

Jurnal Sosiologi Agama

Jurnal Ilmiah Sosiologi Agama dan Perubahan Sosial

Vol. 18. No. 1
January-June, 2024

p-ISSN: 1978-4457
e-ISSN: 2548-477X

Article History

Submitted:
16-04-2024

Accepted:
19-08-2024

Published:
19-08-2024

The Intercultural Accomodation Between Ethnic Arabics, Chines, and Malays in Palembang

Aflatun Muchtar (1)

Anggi Wahyu Ari (2)
Aristhopan Firdaus (3)
Zakki FAddad (4)
Eko Purnomo (5)

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang (1,2,3)
Charles Darwin University Australia (4)
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga (5)

Correspondence Author (1)

Aflatunmuchtar_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

DOI

<http://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2024.181-08>

Pages

115-132

Abstract

This study tries to see how the forms of accommodation and interaction models between Arab, Chinese, and Malay communities are so that they live side by side in Palembang that this city gets the title of a Zero Conflict city. This study uses an ethnographic approach by recording events that affect intercultural interactions. In addition, the data collection technique was carried out by engaging the three communities, interviewing, observing, and documenting the object under study. This study concludes that the three ethnic groups live in Palembang's same social and economic ecosystem and adapt well. However, there have been conflicts involving the Chinese community in Palembang. The interaction pattern between the three tribes is based on values, which is transactional harmonious inter-ethnic integration.

Keyword: interethnic, acculturation, Chinese, Arabic, Malay



© 2024. The Author

Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives BY-NC-ND: This work is licensed under a Jurnal Sosiologi Agama: Jurnal Ilmiah Sosiologi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>) which permits non-commercial use, reproduction, and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed as specified on Jurnal Sosiologi Agama: Jurnal Ilmiah Sosiologi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam and Open Access pages

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mencoba untuk melihat bagaimana bentuk-bentuk akomodasi dan model interaksi antar komunitas Arab, Cina dan Melayu sehingga ketiganya hidup berdampingan hingga saat ini di Palembang, sehingga kota ini mendapatkan predikat sebagai kota Zero Konflik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan etnografi dengan mencatatkan peristiwa-peristiwa yang berpengaruh terhadap interaksi antar budaya. Sementara teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan interaksi terlibat terhadap ketiga komunitas itu, wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi terhadap objek yang diteliti. Penelitian ini berkesimpulan bahwa ketiga etnis tersebut hidup pada satu ekosistem sosial dan ekonomi di Palembang dan beradaptasi dengan baik. Meskipun pernah terjadi konflik yang melibatkan komunitas Cina di Palembang. Pola interaksi antara ketiga suku itu didasarkan nilai dan bersifat transaksional dan menjadikan integrasi antar etnis terjadi dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: antaretnis, akulturasi, Cina, Arab, Melayu

INTRODUCTION

Palembang is a Zero conflict area then, now and forever, a phrase uttered by Herman Deru, Governor of South Sumatra, at a meeting with the management of the Bakti Darma Foundation, which plans to build a temple on January 6, 2021, at the Governor's Office. This phrase is not the only one; it is often conveyed in Palembang's context of inter-religious and inter-ethnic harmony. It cannot be denied that this phrase is very popular among politicians, not only Herman Deru but also the previous governor, Alex Noerdin, and the mayors, and it is believed by many people in Palembang. That question is also not entirely correct. That doesn't mean there has never been conflict in Palembang. The conflicts that have occurred mainly involve the Chinese community. Zaki and Mardiyah (ZAIN ZAKI 2019) recorded two occasions that resulted in the loss of life and property to the Chinese community in Palembang.

First, in 1947, due to the five days and five nights of fighting starting January 1, 1947, between KNIL and TKR troops. The fighting resulted in popular anger and had an impact on parties suspected of being pro-Allied, and the Chinese community was greatly affected by the riots. Around 2050, Chinese people died, 1000 were injured, 600 were missing, and 900 houses were burned down. This incident also involved the Indian community of Palembang; around 50 of their shops were burnt down. (Zed 2003, 68) The second incident was during the May 1998 riots, as excess reform demands led to communal conflict. Again, the Chinese community was affected. In Palembang itself, many Chinese-owned shops were burned down, as well as Chinese people became victims of persecution. Nanda Julian (2015) notes that the Chinese shops that were looted were mostly in markets on the banks of the Musi River, such as Pasar 16 Ilir, Pasar 7 Ulu, Pasar 10 Ulu, Pasar Plaju and Pasar Lemabang. (Julian 2015)

Apart from the conflict that emerges, the potential for conflict exists in a latent form, in the form of stereotypes and biases in judging people according to their ethnicity. Hardi (2019), in his ethnographic research on communication patterns between ethnic Malays and Chinese in Palembang, noted that Malays consider Chinese people unwilling to mingle and like to organize; on the other hand, Chinese people think Malay people tend to be lazy,

untrustworthy, and like to show off.(Nora Meilinda Hardi 2021) On the other hand, this statement is partially correct, considering that Palembang is a multicultural city. There are many tribes and ethnicities inhabiting Palembang, such as Malay, Arab, Chinese, Javanese, Bugis, Batak, Minang, and so on. Likewise, with religion, all six religions live in Palembang. Interestingly, for more than two decades, the harmony between tribes and religions has been maintained well.

Based on the literature search, there are few studies on the relationship between Arabs, Malays, and Chinese. Especially the Arab community and other communities. This is very important because the Arab group is very influential in the structure of Palembang society, both in culture, economics, and politics. Arabs and Malays have the same identity in terms of belief, namely Islam. Islam is a strong identity held by both tribes, and it allows the Arab tribe to blend in well and occupies a special position in the structure of Palembang society. This special position can be seen from their role in the Sultanate of Palembang Darussalam (1659-1823) as intellectual advisors to the Kingdom. They introduced the Arabic script and adopted it into the Malay language known as Arab Jawi. This script eventually became the Sultanate's official script for writing laws.

The Arab community is an old colony in this city, but their interaction with other communities in Palembang, especially with the Chinese, has rarely been studied. The Arabs in Palembang have considerable influence, even though, in terms of numbers, they are a minority. At the same time, the Chinese community is a minority with a population of around 70,000. In Palembang, the Chinese community has been involved in conflicts. So what about the Arab tribe, which amounts to less than 10,000 people? How is their interaction with other tribes, especially Chinese and Malay? From the above background, this research tries to see how the form of communicative accommodation between the Arab, Chinese, and Malay communities has allowed the three to coexist until now in Palembang.

RESEARCH SETTINGS

Palembang has always been known as a cosmopolitan city. This city is not only visited or settled by various ethnicities. But more than that, each ethnic group significantly contributes to shaping the city's culture. The variety of local cuisines is a testament to the role of Chinese and Arab groups, such as the Chinese fusion pempek and the egg martabak with curry sauce, a fusion of Indian and Arab. In addition, there are also other artifacts in Palembang, from the shape of buildings to the art of songket weaving, which is inseparable from various kinds of intercultural mixing. However, the process only runs briefly; it takes a long time to form the acculturation process. Acculturation is a fusion process between the values, practices, and cultural identification of two or more different cultures.(Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J. B., Zamboanga, B. L., & Szapocznik 2010)

In the process, acculturation is always preceded by an appreciation or respect from the host culture to the immigrant culture. There is also something that makes the acculturation

process work well when the immigrants have a great culture (great tradition) with a little tradition (little tradition). (Redfield 1955) In Palembang, there is no dominant and dominant culture. This is because the results of the visible culture are a form of mutual influence (shared), and there is respect for each culture, which enriches the cultural repertoire of Palembang.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Inter-ethnic Interaction Pattern in Palembang

Palembang's geographical condition allows it to be a bustling trade center. The city has a natural transportation route in the form of a river that serves as a hub between the hinterland and the coast of the Malacca Strait. From the sea route, Palembang became a haven from pirates; its 100 to 3000 m riverbank allowed it to become a natural fortress that could ward off pursuing pirates, while from the hinterland, people could easily sell their produce to Palembang through the river route wonder Palembang was an ideal market and was visited by foreigners such as Chinese, Arab Indians and Europeans and also a meeting place for natives from all over Southern Sumatra. According to Anthony Reid, Palembang was an important city in the era of commerce in Southeast Asia in the period 1450-1680. And the average wave of Arab and Chinese arrivals gradually from that period. (Reid 1993, 62–131)

Arabs and Chinese in Palembang can occupy the social strata of society and, in their way, have been able to establish cooperation with the sultanate. The existence of the Chinese in Palembang is older than the sultanate. They have been in the city since the 16th century. By the 17th and 18th centuries, the Chinese had completely integrated into the indigenous community through marriage and conversion. Over the centuries some Chinese married local women, serving as cultural brokers between China and Southeast Asia and fostering hybrid communities. Others maintained their cultural heritage. (Lockard 2013) Even some of the people from the palace circle were of Chinese descent. Some of them were descendants of the Hui tribe from China who had already converted to Islam before they arrived in Palembang. (Zain 2017)

During 1900-1930, the city also transformed into a cosmopolitan hub, influenced by the transnational cultures facilitated by both social (multiethnic) and economic (global trade) dynamics. These elements collectively propelled the emergence of Palembang as a pivotal cosmopolitan center under the Dutch East Indies colonial administration. According to (Zed, 2003), (Santun, 2010), (Utama, 2017), and (Abubakar et al., 2020), the crucial role of economic and political factors was underscored in the urban transition. The rapid advancements in economy, politics, and technology also propelled Palembang evolution into a metropolitan city with global relations. In the 20th century, Palembang became a cosmopolitan city with global connections. (Wargadalem, Putra, dan Wasino 2023)

The role of China in Palembang's economy is mainly in commerce. In the 19th century, in commerce, they worked as retailers and intermediaries, mainly in the commodities of

Pepper and Tin. Tin was the main commodity of the Palembang Sultanate. Bangka, under the rule of the Sultan of Palembang, was rich in Tin, and the Chinese took on the role of partners of the Sultan of Palembang for this commodity. This Chinese intermediary brought large-scale tin laborers from mainland China at the end of the 19th century. When the VOC monopolized the trade, the role of the Chinese as the Sultan's intermediary gradually became marginalized. However, in this situation, the Chinese were able to adapt well. They then shifted their role as intermediaries for commodities from the interior to the city, where the Dutch trade monopoly did not reach the interior. During the reign of the Dutch East Indies Colonial Government, the Chinese were still trusted to be intermediary traders between the indigenous population in the interior, especially plantation products such as rubber. (Zed 2003, 38–40)

As is well known, the Palembang Sultanate was an enclave for the Islamic kingdoms in the archipelago. Every Islamic sultanate always needs prophetic legitimacy, which can be obtained from the Arabs. It seems that the Islamic sultanates also continued the tradition of caste classifications of society, whereas the Sayyids continued the social class of brahmins, intellectuals, or priests of religious experts. In the Palembang Sultanate, the role of Arabs of Sayyid descent was increasingly important, as evidenced by Arabic or Malay Jawi writing, which replaced renting letters to write the rules of the royal bureaucracy. The Law of Simboer Cahaya and the Rules of the State of Palembang are examples of the use of Malay Jawi letters. From this position, the Arabs played a large role in the process of Islamization or the ongoing process of da'wah of Islam, not only through their clergy and schools or madrassas but also through the printing of the Al Quran and Islamic religious books. For example, in Palembang, there is the oldest Quran printing company in Indonesia, and this printing business experienced glory in the early 20th century as the Palembang people began to strengthen their awareness of religion.

Inter-ethnic Interaction in The Economic Field

Its historical journey has brought Palembang to become one of the cities that has a variety of ethnicities, namely Chinese, Arabic and Indian, which live side by side in harmony with the native Palembang. Several buildings that indicate multiculturalism are houses of worship and certain ethnic villages. (Yusuf, Alian, dan Dhita 2020) Palembang has long been known as a trading city. Trading activities grew rapidly from the glory days of Srivijaya until the Dutch colonialism period. Palembang's natural landscape, which consists of rivers, can influence the population's thinking. If most of the inhabitants of Java have a farming character, the people of Palembang have a trading character with the river as their trading arena. (Melisa 2017) Interaction, trade, and friendship in life between communities in the Palembang area rely a lot on the existence of rivers as the main route. Not only have mobility and migration changed as an implication of development, but the pattern of population settlement has also changed following the pattern of development that occurs. (Zulhidayati dan Sudarwanto 2024)

The majority of Arab descendants prefer trade as their livelihood and economic needs. Some run trading businesses such as building materials, motorcycle repair shops, household furniture, photocopy and stationery, batik and clothing shops, boutiques, Muslimah clothes, bookstores, and perfume and restaurant businesses. It can be seen that there has been a balance of work between people of Arab descent and the Palembang Malay community, even though at the beginning of their arrival to Palembang, the Arabs only worked as traders and ship owners. (Apriana 2021)

Chinese and Indigenous people dominate Palembang's business market, while Arab businesses are less prominent. This is because the number of this ethnicity is very small compared to the Chinese and Indigenous. The number of Arabs is estimated to be around 6000 in Palembang. However, Arabs still run more specific businesses, but the commodities traded by these three ethnicities are partly different. For example, in Pasar 16, it can be seen that Arabs sell a lot of religious equipment such as mukena, prayer mat covers, religious books, and Hajj souvenirs such as dates, zam zam water, raisins, and so on. In addition, Arabs are also famous for trading perfumes. In Palembang, many perfume shops scattered throughout the city are owned by this ethnic group. Interestingly, although the business of Arabs is not so developed compared to the past during the Palembang sultanate, the influence of this ethnicity on the social and religious landscape of Palembang society is still quite large.

Meanwhile, in the economic landscape of Palembang, the role of ethnic Chinese is very important. Chinese people control a lot of the trade sector, ranging from small retail such as shop stores to large ones such as malls or shopping centers. From here, it is clear that the relationship is between traders and customers, as well as between employers and employees. The Chinese have a principle of maintaining a balance in doing business between merchants and customers and in the relationship between business owners and workers. This principle is known as Guanxi.

In a personal context, Guanxi is a relationship between two people where one person can influence the other and vice versa or can influence or trust each other. (Penner 2011) In the business world, the Guanxi principle has two domains; the first is social engagement within the scope of business, such as suppliers, buyers, and brokers, and even establishing good relations with competitors. The second domain is social engagement with the government in the national and local scope. The art of doing business means the power of influence in every hierarchy of life. Therefore, many see Guanxi as social capital and a strategic instrument for the success of a business.

The traditional values of their culture influence Chinese business culture. The traditional values of their culture influence Hokkien Chinese business culture. Their business culture consists of Guanxi and time management. Guanxi, which is a network of relationships, is very important and is based on the values of solidarity, loyalty, and courtesy. They tend to value time highly. (Legista, Ali, dan Djausal 2021) With Guanxi, a company can obtain

confidential information, increase their knowledge of regulations, and know bureaucratic channels to expedite their business, such as easy licensing and easy access to other sources of capital. So in a business, interpersonal relationships always precede bureaucratic relationships in business.

It seems that this value is a reference for the Chinese group in Palembang that is always held, and makes their business able to survive and adapt well. One example of the principle of mutual trust in Guanxi ethics in daily life can be seen from the experience of Alam, a Palembang Malay from Plaju. Before he was accepted to work in a Chinese-owned shipping equipment shop in Palembang, he had tried to apply for a job in an Arab-owned shop. According to him, in an Arab-owned shop, if you are not well known, such as a member of the majlis, you will not be accepted to work in his shop. Unlike the Chinese, as long as they need workers, anyone who applies is easily accepted to work.

The relationship pattern shows the integration between the three tribes in the socio-economic landscape. While the Arabs in Palembang still have a strong influence in the socio-religious field, on the other hand, the Chinese have a large role in the economic field. Although both ethnicities are minorities, they can adapt which makes these two groups able to survive and multiply, as well as making Palembang's distinctive cultural characteristics.

Arab-Chinese-Malay culture is a unity in coloring the culture, tradition, religion and social life of the Palembang Malay community. From their Malay entity to maturity until they can connect with the global community. Trade relations, cultural acculturation, and the spread of religion have led to a phenomenon that is deeply rooted in Palembang Malay society with a mixture of cultures that exist among the three ethnicities. Chinese, Arabs and Malays have a cultural attachment that cannot be separated from each other. These three ethnicities make Southeast Asia a vehicle for the emergence of a new civilization that displays something different from what was brought from their home countries, namely China and Arabia. The culture that built into a unifying force between the three. (Hamidah 2022)

In addition to integration in the socio-economic pattern above, other forms of social integration are realized in the form of inter-ethnic cooperation interactions covering various aspects such as language, education, religion, economy, community activities, art, marriage and social-cultural rituals. This interaction allows for cooperation so that it is possible to get to know and understand each other between ethnicities in Palembang.

Inter-ethnic Interaction in Language

Ethnic or ethnic groups or ethnic groups are groups of people whose groups identify themselves with each other, generally based on ancestry that is considered the same. Ethnic identity is marked by recognition from other people and the characteristics of the group itself, for example, similarities in culture, religion, language, behavior, and biological characteristics. Ethnicity is a basic classification of a social organization whose membership is based on similarities of origin, history, culture, religion, and language. It maintains its

identity through distinctive ways and traditions that are maintained, for example, ethnic Chinese, ethnic Arabs, and ethnic Tamil-India. The term tribe is starting to be abandoned because it is associated with primitiveness, while the term ethnicity is felt to be more neutral. In the Indonesian encyclopedia, it is stated that the term ethnicity means a social group in a social or cultural system that has a certain meaning or position because of heredity, custom, religion, language, and so on. (Samiha, Candra, dan Rusdi 2023)

Cultural communication is an essential area of study with wide-ranging implications for understanding ethnic adaptation and intercultural relations. A comprehensive approach encompassing various disciplines and theoretical perspectives enriches our understanding of the complex dynamics between ethnic groups in specific regions. (Yusalia dkk. 2023)

Linguistically, the people of Palembang use the Palembang language, which is still part of the Malay language family. Palembang people call the language baso pelembang. The naming consists of a baso component, which stands for behavior, meaning to language, as well as the general designation Palembang from the city of Palembang. The emergence of linguistic patterns that are distinctive and different from Malay, in general, makes the mention of Palembang more popular than the Palembang dialect of Malay. In addition, the Palembang language has also become the lingua franca for the people of South Sumatra. This is due to the position of South Sumatra Province, which has 6 major language groups and 12 indigenous tribes with a homogeneous society with culture and language. (Izzati, Rais, dan Yustanto 2022)

In terms of language, Palembang Malay is an everyday language used in daily conversations between ethnic groups. Arabs no longer use Arabic, both in the environment of their relatives and families. In daily life and with anyone, they still use the Palembang language. The Chinese still maintain their Chinese language, such as the use of the Hokkien dialect in the Hokkien tribe and Cantonese for the Khonghu tribe. But the language used to talk to new people they meet and to the entire indigenous population is the Palembang language.

Inter-ethnic Interaction in Education

In terms of education, Arabs in Palembang have schools that are characterized by Islam, for example. Arriyad Arab Islamic Boarding School, Adabiyah College, school This school is open to anyone who wants to enter an Islamic-based school, not specifically for Arabs only. Even so, some Arabs also send their children to public schools that allow inter-ethnic encounters.

The Chinese also opened schools for the public, although some established faith-based schools. An example of a public school is Kusuma Bangsa School, where students come from various ethnicities. This school actually accepts Muslims to study there. This school is a public school like any other public school, and they even provide Islamic lessons for students who are Muslim. There is no Chinese impression in this school; the impression for the general public is that this school is elite and superior, and only people from the upper

middle class attend this school.

In addition, public schools are the realm of inter-ethnic encounters, as in some schools where the three ethnicities live, for example, in Seberang Ulu, as well as those in Pasar Kuto, indirectly teaching multicultural insights. Learners share the same responsibilities such as cleaning, the same tasks and also the same rights to get teaching. Children are also encouraged to be tolerant of each other's religions and beliefs.

Interaction in religion

In terms of religion, the Arabs have considerable influence on the religious structure of the Islamic Malay community. At the same time, many Chinese people in Palembang have embraced Islam, which means integrating themselves into the Palembang Malay community. The number of Chinese Muslims alone in Palembang is estimated to reach 3500 people. (Interview with H Didi). Actually, by converting to Islam, the Chinese began to erode their cultural orientation by integrating themselves into the majority culture. However, it is interesting that some of them, even though they have converted, still carry out their Chinese traditions, such as celebrating Cap Go Meh with their families; sometimes, some of them also still do Ceng Beng. This is because there are similar values in China and Islam, especially regarding high respect for parents and ancestors. This means that the presence of Chinese Muslims can bridge the differences between the Chinese community, which is perceived to be non-Islamic, while Malay and Arab are Islamic.

Interaction in the Social Community

In the realm of community social activities, Chinese and Arabs in Palembang who live in public housing do not hesitate to attend Thanksgiving events for weddings and births of children, as well as death ceremonies. This is also the case with various kinds of neighborhood activities, such as meetings of fathers or mothers and cooperation between residents in maintaining environmental cleanliness. On national holidays such as Independence Day on August 17, they celebrate together with competitions, decorate the village together and do other activities such as the Telok Abang Festival, which is an annual event in Palembang.

Inter-ethnic Interaction in Arts

In the field of arts, both Arab and Chinese ethnicities have their own artistic characteristics. Among the Arabs in Palembang, the art of gambus music and marawis, as well as Sufi dances, are quite developed. Not only that, these arts are also quite set among the Palembang Malay community. Indeed, some Arab arts are synonymous with religion; for example, in every Maspuroh majlis, which Arabs, gambus and marawis initiated are often performed along with Shalawat Nabi; however, some arts are committed and "responded to" by the Palembang Malay community, especially Gambus music and Sufi dances at wedding ceremonies.

The art is indeed developed in Arab villages, but the players are also from Palembang Malay people. Gambus and Marawis are not exclusive to Arabs but have become quite popular music genres in the community. Mass media and social media play a role in socializing this art, as is the case with the very popular Gambus Sabyan music group. In Palembang, Gambus music groups are not only in the Arab community but have begun to spread among residents such as mosque youth groups, pesantren, students and so on.

While many Chinese arts are still played specifically for Chinese people, such as Hokkien puppetry or Hokkien opera, in Palembang, this art group is called Sam Khau Bun Gei. This art is struggling to exist because, for the Chinese people alone, it is not very popular; this art is only performed every Cap Go Meh and also every temple anniversary celebration. The popular art is Barongsai, where members of this art not only come from Chinese people but also Palembang Malays. At the same time, ethnic Chinese arts that are open, both in terms of players and trainers, are Kungfu and Wushu martial arts. These martial arts are very popular, as evidenced by the opening of this martial arts college in Palembang.

Social Rituals: Spaces of Interethnic and Religious Encounters

Awareness of plurality in the community can be fostered through the opening of inter-ethnic and religious meeting spaces. It has been mentioned above that there are several inter-ethnic meeting spaces such as schools, social activities in the community, art studios or clubs and so on. However, most of these meeting spaces are not related to religion. These inter-ethnic and religious meeting spaces take the form of rituals which, in the process, involve a plural society. Social ritual linguistically refers to a form of (spiritual) ritual that has a social impact or, in other words, a ritual that not only involves one religion or ethnicity but allows it to affect the socio-economic life of different ethnicities and religions.

These social rituals in Palembang are the Cap Go Meh Celebration on Kemaro Island for the Chinese and the Kubro Pilgrimage for the Arabs. These rituals, indeed, started from one ethnicity but have a broad impact on the social life of Palembang people in general and become a space for encounters between ethnicities and religions. These encounters may foster recognition and understanding between ethnicities and beliefs, which in turn can lead to tolerance, respect for differences and the prevention of radicalism.

Even so, this discourse is relatively new in the study of conflict resolution. Still, in the case of Palembang, several social rituals in this city are at least able to foster public interest, look forward to each year and involve all levels of society from various classes and religions, either directly or indirectly. Or at least, there is a kind of collective awareness that ethnic and religious differences in this city can actually bring benefits and become a common pride as citizens of the pluralistic Palembang community.

The word profit here is understood as something pragmatic. It is based on humans as social actors, agents who, with rational reasoning, act in accordance with the structures facing them. In an inter-ethnic and inter-religious relationship, if you imagine it, three things

might happen regarding the process of profits obtained from this social ritual. First, from an ethnic and religious perspective, organizers can at least show their existence, identity or possibly status compared to others, in addition to their appreciation of spirituality. Secondly, in terms of ethnicities and other religions or guests, they can gain material benefits through the existing economic cycle, or they can also gain spiritual appreciation if the ritual includes the same religion or even different religions but meets the same spiritual point of view. It can also strengthen social relations such as friendship because, rationally, this activity means strengthening or adding to the network. For the government, this is an advantage because it has tourism potential, which can stimulate the community's economy. From there, the government usually does not remain silent. This institution also participates in promoting it, supporting it and making it a regional potential that will continue to be preserved.

Idul Fitri and Idul Adha

Eid al-Fitr is known as the biggest holiday for Muslims in Indonesia. In essence, it is known as the day of victory for Muslims after enduring thirst, hunger, and lust after fasting during Ramadan. It is said to be the biggest holiday in Indonesia because the government usually imposes leave or long holidays, as well as incentives for employees and workers, both public and private. On this holiday, Muslims also have a tradition of going home or returning to their hometowns and sharing their good fortune with other people in need. On this holiday, too, Muslims have a tradition of staying in touch and forgiving each other, accompanied by a banquet of various dishes in their respective homes. In Palembang, the tradition of gathering in the Arab Village during Eid al-Fitr is known as rumpak rumpakan. Rumpak rumpakan is a tradition of visiting people's homes among people of Arab descent. It is carried out en masse and involves many people, usually young people. This tradition begins after performing Eid al-Fitr prayers, gathering in the courtyard of the mosque or an elder's house, and walking towards the home of someone who is considered an old person or figure there. Usually, each journey is accompanied by tambourine music, chanting prayers, and starting to enter the house by praying together, followed by shaking hands and enjoying the food provided by the host. Interestingly, this tradition is observed not only by Arabs but also by Palembang Malays who live around Arab villages.

Meanwhile, for Malays, the tradition of friendship is called sanjo or visiting people's homes. This tradition is also usually carried out by young people visiting those who are considered old and then to their relatives or friends. During Eid al-Fitr, the host usually prepares money to give to the children. Interestingly, some children, regardless of religion or ethnicity, will hunt for this money in the homes of residents, both known and unknown. In Palembang, around the Chinatown complex or in public housing, Chinese people of different religions do not hesitate to visit Muslim homes.

Likewise, in government and private institutions, whether owned by Muslims or non-Muslims, the Eid al-Fitr moment is also used to hold *halal bi-halal* events; apart from the tradition of this event, it is used to get to know each other's families; regardless of religion.

Based on the information of an informant who works for a Chinese company in Palembang, in his office, after every day off from work, there is a halal bi-halal event even though the owner of the company is not Muslim.

Meanwhile, Eid al-Adha for Muslims is a moment of submission to Allah, which is marked by the slaughter of sacrificial animals. On this holiday, sacrificial meat is legally distributed to anyone regardless of religion or ethnicity. Priority is given to sacrificial meat to less fortunate residents, but also to residents. In Palembang, the mosque that carried out the slaughter of Qurbani animals, they distributed the meat to residents even though the residents were of non-Muslim Chinese descent.

Chinese New Year and Cap Go Meh holidays

Chinese New Year is a national holiday to commemorate Chinese New Year. Of the series of Chinese New Year holidays, the peak and biggest celebration is on the 15th day after Chinese New Year, which is called Cap Go Meh. Cap Go Meh in Palembang is the most festive holiday, and a grand event is held, namely, a celebration ceremony on Kemaro Island, specifically at the Hok Tjing Rio Temple. The most prominent thing about the holiday is the distribution of Angpao. Angpao is a gift containing money in a red envelope. For the Chinese, their Angpao is distributed to everyone, young and old, and from any ethnicity or religion. During the Cap Go Meh celebration, lots of people from all nationalities flock to Kemaro Island to get Angpao.

Interestingly, the Chinese have provided free kettles to anyone who wants to cross Kemaro Island during this celebration. The Chinese deliberately rented Ketek, or boats belonging to ethnic Malays and Arabs, to facilitate everyone going to the island. The roads around the pier under the Ampera Bridge are crowded with parked vehicles. Residents are exploiting this situation to clear land and earn money from parking rentals. This event is not only interesting to attend because of the Angpao, but there are a series of performance events such as Barongsai performances, Chinese opera and lantern festivals, so it is not surprising that this event is always eagerly awaited by tourists, both local and from abroad. So, there are also many residents of all ethnicities who sell or peddle their wares to visitors who come. For this reason, the Palembang city government always promotes this holiday as a regional tourism event and makes it a tourist attraction in this city.

The Suharto government banned the Chinese New Year and Cap Go Meh celebrations themselves. The Suharto regime was so anti-Chinese that Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967 was issued regarding the display of Chinese customs and culture in public. The reason is that it is considered to disturb people's psychology and slow down the process of assimilation of the Chinese population with the natives. The era of reform is an era of openness to plurality and tolerance. President Gus Dur revoked this impression, and in the end, the Confucian religion was recognized as the "official" religion in Indonesia. President Megawati then made Chinese New Year a national holiday. It was in this era that Chinese

people again dared to show their identity. They are increasingly enriching national culture. Rather than hindering the assimilation process, through their cultural heritage, Chinese people are able to build interaction and integration with local society naturally, as can be seen in the Cap Go Meh celebration on Kemaro Island, Palembang. This day not only brings happiness to Chinese people but also brings joy to the people of Palembang in general.

Kemaro Island, this island is a tourist destination for the city of Palembang. There stands the majestic Pagoda of the Hok Tjing Rio Temple. There is an interesting legend about the origins of this island, regarding the love story between Tan Bun An, a young nobleman from China and Siti Fatimah, a Muslim nobleman from Malay Palembang, who died together and this island was formed. It is said that Tan Bun An, the son of a Chinese nobleman, brought Siti Fatimah home from China to ask for their marriage blessing. Before arriving in Palembang, Tan Bun An tried to see the gift he had given his parents in the urn. He was surprised to see that the jar his parents gave him only contained mustard greens. Because he was annoyed, he then threw all the jars into the river, and unexpectedly, there was a lot of gold inside. Because he didn't want the gold to be wasted, Tan Bun An then threw himself in to get it, but he didn't come to the surface again. Because she was worried about her husband's safety, Siti Fatimah threw herself in with her bodyguards to look for and save Tan. But unfortunately, they never returned, and finally, the land on the river rose, and Kemaro Island was formed. This story also teaches the values of not pursuing too much wealth and charity, which seems to be a reference for Chinese people to build relationships with ethnic Malays.

The two figures are immortalized in their graves, which are located in the Temple. The graves of these two figures are treated as holy graves by the Chinese, with the presence of altars and various forms of offerings. Interestingly, many Malays also make pilgrimages to the tomb for multiple purposes. Based on interviews with indigenous pilgrims from Palembang, the pilgrimage aims to hope for blessings and smooth sustenance. The legend of Pulo Kemaro can be found not only on one site. It is said that Tan Bun An's bodyguard, who also died, was buried at the Chandra Nadi Temple at 10 Ulu. According to Harun, the guard at the Temple was Ju Sin Kong. For Chinese people, he is considered the protector of Palembang City. It is said that he was a devout Muslim. "He performed (prayers) five times a day and died here. He is very kind to the people here. Therefore, an altar was made to remember his goodness, said Harun. Thus, even though they are inside the Tri Dharma Temple, pilgrims are not allowed to offer food or drinks that are haram for Muslims.

This site has various meanings, from a holy place to a tourist destination. As a tourist spot, the wheels of the economy continue to turn and involve residents, especially natives, from boat or ketek rentals to traders, both food, drinks and snacks. The existence of Kemaro Island illustrates patterns of acculturation and multicultural interaction. Even though there are temples in the area, the Kemaro Island site crosses various ethnicities, cultures and religions.

Kubro Pilgrimage

The Kubro pilgrimage is an activity of visiting graves, which is carried out en masse. This means that this pilgrimage is not carried out by individuals but is organized so that it involves many people. The Kubro pilgrimage is a big event in Palembang, which is held every month of Sha'ban or before the fasting month to visit the graves of the Habaib. It is held for three days, usually starting on Friday and ending on Sunday. According to one of the committee members, every year, the pilgrimage is attended by more than 10,000 people from the Muslim community of Palembang, who also come from various regions in Indonesia and abroad.

The series of events carried out are as follows. (1) Pilgrimage to the grave of Al-Habib Ahmad bin Syech Shahab, which is located on Jalan Dr. M. Isa Lr. Gubah 8 Ilir Palembang, this tomb complex is usually called Gubah Duku. (2) Recitation or Raudah at the Ar-Riyadh Islamic Boarding School, which is on Jalan K.H.A. Azhari, Village 13 Ulu Palembang. (3) Pilgrimage to the Ulama and Auliya Cemeteries at Telaga Sewidak and Babussalam/As-Seggaf): this burial complex is located at 14 Ulu. (4) Haul Al-Imam Al-Faqihil Muqaddam Tsani Al-Habib Abdurrahman As-Segaf. He is believed to be a great Waliyullah, born in 739 AH in Tarim City. (5) Haul Al-Habib Abdullah bin Idrus Shahab and Al-Habib Abdurrahman bin Ahmad AlBin Hamid. (6) Al-Habib Abdullah bin Idrus was born in Tarim City in the month of Shafar 1265 H. He is one of the proud figures of the Palembang community. The peak event of the Kubra Pilgrimage activity was centered in Seberang Ilir, Palembang City, including at the Al-Habib Prince Syarif Ali Cemetery. Followed by visiting the cemetery of the kings of the Palembang Darussalam Sultanate in the Tengkreup Crater and the Kambang Koci Cemetery. (7) Marine Tourism on Kemaro Island. Interestingly, tourists who come for the Kubro pilgrimage are invited to visit Kemaro Island, where the real purpose is not for the pilgrimage but for tourism on the island, where, of course, the tourists visit the Hok Tjing Rio Temple.

The Kubro pilgrimage itself is actually a tradition carried out by Arabs in the family environment, which is routinely carried out every month in Sya'ban or Ruwah. Pilgrimage activities or visiting family graves are carried out every month of Sya'ban or Ruwah, which is a tradition of Muslim communities in the archipelago. Likewise, in Palembang, the Malay people themselves carry out this tradition in the same month. For example, the Palembang Darussalam sultanate family routinely carries out the tradition of pilgrimage to the graves of kings every month. Since the 1970s, this activity has also been followed by the general public, especially those who still have a kinship with the Palace. Due to the similarity of these traditions, plus the respect carried out by the Malay Muslim community in Palembang, the mass Kubro Pilgrimage tradition can occur and illustrate not only social interaction between ethnicities but also for Arabs it is an instrument to show their social status in the public sphere, especially Muslims in Palembang. This can be seen from the series of events carried out; the Kubro pilgrimage is carried out mainly by visiting the graves of the Habaib and Aulia and ends with visiting the graves of the kings of Palembang, especially visiting the

grave of a Sultanate Habib, which is in the same complex as the king's grave.

On the other hand, for some Palembang Malays, this tradition is a form of their love for this group. The high level of public interest in attending this event prompted the government to make the event an annual tourism event in Palembang. The reason is none other than that this event can bring in tourists, both local and foreign, which, of course, makes the city's economy vibrant with great benefits felt by the wider community, including various ethnicities and religions in Palembang.

Inter-Ethnic Interaction Model in Palembang, between Arabs, Malays and Chinese

Discussing inter-ethnic interactions in Palembang between Arabs, Malays and Chinese is unique. Even though both of them have also contributed to and acculturated with Malay culture, the two ethnicities, Arab and Chinese, still maintain their distinctive culture. For example, firstly, ethnic Chinese still preserve their language, while some ethnic Arabs no longer retain it, but others still study it as a science in studying Islam. Second, most ethnic Arabs and Chinese still maintain family traditions through kinship ties or family ties through marriages between ethnic groups, which are unique and institutionalized in clan records. Third, most of them are very firm in maintaining religion and rituals related to their ethnic traditions, such as reciting *ratib* for Arabs and ancestral prayers for Chinese. Various characteristics of both ethnicities are produced through family institutions, schools, and organizations, as well as the ethnic groups they founded.

From this, it can be said that the model of adaptation between ethnic Chinese and Arabs and Malay society in Palembang is integration. It is called integration because both ethnicities, on the one hand, are trying to maintain their original identity. Of course, some changes or adjustments occur both to their new environment and to current developments. If it is said that changing religions allows for total assimilation between ethnicities, then that is not entirely the case. Assimilation allows complete fusion and does not require maintaining the original identity. Even Chinese Muslims in Palembang feel they still retain their actual identity, which can be seen through the existence of Chinese Muslim groups. This group is not intended to speed up the process of fusion through religion. Still, it is a way for ethnic Chinese to negotiate between strengthening their Islam and maintaining their Chinese identity.

On the other hand, these two ethnic groups require assimilation and interaction with the Malay community (majority community) in an effort to continue to reproduce and exist while maintaining their social status.

In fact, differences are not a significant problem because Palembang has been famous for centuries among us as cosmopolitan people. Arabs and native Malays are very well integrated because of the similarities in religion and the values believed by Malays towards Arabs from among the *Alawiyyin*. Meanwhile, the interaction patterns between the three ethnic groups range between value-based and transactional interactions. For example, interactions based

on values include the Malay tribe, who consider Arabs to be a group who are role models in religion because of the hereditary factor of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and vice versa; there is an obligation to preach to people with knowledge, for Arabs. The Guanxi philosophy of ethnic Chinese considers that maintaining good relations with everyone is an obligation to maintain balance in life.

Meanwhile, the transactional interaction model is seen in social ritual traditions such as the Cap Go Meh celebration and the Kubro Pilgrimage ritual. These two rituals are not just traditions but are efforts to demonstrate the existence of these two ethnicities to the Palembang public based on economic capital (Chinese) and charisma (Arabs). Even though they are transactional, these two social rituals have proven to be effective in showing harmony between the three ethnic groups in Palembang and have a big influence on social and economic life.

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that these three ethnicities live in one social and economic ecosystem in Palembang. It seems that this is the factor that allows the three of them to continue their lives or adapt well in this city. Even though there are various potential stereotypes between the three, this is not a strong factor in the conflict in Palembang. This value-based and transactional interaction pattern seems to be more prominent in inter-ethnic integration because, basically, humans are rational creatures who consider profits and minimize conflict and risk.

Social rituals are very meaningful for the continuity of inter-ethnic interactions. So, the government must create events that can generate closer integration of the three ethnicities by involving all three in one cultural performance. For this reason, by considering the continuity of existing social rituals, it is necessary to think about appropriate steps to continue to be implemented during the pandemic, especially the Cap Go Meh and Ziarah Kubro events. Considering that the Musi River is where the ecosystem takes place, cooperation between the three ethnic groups is needed to work together to anticipate future damage. Finally, further research is really needed to see how the Musi River ecosystem is a living landscape for these three ethnicities. There is much that has not been discussed in this research regarding how rivers influence their lives and the potential for damage in the future, environmental conservation measures, and models of cooperation between ethnic groups in maintaining their ecological ecosystem. Therefore, in the future, research based on involved action research (Participatory Action Research) is also needed to solve the problems above.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Apriana. 2021. "Faktor Ekonomi dan Agama Sebagai Salah Satu Faktor Pendorong Asimilasi Arab-Melayu Palembang." *Sejarah dan Peradaban Islam* I, no. 3: 1–16.
- Hamidah, Hamidah. 2022. "Dinamika dan Tradisi Kelompok Minoritas Budha Dalam Masyarakat Islam Melayu Palembang." *Medina-Te : Jurnal Studi Islam* 18, no. 1 (November): 54–75. <https://doi.org/10.19109/medinate.v18i1.6614>.
- Izzati, Wakit A. Rais, dan Henry Yustanto. 2022. "The Impact of Cultural Contact Between Javanese and Palembang Malay On the Language System In the City of Palembang." *Ichss* 2: 1–11.
- Julian, Nanda. 2015. "Kriminalitas di Palembang: Kerusuhan dan penjarahan di kota Palembang pada bulan Mei 1998." *Jurnal Criksetra* 4, no. 8: 146–52.
- Legista, Veina, Suprihatin Ali, dan Gita Paramita Djausal. 2021. "Budaya Bisnis Etnis Tionghoa Hokkian di Kota Prabumulih." *Jurnal Perspektif Bisnis* 4, no. 2: 138–48. <https://doi.org/10.23960/jpb.v4i2.79>.
- Lockard, Craig A. 2013. "Chinese Migration and Settlement in Southeast Asia Before 1850: Making Fields From the Sea." *History Compass* 11, no. 9: 765–81. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12079>.
- Melisa. 2017. "Ampera dan Perubahan Orientasi Ruang Perdagangan Kota Palembang 1920an-1970an (Ampera and Changes in the Orientation of Palembang's Trade Spaces in the 1920s-1970s)." *Lembaran Sejarah* 9, no. 1: 51–68. <https://doi.org/10.22146/lembaran-sejarah.23768>.
- Nora Meilinda Hardi. 2021. "Komunikasi Antarbudaya Etnis Tionghoa Dan Pribumi Di Kota Palembang." *Jurnal RASI* 1, no. 1: 73–91. <https://doi.org/10.52496/rasi.v1i1.31>.
- Penner, Pierre Ostrowski & Gwen. 2011. *It's All Chinese to Me: An Overview of Culture & Etiquette in China*. Singapore: Tuttle Publishing.
- Redfield, Robert. 1955. "The Social Organization of Tradition." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 15, no. 1: 13–21. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2942099>.
- Reid, Anthony. 1993. *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: Volume 2: Expansion and Crisis*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Samaha, Yulia Tri, Andi Candra, dan Amir Rusdi. 2023. "Internalization of The Value of Islamic Education Through The System of Kindness and Religious Harmony in Village Communities of 10 ULU Palembang." *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 01: 181–90. <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v12i01.3830>.

- Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J. B., Zamboanga, B. L., & Szapocznik, J. 2010. "Rethinking the concept of acculturation: Implications for theory and research." *American Psychologist* 65, no. 4: 237–51. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019330>.
- Wargadalem, Farida Ratu, Diki Tri Apriansyah Putra, dan Wasino. 2023. "Cosmopolitan Palembang: Palembang's Interconnection and Global Trade in 1900-1930." *Paramita* 33, no. 2: 255–66. <https://doi.org/10.15294/paramita.v33i2.45844>.
- Yusalia, Henny, Atwar Bajari, Dadang Suganda, dan Siti Karlinah. 2023. "Cultural Communication and Ethnic Intermingling: A study of Chinese Descendants in Kampung Kapitan Palembang." *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development* 11, no. 11: e877. <https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i11.877>.
- Yusuf, Syafruddin, Alian Alian, dan Aulia Novemy Dhita. 2020. "Historical Building: Symbol of Harmonious Multicultural in 'Venice from East.'" *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 513: 489–94.
- ZAIN ZAKI, ANISATUL. 2019. "The Dynamic Of Malay Muslim Chinese Realtion In Contemporary Palembang." *Islam Realitas* 5, no. 1: 28–41.
- Zain, Zaki Faddad Syarif. 2017. "TIPOLOGI IDENTITAS MUSLIM TIONGHOA DI PALEMBANG SUMATERA SELATAN." *Journal of Materials Processing Technology* 18, no. 2: 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.19109/jia.v18i2.2356>.
- Zed, Mestika. 2003. *Kepialangan Politik dan Revolusi Palembang 1900-1950*. Jakarta: Pustaka LP3ES Indonesia.
- Zulhidayati, Indah, dan Aan Sudarwanto. 2024. "The Existence of Bangsawan Theatre in Palembang Viewed From the Demographic Aspect." *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 07, no. 01: 286–91. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v7-i01-38>.