

Orientalist's View of the Malay Community: A Focus on R. O. Winstedt

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Received: December 22, 2016

Accepted: February 27, 2017

ABSTRACT

R.O. Winstedt was an orientalist who served in Malaya as a British administrator. His thought was based on the studies of classical orientalists with negative perception of Islam. This article focuses on the views of Winstedt in respect to the Malay community in Malaya based on analysis of his selected works. The authors will first describe the orientalist approach in evaluating the Malay community and then analyses the works of Winstedt in order to ascertain the validity of facts in his work in regard to personal evaluation on the people of Malaya. The authors have applied the method of historiography, comparison and content analysis to analyses these views. The authors also applied the median principle in order to produce a fair and impartial study. The result of the study reveals that the writings of Winstedt have a biased point of view and sceptical towards the Malay community. He believes that the community has been affected by the culture and practices of Hinduism in each pattern of life including intelligence (local genius) in building a civilization. Therefore, this article will cover the views of R.O. Winstedt towards the society and culture in Malaya.

KEYWORDS: R.O. Winstedt, Orientalist, Malay Community, Malaya.

INTRODUCTION

According to [10], orientalism is a political ideology that seeks to colonize and destroy the Eastern cultures particularly Islam and to feature the Western civilization as great and dominating the world. As for [20], orientalism is a way to understand the world of the East based on the observation by Western society. Said's opinion covers three different but intertwining matters namely:

- a. Orientalists are individuals who teach, write or perform a series of research works about the Eastern world. This group consists of anthropologists, sociologists or philologists.
- b. Orientalism is a way of thinking that is based on the differences of ontology and epistemology between East and West.
- c. Orientalism is a discipline by which the West uses to dominate, restructure and dominate Eastern societies. It creates interest statements about the Eastern world particularly regarding religion, teaching and dominating the Eastern world and eventually changing it according to their needs.

In [3] also offers a similar view regarding orientalism. It states that "The way in which the Orient has been represented in Europe through an imaginative geography that divides East and West, confirming Western superiority and enabling, if not actually constituting, European domination of those negatively portrayed regions known as East". These three views clearly demonstrate that the West aimed towards dominion on the Eastern world which includes culture and religion as well as cultivating ideologies based on rationalism into the minds of the colonized lands.

Winstedt's contribution as an orientalist who studied the Malay Peninsula was significant to the British in order to strengthen control of Malaya. His research covered the history, culture, literature and the Islamic legal system. When he was in Malaya, Winstedt tried to make a variety of changes that were alien to the community based on his personal conservative views on Islam such as the claim that only Western power alone can provide humanity with progress and modernity, not Islam. The authors will focus on four selected works of Winstedt: The Malays: A Cultural History, Shaman, Saiva and Sufi; A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic, A History of Malaya and Kitab Tawarikh Melayu in order to elaborate on his views of the Malays and Islam in Malaya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the authors' study on previous works which have focused on Winstedt's views of the Malays in Malaya, in [8, 12] looked at Winstedt's stance in the field of literature. Both researchers have made literature as a method for analysing Winstedt's thinking approach in assessing community in Malaya based on his orientalist

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approach and the extent that he was able to understand the history of the Malays as described in literature. In [8] believes that even when orientalist learnt the Malay language, they were not necessarily skilled in evaluating the original works due to the use of jawi script, and some of them were unable to master the language and writing well.

Other researchers like [17, 22] have commented on a similar issue. For example, in [22] states that “Winstedt’s commentary, published in his well-known book “A History of Classical Malay Literature” demonstrates his conviction in the diffusive impact of Indian culture within Malay Society and folk literature. He asserts that Indian sociocultural is the main source of folk stories for a budding Malay folklore and subsequently the Arabic-Persian imaginary through the spread of Islam in the region”. These two researchers mainly refer to Winstedt’s A History of Classical Malay Literature as a basis for their main argument.

In [2], on the other hand focused on Winstedt’s influence the field of education for the Malay community. During Winstedt’s involvement in Malayan education, in [40] has offered a concept of ‘rural bias’ and determined the level of education of the Malays for a quarter of the century. In [2] argued, “Dipandang menerusi kacamata pihak pentadbir kolonial British pula, langkah-langkah yang telah diatur oleh Winstedt dalam menyekolahkan kanak-kanak Melayu itu adalah akur dan selari dengan garis-garis dasar kolonialisme terhadap anak-anak tanah jajahan. Mereka tidak dikehendaki disekolahkan pada tahap yang lebih tinggi, hanya sekadar mencapai peringkat celik huruf sahaja; sebaliknya mereka diperlukan dapat mencapai ketrampilan-ketrampilan tertentu yang bercorak “motor skills” atau vokasional. Ketrampilan-ketrampilan ini akan memungkinkan mereka berfungsi sebagai buruh kasar dalam skema ekonomi British untuk koloni-koloni mereka” (Seen through the eyes of the British colonial administrator, the steps that have been set by Winstedt in schooling Malay children embraced and corresponded with the bottom lines of colonialism for children of the colony. They were not required to be schooled at a higher level; merely reaching basic literacy. Instead they were required to achieve certain ‘motor skills’ or vocational training. These skills will enable them to work as labourers in the scheme of the British economy for their colonies). In [4] also discusses Winstedt’s tactics in controlling the writing of Za’aba which attempted to evoke the spirit of nationalism within the Malay community during that time.

In regard to discipline of history, the authors refer to works of [1, 15, 19]. However, the scope of discussions on Winstedt by [1, 19] were not specifically concentrated on Winstedt alone. In [1] mainly used one of Winstedt’s work, A History of Johore for fact-sharing, while [19] was more focused on orientalist approach including Winstedt towards the people of Malaya. In contrast, in [15] an article was leaning towards studying Winstedt as a figure. However, the objective of his study was on Winstedt’s perspective towards Islamic legislation in Malaya. In [23] research also discusses a similar topic, though it was not solely focused on Winstedt, but rather elucidates the orientalist approach from purely a contextual perspective.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the views of Winstedt towards the Malay community through some of his selected works, namely The Malays: A Cultural History, Shaman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic, A History of Malaya and Kitab Tawarikh Melayu. Based on previous studies, the authors found that focused studies on Winstedt are few and most of them have been focusing on the aspect of the role of orientalist as well as popular focus in the field of literature. His other disciplines have yet to receive more attention. Thus, the selected four of his works is seen as encompassing all of his studies regarding culture, society, literature and Islam in Malaya which fulfills the focus of the present study.

METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on Winstedt’s view towards the Malays based on the examination of his selected works: The Malays: A Cultural History, Shaman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic, A History of Malaya and Kitab Tawarikh Melayu. For the purpose of this study, the authors have applied three approaches namely the historical method, comparative method and content analysis.

Historical Method

This method refers to the study of a problem from the historical perspective. It uses chronological and historical background to understand the origin of a development with reference to evidences and facts of history from primary and secondary sources in the respective field. The authors have applied this method in identifying orientalist’s approach in evaluating the Malays in Malaya and Winstedt’s view of the Malay community. Incidentally, this method is also taken to analyse Winstedt’s works.

Comparative Method

This method is based on the middle approach in making evaluation. It aims to produce a study that is fair and unbiased. Any information obtained will be analyzed to avoid sceptical understanding and only highlights the mistakes made by one side. The authors have applied this method to analyse Winstedt’s works that are related to his view of the Malay people, and consequently compared other academics with similar and dissimilar views. It aims to dispel doubtful views on the Malay community.

Content Analysis

This method is used for analysing data on primary and secondary sources on the issues in this study. Through this method, the authors analyse the work of Winstedt in terms the quality of his writing as well as the extent of his allegations against the Malay community, who were claimed as uncivilized because their adherence to Islam. The conclusion of the study is then derived from the final analysis result.

THE ORIENTALIST APPROACH IN EVALUATING THE MALAY COMMUNITY IN MALAYA

During the days of colonial rule in Malaya, the expertise of Orientalist scholars were fully utilized in order to colonize and dominate the people of the colony. The group stressed that it was important for every member of society to be courageous in leaving the traditional practices and religious beliefs in order to succeed in life. The expertise was applied into the thoughts of Western colonizers in several forms including:

First, is by studying the culture of the East in all aspects in both the positives and negatives. This aspect indirectly became a tool of Western colonial, especially the British in providing complete description of the strengths and weaknesses of the Orient. It also served the purpose of strengthening their control on people of the colony [11].

Referring to the work of *The Malay Peninsula* [37], *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of Sir Stamford Raffles* [18], *The Modern Malay* [29] and *Malay Sketches* [27], it can be seen that orientalists have labelled the Malay community with negative images such as lazy, stubborn, pleasure-loving, debt-prone and so on. To fix such weaknesses, the British colonizers were raised as a saviour to the community by introducing a system of education with the concept of secularism that separates worldly knowledge and religious knowledge [32]. However, education was solely devoted to the upper class Malays [29]. According to [25], the Malays were trained to become a vassal to the British to strengthen their power in Malaya. In [13] also views this group as the best medium in dominating the wider Malay community, which traditionally has great respect for the upper class group.

Second, the evolutionism approach; Western civilization is considered as a greater civilization compared to the East [21]. In [26] argues that this great achievement was due to the acceptance of secularism which rejects the importance of religion in people's lives. Eastern societies who still believe in religion were labelled as a nation that rejects progress and should be civilized through the process of colonization. He stated how Raja Muda Abdullah has asked the British to intervene in the State with the aim "to teach him how to rule this unruly country, but the circumstances made that interference alone the duty of the paramount power". The orientalists have also labelled the laws of Islam as static and suitable to be practiced only in the Middle East. In fact, in [27] adds that the overall negative attitude of the Malay community stemmed from their firm belief towards Islam by submitting to fate, being unappreciative of time and rejecting modernity. Therefore, it needed to be changed to introduce Western thought, particularly the legal system, which was seen as more relevant and flexible for the current time.

Third, the diffusions approach; it is an approach that considers the progress made by the Malays was not due to the original attitude such as being diligent and proactive towards progress, but rather was the result of the influenced by foreign cultures such as Arab and Indian [39]. This approach denies the intelligence of the community (local genius) in the building of a great civilization. According to [14], the Malay community did not have a strong grip of Islam and was still influenced by animism and Hinduism. In [5] believes that this approach was based upon anti-Islamic attitudes which spring from the experience of the Crusades and the opposition of the Muslim communities in previous colonies.

SELECTED WORKS OF R. O. WINSTEDT ON THE MALAY COMMUNITY

The Malays: A Cultural History [36]

This work discusses the lives of the Malays in Malaya; the formation of the Hindu belief system until the arrival of Islam. Winstedt also elaborated on customary law, especially Minangkabau. According to him, Islamic law and customary law are two different types of legislation from the orientalist perspective. The work also elucidated upon the formation of the Malay culture, beginning with the Malay kingdom of Malacca to the Malay kingdoms in the Malay regions which were interconnected in terms of history, language, literature and social.

In the introduction, Winstedt was clearly proclaiming this particularly work as the complete study of the Malays in Malaya. He states that: "The conception of culture in this book is implicit in its table of contents. Broadly it is regarded as a body of ideas, practices and techniques that have been cherished by the Malays long enough to affect their way of life, a legacy that gives them heart and interests save their minds from inanition as food saves their bodies". Winstedt believes that the overall life of the community includes a system of belief, culture, language, social and literary influence of Hinduism and Islam which he elaborates that the "Malay culture includes a fear of nature spirits, an instinctive perception of the "unbecoming" rather than of the sinful

and the criminal, the séance of the shaman, the Hindu ritual of a royal installation, the celebration of the Muhammadan New Year, the sermon in the mosque, the pilgrimage to Mecca, Sufi mysticism...”.

Next, Winstedt states that Islam in Malaya was similar to Hinduism as well as being influenced by it. His argument was based on the findings of Marco Polo in 1292 that before the acceptance of Islam on in the Samudera and Pasai, the first system of beliefs held by people was Hindu which was followed by the dominion of Islam throughout the Malay region. Based on this view, Winstedt believes that Islam in Malaya was encrusted with the values of Hinduism which led to Islam as the weaker religion and easily influenced by other beliefs. In addition, Winstedt made a comparison between Islamic law and custom especially Minangkabau including in the matters of marriage, crime and inheritance. Winstedt views that the Adat Perpatih and Adat Temenggong were two types of different laws in Malaya. He believes that there were influences of Islam and Hindu in Adat Temenggong, while Adat Perpatih had none of the either influence.

At the end of the volume, Winstedt denies the level of local genius by stating that “The Malay is still a child of nature in a sophisticated world that awaits his exploration. If any Malay should develop an original literary bent, it is more likely that the impulse will come from densely populated Java or even from Sumatra rather than from the two and a half million Malays of the peninsula, though it is not always the probable that happens”.

A History of Malaya [35]

This particular work focuses on the history of Malaya starting with the influence of Hinduism and Islam, the Malacca Malay sultanate and colonization of the Portuguese, Dutch and British, the Sultanate of Johor after the fall of the Malacca Sultanate, the relationship of Malaya with the Siamese, the Japanese invasion and the independence of Malaya. There are also discussions on cultural, literary, social and religious work although they were more general in nature. Winstedt believed the work answered all the questions about the history of Malaya. He also states that “No one can engage in first-hand research in all the fields of Hindu, Malay, Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch and English history so that like every modern historian I am indebted for the material of some of my chapters to the labors of others whose works are cited in my bibliography. The discovery before the world war in the library of the chamber of Deputies, Paris, of the *Suma Orientalis* of Tome Pires has helped me in my researches into the early history of Malacca”.

Through this work, Winstedt has categorized the people of Malaya into four main races which were “Omitting Indians, Chinese and other immigrants of historical times, the inhabitants of Malaya are of four races: the Negrito, the Sakai, the Jakun (or proto-Malay) and the civilized Malay though anthropology has not left the Sakai pure and finds even the Negrito composite”. Winstedt has described the categorization at length and clearly based upon the orientalist point of view. However, these elucidations can be seen as biased and prejudiced against these races as there were more mention of their weaknesses as opposed to their strengths. He also questioned the ability of the Malays not because of their origin, but due to the influence of foreign cultures selectively copied from nations such as the Arab and Indian. Winstedt was clearly using the evolutionism approach when he elevated the status of British as a great nation and rescuer of the other civilizations that have not progressed.

Winstedt also described the British presence as a major contributor to the merger of Malaya starting from the opening of Penang by Francis Light in 1786 up to the surrender of Malacca by the Dutch to the British in 1824. He recorded the events as such: “In 1786 Francis Light had acquired Pinang from the Sultan of Kedah, and in 1800 His Highness ceded what became Province Wellesley to the British for an annual payment of \$4000. On 6 February 1819 Stamford Raffles hoisted the Union Jack over Singapore. Finally by the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824 Malacca (with Naning) was transferred to the British”. In addition, a discourse on how Hinduism influenced the Malay community lives was also included though it was not as complete as the discussion in *The Malays: A Cultural History*. The main focus was mainly on the government of Sri Vijaya and Majapahit in the region before the spread of Islam and the establishment of the Malacca Sultanate. Winstedt explains that “Sri Vijaya had its beginning at Palembang which lying at the south of Sumatra dominated the straits of Sunda. Near to its capital Bukit Seguntang (it’s Mahameru) is a statue of Buddha in the Amaravati style, which goes to confirm a statement by the Buddhist I-Tsing that in 671 A.D”.

At the end of the writing, Winstedt concludes that the Malay race does not have its own identity by stating that “The Malays have experienced many foreign influences, incomparably the greatest being that from India which gave them three religions, a new magic and medicine, law Hindu and Islamic, the arts of sculpture, gold and silver-work and silk-weaving, two alphabets and a secular and religious literature, full of Sanskrit words for abstract concepts such as danger, intellect, kindness, language, name, price, profit, property, religion, heaven and hell”.

Shaman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic [34]

This work discusses the relationship between Hindu and Muslim influence in the Malay medicine. The discussion touched on the level of belief that the community still has in the matter, and whether the belief is still practiced despite being adherents of Islamic teachings, such as worshipping plants, special ceremonies celebrating the birth of a baby and so on.

Through this work, Winstedt attempts to prove that Islam as embraced by the community in Malaya originated from South India: "Islam first coming from India, introduced the Malay to a wide field of fresh magic". He believes that Islam that was brought to Malaya came specifically from South India based on a strong background in Pasai, based on study of Hikayat Raja Pasai. Winstedt also tried to show the similarities between the term *mantera* by Hindus during official ceremonies such as healing with a *doa* (prayer) as used by a medical practitioner of Islam. One example is in the following:

Genies of supernatural power!
Your home is at the navel of the sea,
By the tree on the broken rock!
Enter not the line drawn by my teacher!
Else will I curse you with the words!
"There is no God but Allah and Muhammad it His Prophet"
OM! I neutralize all evil,
O Solomon! In the name of God.

Winstedt also adds, "When Islam came, the Malay magician sat at the feet of its pundits, studied their arts of divination and borrowed their cabalistic talismans. Before he set his old incantations the names of Allah and Muhammad, often in contexts impious". This statement clearly shows that Winstedt believed Islam as professed by the community in Malaya was brought from India, and religious belief in society was not as strong as it was still covered by the values of Hinduism and was easily influenced by other beliefs. According to Winstedt, "Long before the introduction of Islamic mysticism, Hinduism had encouraged the Malay magician to fortify his powers and command the wonder of the credulous by ascetic practices".

Kitab Tawarikh Melayu [31]

The production of this work that was written in Malay was assisted by Daing Abdul Hamid Tengku Muhammad Salleh. This work was categorized by [38] as "The first scientific work on general Malay history ever produced in the Malay language" in his book *Modern Developments*. According to Winstedt, the writing of a historical work include facts and evidence to show the truth of a respective incident. For him, any work that highlights myths and fantastic tales such as Malay literature were completely unacceptable. This work was focused on the history and nation of Malay civilization, Hindu and Islamic influence in society, Malacca Sultanate era, literature and up until the arrival of the colonizers to Malaya. Winstedt took a skeptical standpoint and biased in their viewing Malay literature, when he mentions that "Maka sunggoh pun ada hikayat mencheritakan hal zaman purba kala itu, tetapi tiada-lah berapa guna-nya: kerana segala yang di-riwayatkan dari hal dewa-dewa dan orang kesaktian yang tersebut kesah-nya di-dalam hikayat-hikayat itu sa-mata-mata-lah nampak-nya cherita menyedapkan telinga sahaja, bukan-nya dari-pada perkara yang di-terima dan di-hargakan pada nilayan tawarikh" (Although there have been tales of the ancient, they were useless as the tales were about deities and magicians and their purpose were to make the tales more interesting, and were not acceptable nor valuable according to historical estimation).

This work also discusses the nation of Malay Archipelago and specifically Malaya. He called them as a mixed nation by stating that "Sa-sunggoh-nya dari-pada perchamporan lain-lain bangsa (terutama orang Hindu) dengan benih pancharan nenek moyang orang Melayu itu-lah telah jadi-nya bangsa Melayu yang ada sekarang ini, ia-itu yang memenohi jadi penduduk-penduduk merata-rata 'Alam Melayu'" (With the mixture of different races (especially Hindu) with the seeds of the Malay ancestors, the Malay people of now came into being, who now populated the 'Malay Archipelago). In fact, Winstedt looked down upon the Malay aborigines such as Semang and Sakai when he classified them as primitive compared to the Malays, which seemed more civilized.

Winstedt also expounds on the influence of Hindu in the lives of the Malay people by mentioning that "Maka guru yang mula-mula datang memberi tiruan atau tuladan ka-pada orang Melayu berkenaan dengan perkara-perkara kemajuan dan tamaddun dan fikir-fikiran baharu yang tiada pada orang Melayu zaman itu ia-lah orang Hindu; khabar-nya mereka mulai datang itu pada kurun Masehi yang kedua, tatkala Tanah Jawa sudah diduduki oleh orang Hindu itu" (The first teachers who gave to the Malays matters of advancement and civilization and new ideas that were non-existence for the Malays at that time were the Hindus; it was said that they first came in the second century during the time when Java was inhabited by the Hindus). He believes the influence of Hinduism that brought the Malaya civilization, and not Islam. In fact, Winstedt thinks the community does not cling to the teachings of Islam even though it has long been embraced. In the early stages of the spread of Islam to the Malay religious teachers were not so respected and often frowned upon by society.

Subsequently, the final part in this work is focused on the colonial domination of Malaya starting from the beginning of the 14th century include Portuguese, Dutch and British. According to Winstedt, the role played by Portuguese was first focused on the spread of Christianity in Malaya by force. In contrast, the emphasis made by the Dutch was on trade compared to religion. Whereas the reason cited by the British in their interference in all

matters related to the administration and the community in Malaya was to provide security and ensure the survival and advancement of civilization for the people. The British believe that it was part of their responsibility to liberate the people from decline.

ANALYSIS ON THE WORKS OF WINSTEDT

Based on the examination of Winstedt's works, the present study has observed that the quality of Winstedt's writing seem to replicate previous works and there are matters that have been exaggerated in forms of additions or reductions from other orientalist's works such as [24] in his *Sejarah Melayu*. The authors observe that Winstedt often repeated what had already been described in prior work in a subsequent work such as discussion on the level of civilization of indigenous tribes in Malaya like Sakai and Semang. In order to differentiate the storytelling, he adds to the elaboration and images, which can be seen between *A History of Malaya* (1935) and *The Malays: A Cultural History* (1947).

This is supported by the opinion of [16] where he mentions that "Terdapat beberapa kekurangan yang telah saya sebut dan ulang sebelum ini iaitu persediaan sumber sering kurang mencukupi, pendekatan yang tidak menyeluruh, tidak berlaku adil kepada objek kajiannya dan pada peringkat ini, yang dikajinya adalah bahagian-bahagian atau cebisan dari suatu sastera yang cukup kaya, tersebar luas dan berwatak lebih penuh daripada apa yang dikenalnya" (There are a few drawbacks that I have mentioned and repeated before which are the allocation of resources is often insufficient, the approach is not comprehensive, it does not do justice to the object of study and at this stage, what has been analyzed are parts or fragments of a literature that is richer, widespread and with even more characteristics compared to what is known). In [28] also shares a similar view where "Winstedt at that time was the only scholar who would have the presumption to write such a history, and he could not have written it differently from the way he did".

In regard to the replicating of previous work by Winstedt, the replication has produced various versions of Malay history. The authors compare the version produced by [24, 33], where has been addition and reduction of words in the text such as:

...gilang-gemilang seperti cahaya matahari dan bulan, dan amat bijaksana... [24]
(Brilliant like the light of the sun and the moon, and much wise)

...gilang-gemilang seperti cahaya matahari, dan terlalu amat bijaksana... [33]
(Brilliant like the light of the sun and very much wise)

Changes also occur because of replications that change story lines of events, which led to the appearance of anachronistic elements in such as the telling of the proposal for Puteri Gunung Ledang by Sultan of Malacca. The difference is the character who decreed the proposal, for example:

Maka Sultan Mansur Syah memberi titah pada segala orang besar-besar...bahawa kita hendak beristeri terlebih dari segala raja-raja dalam dunia ini...Maka titah baginda, kita hendak meminang Puteri Gunung Ledang, Laksamana dan Sang Setia...kita titahkan [33].

(So, Sultan Mansur Syah gave the decree to the nobles...that we must take a wife that incomparable to other kings of the world...Therefore, the king declared that we must propose to Puteri Gunung Ledang (Princess of Ledang Mountain). This task befall on Laksamana and Sang Setia)

Maka titah Sultan Mahmud, jikalau beristeri sama anak raja-raja ini, adalah raja-raja lain pun demikian juga...Akan sekarang kita hendak meminang Puteri Gunung Ledang, Laksamana dan Sang Setia kita titahkan [24].

(So decreed Sultan Mahmud, if we are to take a wife from daughters of kings, so did other monarchs... As for now, we will be offering for Puteri Gunung Ledang, which we commanded that Laksamana and Sang Setia do so)

Based on works such as [8, 16], this present study argues that the weaknesses of western writers, Winstedt in particular is that they can write but unable to evaluate the content of the original work accurately. Furthermore, the original work was written in jawi and not all authors can master the language and writing well.

Based on the examination of the four works of Winstedt, it can be seen that he believed that that Islam that was introduced to Malaya came from South India, based on his study of *Hikayat Raja Pasai* due to the strong background of South Indian in Pasai. However, in [9] believes otherwise as she has stated that *Hikayat Raja Pasai* denies the prejudice spread among Western orientalist that Islam came to the Malay world from India or from Iran and Islam that spread in the region is Islam that has been transformed and dissimilar to "Arab Islam" or "pure Islam".

In [36] also rejected the use of myth in the proof of a historical event. He viewed works that use myth as illogical, such as Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa, where there is a character of Raja Bersiong, Geruda and so on. According to [31], “Maka sunggoh pun ada hikayat mencheritakan hal zaman purba kala itu, tetapi tiada-lah berapa guna-nya: kerana segala yang di-riwayatkan dari hal dewa-dewa dan orang kesaktian yang tersebut kesah-nya di-dalam hikayat-hikayat itu sa-mata-mata-lah nampak-nya cherita menyedapkan telinga sahaja, bukan-nya dari-pada perkara yang di-terima dan di-hargakan pada nilayan tawarikh” (Although there have been tales of the ancient, they were useless as the tales were about deities and magicians and their purpose were to make the tales more interesting, and were not acceptable nor valuable according to historical estimation).

Based on that perspective, Winstedt assumed that the knowledge of the Malay community is lower than the West which is in line with the approach of the historiography which values accuracy through verification of logic. However, in [6] thought otherwise, as he stated that although the information about dream the dream of Malik al-Saleh in Hikayat Raja Pasai was a magical dream, there were also elements of truth and its content did not deny contradict what is true.

Apart from that, in [36] was clearly belittling Islamic laws when he states that “there are Malay translations of orthodox Muslim works of the school of Shafi’i, especially treatises on the law of marriage, divorce and the legitimacy of children, the only branch of Muslim canon law that Malays have adopted practically unchanged”. This view of Winstedt clearly shows that he rejected the authority of Islamic law and has relegated it as family law only, rather than the whole aspect of human life.

In [30] acknowledges this view, when he explains that “Tidak boleh diragukan lagi bahawa undang-undang Islam akan menjadi undang-undang Tanah Melayu sekiranya undang-undang British tidak masuk dan menahannya” (There is no doubt that the Islamic Law will become the law of Malaya if the British law did not come and prevent that). The authors believe that these two figures were clearly recognizing the reality and strength of Islam in shaping the lives of the Malays towards civilization. This reality is further reiterated when both figures made several negative statements on Islamic law which managed to shaken the firm belief of the society.

In [7] beliefs the opposite, when he articulates that the reason for the negative evaluation of the colonizers on all things Islam, including its law was due to “Pengalaman beragama yang pahit dalam sejarah kebudayaan Barat serta pertembungan dengan agama serta kebudayaan Islam dalam sejarah dunia telah mencorakkan penilaian umum orientalis terhadap agama Islam. Keraguan yang terbit akibat dari sifat dan pembawaan agama mereka sendiri serta prasangka yang menebal terhadap hakikat risalah Islam serta pembawanya, akhirnya menjadikan kebenaran semua agama dilihat tidak lebih dari kebenaran falsafah” (negative experience with religion in the West as well as the encounter with the religion of Islam and its culture in world history had shaped the orientalis general perception on Islam itself. The doubt that resulted from their religious experience became the truth for all religion, which was seen as no different from any philosophical truth). He adds that “Agama yang ditanggapi dalam telaah sejarah penulis orientalis ini adalah agama yang mesti berubah mengikut peredaran zaman hingga mampu menjadi batu loncatan mencapai cita-cita pembangunan atau sebaliknya, agama yang jumud, yang layak dicerca sebagai batu penghalang” (the religion which had been accepted by these orientalis writers must be one that changes according to the tides of time and could achieve the aim of progress, otherwise it is considered a backward religion that only serves as a barrier).

This assertion points out that the orientalis’ views have been influenced by negative perception based on the encounter of religions and cultures of two major world civilizations. The authors believe that the views of the two well-known orientalis above were based on negative prejudice of historical evaluation, where Islam was seen as unable to fulfil the need of the society and did not conform to the changes in time and situations.

CONCLUSION

Winstedt’s thinking approach to Islam in the Malay Archipelago clearly reflects a skeptical point of view in almost all of his writings on Islam and the Malay community based on the consideration that was one-sided and distorted from the history of the Malay civilization. His perspective was based on the paradigm of evolution and diffusion that occurs in orientalism approach. Winstedt placed logic at the highest level, to extent of questioning the accuracy of all Islamic traditions, manners and procedures of science as well as Islamic law. Works of orientalism on the history of Malaya projected weaknesses of the methodology, as well as full of prejudice that their content did not depict reality. The history of the Malay civilization has not been portrayed correctly, but manipulated in such a way to highlight the role and influence of the so-called West is bringing progress to the Malay civilization.

Winstedt labelled the Malay community as a nation which was weak in all respects such as lagging behind in terms of progress and modernization due to its hold to Islam. Winstedt can be seen to fail in understanding the Malay community because of his Euro-centrism background. This idea raises Europe as a greater and civilized nation, which possess a civilization higher than those who live in Asia and the Middle East. In order to rectify this, the British was considered as the "ambassador of civilization" to the rescue the Malay community. When Winstedt made euro-centrism a yardstick for assessing the history of Malaya, it showed that he did not fully

understand the respective community and was biased in interpreting the matter of Islam in the Malay Archipelago.

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