

**MALAY WEDDING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN
SINGAPORE**

THESIS

**By:
Ner Rahim Bin Mohd Shariff
NIM 09210095**



**AL-AHWAL AL-SYAKHSHIYYAH DEPARTMENT
SHARIA FACULTY
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MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM OF MALANG
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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

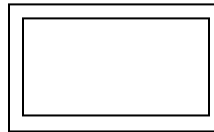
In the name of Allah (swt),

With consciousness and responsibility towards the development of science, the author declares that the thesis entitled:

MALAY WEDDING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN SINGAPORE

is truly the author's original work. It does not incorporate any material previously written or published by another person. If it is proven to be another person's work, duplication, plagiarism, this thesis and my degree as the result of this action will be deemed legally invalid.

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MALAY WEDDING CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN SINGAPORE

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3	Wednesday, 30 May 2012	Review of Chapter I	
4	Friday, 29 June 2012	Chapter II & III	
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MOTTO

“But in the night of thick darkness enveloping the earliest antiquity, so remote from ourselves, there shives the eternal and never falling light of a truth beyond all question; that the world of civil society has certainly been made by men, and that its principles are therefore to be found within the modifications of our own human mind. Whoever reflects on this cannot but marvel that the philosophers should have bent all their energies to the study of the world of nature, which, since God made it, He alone knows; and that they should have neglected the study of the world of nations, or civil world, which, since men had made it, men come to know.”

Giovanni Battista Vico
(1668 – 1744)

Italian Jurist, Philologist & Philosopher

DEDICATION

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Almighty Allah

Blessing and peace be upon His Prophet Muhammad

And all those who followed his guidance

This thesis is dedicated to :

My beloved late Father, Md Shariff Bin Abdullah,

And Mother Roseyah Bte Abdullah,

for their love, guidance and prayers.

My brothers and sister,

whom I cherish always, even we may be far away.

My beloved wife, Ernie Bte Salim,

for her love, devotion, courage, selflessness and sacrifice

in taking care of the family during my absence.

My beloved children, Khairul Irfan, Nurul Izzah and Lina Irdina,

as the source of my inspiration and determination.

Also to Ust Md Feer, Suraidi, Ali Ahmadi, friends and colleagues who had

contributed in any manner, in the completion of this thesis.

May Allah (swt) shower them with blessings and

lead them in the path of righteousness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise due to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of all the worlds. There is neither might nor power but with Allah the Great, the Exalted. With only His Grace and Guidance, this thesis entitled “Malay Wedding Culture and Traditions in Singapore” could be completed, and also with His benevolence and love, peace and tranquility of the soul. Peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad (saw) who had brought us from darkness into the light, in this life. May we be together with those who believe and receive intercession from Him in the day of Judgement. Amîn.

With all the support and help, discussions, guidance and directions from all parties involved during the process of completing this thesis, the author wishes to express his utmost gratitude to the following :

1. Prof. Dr. H. Imam Suprayogo, as the Rector of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
2. Dr. Hj. Tutik Hamidah, M. Ag., as the Dean of the Sharia Faculty of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
3. Dr. Zaenul Mahmudi, M.A., as the head of Al-Ahwal Al-Syakhshiyah Department of the Sharia Faculty of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
4. Dr. Zaenul Mahmudi, M.A., as the thesis supervisor. The author expresses his gratitude for the guidance and directional motivation given in the course of completing this thesis. May Allah (swt) shower him and his family

with His blessings.

5. Dr. Zaenul Mahmudi, M.A., as supervisory lecturer during the author's course of study in the Al-Ahwal Al-Syakhshiyah Department of the Sharia Faculty of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang.
6. All lecturers for their sincere and dedicated teaching and supervisory efforts. May Allah (swt) shower them with His blessings.
7. Staff of the Sharia Faculty of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang. The author expresses gratitude for all their support and co-operation during the course of completing this thesis.

Hopefully, by imparting what has been learned during the course of study in the Faculty of Sharia of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, it will benefit all readers and the author himself. Realizing the fact that error and weakness is impartial to being human, and that this thesis is still far from perfection, the author appreciates constructive criticism and suggestions for the improvement and betterment of this thesis.

Malang, 18th of May 2012
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Transliteration Guide

A. General

The transliteration guide which is used by the Sharia Faculty of State Islamic University, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, is the EYD plus. This usage is based on the Consensus Directive (SKB) from the Religious' Ministry, Education Ministry and Culture Ministry of the Republic of Indonesia, dated 22 January 1998, No. 158/1987 and 0543. b/U/1987, which is also found in the Arabic Transliteration Guide book, INIS Fellow 1992.

B. Consonants

ا	=	Not Represented	ض	=	dl
ب	=	B	ط	=	th
ت	=	T	ظ	=	dh
ث	=	Ts	ع	=	' (comma facing upwards)
ج	=	J	غ	=	h
ح	=	H	ف	=	f
خ	=	Kh	ق	=	q
د	=	D	ك	=	k
ذ	=	Dz	ل	=	l
ر	=	R	م	=	m
ز	=	Z	ن	=	n
س	=	S	و	=	w
ش	=	Sy	ه	=	h
ص	=	Sh	ي	=	y

The *hamzah* (ء) which is usually represented by an *alif*, when it is at the beginning of a word, henceforth it is transliterated following its vocal pronunciation and not represented in writing. However, when it is in the middle or end of a word, it is represented by a comma facing upwards (ˆ), as oppose to a comma (˘) which replaces the “ع”.

C. Long Vowel and Diftong

In every written Arabic text in the *latin* form, its vowels *fathah* is written with “a”, *kasrah* with “i”, and *dhommah* with “u”, whereas elongated vowels are written as such :

Elongated (a) vowel = a example قال becomes *qâla*

Elongated (i) vowel = i example قيل becomes *qîla*

Elongated (u) vowel = u example دون becomes *dûna*

Specially for the pronunciation of *ya' nisbat* (in association), it cannot be represented by “i”, unless it is written as “iy” so as to represent the *ya' nisbat* at the end. The same goes for sound of a diftong, *wawu* and *ya'* after the *fathah* it is written as “aw” and “ay”. Study the following examples :

Diftong (aw) = و example قول becomes *qawlun*

Diftong (ay) = ي example خير becomes *khayrun*

D. Ta' marbutah (ة)

Ta' marbutah is transliterated as " t " if it is in the middle of word, but if it is at the end, then it is transliterated as " h ". For example الرسالة للمدرسة will be *al-risalah li al-mudarissah*, or if it happens to be in the middle of a phrase which constitutes *mudhâf wa mudhaf ilay*, then the transliteration will be using " t " which is enjoined with the previous word, for example فى رحمة الله becomes *fi rahmatillah*.

E. Definite article

Arabic has only one definite article, " ال " (" al ") and it is written in small letters, unless at the beginning of a word. While "al" in the phrase of *lafadh jalalah* (speaking of God) which is in the middle of a sentence and supported by an *idhafah*, then it is not written. Study the following :

1. Al-Imam al-Bukhariy said . . .
2. Al-Bukhariy explains, in the prologue of his book . . .
3. Masya' Allah kana wa ma lam yasya' lam yakun.
4. Billah 'azza wa jalla.

TABLE OF CONTENT

TITLE SHEET.....	i
STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY.....	ii
APPROVAL SHEET.....	iii
CONSULTATION PROOF.....	iv
LEGITIMATION SHEET.....	v
MOTTO.....	vi
DEDICATION.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	viii
TRANSLITERATION GUIDE.....	x
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	xiii
ABSTRACT.....	xvii

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study.....	1
B. Problem Statement.....	7
C. Scope and Limitation.....	7
D. Research Objectives.....	7
E. Significance of Study.....	8
F. Definition of Key Terms.....	9
G. Previous Research	10
H. Structure of Discussion.....	12

CHAPTER II : REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Islamic Aspects of Walimah.....	16
1. Definition of Walimah.....	16
2. Rulings on Walimah.....	18

3. When to Hold A Walimah.....	20
4. Type of Food.....	21
5. Invitation of Guests.....	22
6. Attending of Walimah.....	23
7. Entertainment.....	24
8. Extravagance and Wastage.....	25
B. Associated Wedding Cultures.....	28
C. Religion and Culture.....	32

CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Location.....	35
1. Description of Location	38
2. Transportation.....	39
3. Commercial Services.....	40
4. Population.....	41
5. Education.....	43
6. Economy.....	44
7. Religion.....	46
B. Research Design.....	48
1. Research Approach.....	49
2. Data Source.....	50
a. Primary Source.....	50
b. Secondary Source.....	50
3. Data Consolidation Techniques.....	51
a. Observation.....	51

b. Interview.....	51
c. Documentation.....	52
4. Data Analysis Technique.....	52

CHAPTER IV : FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Processes of A Malay Wedding.....	54
1. Engagement.....	55
2. Henna-Staining Ceremony.....	57
3. Religious Solemnization.....	58
4. Wedding Day.....	62
5. Wedding Favours.....	65
6. Enthronement (Bersanding).....	66
7. Attributes of The Malay Wedding Processes.....	68
a. Cultural Polarities.....	71
b. Culture Traits.....	73
c. Trend Adaptation and Competitiveness.....	76
B. Muslims’ View on Cultural Practices.....	78
1. Non-Islamic Rituals and Traditions.....	86
2. Factors of Common Formalities.....	88
3. Sense of Identity.....	90

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Summary of Findings.....	93
B. Conclusion.....	94
C. Suggestions.....	95

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIXES

CURRICULUM VITAE

Abstract

Ner Rahim Bin Mohd Shariff, NIM 09210095, 2012. *Malay Wedding Culture and Traditions in Singapore*. Thesis. Al-Ahwal Al-Syakhshiyah Department, Syariah Faculty, The State Islamic University Maulana Malik Ibrahim of Malang. Supervisor: Dr. Zaenul Mahmudi, M.A.

Key Words: Culture, Tradition, Malay, Wedding.

One of the unique traits of Singapore is its multiracial society which encompasses mainly Chinese, Malay, Indian and other races. With the different cultural and historical background each ethnic group, they manifests their own culture traits. The Malay society represents the second majority in terms of the country's population, comprising of different roots of Malay lineage dating back to the days of migration from Indonesia and Malaysia. Being a race known for its refined culture and traditions, and yet sharing a common livelihood with other ethnic groups in Singapore, its cultural practices and traditions are sometimes not fully understood or even misconstrued; particularly the Malay wedding culture and traditions.

This study is focused on the actual culture practices and traditions being performed in a typical Malay wedding. The concentration includes the rituals, protocols and normalities in such a socio-cultural event which seemingly has undergone much transformation since the early days of the Malay settlement in Singapore. In addition, the research is concerned with unraveling the views of a practising Muslim (Syafi'i Mazhab) of such practices and traditions.

The main aim of this study is to have a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in a typical Malay wedding. The effort to learn and recognize the actual meanings, perceptions and aspirations from local Malays who are generally Muslims, also becomes one of the focal points in this research.

The method of research employed is that of a descriptive qualitative one, which also utilises the inductive approach of analysing field data. The main bulk of primary data is consolidated through field observation and personal contact with informants who are related directly or indirectly with the field of study. Literature and documentation pertaining to the subject matter are used as secondary data source.

In conclusion, the Malay wedding culture is said to be a complex combination of different cultures and traditions, whereby the attributes of these complexities comes from both internal and external factors. The former being reasons of different culture traits or various Malay lineage and the latter being reasons of foreign culture adaptation though means of diffusion, elaboration and evolution. The consensus from the practising Muslims is that whatever manner the society practice their culture or traditions, it should comply with Islamic principles and ethics.

Abstrak

Ner Rahim Bin Mohd Shariff, NIM 09210095, 2012. *Kultur dan Tradisi Perkawinan Orang Melayu Di Singapura*. Skripsi. Jurusan Al-Ahwal Al-Syakhsiyyah, Fakultas Syariah, Universitas Islam Negeri, Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing: Dr. Zaenul Mahmudi, M.A.

Kata Kunci : Kultur, Tradisi, Melayu, Perkawinan.

Satu dari keunikan karakter Singapura adalah masyarakat multiras yang terdiri daripada suku bangsa Cina, Melayu, Hindu dan lainnya. Dengan dilatarbelakangi oleh kultur dan sejarah yang beragam pada tiap golongan yang bersangkutan, mereka memanifestasikan karakter kultur masing-masing. Masyarakat Melayu merepresentasikan kaum mayoritas kedua dari segi populasi negara, dimana terdiri dari keturunan Melayu sejak zaman migrasi dari Indonesia dan Malaysia. Sebagai bangsa yang terkenal dengan kultur dan tradisinya, yang saling bergabung kehidupan dengan suku bangsa lain di Singapura, terkadang kultur dan tradisinya kurang difahami atau terjadi tingkat pemahaman yang kurang tepat. Khususnya dari segi kultur dan tradisi perkawinan orang Melayu.

Kajian ini difokuskan pada kultur dan tradisi secara praktis yang dilakukan dalam suatu perkawinan Melayu. Penekanannya adalah terkait dengan ritual-ritual, protokol dan kebiasaan dalam suatu acara sosio-kultural yang dampaknya telah mengalami beberapa transformasi sejak zaman migrasi orang Melayu ke Singapura. Selain itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pandangan orang Melayu-Islam (bermazhab Syafi'i) tentang tradisi-tradisi tersebut.

Tujuan utama kajian adalah untuk memahami secara komprehensif tentang proses-proses yang terdapat dalam suatu perkawinan Melayu. Suatu usaha untuk mempelajari dan mengenal maksud-maksud, persepsi and aspirasi dari orang Melayu lokal yang umumnya orang-orang Islam, juga ditekankan dalam penelitian ini.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dan juga pendekatan induktif dalam rangka analisis data lapangan. Sebahagian besar dari data primer dikumpulkan dari observasi lapangan dan hubungan langsung dengan informan yang terkait dengan bidang kajian secara langsung atau pun tidak. Literatur dan dokumentasi tentang persoalan yang terkait digunakan sebagai sumber data sekunder.

Dapat disimpulkan bahwa kultur perkawinan Melayu adalah sebuah kombinasi kultur-kultur dan tradisi-tradisi yang kompleks di mana dipahami dan diapresiasi bahwa unsur-unsur pada kompleksitas itu adalah dari faktor-faktor internal dan eksternal. Yang pertama adalah sebab-sebab karakter kultur yang beragam atau keturunan Melayu yang berbagai dan selainnya adalah sebab-sebab adaptasi dari kultur asing melalui diffusi, elaborasi dan evolusi. Pandangan mayoritas orang Melayu-Islam bahawa segala bentuk kultur atau tradisi yang diamalkan seharusnya dalam batasan prinsip dan etika keagamaan.

ملخص البحث

نير الرحيم بن محمد الشريف, NIM 09210095, 2012. ثقافية و تقاليد الزواج الملايوى فى سنغافورة. بحث جامعى. شعبة الأحوال الشخصية كلية الشريعة. جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية، مالانج. الشريف الدكتور زينول محمودى الماجستير

الكلمات الرئيسية : الثقافة، التقاليد، الملايوى، الزواج

من مزية سنغافورة هي تتكوّن من الجنسية المختلفة كالصيني والملايوي والهندي وغير ذلك. بسبب اختلاف الثقافة والتاريخ الذي يتعلّق بهم كلّ منهم يظهر شخصية ثقافتهم المختلفة. كان مجتمع الملايوي أكثر سكان سنغافورة بعد الصيني هم جاؤوا من إندونيسا ومليزيا. الملايويون يعرفون الثقافة و التقاليد النامية في حياتهم اليومية. وكثيرا ما منهم لا يعرفون حقيقة ثقافتهم بدقة و صحة خصوصا الثقافة و التقاليد المتعلقة بالزواج الملايوي.

يركز هذا البحث على عملية الثقافة و التقاليد فى مجلس الزواج الملايوى و تخصيصه على الطقس و العادة فى برنامج الإجتماعى الثقافى الذى يتيغر منذ زمان هجرة الملايو فى سنغافورة. و بعد ذلك، يركز البحث بمعرفة القيمة و رأى المسلم (الشافعى) فى هذه الثقافة و التقاليد.

يقصد البحث لمعرفة الفهم الشامل على عملية وليمة العروس الملايوى. ثم لمعرفة المقاصد. أسلوب البحث هو بطريق الإيضاحى الكيفى حيثما يستخدم شيك الإستقرائى لتحليل معلومات. عزر أكثر المعلومات الأولية بمشاهدة داخلية مع مخبرين الذين يتعلقون بميدان البحث مباشرة أو غير مباشرة، ويستعمل مقروءات و وثائق نحو معلومات ثانوية.

ختاما، كانت ثقافة الزواج الملايوى إتحاد دقيق من ثقافات و تقاليد مختلفة. أما باستخدام أسلوب العلمية لتحليل معلومات، نفهم عن علامات العقدة يعنى من عوامل داخلية و خارجية. الأول هو بسبب إختلاف الثقافة أو أصول الملايو، و الثانى هو بسبب تكيف الثقافة الخارجية بطريق إنتشاء، توسيع و تطور. و رأى أكثر المسلم (الشافعى) مقبولة حينما لا تعدت الأداب الإسلامية.