditions and becomes a social construction of Malay society. Thus, a deep understanding of the social construction of religion in the Malay community provides a model for Malay history, tradition, culture, and identity as a picture of social and religious life.

² Khalidah Khalid Ali, "A Discourse On The Malay Cultural Identity Within The Malaysian Society," *Kajian Malaysia*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.21315/km2022.40.1.5>.

³ Mohd Amirul Hussain et al., "A Review of the Elements of Nature and the Malay Cultural Landscape through Malay Literature," *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12062154>.

⁴ Bibi Suprianto, "On Human- Nature Relations: The Importance of Malay Adat and Rituals in Protecting Suhaid River in West Kalimantan, Indonesia," *Islamic Studies Review* 2, no. 2 (2023): 217–50, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.56529/isr.v2i2.171>.

⁵ Zaenuddin Hudi Prasajo, "Social Change and the Contributions of the Tionghoa, Dayak and Melayu (Tidayu) in West Kalimantan," in *Asia in Transition*, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-0672-2_20.

⁶ Hasse Jubba, Muhammad Rafi, and Zuly Qodir, "Penonjolan Identitas Melayu Islam Oleh Pemerintah Dan Masyarakat Riau," *JURNAL SOSIAL POLITIK*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.22219/sospol.v7i1.12822>.

⁷ Ademola Adeponle, Rob Whitley, and Laurence J. Kirmayer, "Cultural Contexts and Constructions of Recovery," in *Recovery of People with Mental Illness*, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.1093/med/9780199691319.003.0008>.

⁸ Dina Amalia Susanto, "Konstruksi Sosial Pepatah Tradisional Dan Aturan Adat Untuk Keseimbangan Ekologi [Social Construction of Traditional Proverb and Customary Law For Balancing Ecology]," *Totobuang*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.26499/tbng.v6i1.78>.

⁹ Markus Dressler, "The Social Construction of Reality (1966) Revisited: Epistemology and Theorizing in the Study of Religion," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700682-12341434>.

¹⁰ Abdur Razzaq, "Islamic Civilization Of Malay: Historical Polemic And Modern Challenges (The Thought Of Syed Naquib Al-Attas)," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jmis.v2i2.3778>.

¹¹ Razzaq.



This research is based on an argument that social construction on religion builds the concept of culture in Islamic religious values as an identity through the customs of the Malay community. The Malay community has a religious social construction as a strategy to build local culture in a cultural and religious system. This strategy is formed based on the dualism of subjectivity and objectivity.¹² The main objective in the social construction of religion is to build Malay identity as a society based on Islam in an area. This religious social construction means that Malay in Islamic identity can play a role in territory, religion, and culture. Thus, religious social construction in the Malay community means that the importance of religion becomes an identity to provide boundaries and ethics in local and urban communities. This research uses a social media approach and literature research found in several literatures such as the web, books, and several articles. This research re-analyzes the findings of previous research on Malay in Indonesia. For this reason, this research will contribute the social development of future Malay studies.

Social Construction of Religion

Social construction is the creation of social reality through interaction and action. Social reality is based on a culture and religion that can develop in local communities. Social Construction can empower action more authentically within a group identity.¹³ This identity shapes social power and reproduction in social structures and can be asymmetrical for the actors involved.¹⁴ Social

construction of the target population framework for understanding public policy processes into discourse and policy decisions regarding individuals/groups.¹⁵ For example, the Malay community has social interactions in the development of religion and culture. These social interactions are based on customs in the Malay community. They make policies and inform potential policy design strategies that can provide positive outcomes for the community.¹⁶ Thus, social construction is a social development that forms interactions in the local community's culture, religion and customs.

In the Malay tribe, social construction covers local communities culture, religion, and customs. For example, in the context of Malay in Riau, Jubba said that there are three concepts of emphasis in social construction in Malay society, namely First, efforts to legitimize Malay identity through the establishment of the Lembaga Adat Melayu (LAM) Riau which is dedicated to maintaining and preserving the heritage of Malay symbols and working closely with the Riau Provincial Government; Second, efforts to fight the negative stigma attached to Malay culture in the past and; Third, the identification of Malay as Islam and vice versa through the promotion of the Malay language as an effort to dismiss previous negative views and affirm the existence of Islamic Malay culture in Riau.¹⁷ Historically, upon the arrival of Islam in the Malay Archipelago, the ways of Islam were adapted to the lifestyle of the Malay people.¹⁸ This is part of the modernization of traditional Malay thinking influenced by Islamic values and teachings.¹⁹ One

¹² Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of the Taste*, *Social Theory Re-Wired: New Connections to Classical and Contemporary Perspectives: Second Edition* (United States of America: Harvard College, 1984), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315775357>.

¹³ Maren Trochmann, "Identities, Intersectionality, and Otherness: The Social Constructions of Deservedness in American Housing Policy," *Administrative Theory and Praxis*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2019.1700456>.

¹⁴ Bo Edvardsson, Bård Tronvoll, and Thorsten Gruber, "Expanding Understanding of Service Exchange and Value Co-Creation: A Social Construction Approach," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 2011, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-010-0200-y>.

¹⁵ Elizabeth C. Coppola, "The Social Construction of Transgender Individuals and U.S. Military Policy," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2020.1717838>.

¹⁶ Mary Elizabeth Collins and Michelle Mead, "Social Constructions of Children and Youth: Beyond Dependents and Deviants," *Journal of Social Policy*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047279420000239>.

¹⁷ Jubba, Rafi, and Qodir, "Penonjolan Identitas Melayu Islam Oleh Pemerintah Dan Masyarakat Riau."

¹⁸ Adibah Yusuf et al., "The Adaptation Of Islamic Principles In Sarawak Traditional Malay House," *Journal of Islamic Architecture*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.18860/jia.v6i4.13044>.

¹⁹ Yusuf et al.



of the manifestations of Islamic influence in the traditional Malay lifestyle can be identified from the design and characteristics of traditional Malay houses developed with basic Islamic principles.²⁰ The social construction of religion in Malay society develops customs based on Islam.

In West Kalimantan, for example, the social construction of religion was formed based on kingdoms such as the kingdom of Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qadrie in Pontianak. This kingdom was formed in 1771 A.H. Initially, this kingdom was formed based on the desire of a scholar from Hadaramaut, Yemen, Habib Husein Al-Qadrie. He was the mufti of the Mempawah kingdom. His dream was to make a stopover place near the waters of the river. Through his father's dream, Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qadrie traveled to find a stopover place as the center of the royal settlement. Syarif Abdurrahman found his territory in the Landak and Kapuas Kecil Rivers. Here he built a kingdom with the name Pontianak sultanate.

Furthermore, the area was named Pontianak as the center of the Pontianak sultanate kingdom. Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qadrie founded the city of Pontianak on October 28, 1771. This establishment succeeded in building the social construction of the community, especially from land clearing. He established the Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qadrie mosque as a sign that Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman was a Muslim from the descendants of a great scholar, Habib Husien Al-Qadrie. The mosque is located at the Landak and Kapuas Rivers' confluence in the Beting area. Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman strengthened power in

the Pontianak sultanate. With the mosque's existence, the sultan's followers emerged who spread in various areas of Pontianak as Malay Muslims.

The Social Construction of Religion

Religion in social interaction is human religiosity in strengthening social life in society.²¹ Religiousness in humans gives the effect of social interaction based on ethnicity on individual characteristics in explaining variations in fertility.²² Those who claim to be Malay identity recognize that they are adherents of Islam. This identity recognition is based on religion entering social interactions in the community, such as customs that adopt religious values. Religion has value in social interactions, namely networked communities, stratified identities, authority, religious practices, and religious reality in a region.²³ Gaduh said that religion can influence norms of cooperation, namely individual religiosity and social interaction within the community.²⁴ This attitude is manifested in the practice of mutual collaboration in carrying out social religious activities involving Muslims and tribes in the community.²⁵ Thus, religion in social interaction is a religion that accompanies local people in a community communication in an area.

Bahri said that religion in social interaction provides several concepts such as social interactions that take place by working together, learning together, discussing, and helping each other.²⁶ Meanwhile, Bruce revealed that religion in social interaction concerns culture, ethics, and

²⁰ Yusuf et al.

²¹ Ioannis Laliotis and Dimitrios Minos, "Religion, Social Interactions, and COVID-19 Incidence in Western Germany," *European Economic Review*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurocorev.2021.103992>.

²² Sriya Iyer and Melvyn Weeks, "Social Interactions, Ethnicity, Religion, and Fertility in Kenya," *Journal of Demographic Economics*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1017/dem.2020.6>.

²³ Heidi A. Campbell, "Understanding the Relationship between Religion Online and Offline in a Networked Society," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfr074>.

²⁴ Arya Gaduh, "Religion, Social Interactions, and Cooperative Attitudes: Evidence from Indonesia,"

Manuscript, Departments of Economics, University of Southern California, 2012.

²⁵ Feryani Umi and Budi Ichwayudi, "Religious Harmony in the Era of Globalization: Social Interaction of Muslim and Christian Religions in Pelang Village, Lamongan," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v33i1.2040>.

²⁶ Syamsul Bahri, "The Role Of Islamic Education In Realizing Social Interaction Based On Multiculturalism Among Students Of Different Religions In Elementary Schools," *International Journal of Islamic Education, Research and Multiculturalism (IJIERM)*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.47006/ijierm.v1i1.2>.



human morality in conducting social interactions.²⁷ The concept in Bahri and Bruce's view illustrates that religion in social interaction cooperates in respecting humans but still maintains culture, ethics and morality as humans. This concept builds the social construction of religion in society.²⁸ In addition, the religious dimension of life is an important source of strength, meaning, and coping for many people.²⁹ For example, the Malay community builds social construction by interacting with religious leaders and the community to introduce Malay cultural identity. This role includes the religious dimension in showing social values such as ethics and legal norms in indigenous communities.

Malay Community in Indonesia

The Malay community has a broad tribal identity in Asia. Malay tribal people have their own physical, cultural, religious, and spiritual identities.³⁰ Abdullah said that as a large ethnicity with long historical roots, the Malay identity is entirely a view of mixing an ethnicity in an ever-changing strategic environment and is widely spread throughout Indonesia.³¹ For example, the inland Malay community in referring to the adherents of Islam in the interior of West Kalimantan, especially in the Hulu Kapuas River is called the Kapuas Hulu Malay, West Kalimantan.³²

The history of the founding of towns and regions is part of the common Malay cultural knowledge in West Kalimantan. It is also mentioned in many books on Malay regions in West Kalimantan.³³ Mee argues that a Regency in the province of West Kalimantan Indonesia continues to utilize and shape the unity of the Malay region more broadly.³⁴ So that the lives of the Malay people can be said to spread throughout the interior of Indonesia.

The Malay community in Indonesia has customs from the habits of previous people (ancestors). These habits become traditions in people's lives, both as individuals and groups, which creates the customs of a particular group as village customs.³⁵ Customs are based on a view of the world that consists of visible (physical) and invisible (spiritual) elements.³⁶ Customs are elements of community life from ancestors who have become norms or regulations to inherit customs for local communities. For example, the Malay community of Suhaid in Kapuas Hulu district has customs and concepts of life that protect the river (nature) from pollution and losses from irresponsible people (Source, Malay customary law).³⁷ So the customs of the Malay Community have always been a guideline in providing regulations and maintaining customs as a source of their lives.

²⁷ Joshua R. Bruce, "Uniting Theories of Morality, Religion, and Social Interaction: Grid-Group Cultural Theory, the 'Big Three' Ethics, and Moral Foundations Theory," *Psychology & Society*, 2013.

²⁸ Titus Hjelm, "Religion, Discourse and Power: A Contribution towards a Critical Sociology of Religion," *Critical Sociology*, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920513477664>.

²⁹ Malgorzata Szcześniak and Celina Timoszyk-Tomczak, "Religious Struggle and Life Satisfaction Among Adult Christians: Self-Esteem as a Mediator," *Journal of Religion and Health*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-020-01082-9>.

³⁰ Manash Goswami, "Totemism and Tribes: A Study of the Concept and Practice," *Adroit* 3, no. 4 (2017): 72–74.

³¹ Irwan Abdullah, "Glokalisasi Identitas Melayu," *Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat* 6, no. 2 (2017).

³² Ibrahim, "CONTIGUITY OF ISLAM AND LOCAL TRADITION ON THE HINTERLAND MALAYS OF WEST KALIMANTAN," *Journal of Ulumuna* 22, no. 2 (2018): 277–300.

³³ Timo Duile, "Kuntilanak : Ghost Narratives and Malay Modernity in Pontianak, Indonesia," *Bijdragen Tot de*

Taal, Land- En Volkenkunde 176, no. 2 (2020): 279–303, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-17601001>.

³⁴ Wendy Mee, "A Traffic in Songket: Translocal Malay Identities in Sambas," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41, no. 2 (2010): 321–39, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246341000007X>.

³⁵ H Munir Salim, "Adat Sebagai Budaya Kearifan Lokal Untuk Memperkuat Eksistensi Adat Ke Depan," *Jurnal Al-Daulah* 5, no. 2 (2016): 244–55.

³⁶ Cameron Campbell, *The Effect Of The Dayak Worldview, Customs, Traditions, And Customary Law (Adat - Istiadat) On The Interpretation Of The Gospel In West Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo* (Canada: National Library Of Canada, 2000).

³⁷ Suprianto, "On Human- Nature Relations: The Importance of Malay Adat and Rituals in Protecting Suhaid River in West Kalimantan, Indonesia"; Bibi Suprianto, Zaenuddin Hudi Prasjojo, and Doli Witro, "The History of Islamic Kingdoms in Kapuas Hulu District: A Manuscript Translation of Pangeran Kesoema Anom Soeria Negara," *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.31291/hn.v10i2.633>.



Religion as Tradic tion

Religion as tradition is a social construct in the development of Malay society today. Those who carry out traditions in every region always connect themselves with religion. Many Malay traditions are built based on religious teachings. These traditions form a social connection between society, culture, and the norms of life as community customs. The connection makes the belief that Malay sterilized religion as a form of culture in the circle of Malay tradition. Many traditional performances are adapted and adopted into the culture and tastes of local people, especially local traditions within a culture.³⁸ The culture adopts Islamic values in practice, ritual, and dissemination to the

community. The cultural practice involves religious groups and leaders in the development of traditions in local communities. Rituals in Malay society provide social construction through community trust to show the traditions that develop through religion. The study of symbolic interactionism in Malay ritual ceremonies focuses on interactions that give rise to specific meanings that create interpretations.³⁹ The symbols used in the ceremony are the result of mutual agreement.⁴⁰ Therefore, the spread of religion develops in the community through social construction in Malay traditions. Several Malay traditions adopt religious rituals in Islam, which can be seen in the following table:

Table. 1 Islamic Local Tradition in Malay Community of Indonesia

<i>Buang-Buang</i>	<i>Beruah</i>	<i>Robo-robo</i>
Reading prayers of safety and <i>tolak bala'</i> (protective prayers from Islam). Spreading <i>Buang-Buang</i> materials on land and sea.	Prayers and <i>Tablilan</i> (Surah Yasin, Dhikr and Prayer).	Performing the call to prayer (<i>aḥzan</i>) and reciting the prayer to ward off misfortune, followed by the <i>buang-buang</i> ritual..
One Day	1-7 Day	3 Days, once a week in the month of Shawfar
Before carrying out the Malay traditional event	From the first day to the seventh day, maghrib prayer and <i>tablilan</i> at the house of the deceased.	First Day - Buang-buang and the traditional title of releasing Puaka (rare animals such as crocodile species) -Kirab Pusaka - <i>Tablil</i> Second Day -Ziarah Akbar makam raja-raja -Napak Tilas -Gelar Adat Toana, Royal banquet with Sultan/Raja nusantara and cultural attractions. Third Day -The traditional ceremony of shofar with the King -Buang-buang, flouring of fishing boats. -Opening of Robo-robo and Toana traditional customary titles -Closing of the Robo-robo tradition.
Ask for protection and safety from disaster	Praying for the soul of the deceased to be at peace in heaven.	Commemorating the Malay Kingdom in Mempawah, Opu Daeng Menambun. Asking the Almighty God to protect from disaster in the month of Safar.
Marriage, childbirth, circumcision, and clearing crops in the forest.	Death	Adat of the Malay Royal Family
⁴¹	⁴²	https://dppkbpppa.pontianak.go.id/

*Description: Field and media research analysis

³⁸ Samuel, et.al. A comparison of Malay and Tamil Tradition Shadow-pay. *Journal Psychology and education*. (2021).

³⁹ Nurmalinda. Symbolic Interactionism in Ceremonies of Ritual Medicine in Malay Society in Riau Province. *Journal of Urban Society's Arts*. 2022

⁴⁰ Nurmalinda. Symbolic Interactionism in Ceremonies of Ritual Medicine in Malay Society in Riau Province. *Journal of Urban Society's Arts*. 2022

⁴¹ Bibi Suprianto, "Islamic Acculturation in the Ancestors ' Of Legacy Nanga Suhaid Village, West Kalimantan," *Jurnal Dialog* 43, no. 2 (2020).

⁴² Suprianto.



Malay traditions such as *buang-buang*, *beruah*, and *robo-robo* are traditions that often occur in local communities. These traditions have local wisdom values to harmonize the relationship between humans and ancestors as a form of adat. These values are in the form of asking for protection, praying, and maintaining ethics in togetherness. Nevertheless, this tradition is growing in the community. For example, in the Malay community, especially in Kapuas Hulu district, the *buang-buang* tradition is carried out for weddings, circumcisions, and childbirth. Those who still believe in ancestral spirits practice the *buang-buang* tradition as a tribute to their ancestors. However, this practice is based on Islamic ritual practices. Before delivering the *buang-buang* ritual to the sea and to the land, the Malays first recite a prayer of congratulations and *tolak' bala'*. After reciting the prayer, then they perform the ritual practice of *buang-buang* in the River and land. This tradition has developed from the past until now. Even before carrying out the *robo-robo* tradition, the Malay tribe first carried out the tradition of throwing into the river to respect the ancestors in the River.




In addition, the tradition that develops in religion is the tradition of death in the Malay Community. Every time there is a death, the Malay community performs the *beruah* tradition as one of the obligations to pray for the dead. They usually invite the community to perform prayers at the house of the deceased family. The Malay community carries out this practice for 3 days and even up to 7 days. The purpose of the *beruah*

tradition is to pray for the deceased and, at the same time, give condolences to the families left behind. Interestingly, the Malay community performs this tradition as a religious ritual that is carried out as obligatorily as the five daily prayers. Those who carry out the *beruah* tradition perform maghrib prayers in congregation at the house of the deceased. The tradition proves that the practice of praying is not only done in mosques, *mushollas*, and private homes but can also be done in the homes of residents who died as a tradition of praying for the dead. This practice changes the

perspective that sacredness in religious rituals can join the traditions of local communities.

In addition, the *robo-robo* tradition is a Malay tradition that developed from the Malay kingdom, Mempawah, West Kalimantan. This ritual was originally to commemorate the history of Opu Daeng Menambon as the Malay kingdom of Mempawah, who merited to lead the kingdom. This tradition is carried out before the end of the month, namely the month of Safar. Then, this ritual is used to commemorate and ask for protection from the Almighty God from *bala'* / disaster, which the Malay community believes to exist in the month of Safar. This tradition also has Islamic values such as reading prayers and *sholawat* when you want to do the tradition. This tradition is carried out by echoing the adhan and reading prayers to ward off bad luck, then continuing with the *buang-buang* ritual. The pictures below are evidence obtained as an illustration of Malay traditions that adopt religious values in Islam as follows.

Table. 3 Islamic local tradition in Malay Community

Picture 1	Picture 2	Picture 3
		
Illustration of the Buang-buang.	Illustration of Beruah	Illustration of robo-robo
Sources: Poto Bibi Suprianto 2020	Sources: https://warta.pontianak.pikiran-rakyat.com/kabar/pr-1171935712/mengenal-tradisi-beruah-masyarakat-melayu-desa-nanga-tikan-saat-hari-raya-idul-fitri	Sources: https://dppkbppp.a.pontianak.go.id/informasi/berita/cara-robo-robo-adalah-salah-satu-warisan-budaya-indonesia#:~:text=Robo%2Drobo%20adalah%20upa cara%20tolak,peka n%20terakhir%20bulan%20Safar%20C%20Hijriah.

*Description: Research and media results on *Buang-buang*, *beruah* and *robo-robo*.

The Malay community carries out this tradition as a form of culture as a religion. For the community, tradition is a culture that grows based on religion. Islam has become the belief of the Malay people in practicing local cultures. The



Malay community in West Kalimantan has a role in making tradition a part of religion. Traditions developing in various West Kalimantan regions such as Pontianak, Mempawah, and Kapuas Hulu districts have almost the same practices and rituals. The basic difference is only in dialects and community habits in responding to a tradition. However, the Malay tradition cannot be separated from Islamic teachings as local knowledge that develops in Malay society. The illustration above explains that Malay traditions such as buang-buang, beruab and robo-robo are interconnected through religion as a tradition in West Kalimantan society.

Religion as Solidarity

The Malay community has solidarity to build social construction. Religion as solidarity in the environment. This solidarity is based on Malay traditions that reflect the basis of solidarity to form cooperation between groups. Like the *beruab* tradition, this tradition reflects the solidarity of the Malay community in praying for someone who has died. The goal is for the peace of someone who has died. In addition, the *beruab* tradition is solidarity in religion fosters a sense of belief in the local community that death is not far from humans. With the *beruab* tradition, they remember each other in the Malay community about death. As the first informant, Habibi said that beruab was carried out as a religious effort to maintain culture to connect with each other's closest family relatives, and religiously explain *tablilan*, dhikr and describe blessings.⁴³ Akbar as the second resource person, said that the *beruab* tradition is one of the activities that respect each other between humans, religions, and cultures, which is included in the category of *shodaqoh* from the families left behind, and aims to erase all the sins of the spirits who died.⁴⁴ There are several religious concepts as solidarity in the beruab tradition, namely (1) praying together for the safety and tranquility of the spirit of someone who has died; (2) the spirit of the deceased; and (3) the spirit of the deceased.

While the *robo-robo* tradition is different in meaning from the *beruab* tradition, it also has a religious concept as solidarity. This tradition has the value of the Malay community's togetherness to form local cultures from the history of the kingdom. Those who recognize themselves as Malay tribes help and work together to pray for help to God through a system of traditions and beliefs from the king to the local community. This form of solidarity includes; (1) togetherness in developing local Malay culture; (2) shared belief in calamities in the month of shafar for the Malay community, and (3) as a form of request through joint prayers for peace for the Malay community. The tradition forms a concept that religion or belief as solidarity to form social construction in society.

Table. 3 Analyze the value of solidarity

Names of Tradition	Beruab	Robo-robo
Value of solidarity	(1) Pray together for safety. (2) The spirit of togetherness to encourage families affected by the disaster. (3) The spirit of togetherness in developing local traditions through Islamic beliefs.	(1) Togetherness in developing local culture. (2) A shared belief in disasters in the month of shafar for the Malay community. (3) As a form of request through joint prayers for peace for the Malay community.

*Description: Analyze the value of solidarity

These two traditions show religion as solidarity in Malay society. This solidarity is formed through traditions that embrace religious values in local cultural practices. There are two concepts in common: prayer requests and the development of local traditions in an Islamic belief. Through prayer requests, the community forms a solidarity to pray for the dead and the safety of the community. This prayer provides Islamic values in the practice of ritual beliefs of the Malay community. In addition, the solidarity of the Malay community develops local traditions. This tradition is the defense of the Malay community to maintain local cultures. These

⁴³ Habibi (Interview, October 4, 2020)

⁴⁴ Akbar (interview, October 4, 2020)



cultures continue to be held as a form of symbols and values of Malay cultural customs that adopt cultural and religious values. Solidarity in the Malay tradition provides an argument that it turns out that the Malay community has the strength to maintain religion and culture in forming solidarity that blends with local customs and religion.

Identity that is Malay Pride

The Malay identity as Muslims has the pride of every title. This title is an honor for Malay descendants from lower, middle, and royal or noble circles. This title is a call to power and a symbol of culture in the Malay tribe. Moreover, Malay history has always told about Islamic kingdoms in the world.⁴⁵ Those who recognize themselves as Malay tribes always tell about royal power in each region such as the kingdom of Pasai, the kingdom of Kutai Kartanegara, and the kingdom of Mempawah.⁴⁶ These kingdoms called the Malay tribe a tribe that has an identity as a Muslim kingdom. In addition, those who have Malay Muslim kingdoms always pride themselves on their respective titles. This title becomes a strong identity to call everyone. The identity of Malay pride that becomes an honor also gives a reputation for respect for young and old. This proud identity provides a symbol of Malay identity that has the character of Muslims who rule in a kingdom. From this identity, they can build a social construction of religion in a community.

Malays built an Islamic civilization by means of power. Many royal powers were developed in the Malay community such as Brunei Darussalam, which is recognized as an Islamic kingdom state with a Malay ethnic background. This country has full power in every action and regulation for the community. Moreover, Brunei Darussalam is a country that has a majority of Malay Muslims. With this condition, it can rebuild Islamic civilization in religious social construction. However, the Malay

tribes that spread in Brunei Darussalam also have titles such as Raja, Sultan, Tan, Tengku, and others.⁴⁷ This nickname developed in Southeast Asia. Indonesia is also among the countries that still boast royal titles in every Malay community. Such as Aceh, Riau, Palembang, and Kalimantan. The digging developed due to a good descent obtained from the royal circle, and respect due to wealth, authority, and respect for those who have been to the holy land / hajj. These proud identities became part of the social and religious life of the Malay community.

These titles are about issues of identity that make them superior to other groups. First, those with the title Al-Hajj describe someone who has successfully returned from the holy land for the Hajj pilgrimage. They get this title after performing various Hajj rituals such as *wukuf*, *tawaf*, and Hajj fasting in the holy land. Then after returning to the country, the title Haji became a title of respect for those who live in the Malay tribe. Secondly, Tan, is the most senior title and is given to recipients of awards such as the honorary Bintang in Indonesia, Seri Maharaja Mangku Negara, or Setia Seri Mahkota/Panglima Besar of the Order of Kesetiaan Kepada Mahkota Malaysia.⁴⁸ The Yang Dipertuan Agung of Malaysia confers the title to honor 25 living royal figures. Those who have family, such as his wife, will be titled with To [Toh] Puan, or more or less means glorified woman. Third, Tun is the highest title of nobility conferred on commoners by the Yang Dipertuan Agung - not of noble or royal descent. This title is given for outstanding dedication to the country. Technically, Tuns are those who are awarded the "Seri Maharaja Mangku Negara" or "Seri Setia Mahkota" merit badge by the Yang Dipertuan Agung. In Malaysia, they limit only 50 people who can have the title.

Fifth, the title *Dato* or *Datuk* is given to the leader of a tribe or clan in an area with an ethnic

⁴⁵ Suprianto, "On Human- Nature Relations: The Importance of Malay Adat and Rituals in Protecting Suhad River in West Kalimantan, Indonesia."

⁴⁶ Suprianto, Prasjojo, and Witro, "The History of Islamic Kingdoms in Kapuas Hulu District: A Manuscript Translation of Pangeran Kesoema Anom Soeria Negara."

⁴⁷ Wikipedia, 6 January, 2024 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malay_styles_and_titles)

⁴⁸ Wikipedia, 6 January, 2024 (https://ms.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seri_Maharaja_Mangku_Negara)



Minangkabau population. Datuk titles are also referred to as tribal titles in Minangkabau. In addition to the *Datuk* title, there is a title given to a man on his wedding day. Since then, it is recommended for anyone to call the man by the title given, no longer by calling his small name as a form of respect for an adult. Sixth, Sultan (Arabic: سلطان, *sultān*) is a title in the Muslim world used to refer to a variety of positions throughout the history of its use. Typically, the title Sultan is used for a position that refers to the head of a Muslim monarchy ruling over an Islamic state/region. Nowadays, it is used for those who have the position of caliph/leader. Seventh, Empress is a title for the wife of a male monarch (king, maharaja, sultan, or emperor). Eighth, Pengiran. This title is obtained by married people, both sultans' family and other people whose marriage is related to the kingdom, not only limited to descendants of sultans. Brunei Darussalam's royal tradition contrasts with Indonesian, which only specifies prince (*pengiran*) for men. In Brunei, this title can be held by both men and women. This makes the title *pengiran* comparable to putri in Indonesian. Ninth, Tengku is a Malay title of nobility that is automatically attached to male and female descendants of the Sultans and kings in the Malay kingdom. Those who have "Tengku" at the beginning of every Malay's name have a status that signifies the highest position in Malay traditional society. These names are nicknames that become the proud identity of the Malay community.

Social Construction of Islamic Local Tradition

The social construction of religion in Malay society not only provides an overview of the social development of religion, but the Malay pride identity becomes a religious authority that plays a role in controlling religion and culture in one community's life. Malay reconstructs religion in social life, nation, and state as a unitary region of Muslims. Backford revealed that there are three

advantages in the religious social construction system, namely (1) the community considers the existence of religion that enters social and cultural life; (2) religion becomes a tribal identity; (3) religion becomes a tribal authority that shapes ideology, culture, and tribe in social life⁴⁹. This social construction of religion develops in Malay Society. Religion becomes part of social life. Those who are recognized as Malay tribes have the power to develop religious identity through a social life with the legality of Islam. This religious identity can be seen from several social constructions that developed from the customary society of the Malay tribe. The Malay community plays an important role in group affairs to voice moral authority in religion. They have personal qualities associated with independence, developed and manifested in the specific implementation of various ritual actions, leadership, and social life.⁵⁰ In the three components of the Malay tradition namely *buang-buang*, *beruab*, and *robo-robo*, each have a variation of the tradition but has a one-way component. For example, the Malay community carried out the *buang-buang* tradition for the implementation of the *robo-robo* tradition as an effort by the Malay community to ask for prayers to be kept away from natural and human disasters/disasters. Then, the Malay community carried out the *beruab* tradition to pray for the death of previous ancestors by reading *tahlilab* and prayers. This all becomes a social construction from time to time that develops in a society with different variations in practice but has the same components and meanings, namely praying and asking for help. This proves that religion enters into social and cultural life through local traditions in Malay society.

Malay today transforms a tribal identity into a religious identity. This presents a local view that is not just popularizing traditions for consumption by many people but as a reflection of cultural choices that create new forms of expression that bring local traditions within a broader religious

⁴⁹ James A Backford, *Social Construction*, 1st ed. (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁵⁰ Darmanto, "Good to Produce: Food, Gardening, and Valued Persons in Contemporary Mentawai Society,

Indonesia," *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2022.2089479>.



consciousness.⁵¹ Religious actors who have the authority to convey the teachings of Islam enter into a culture and customs that make social construction in Malay society. as such situations where religion is associated with human actions, feelings, or ideas as individuals or groups.⁵² In an act of religion, the Malay community strengthens Islamic values from traditions in local traditions. Several components can be seen from Islamic values are: (1) Islamic law as a guide to the customary law of the Malay community; (2) religious practices in Islam which include sacred verses as prayers, religious ethics as norms of social life; and (3) solidarity that is integrated into the culture and traditions of the Malay community. The Malay community controls these actions in the community's social life.

In addition, religion becomes an authority for the Malay tribe to shape ideology, culture and tribe in social life. Like the Malay ideology of Minangkabau "*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*" this ideology is inherent in the Malay indigenous community, which recognizes that the primary source and reference for the life of the Malay community is the book of the Qur'an as a guide to life in social society. This situation shows an interesting phenomenon where Islamic history has been sacralized and embedded in doctrine.⁵³ In the past, Islam was only limited to the doctrines of the Qur'an and hadith for Muslims in implementing prohibitions, actions, and world life separated from the ideology of a culture. In the context of the Malay community, Islamic ideology is used as a social construction. The ideology is also included in historical life in the call of royal honor, authority, and the context of Islam in everyday life. For example, the call Haji is a pride of the Malay community because they have gone to the holy land. Then, the call of Sultan, Tengku, Pangeran, and Datok became the pride of the Malay people that they were a tribe that held the throne and power in the Islamic kingdom. This principle forms a Malay authority in the context of culture and religion.

Conclusion

The social construction of religion in Malay society is not only a matter of social life but also enters into religious life. The dynamics of human social relations and religious adherents have provided construction in a custom without many knowing widely. The social construction of religion in Malay society creates the formation of cultural and religious structures in local traditions and customary norms. The Malay community develops local traditions as customs *with* Islamic values. Those who *are recognized* as Malay tribes always hold fast to the stance of Islamic teachings as an orientation of religion-based traditions. This orientation provides an overview of Islamic local traditions such as the beruah tradition, buang-buang, and the robo-robo tradition to create community solidarity in a religious social construction. In addition, this tradition symbolizes that Malay has local traditions combined *with* a religion where religious social construction provides human ethical values that have manners and customs as norms of decency in humanity. Social construction in the local Islamic tradition maintains a culture as a Malay identity.

Finally, this article provides a view that the construction of Islamic local traditions in the Malay community is a concept of cultural identity in developing Islamic religious values toward community customs. In addition, various forms of religious social construction in the Malay community are the basis for the customs of the Malay community, which are very important to play a role in religious identity, which concerns the symbols and characters of Malay societies. It can be said that the social construction of religion has provided a relationship between culture and religion as a subject to connect the background of the life of the Malay community. Therefore, this paper confirms that it turns out that the social construction of local Islamic traditions in Malay society builds a religious community identity in social life.

This paper has limitations in data sources that are only aware of ethnographic research, media studies, and literature on the social construction of

⁵¹ R. Michael Feener et al., "Islamisation and the Formation of Vernacular Muslim Material Culture in 15th-Century Northern Sumatra," *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2021.1873564>.

⁵² Backford, *Social Construction*.

⁵³ Natalia Laskowska, "Contemporary Indonesian and Malaysian Interpretations of 'No Compulsion in Religion,'" *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2015.1129161>.



religion in Malay society, so that it cannot be used as a strong foundation for claiming Malay traditions, religion and culture at large as cultural construction in religion. The formulation of policy as a broad knowledge requires a broad survey of Malay tribes throughout Asia, which can be seen in terms of social, cultural and religious development in various regions. A survey of a number of social constructions of religion in the broader Malay society is underway and is still in the data collection stage to look back on a few years later. Follow-up studies will analyze and theorize more broadly and deeply about religious authority in the Malay tribe, from the kingdom's ancient time to the current kingdom period. Thus, further research will be more interesting and tell a lot of significance in a writing.

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