

# Malay Arabic Script: Shifting Theology towards the Construction of Identity in Malays Civilization

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**Abstract**---Malay Arabicscript is an Arab script that is collaborated with Malays. The introduction of Arabic script to the Malay society has a long process. The emergence of theMalay Arabic Script is explained when there was a pebble as a proof that is inscribed in Kuala Berang Trengganu on Friday, 4 Rajab 702 H and February 221303 AD. But, the Malay Arabic Scriptwas lost and abolished during the New Order era, reappeared and revived in the Reform era with the regional autonomy system of government. This phenomenon raises an academic question, why did Malay Arabic Scriptrise again? Does the effort of the revitalization of Arabic script of Malay is reflection of the theological Malays in their aspect of life, or does the use ofMalay Arabic script as a symbol of identity of Malay society?To answer this problem, the author used a sociolinguistic and historical approach. Whereas, the theory that used is the theory of social constructivism by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's. The reality showed that the Malay Arabic Scriptexperienced a shift in meaning (values) for the Malays. TheMalay Arabic Scripttoday is not only used as a theological interest or as a direction of a practice that related to religiosity. However, nowadays, the existence of theMalay Arabic Scriptin Riau is used as a tool of legitimacy for the existence and interests of individuals, groups and institutions. Identity construction is carried out in the form of objectivation, internalization and externalization. Indeed, the action is to strengthen the identity of the Riau region in accordance with the Vision of Riau 2020 which makes Riau a Malay Cultural Center in Southeast Asia.

**Keywords**---Malay Arabic Script, Theology, Identity

## I. Introduction

Indonesian culture is diverse, as an asset and national wealth that cannot be forgotten, because it has a role and contribution in the progress of a nation. Hebding and Glick, quoted by Ellya Roza in his book "Naskah Melayu", explains that culture can be material, appearing in material objects created by humans. Whereas culture is in the form of non-material things, such as norms, values, beliefs and language<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ellya Roza, *Naskah Melayu*, (Pekanbaru: Yayasan Pusaka RIAU, 2011), 3.

The Malay Arabic Scriptor also called as *Jawi* letter, is a written language culture that has contributed to the *tamadun*<sup>3</sup> of Malay<sup>4</sup> in various aspects, namely knowledge, religion, education, economy, politics and culture. To facilitate and study the Koran, Arabic characters were adopted by Malay people known as Malay Arabic characters, Jawi characters, Rumi script and Malay Arabic Script is specifically characters in Riau). Through the Malay Arabic Script, literary works emerged in the Malay realm<sup>5</sup>.

The Arabic script of Malay cannot be know and how its existence began. However, Al-Attas said that about three hundred years after the discovery of Arabic script that was still in Arabic on several gravestones. Suddenly, there was Arabic script that is in Malay language. The evidence is a stone that is inscribed in Kuala Berang Trengganu which was dated on Friday 4 Rajab 702 H together 22 February 1303 AD. According to al-Attas, the stone had been found by the villagers and used as a place to wash the feet before going up to *Surau* (a hut). The stone was discovered in 1887<sup>6</sup>.

Naquib al-Attas's opinion was reinforced by Gong Gyong Suk's opinion in his book "فر كمبقتوليسنجاويدالممشاركتمايو" that the Kuala Berang Trengganu inscription can be explained about the influence of Islam is really strong. It was proven that the contents of the writing explained the Islamic jurisprudence law carried out in that place. Besides that the oldest Malay manuscript found in 998 H / 1590 AD also uses Jawi writing. This manuscript is a translation of the Islamic religious book 'Aqa'id Al-Nasafi (عقائد النسافي)<sup>7</sup>

After Indonesia's independence, the writing was still studied in *Sekolah Rakyat* (SR) until 1969. After that, the lesson of Malay Arabic writing was removed from curriculum of schools in the days of Old Order and curriculum of elementary school in New Order era. It's increasingly forgotten that there were even children and young people who did not understand the Malay Arabic Script withering. During the reform era, several provinces in Indonesia including Riau, included Malay Arabic lessons in the elementary curriculum<sup>8</sup>. Based on the Decree of the Head of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education of Riau Province Number 24 / KPTS / P / 1994, regarding the enactment of the Local Content Curriculum of Malay Arabic Writing as a subject of Mandatory Riau Local Content<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The term *Tamadun* was first used by Ibn Khaldun in the 14th century AD, in his book *Al-Muqaddimah li Kitab al-'Ibar Wa Diwan al-Mubtada 'Wa al-Khabar fi Ayyam al-Arab wa al-Barbar*. Read: Ellya Roza, *Islam and Tamadun Melayu*, (Pekanbaru: Daulat Riau Member of IKAPI, 2013), 1. *Tamadun* is derived from the Arabic word '*maddana*' which means to build a city or a person or society that has civilization. The word *tamadun* can be interpreted as a state of community life that is getting more advanced. Other terms that are the same as *tamadun* are: *umran*, *hadarah*, *madaniyah*. In English, the terms that are almost the same as civilization are: culture and civilization. See: <https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamadun>, accessed on May 16, 2019, at 12:13 WIB. The words *al-hadlarah*, *al-madaniyah* and civilization in English, are the most ideal and peak forms of culture that show the civilization (*madaniyah*), progress (*taqaddum*), and prosperity (*'umran*) of a society. Read: Moh. Nurhakim, *Jatuhnya Sebuah Tamadun: Menyingkapi Sejarah Kegemilangan dan Kehancuran Imperium Khalifah Islam*, (Jakarta: KEMENAG RI Ministry of Religion, 2012), 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> Malay term is known around the year 644 AD by Chinese call it the word *Mo-Lo-Yeu*. Malay is the current government had send a mission to bring the earth to be presented to the emperor of China. many opinions say that the government is in Jambi right now. Read: Lembaga Penelitian Universitas Islam Riau, *Orang Melayu di Riau*, (Pekanbaru: Pusat Pengajian Melayu UIR, 1996), 12. Malay is often identified with Islam, because it is not said to be Malay if he is not Muslim. Read: Ellya Roza, *Internalisasi Nilai Islam dan Tamadun Melayu Terhadap Perilaku Sosial Orang Melayu*, *Journal of Tolerance: Religious Communication Media*, Vol. 6, No. January 1-June 2014), 16. Accessed on November 22, 2019, 9.24 WIB.

<sup>5</sup> The term *Tamadun* was first used by Ibn Khaldun in the 14th century AD in his book *Al-Muqaddimah li Kitab al-'Ibar Wa Diwan al-Mubtada 'Wa al-Khabar fi Ayyam al-Arab wa al-Barbar*. Ellya Roza, *Islam dan Tamadun Melayu*, (Pekanbaru: Daulat Riau Anggota IKAPI, 2013), 124. The word *Tamadun* is often identified with the words *al-hadlarah*, *al-madaniyah* and civilization in English, is the most ideal and peak form of culture that shows civilization (*madaniyah*), progress (*taqaddum*), and prosperity (*'umran*) of a society. Read: Moh. Nurhakim, *Jatuhnya Sebuah Tamadun: Menyingkapi Sejarah Kegemilangan dan Kehancuran Imperium Khalifah Islam*, (Jakarta: KEMENAG RI, 2012), 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Ellya Roza, *Aksara Arab Melayu di Nusantara dan Sumbangsihnya dalam Pengembangan Khazanah Intelektual*, (UNIDA Gontor: Jurnal Tsaqafah, Vol. 13, No. 1, Mei 2017), 191, accessed on September 14, 2019, at 10:23 WIB. Read also M. B. Hooker. *The Trengganu Inscription in Malaysia Legal History*, *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 49, No. 2, 1976, 127-133. Accessed on Desember, 07, 2019, at 19.27 WIB.

<sup>7</sup> Before the Malay Arabic alphabet entered the Malay world, there had been writings used by Malays, namely the State Council writings used by Poles. In addition, Rencong writing in Sumatra, Ancient Javanese (Kawi) and other writings used in Palembang, Sulawesi and Southeast Asia. Malay-language writings entered Sumatra in the the century in South Sumatra using Hindu influence writing and inscriptions in Pagaruyung and Muara Takus using Indian influence writing. See: Gong Gyong Suk .. *فر كمبقتوليسنجاويدالممشاركتمايو* Kuala Lumpur: Language and Library Board of the Ministry of Education Malaysia, 1993), xxi.

<sup>8</sup> Nurfitri Dewa, *Sejarah Perkembangan Tulisan Arab Melayu di Nusantara*, Work paper on a seminar in History of Islamic Civilization Department, (Padang: Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Adab, IAIN Imam Bonjol, 2008). Accessed on January, 2, 2019, at. 19.54 WIB.

<sup>9</sup> Fadillah Om, *Ensiklopedi dan Standarisasi Tulisan Arab Melayu Provinsi Riau*, (Pekanbaru: CV Usaha Putra, 2009), 8.

Alvin Toffler suggests that decentralization allows a greater diversity of regional, local authorities to change the curriculum, student regulations and administrative practices<sup>10</sup>. Likewise, in Indonesia, decentralized systems with regional autonomy provide opportunities for each region to highlight the peculiarities of local characteristics as a potential source. Indeed, this action changed all the order of life.

Noerhaidi Hasan in his writings explained:

*"Local-elite political groups adopted a range of strategies to redefine and strengthen regional identity as a means of increasing their electoral support. As well as reinventing historical legacies and memories, they mobilized religious symbols and other forms of cultural capital, including support from the ulama"*<sup>11</sup>

Various policies that accentuate the interests of locality seems to be starting to become a regional issue, transmigration policies that only open up opportunities for migration in one province, to efforts to restore the symbols of the glory of the kingdom. Al Azhar has said During the reform period, "Malayness" has always been a conversation in Riau. As Al-Azhar stated in his article "Malayness in Riau (The Study and Revitalization of Identity), that: In Riau Province, the statement, as" Son of Riau ", what kind of Malay are you? become a questionable thing. Philosophical of this Statement, as if to escape from the vision of the archipelago as a political entity. This statement arises because of at least two interpretations: first, the role of Malays in Riau is weak; secondly, awareness arises that identity can be created by looking back to the neglected legacy of the past. Since the early 1970s.<sup>12</sup>

It over looks with their vision of Riau in 2020 which makes Riau as Center of Malays Culture in Southeast Asia, most of the people back to know and understand Malay Arabic (*Jawi*) through various government programs on cultural heritage, the one of the way is the use of Malay Arabic script on several of road markings in Riau<sup>13</sup>.

Thephenomenon above is supported by an interview with Mr. Ahmad Darmawi, a lecturer at State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau and as a cultural practitioner in Riau said that theMalay Arabic Script was revived and made a subject of local content that must be followed by all students in the elementary school in Riau. This is seen by a mandatory book entitled Riau Malay Culture that containing Riau-Malay treasures, covering arts and cultural material, folk games and Malay Arabic Script<sup>14</sup>.

Seeing this reality, it caused academic anxiety about why the Malay Arabic scriptwhich had disappeared, revived in the Riau-Malay society in this reform era, was the efforts of revitalizing the Malay Arabic scriptrelated to the understanding of theology of the Riau-Malay society or the Malay Arabic scriptas a symbol for the interests of the identity of the Malay community, especially in Pekanbaru, Riau?.

There have been many studies on the Malay Arabic script, such as research conducted by Gong Gyong Suk, a researcher from Korea, who has examined the development of the Jawi spelling system from 1200 AD to 1986 AD in complete detail in his very famous book which reads Malay Arabic script ". Further research<sup>15</sup> فركمبغتو لیسنجاویدالمشاركتملايو conducted by Ellya Roza about Archipelago Malay Arabic Script and its contribution in the development of intellectual

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<sup>10</sup> Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock*, (United States and Canada: Bantam Books, Inc., a National General Company, 1970), 119.

<sup>11</sup>Noerhaidi Hasan, "Between The Global and the Local: Negotiating Islam and Democracy in Provincial Indonesia", dalam Gerry van Klinken dan Ward Berenschot, *In Search Of Middle Indonesia: Middle Classes in Provincial Towns*, Brill, 2014), 193

<sup>12</sup>Al-Azhar, *Malayness in Riau (The Study and revitalization of Identity)*,( Brill: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Deel 153, 4de Afl., RIAU IN TRANSITION,1997), 764, accessed on July, 11, 2019, at. 9.00 WIB.

<sup>13</sup>*Warta Riau*, NO. 336 tahun VII/Edition14-20 Maret 2006.

<sup>14</sup>*An interview* on June 17,2019 in Pekanbaru, at 17.00 WIB.

<sup>15</sup>Gong Gyong Suk, فركمبغتو لیسنجاویدالمشاركتملايو, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1993), xxvii.

property.<sup>16</sup>And Tengku Abdullah Sakti has research about Development and Preservation of Malay Arabic Manuscripts in Aceh.<sup>17</sup>

Likewise the research conducted by Tatiana Denisova in her article Malay Islamic Historiography (XIII-XIX), Regarding Finance and Taxes in The Malay World, explains Malay texts in the historiography of Malay Islam in the 13th to 19th centuries, such as the Hikayat Raja Pasai, Malay History, Aceh Saga, Commemoration of the History of the Johor State, *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, which reads the Jawi script (Malay script) also tells of the Malay economic and financial system in collaboration with the larger world economy especially Malaysia and also part of the Western world system.<sup>18</sup>

While research on the language and pronunciation of Malay Arabic script, William Marsden has also conducted research on the Malay spelling system, nouns, verbs, adjectives, exclamations, rhymes, Malay poems and dialects.<sup>19</sup>Afrijon Efendi's research, on the contrastive analysis of writing the Riau Malay Arabic script and writing Arabic.<sup>20</sup>

Whereas research on language or Malay as identity has been investigated by Carole Faucher<sup>21</sup>, Anthont Reid,<sup>22</sup> Willie Thompson<sup>23</sup>, Brahim Chakrani<sup>24</sup>,Phyllis Ghim-Lian Chew<sup>25</sup>And Sunandar<sup>26</sup>has research aboutMalay and the challenges of globalization. But not yet connected with the Malay Arabic script.

In contrast to previous research, this paper intends to examine the development of Arabic-Malay script related to theology and and Malay Arabic script as identity.

Based on the above problems, the writer used descriptive analysis techniques, using 2 types of approaches. First, the sociolinguistic approach<sup>27</sup>. Hymes in Abdurrahman, *Sociolinguistics: Theory, Role and Function of Literary Language Studies*, suggests that "the term sociolinguistics to the correlations between language and societies in particular linguistics and social phenomena"

Secondly, the historical approach, in religious studies that examined the abstract territory (phenomenological) the essence of its existence because religion has empirical and historical nature. In research using this approach will also be known the relationship with various binding interests, there are economic, political, social and cultural interests<sup>28</sup>.

While the theory used by the author in this paper is the Theory of Sociological Constructivism. Three things are called constructivist literature. *First*, convey a metaphysical thesis about some or all facts about the world. *Second*, convey an

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<sup>16</sup>Ellya Roza, *Aksara Arab Melayu Nusantara dan Sumbangsihnya dalam Pengembangan Khazanah Intelektual*, (UNIDA Gontor: Jurnal Tsaqafah, Vol. 13, No. 1, May 2017), 193, accessed on September 14, 2019, at 10:23 WIB.

<sup>17</sup>Tengku Abdullah Sakti. *Perkembangan dan Pelestarian Manuskrip Arab Melayu di Aceh*, Journal of History: CITRA LEKHA, Vol. XVI, No. 02, August 2011, accessed on September, 2019, at 11.23 WIB.

<sup>18</sup>Tatiana Denisova, *Malay Islamic Historiography (XIII-XIX), Regarding Finance and Taxes in The Malay World*, (Asian Journal of Social Science, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2012), 7-33, accessed on September 14 September 2019, at 10.23 WIB.

<sup>19</sup>William Marsden, *A grammar of the Malayan language*, (London: University Of Michigan, 1812), 289.

<sup>20</sup>Afrijon Efendi, *Analisis Konstrastif Penulisan Aksara Arab Melayu Riau dan Penulisan Bahasa Arab*, Journal of Social Culture (Volume 11 No.2, 2014), 223, accessed on November, 22, 2019, at 11.20 WIB.

<sup>21</sup>Carol Faucher, *Contesting Boundaries in the Riau Archipelago* in the journal *Renegotiating Boundaries: Local Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, (Brill, 2007), 443, accessed on Desember,5, 2018, at 8.48 WIB.

<sup>22</sup>Anthony Reid, *Understanding Malay as a Source of Diverse Modern Identities* (Cambridge University Press on behalf of Departement of History, National University of Singapore: Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Oct, 2001)), 295-313, accessed on September 14, 2019, at 10.11 WIB.

<sup>23</sup>Willie Thompson, "Imagined Communities: Signs and Symbols, Identities and Nations" in Book Title: *Work, Sex and Power*, (Pluto Press is collaborating with JSTOR, 2015), 145-163, accessed on September, 14, 2019, at 10.17 WIB.

<sup>24</sup>Brahim Chakrani, *Between Profit and Identity: Analyzing the Effect of Language of Instruction in Predicting Overt Language Attitudes in Morocco*, dalam *Jurnal Applied Linguistic*, Oxford University Press, 2017), accessed on Desember, 5, 2017, at 10.37 WIB.

<sup>25</sup>Phyllis Ghim-Lian Chew, *Identity Construction and Language Use in a Singaporean Muslim Youth Camp*, *World Englishes*, Volume 37, issue 2, June 2018, accessed on November,26, 2019, at 8.50 WIB.

<sup>26</sup>Sunandar, *Melayu dalam Tantangan Globalisasi: Refleksi sejarah dan berubahnya sistem Referensi Budaya*, in the *Equatorial Journal - Journal of Islamic Studies* (Volume 5, Number 1 March 2015), accessed on Desember, 7, 2019, at 19.19 WIB.

<sup>27</sup> Abdurrahman, *Sociolinguistik: Teori, Peran dan Fungsinya Terhadap Kajian Bahasa Sastra*, (UIN Malang: Lingua, (Vol. 3, No. 1, 2008), 21, accessed on October, 24, 2019, at 10.31 WIB.

<sup>28</sup>Amin Abdullah, *Studi Agama: Normalitas dan Historisitas*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1996), 22.

epistemological thesis about what is known about the world. The third, the semantic thesis deals with what is known about the world.<sup>29</sup>

According to Peter L. Berger and Luckmann, Sociological constructivism that is quoted by Paul Suparno, holds that knowledge is the result of social discovery and at the same time is a factor in social change. So knowledge is the result of social construction, not individual construction. Scientific knowledge is shaped and socially justified in this concept<sup>30</sup>

## II. Result and Discussion

### Understanding Of Malay Arabic Script

Script is a term derived from the Sangsekerta language, namely *akshara*, to refer to *imperishable letters, syllable words, the sacred syllable, sound letters, documents, epistle*. Another term for letters is a letter or alphabet in Arabic called the symbol of sound (phoneme)<sup>31</sup>

Malay Arabic script is writing that uses Arabic characters / letters (*Hijaiyah*) in Malay. The Malay Arabic writings appeared together with the spread of Islam to Malay lands, namely since the time of the Samudera Pasai Kingdom in Aceh and spread to the Malay-Islamic Kingdom. This was introduced by scholars of Islamic propagators by writing of Islamic teachings, including through Malay-Islamic literary works, such as saga, poetry, and so on.

In the history of Islamic civilization, writings known to scholars are writings used in the Holy Qur'an, namely Arabic writings in Arabic. When spreading Islam to Malay lands, the ulama borrowed or used the Arabic letters to write Islamic teachings in Malay. That is what is called Malay Arabic which develops in almost all regions in Sumatra, and is also known in Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore.

In the opinion of experts, the use of Jawi writings has existed since the 14th century AD. The initial findings of the Jawi writings were on the tombstone from Trengganu-Malaysia on the 4th Rajab 702 Hijri or 22 February 1303 CE, and were reviewed by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. In the opinion of Hasyim Musa, the Arabic script adapted by Malay for spelling is known by the name Jawi script. However, Hasyim Musa, referring to Omar Awang's opinion, said he did not know for certain who gave the name Jawi to the article. Hasyim Musa disagrees with the name Jawi, because Jawi writings already existed and were used in Sumatra and the Peninsula before Java fell to Muslims in 883 H / 1468 AD.<sup>32</sup>

As Omar Awang said, it is possible that *Jawi's* words came from the Arabic "*al-Jawah*". The word Jawi is an adjective word from the word *al-Jawah* which is used to name the island of Sumatra. Like other names according to the Arabic version is Yaqu in Mu'jan al-Buldan; written in Arabic before the mid-14th century AD. Likewise GH Erndly quoted Marcopolo as saying that the word jawi was another name for the island of Sumatra in ancient times, when the islanders embraced Islam<sup>33</sup>.

### Transliteration System of Arabic Letters, Arabic-Malay Letters and Roman Letters<sup>34</sup>

ROMAWI LETTERS	MALAY ARAB LETTERS	ARABIC LETTERS	NO
Alif	ا	ا	ا

<sup>29</sup> Andre Kukla, *Konstruktivisme Sosial dan Filsafat Ilmu*, transeled by Hari Kusharyanto, (Yogyakarta: Jendela, 2000), 6-7.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Suparno, *Filsafat Konstruktivisme dalam Pendidikan*, (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius, 1997), 47.

<sup>31</sup> Ahmad Darmawi, *Bahasa dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara*, (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau), 147.

<sup>32</sup> Uka Tjandrasmita, *Arkeologi Islam Nusantara*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2009), 292.

<sup>33</sup> Ahmad Darmawi, *Bahasa dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara*, (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau), 187.

<sup>34</sup> Ahmad Darmawi, *Bahasa dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara*, (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau, 2010), 201.

Ba	ب	با	٢
Ta	تا	تا	٣
Tha	ثا	ثا	٤
Jim	ج	جا	٥
Ha	ح	حا	٦
Kha	خ	كا	٧
Dal	د	دا	٨
Dzal	ذ	ذا	٩
Ra	ر	را	١٠
Zai	ز	زا	١١
Sin	س	سا	١٢
Syin	ش	شا	١٣
Shat	ص	صا	١٤
Dhat	ض	ضا	١٥
Tha	ط	طا	١٦
Zha	ظ	ظا	١٧
'Ain	ع	عا	١٨
Ghein	غ	غا	١٩
Fa	فا	فا	٢٠
Qaf	ق	قا	٢١
Kaf	ك	كا	٢٢
Lam	ل	لا	٢٣
Mim	م	ما	٢٤
Nun	ن	نا	٢٥
Waw	و	وا	٢٦
Ha	ه	ها	٢٧

Ya	ي	ي	٢٨
C = Ca	چ		٢٩
G = Ga	ك		٣٠
Ng = Nga	ع		٣١
Ny = Nya	ي		٣٢
P = Pa	ط		٣٣
V = Va	و		٣٤
X = Xa	خ		٣٥

Based on the three periods of the development of the Malay Arabic script grammar, it can be distinguished that the Malay Arabic version of the Al-Qur'an, has not used magic letters in writing so that it can cause reading Malay Arabic writings with various versions or points of view of people who read it. Whereas Classical Malay Arabic already uses magic letters in its writing, namely ي, و, ا, or 'illat alphabet (sick letter). Modern Malay Arabic, in its writing, uses the rules of Arabic Grammar.

### III. History of Malay Arabic Script

The advent of Islam in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, was estimated in the 7th century AD. Gradually, the development was accompanied by the spread of Arabic and its writing. Archaeological data of tombstones from the 11th, 13th to 15th centuries indicate that the text used was Arabic. Examples are the tomb of Fatimah bint Maimun bin Hibatullah (475 H / 1082 AD) with the *Kufi* letter, in Leran-Gresik, the tomb of Sultan Malik As-Saleh (696 H / 1297 AD) with the letter *Tsuluts*, in the Passover of the Pasai Lhokseumawe Ocean; and the tomb of Maulana Malik Ibrahim (822 H / 1419 M) with the letter *Tsuluts* in Greece.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, relations between nations, especially with Europe, in the form of the Malay Islamic kings' agreement with the British colonial party had used Malay Arabic writing.<sup>36</sup>The arrival of colonial peoples (Portuguese, Dutch and English) to the archipelago does not eliminate the Arabic script, although writing Romans introduced. Japanese arrivals who introduced writing Hiragana and Katakana also does not eliminate the Arabic Malay.<sup>37</sup>

The arrival of Islam has brought together Arabic writings which were made into Malay writings which have a few extra letters, and it is this Jawi writing that binds the unity of one language covering all groups of Malays. In the 16th and 17th centuries there were terms such as "*Malay People* " and "*Malay Country* ", but there were no "*Malay Language*" terms<sup>38</sup>.

Historically, the development of the Malay Arabic script has 3 periods:

<sup>35</sup>Uka Tjandrasmita, *Arkeologi Islam Nusantara*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2009), 290.

<sup>36</sup>M. Irfan Shofwani, *Mengenal Tulisan Arab Melayu*, (Yogyakarta: The Center for Research and Development of Malay Culture, 2005), 10.

<sup>37</sup>Uka Tjandrasmita, *Arkeologi Islam Nusantara*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2009), 292-307.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 64.

a. The early period of Malay Arabic writing, which is the Malay Arabic version of the Qur'an in which the method / writing used the dignity or line. So, at this time, there are new words from one word into several words in the same letter, such as: *تغگل* = *tanggal* = *تغگل* = *tunggul* = *توغگل*, and so on.

b. Classical Malay Arabic, that is the method which used lines and *ilat*. That is, the writing of the word is given witness to certain syllables and lines to certain syllables, such as: *بكو*.....*بكو*, *مِينوم*.....*مِينوم* *جوجور*.....*جوجور* And so on.

c. Modern Malay Arabic, in its writing is adjusted to the appropriate rules and holds to the previous Malay Arabic and Arabic language. Usually use the *ilat* letters written in Malay Arabic characters: a = - ل, i = ي, u = و. etc<sup>39</sup>.

In Riau, *Jawi* writing is known as the Malay Arabic script, but in Java and Sundanese, it is known by the name *Pegon*<sup>40</sup>. The center of Malay script writing with *Jawi* (Malay Arabic script) is mainly found on Penyengat Island, which had been the center of government since the 18th and 19th centuries AD. This writing was motivated by the famous court relatives author Engku Haj Ahmad and his son, namely Raja Ali Haji, who wrote the book "*Tuhfat an-Nafis*" (A very valuable gift). In addition, there are also Riau Malay figures, Tun Sri Lanang who authored the book *Sulatus Salatin* (Lineage of the Sultan) and Tengku Said who composed the book of *Hikayat Siak*. All works were written using Malay Arabic script.<sup>41</sup>

Literary works composed in the form of Raja Ali Haji many religious and historical poetry: *Syair Hukum Nikah* (Poem of Marriage Law), *Syair Hukum Fara'id* (Poetry Fara'id Law), *Syair Gemala Mestika Alam* (Poetry Gemala Mestika Alam), *Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis* (Lineage Malay and Bugis). The work written with his father, Raja Haji Ahmad, is *Tuhfat al-Nafis*. In addition to Raja Ali Haji and his father, there are still other authors such as Raja Daud bin Raja Ahmad who composed the *syair* prince Syarif Hasyim and Encik Kamariah who wrote the *Syair Sultan Mahmud* in Lingga.

From the explanation of the development of the manuscript written in *Jawi* or the Malay Arabic script, the use of which is estimated since the beginning of the 14th century AD has a role or function, namely conveying various feelings and thoughts in various aspects, namely Islamic religion, society, economy, art and culture, correspondence technology, diplomatic relations, and so on. This is evidenced by the correspondence and agreements between the Islamic kingdom and foreign governments. Examples of Alauddin Riayat Syah's letter (Sultan of Aceh) in 1602 to Harry Middleton, Iskandar Muda's letter in 1615 to King James I and Sultan Abu Hayat's letter from Ternate to the King of Portugal in 1512.

#### IV. Malay Arabic script as theological media

Historically, Malay Arabic script was used as a theological medium, meaning to convey Islamic teachings to the Malay world. This is certainly not apart from the strong Islamic influence on Malay literature which illustrates that the concept of "Malay" is synonymous with "Moslem" and this is due to the influence of the Qur'an brought by Islam. It is clear that the Malay Islamic culture reflected in Sufistic Malay literary works contributed greatly to the reception of Arabic literary works in the Malay tradition<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>39</sup> Fadillah Om, *Ensiklopedi dan Standarisasi Tulisan Arab Melayu Provinsi Riau*, (Pekanbaru: Usaha Putra Riau, 2009), 4-5.

<sup>40</sup> Pegon letters are *Jawi* letters that support translating Javanese as well as Sundanese. The word *Pegon* is from the Javanese language which means to deviate. Why Javanese written in Arabic is considered as something unusual. See: Ma Duncik and Bety, *Standarisasi Sistem Tulisan Jawi di Dunia Melayu, Sebuah Upaya Mencari Standar Penulisan yang Baku Berdasarkan Aspek Fonetis*, (TAMADDUN: Journal of Islamic Culture and Literature, Vol. 14 No. 22, 2014), 88.

<sup>41</sup> Yahya Anak Rainin, et al. *Budaya Melayu Riau*, (Pekanbaru: Gahara Muda Sakti Foundation, 2017), 2.

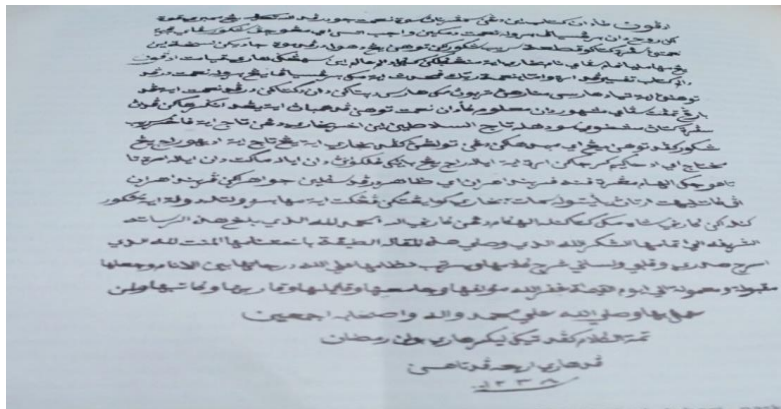
<sup>42</sup> Fadlil Munawwar Manshur, *Perkembangan Sastra Arab dan Teori Sastra Islam*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011), 108.



The roots of the renewal of the Islam in the Malay-Indonesian region were pioneered by three theologian from the Middle East, namely al-Raniri, al-Sinkli and a -Maqassari, since the beginning of the 17th century<sup>43</sup>. The Heyday of the Islamization of Malay culture in Riau began in the late 18th century until the middle of the 20th century. The rung of the brilliance has at least been started by the young Riau ruler Raja Haji Fisabilillah, who was martyred against the Dutch at Ketapang Melaka Bay, in 1784, then continued by his descendant Raja Ali Haji<sup>44</sup>. the work of its most fundamental is the language. Language shows the quality of human beings, the dignity of the people and the nation, so he said " *if you want to know the people of the nation, look at the language of the mind*". Therefore, he wrote in his Malay book guidelines *Bustan al-Katibin* (garden scribe) in 1857. The islamization of Malay language and use of letters or writing Malay Arabic in Riau-Lingga Kingdom period (1824-1913) had unleashed a wave of Islamization of culture Malay is quite great in Riau<sup>45</sup>.

Finally, using the Malay Arabic script as a medium, in 1859, as a highly productive Riau author, Raja Ali Haji composed a very famous book, "Knowledge of Language". This book is a dictionary or encyclopaedia of Malay dialect and linguistic concepts. This author also wrote in the field of literature, his external poetries are Gurindam Twelve (1847), Poetry of Marriage Law. Gemala Mestika Alam Poem, which contains about the life of the Prophet Muhammad. In the field of history, Malay and Buginese Salasila (written around 1860), *Tuhfat an-Nafis* (1865), and much more, it is estimated that there are around 13 of his works.<sup>46</sup>

Examples of Malay Arabic script used as a medium to convey religious teachings in the writing of the book of *Taj al-Salatin* :



Picture: The Malay Text of *Taj al-salatin* by Bukhori al-Johori<sup>47</sup>.

*Taj al-Salatin*, meaning "Crown of Kings", consists of 24 chapters. After the praises of Allah, who was very powerful, it was said to the Prophet Muhammad and his best friends. The first chapter of this book states that humans need to know themselves in order to know their origin (وجوده). The Prophet said " *من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه*" Whoever knows him, actually he knows his Lord.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara abad XVII dan XVIII*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), 240.

<sup>44</sup> UU Hamidy, *Bahasa Melayu dan Kreativitas Sastra di RIAU*, (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi RIAU, 2010), 16.

<sup>45</sup> Hasbullah, *Dialektika Islam dalam Budaya Lokal: Potret Budaya Melayu Riau*, (Journal: Social Culture: Communication Media for Social and Cultural Sciences, Vol. 11, No.2 July-December 2014), 166-167. Accessed on December, 07, 2019, at. 19.58 WIB.

<sup>46</sup> UU Hamidy, *Bahasa Melayu dan Kreativitas Sastra di RIAU*, (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi RIAU, 2010), 17.

<sup>47</sup> Uka Tjandrasasmita, *Arkeologi Islam Nusantara*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2009), 294.

<sup>48</sup> Liaw Yock Fang, *Sejarah Kesusasteraan Melayu Klasik*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2016), 412.

Based on this history, it is clear that the Malay Arabic script has a meaningful role as a medium for scientists and preachers in spreading and developing science, theology, philosophy, Sufism, commerce, politics and art in the archipelago.

#### 4.Reconstruction of Arabic-Malay Script as identity according to the theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman

The Malay Arabic script as a language does not only function as a medium of written communication, even as a cultural product, which experiences changes in the social context.

Chomsky said that "language is not a neutral medium for communication but rather a set of socially embedded practices".<sup>49</sup>Bourdieu and Passeron use "the term" cultural capital "to refer to symbolic resources (language, education, friendship), as well as material resources (goods, real state, money). They argue that some forms of cultural capital have a higher exchange value than others in particular social contexts."<sup>50</sup>

In the context of this shift, cultural symbols are no longer the directors that determine the code of conduct in a society that is obeyed and have a forced power, but it becomes a political tool for the struggle for the interests of the parties, both individuals, groups and institutions. Religious symbols, for example, are not only indicative of a practice related to religiosity, but also for some people, groups or institutions, as a tool for the legitimacy of existence and interest. Religion functions to validate the existence and actions that can occur deviate from the substance of the teaching because the image has represented a religious reality itself. Religion is practiced as part of social control and self-identification for positioning individuals, groups and institutions in a series of dynamic and contextual social transactions. Cultural symbols have become a tool for affirming the authenticity of groups whose existence is part of a global social system with increasingly sharp value conflicts.<sup>51</sup>

For Foucault, religion is a powerful body of knowledge production, especially in societies such as in Indonesia, which cannot be separated from the mechanisms and techniques of normative and disciplinary power. Religion governs individuals and society through uniformity of behavior, language, clothing and rites. With this technique an identity will be generated which will make it easier to get compliance from both adherents, as well as fears from those who are not part of it.<sup>52</sup>

Lary A. Samovar, has quoted the opinion of Gardiner and Kosmitzki that identity explains identity as one's self-definition as a distinct and separate individual, including behavior, beliefs and attitudes. While Ting Toomey considers identity as a self-concept that is reflected that we come from family, gender, culture, ethnicity and individual socialization processes.<sup>53</sup>

Identity refers to the specific character of individuals or members of a particular group or social category. Identity comes from the word "idem" in Latin which means the same. Thus identity contains the meaning of similarity or unity with others in a certain area or matters. Besides containing the meaning of similarity, identity also contains the meaning of difference. Identity can also mean a character that distinguishes an individual or group from other individuals or groups.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Majid Sarah, *Identity, Ideology and language: A Literature Review of Theoretical Anchors and Empirical Studies*, (Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), Volume 9 No. 2, June 2018), 57. Accessed on 27 December 2018, 12.48 WIB.

<sup>50</sup>Majid Sarah, *Identity, Ideology and language: A Literature Review of Theoretical Anchors and Empirical Studies*, (Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), Volume 9 No. 2, June 2018), 59. Accessed on 27 December 2018, 12.48 WIB.

<sup>51</sup>Irwan Abdullah, *Konstruksi dan Reproduksi Kebudayaan*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010), 4-9

<sup>52</sup>Haryatmoko, *Membongkar Rezim Kepastian Pemikiran Kritis Post-Strukturalis*, (Yogyakarta: PT Kanisius, 2016), 23-24.

<sup>53</sup>Larry A. Samovar, et al. *Komunikasi Lintas Budaya*, translated by Indri Margaretha Sudabolak. (Jakarta: Salemba Humaika, 2010), 184.

<sup>54</sup>Budi Santoso, *Bahasa dan Identitas Budaya*, (Sahda: Journal of Cultural Studies and the Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University , Volume 1, Nomor 1, September 2006: M –49), 44. accessed on November 22, 2019, at 10.46 WIB

The identity of a group is formed by social processes. The social processes that shape and maintain identity are determined by social structures. The identity is carried out with social construction. According to Peter L. Berger, the identity instructions can be carried out :

a. Internalization: self- identification in socio-cultural

Internalization is the direct understanding or interpretation of an objective event as the expression of a meaning; it means as a manifestation of the subjective processes of others so that it becomes meaningful subjectively for oneself<sup>55</sup>. The individual identifies with social institutions or social organizations where individual members. Two important things in self identification is socialization conducted through two pathways, there are primary socialization and secondary socialization. Primary socialization can be family, while secondary socialization is organization.

In Riau, the efforts to revive the existence of the Malay Arabic script raised a polemic about the pros and cons of the existence of the Malay Arabic script ; namely by adding signposts of street names with Malay Arabic script made of plywood.

b. Objectivation

Objectivation<sup>56</sup> is the interaction with the intersubjective world that is institutionalized or subjected to institutionalization . Institutionalization carried out in Pekanbaru Riau, in the form of:

1. Making the Malay Arabic alphabet as a Local Content lesson in the public and private elementary level curriculum. This was done based on the Decree of the Head of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education of the Riau Province Number: 24/KPTS?P/1994 concerning the application of the Local Content Curriculum in Malay Arabic writing as a subject for the Mandatory Local Content of Riau<sup>57</sup>.

2. For the training of Arabic script returns the glory of the Malay archipelago se like part of Malay culture. The aims and benefits of training in the role of the Malay Arabic script are: (1) providing knowledge transfer related to language teaching through the learning of the Malay Arabic script in cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects . (2) efforts to preserve the teaching of Malayscript which had been invented by Indonesians and archipelago scholars more or less in the past 1 century to remain unearthed, maintained and preserved.

3. Externalization is self adaptation to the socio-cultural world as a human product. For the religious elite, abstract life texts are texts written in the scriptures or reference books, which in reality still require interpretation, and the interpretation is then not single, but plural<sup>58</sup>

Likewise, the Malay Arabic alphabet in Pekanbaru Riau as a human product, has a different value from the past until now. That is, the Malay Arabic alphabet is no longer valuable as a religious product, but rather a cultural product that is proud of being the identity of the Riau Malay community.

The explanation above can be understood in the following *flowchart* :

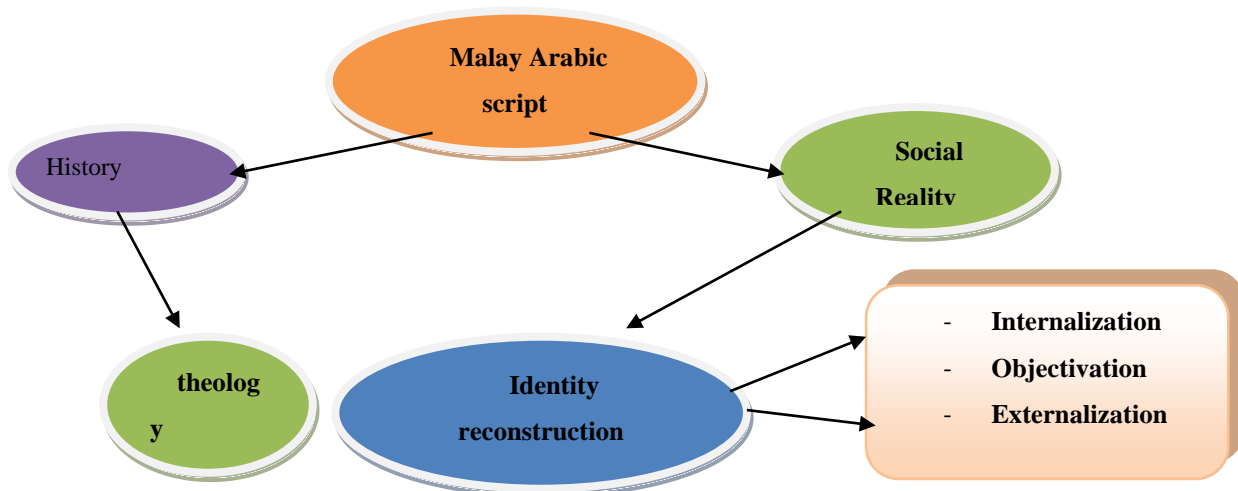
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<sup>55</sup> Peter L Berger dan Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality : A Treatise in Sociology of Knowledge*, (USA: Penguin University Book, 1971), 149- 150.

<sup>56</sup>Peter L Berger dan Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality : A Treatise in Sociology of Knowledge*, (USA: Penguin University Book, 1971), 70

<sup>57</sup> Fadillah Om, *Ensiklopedi dan Standarisasi Tulisan Arab Melayu Provinsi Riau*, (Pekanbaru: CV Usaha Putra, 2009), 8.

<sup>58</sup>Peter L Berger dan Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality : A Treatise in Sociology of Knowledge*, (USA: Penguin University Book, 1971), 149. Juga: <https://argyo.staff.uns.ac.id/2013/04/10/teori-konstruksi-sosial-dari-peter-l-berger-dan-thomas-luckman/>, diakses pada tanggal 8 Agustus 2019, jam 8.54 WIB.



The definition and reality above can be understood the identity of the Riau Malay community who popularized the Malay Arabic script as their symbol is a characteristic that can distinguish these groups from other groups to show the identity of the Malays. Social construction of reality offered by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman that efforts to revitalize the continuously reconstructed Malay Arabic script which was originally to strengthen Islamization experienced a shift as a reconstruction of identity. This was reinforced by the birth of the Vision of Riau 2020 which made Riau as the Center of Malay Culture in Southeast Asia, most people came to know and understand the Malay Arabic script through various media.

## V. Conclusion

Malay Arabic script is a modified Arabic script experiencing rapid progress and development in Indonesia, including Sumatra. Many works written in Malay Arabic script by Malay figures such as Raja Ali Haji, Hamzah Fanshuri, Bukhari al-Jauhari, and others, have contributed a lot in spreading Islamic theology in the archipelago, especially Sumatra.

However, the Malay Arabic script initially functioned as a written language and media to spread Islamic teachings, such as the birth of works, for example *Tajus Salat*, *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, *Book of Language Knowledge*, *Gurindam twelve*, *Syair Gemala Mustika* and other works that has been written by Malay figures experiencing a paradigm shift in the epistemology of Malay Arabic script, namely as the identity of a culture or region, especially in Riau. The Malay Arabic script is not only seen as a medium to study religious teachings but even is used by various government interests to strengthen Malay identity, ideologization of Malay which is synonymous with Muslims. This is one of the government's policies to support the Riau Vision 2020 which makes Riau a Malay Cultural Center in Southeast Asia.

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