

REFLECTION OF MALAYSIAN RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN TRADITIONS

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ABSTRACT

Current article states that Malaysia has long been a multi-ethnic country, and despite its significant influence on migration and missionary work, trade, and Western colonial policy, it is one of the world's leading nations in pursuing a policy of interethnic harmony, and practicing national traditions in accordance with the principles of tolerance.

KEYWORDS: *Malaysia, pluralism, tolerance, nation, tradition, marriage.*

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia or the Federation of Malaysia is a country located in Southeast Asia, one of the founders of the Union of Southeast Asian Nations and a member of this Union. It is noteworthy that in the short period of its independence, the Malaysian economy has grown rapidly and the living standards of the population have improved significantly.

It should be noted that Malaysia has long been a multinational state, which in turn has been significantly influenced by migration and missionary work, trade, and the colonial policy of Western countries. Nevertheless, Malaysia is one of the countries in the world that pursues an exemplary policy of interethnic harmony.

Geographically, the Federation of Malaysia is divided into two parts by the South China Sea: Western Malaysia (also known as Malaya) and Eastern Malaysia (also known as Sabah and Sarawak). According to some historians, the name "Melayu" is believed to be derived from the Sanskrit word "Malaiur" or "Malayadvipa" meaning "mountain state" [1] and was used by Indian traders to refer to the Malacca Peninsula. According to other hypotheses, it is derived from the Tamil word Malai, which means "mountain". After his voyage to Oceania in 1826, the French navigator Jules Dumont-Durville coined the words "Malaysia," "Micronesia," and "Melanesia" to distinguish a group of islands from Polynesia. Malaysia called it the "East India Territory." [2] In 1850, the English ethnologist George Samuel Windsor proposed in the Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia that the islands of Southeast Asia be renamed Melayunezia or Indonesia.

About 60.3% of Malaysia's population is Austronesian, known in the region as bumiputra ("sons of the earth"). The indigenous population of the state is collectively known as Orang-Asli ("real

people”) [3] and they live mainly in the states of Sarawak and Sabah. The largest of this ethnic group is the Ibans, who make up 30% of the Sarawak population. Another large indigenous population living in the southwestern part of Sarawak is the Bidayus.

The second largest ethnic group is the Chinese, who make up 24.6% of Malaysia’s population. They live mainly in Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur, the "Chinese" cities of Malaysia, as well as in the "Chinese" state of Penang. The third largest ethnic group is Indians, who make up 7.1% of the population.

Although the Malaysian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, Islam has been declared the state religion [4]. Although Islam is the state religion and the majority of the population is Muslim, Malaysia is not a classical Muslim state, with 61.3% Islam, 19.8% Buddhism, 9.2% Christianity, 6.3% Hinduism and 1.3% Confucianism, Taoism and other Chinese religions, while 1.4% believe in other religions in general, while 0.7% of the population do not believe in any religion.

Malaysia presents itself as a state based on religious pluralism, and Article 153 of the Constitution is the most important legal document in the process of governing ethnic processes and the emergence of national equality.

Marriage is both an obligation and a Sunnah for Muslims. It should be noted that Muslims around the world celebrate their weddings based on the conditions and customs of their region, even if they get married as commanded in the Qur’an and Hadith. In particular, in Malaysia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, weddings are held based on traditions mixed with the customs of the existing religions in the region.

In Malaysia, matchmaking is an honorable and responsible job. Choosing the spouse is made by the youth or the parents. The matchmaking can be made by a close friend of the young man or by the elder of the neighborhood where the young man lives. The groomsmen usually go to the girl’s house in the evening. If the girl’s side has not promised anyone else, the boy’s side will give the girl’s family a ringgit (Malaysian currency) and a gold ring. This is called "tandahantaran" - a symbolic gift. If the gift is accepted, Fatiha day (engagement) is set, and if the gift is not accepted, no hope is given to the young man. According to Malay custom, the day of the Fatiha wedding is usually set between one and four weeks after the first communion.

The Fatiha wedding is usually a small event held at the girl’s house in the presence of close relatives and friends of both sides. In it, the two parties agree on the wedding day (meeting kahwin), the bride’s dowry (mas kahwin), the gift, and the wedding expenses (belanjakahwin) distributed equally to both sides [5].

Malays determine the wedding day according to the lunar year: the months of Shawwal and Dhu’l-Hijjah are the best months, and Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays are considered the best days, and the remaining days and months are considered hot days and months, making them unsuitable for weddings.

A scheduled wedding day can be changed for only two reasons - if someone on the groom or bride’s side dies or becomes seriously ill. A seriously ill patient should be expected to recover or die. If one of the relatives of both parties dies on the appointed date of the wedding, the wedding

is held a week later. This, in turn, is seen as a tribute to the troubled home, and proves that there is a presumption among the people that the soul of the dead can return in a week and do evil.

Usually, the wedding is held at the girl's house. Weddings can last from one to three days, depending on the economic circumstances of the families.

The wedding begins with an event called "the arrival of the dowry and gift greetings" ("menghantarbelanja"). After the two sides have gathered, the representative of the bride side opens the gifts brought by the groom one by one and shows them to the gathered guests and presents them to the father of the bride. In the evening, "majlis berinai" - the ceremony of decorating with henna begins. In this ceremony, a beautifully dressed bride has her hands and nails dyed with henna by a beautician.

Before the wedding, "bertemutunang" - a ceremony of welcoming the bride is held. At the event, the bride sits on a special pillow with her friends behind the groom, who is surrounded by friends. They are brought a dish made of yellow sticky rice and eaten.

On the third day, the ceremony "istiadat mandipengantin", baptism of the bride and groom begins. The bride is taken to the river surrounded by her friends, wearing a dress decorated with beautiful ornaments and gold on her head. This ceremony is also performed by the groom. After the baptism, the bride and groom put on their wedding dress.

The bride wears a Malay national costume and a silk dress made of gold thread, which is the Malay national fabric, and is taken to the wedding hall built for the bride and groom surrounded by family members and friends.

The groom, in turn, wears Malay-style trousers, a shirt, and a black fez with a conical tip on his head. Surrounded by friends, with the sound of drums and drums he walks to the wedding hall, where the bride is waiting for, and sits to the right of the bride, which is called "custom bersanding" - "the bride and groom sit side by side." Then there will be "istiadat menepung tawar" - "rice halva ceremony".

As the bride and groom sit, they are lightly fanned. This landscape allows them to imagine themselves as kings and queens who have earned the respect and attention of their people. The bride and groom feed each other with sticky yellow rice with the help of the bride's friend and the groom's friend. This ceremony is called "adat bersuap-suapan" - a ceremony of mutual feeding.

Each guest who comes to the wedding brings different gifts to the bride. In turn, guests will be presented with an egg called "telur pengantin" - "wedding egg" in a special container made of colored paper.

In the morning after the wedding, the relatives of both sides gather and hold a ceremony to give the bride and groom as much money as they want, that is, a custom called "adat menimbang" - "custom of measurement". The money collected is distributed equally between the bride and groom. Usually, after the wedding, the groom lives in the bride's house, and now most modern brides and grooms buy a separate house for living independently.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the people of Malaysia perform their rituals in harmony with national traditions, without contradicting Islamic doctrines.

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