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The Relationship Between Indonesia and Malaysia: An Overview of Historical, Artistic and Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

The close relationship between Malaysia and Indonesia in historical, artistic, and cultural contexts demonstrates that Indonesia can be considered the mainstream of Malaysian culture. Historically, for example, the territory of present-day Malaysia was once part of the Srivijaya Kingdom in South Sumatra (7th century) and the Majapahit Kingdom in Java (14th century). The impact of these historical events has resulted in numerous social and cultural similarities between Indonesians and Malaysians, especially in regions geographically close to Malaysia, such as Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Java. In these regions, not only do intense socio-cultural ties exist but also blood ties. Many Malaysian kings, officials, and religious scholars are descended from Sumatra, Java, and Sulawesi. Historically, the long-standing relationship between the Indonesian and Malaysian peoples has led to several cultural similarities between Indonesia and Malaysia. It would be more accurate to say that some Malaysian culture is Indonesian, or some Indonesian culture is Malaysian. The many similarities between Malaysian and Indonesian culture have given rise to the term "sisterhood" often used by Malaysians to refer to Indonesia as "sisters of the same race."

Keywords: Indonesia – Malaysia Relations, Heritage, History, Art, Culture

1. Introduction

The geographical position of Indonesia and Tanah Melayu has an important meaning in the early relationship between the two countries. Both countries are located along the trade route between China and India since ancient times. This position has caused the regions of both countries to be influenced by India and China. The influence of the two civilizations can be seen in the culture, society and religion of the local people. Indian influence is found in the art, architecture, literature and customs of the people before the arrival of Islam in the 13th century. Hinduism and Buddhism are the religions practiced by the majority of people in the Indonesian Archipelago and the Malay Peninsula. This is evidenced by the existence of temples in Sumatra, Java and the Malay Peninsula. Chinese influence is more on the political aspect. Kingdoms in the Malay world such as Sriwijaya, Majapahit and Malacca once had diplomatic relations with China.

The geographical position of the Tanah Melayu Peninsula which is located adjacent to the Indonesian archipelago, especially Sumatra and Java, has caused the population on the Peninsula to be more influenced by the culture of

the Indonesian archipelago, compared to the culture of mainland Southeast Asia (Thailand and Indochina). The Strait of Malacca is a strait located between the east coast of Sumatra and the west coast of the Tanah Melayu Peninsula, which is an important sea route for East-West trade relations or India-China trade. Trade activities in this strait have advanced the kingdoms along the strait such as Palembang, Kedah, Melayu (Jambi) and Malacca (Sar Desai, 1980).

Trade interests have led to the emergence of large maritime-style kingdoms such as Srivijaya and Malacca. With this, the geographical position of Indonesia and Malay Land has played an important role in relations between the two regions, especially in terms of trade development and cultural development. There are several important similarities that stand out in the early relations between the two countries. These similarities can be seen from the aspects of nationality, language, religion and culture. In terms of ethnicity, the indigenous people of Indonesia and Malaysia are known as Indonesians or Malays (Tate, 1977). The indigenous people of Malaysia and Indonesia generally come from the same ethnic group, namely the Mongoloid group which originates from the Yunnan region in southern China. They came to Southeast Asia around 2500 BC. The Malays came to Southeast Asia in two waves. The first wave was a group known as the Proto Malays and the second group was known as the Deutero Malays. The difference in the arrival time of the Proto Malay and Deutero Malay has a time difference of 2000 years (Vlekke, 1967:9-10).

Population migration in Southeast Asia is a phenomenon that has been going on since humans arrived in this region. Migration has always occurred between the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, Sumatra and Java, Java and the Malay Peninsula and so on. Because they come from the same ethnic group, their migration from one country to another in this region is not considered as migration abroad but as migration from one village to another.

The Malay people in the Malay Archipelago are maritime societies. As a maritime society, they sail to all corners of the region. As a result, their language, namely Malay, has become the lingua franca in this archipelago. In fact, this language is only spoken by residents in several parts of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. Malay received extraordinary encouragement to develop as a lingua franca due to the development of trade and ports in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. These trading centers have become meeting places for people from all over Southeast Asia. The use of Malay has united almost all ethnic groups in Indonesia (Vlekke, 1967:12).

In terms of religion, there are similarities between Indonesia and Malaysia. Compared to other countries in Southeast Asia, Islam is an influential and dominant religion in the lives of people in both regions. In terms of belief, Islam is an element that distinguishes the people of Tanah Melayu and Indonesia from the people of other Southeast Asians. This is because the majority of the population of mainland Southeast Asia are Buddhists and Catholics in the Philippine Islands.

In terms of culture, Tanah Melayu and Indonesia received many elements from Indian culture, but elements of Indian culture are more visible in Indonesian culture, especially in architecture and carving. In examining the early relationship, there are similarities in the cultural aspects between the two countries. Because of its geographical location on international trade routes, including trade routes between India and China, these two regions, Tanah Melayu and Indonesia, were greatly influenced by Indian and Arab cultures. In the end, many cultural products of the two nations, Indonesia and Malaysia, are a blend of local values and foreign elements such as Indian, Chinese and Arab influences. Examples are wayang (the Mahabharata story) and Zapin dance which are Arab influences (Sunarti, 2013a).

The development of Islam has had an important impact on the early relations between the two countries. Islam has become one of the unifying factors of the two nations. Compared to the Majapahit and Srivijaya eras, the relations between the two nations were increasingly close during the Malacca Sultanate in the 14th century, which was an Islamic Sultanate that played an important role in trade and the spread of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago. In addition, the occurrence of marriages between members of the royal family resulted in closer relations between one kingdom and another. Before the entry of British and Dutch colonialism in the Malay and Indonesian lands, the people of the two nations were politically connected by kingdoms that took turns influencing each other. Several large kingdoms in the past took turns controlling the same area, such as the power of the Aceh kingdom

which covered part of the Malay Peninsula, as well as the Riau Lingga kingdom whose territory reached the Johor region (Sunarti, 2013b).

The different concepts of national identity between Indonesia and Malaysia are apparent, yet they are interconnected. Indonesia, with its motto of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), has successfully created a strong national identity. Conversely, Malaysia, with its National Cultural Principles (DKK), faces challenges due to its ethnic diversity and Article 153 of the Malaysian Constitution, which protects the privileges of Malays. The formation of national identity in Indonesia began in the early 20th century during the Dutch East Indies colonial period, with the organization of the independence movement and the use of the Indonesian language. Meanwhile, in Malaysia, the concept of National Cultural Principles remains difficult to implement due to its focus on Malay culture, in contrast to the *Rukun Negara* (State Principles), which consider all citizens equal (Fortuna Anwar, 2012).

Both countries have experienced colonisation and its associated legacies, such as cultural dislocation, cultural appropriation, and hybridity. European domination took root in Southeast Asia in the 19th century and imperialism reached its height at the beginning of the 20th century. During these centuries Indonesia was colonised by the Dutch, with brief interregnums by the British and the Japanese, and Malaya was colonised by the British, with a brief period of Japanese rule. Many have argued that postcoloniality and its associated colonial paradigms did not necessarily end at the moment independence was declared or obtained (Clark and Juliet Pietsch, 2014:11).

Since the 1950s, Malaysian films have been popular in Indonesia, and vice versa, Indonesian films have also been popular in Malaysia. During the Soeharto era, Indonesia and Malaysia collaborated on television broadcasts through the program "Titian Muhibah." Cultural relations between the two countries flourished in music and film, with figures such as P. Ramlee, Siti Nurhaliza, Sheila Majid, and Indonesian literary works becoming known in Malaysia. The COVID-19 pandemic has spurred innovation in cultural diplomacy with virtual events, seminars, and cultural festivals expanding audience reach. Creative industries, such as film and music, have become important sectors in cultural relations. ASEAN film festivals and musical collaborations promote the cultures of both countries (Fauzi, 2009).

2. Historical connection

Indonesian and Malaysian society are connected by kingdoms that alternately influence each other. Several large kingdoms in the past alternately controlled the same area, for example, the power of the Aceh kingdom covered part of the Malaysian Peninsula. Likewise with the Riau Lingga Kingdom, the territory of the Malacca Sultanate during its heyday also covered part of the island of Sumatra. Furthermore, several kingdoms in the Malaysian Peninsula region were founded by Indonesians, such as the Negeri Sembilan kingdom by the Minang people who had come to the Peninsula region since the early 16th century AD, then the Johor Sultanate by the Bugis people, as well as the Selangor Sultanate.

In the book *Sejarah Melayu* and a Malay epic, *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, the word "Melayu" is explicitly associated with Sumatra and in Tome Pires' book, *Suma Oriental* in the 16th century AD, the term "Tanah Melayu" refers to the area around present-day Palembang. Early Chinese sources mention a Malay country in the present-day Jambi region; but *Sejarah Melayu* mentions that "Melayu" is a river that flows near a sacred hill in Palembang, namely Bukit Siguntang (Andaya & Andaya, 1982). One day on the hill, three brothers who were descendants of Alexander Zulkarnaen miraculously appeared. One of them became King of Palembang who later became the ancestor of the kings of Malacca.

In this connection, "Melayu" means a person who has a close relationship with this single ancestor and whose descendants became kings who ruled the Malacca kingdom. "Melayu" (Malaysia), thus, also refers to the region of Sumatra. More specifically, the region is the Srivijaya Kingdom. Referring to a great power and culture, such as the Srivijaya Kingdom, the term "Malay" was used by a society in Malaysia who intended to distinguish it from the indigenous people of the Malaysian region at that time. Until now, in Malaysia there is still a distinction between indigenous people and Malays. In the context of Malaysia, the term "indigenous people" can be equated

with the term "isolated tribe" in Indonesia. Although many of them live in urban areas and are indeed indigenous Malaysians. With the Malay identity, these people often feel more civilized compared to the indigenous people who are considered primitive (Sunarti, 2016).

Many kingdoms or sultanates in Malaysia are closely related to sultanates in Indonesia. Therefore, the people of Tanah Melayu do not see the Bugis and Minangkabau people as foreigners. This was proven when the people of Selangor accepted Raja Lumu, son of the Bugis ruler Daeng Chelak, as their sultan in 1742. and the people of Negeri Sembilan accepted Raja Melewar, who was of Minangkabau descent, as king of Negeri Sembilan (Yang Dipertuan Besar Negeri Sembilan) in 1773 (Tate, 1997).

The Sultanates of Selangor and Johor have close ties with South Sulawesi because the sultans of Selangor and Johor are of Bugis descent. Likewise, the Malacca Sultanate was founded by Parameswara, a prince from Sriwijaya (Palembang) who fled from the Majapahit attack to Tumasik or Singapore. Parameswara succeeded in establishing the Malacca Sultanate around 1400 in Tanah Melayu which later developed into the largest trading city of his era, replacing the Sriwijaya kingdom (Sunarti, 2016).

The Perak Sultanate was closely related to Aceh. This happened because when Aceh attacked Perak in 1575, the eldest son of the Sultan of Perak was taken as a husband by the Queen of Aceh. Four years later the son of the Sultan of Perak became king or sultan in Aceh (Andaya, 1982). Then this sultan sent his younger brother to Perak who later reigned as Sultan of Perak. This action strengthened the family relationship between Aceh and Perak.

This very close political and cultural relationship then changed after the arrival of Western nations, especially the Dutch and British, who then controlled the Malay Lands and Indonesia. The London Agreement of 1824 between England and the Netherlands can be said to be the starting point for the political separation of the Malay Lands and Indonesia. This agreement divided the Malay world into two regions that were different in terms of politics. Based on Articles 9 and 10 of this agreement, the British agreed to hand over all their trading centers in Sumatra to the Dutch and would not make other agreements with local leaders on the island (Sar Desai, 1981:58).

On the other hand, the Dutch also handed over the city of Malacca and its territory in the Malay Peninsula to the British and also stated that they would not make any other agreements with local leaders in the Peninsula. This agreement is considered to be the basis for the modern Indonesian and Malaysian states. The British colonization of the Malay Peninsula and the Dutch colonization of the Indonesian archipelago subsequently created a different historical experience for the two nations (Sunarti, 2013a).

Before the formation of the two countries called "Indonesia" (1945) and Malaysia (1957) today, the relationship between the people of the two countries was relatively very close. Both nations have the same historical heritage, language, religion, and culture. The people of both countries come from the same ethnic group and most of them have close family ties, especially between the people of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula (Muniandi, 1996). During the glory of the great kingdoms, such as Srivijaya, Majapahit, and Malacca, the territories of Indonesia and Malaysia were once under the auspices of the powers of these kingdoms. There are several important similarities that stand out in the early relations between the two nations. These similarities can be seen, among other things, from the aspects of nationality, language, religion, culture and work.

In terms of ethnic groups, the indigenous people of the Malay Lands and Indonesia generally come from the same ethnic group, namely the Mongoloid group originating from the southern part of China (Yunan). They came to Southeast Asia around 2500 BC. According to the theory of the Dutch anthropologist, P. Sarasin, the Malays came to Southeast Asia in two waves. The first wave was a group known as the Proto Malays and the second group was known as the Deutro Malays. The difference in the arrival time of the Proto Malay and Deutro Malay groups is 2000 years.

The Proto Malays came to Southeast Asia around 2500 BC and brought Neolithic culture. Meanwhile, the Deutro Malays came around 300 BC and brought iron and bronze culture to the Southeast Asian region (Vlekke, 1967). According to this theory, the descendants of the Proto Malays were forced to move to the interior after the arrival

of the Deutro Malay group. This new group settled throughout the Malay archipelago and was gradually able to control the coastal areas of the Southeast Asian archipelago.

The success of the Deutro Malay group in guarding the coastal area was due to their wandering spirit and expertise as sailors. Population migration in Southeast Asia is a phenomenon that has occurred since humans arrived in this region. Migration always occurs between the Malay Lands and Sumatra, Sumatra and Java, Java and the Malay Lands and others (Ghulam, 1976; Taib Osman, 1989). Because they come from the same group, their migration from one country to another in this region is not considered as migration abroad but as migration from one village to another.

The Malay community in the Malay archipelago is a maritime society. As a seafaring society, they sail to all corners of this region. As a result, their language, namely Malay, has become a lingua franca in this archipelago (Tate, 1977:27). In fact, this language was initially only used by residents in several parts of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. The Malay language received extraordinary encouragement to develop as a lingua franca due to the development of trade in ports on the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. These trading centers have become meeting places for people from all over Southeast Asia. The use of Malay is considered to have united almost all ethnic groups in Indonesia (Vlekke, 1967:12).

In terms of religion, there are similarities between Indonesia and Malaysia. Compared to other countries in Southeast Asia, Islam is an influential and dominant religion in the lives of people in both regions. In terms of belief, Islam is an element that distinguishes the people of Tanah Melayu and Indonesia from the people of other Southeast Asians. This is because the majority of the population of mainland Southeast Asia is Buddhist, or Catholic in the Philippine Islands. In terms of culture, Tanah Melayu and Indonesia received many elements from Indian culture, but elements of Indian culture are more visible in Indonesian culture, especially in the fields of architecture and sculpture (Holt, 1967).

In examining the early relationship, there are similarities in the cultural aspects between the two countries. Because of its geographical location on international trade routes, including trade routes between India and China, the Tanah Melayu and Indonesia regions were greatly influenced by Indian and Arab cultures. In the end, many cultural products of the two nations, Indonesia and Malaysia, are a blend of local values and foreign elements, such as Indian, Chinese, and Arab influences. Examples are wayang (the Mahabharata story) from India and Zapin dance (influenced by Arab).

3. The relationship between art and culture

The process of the arrival of Indonesians to Malaysia is certainly not only loaded with economic and political aspects but also cultural aspects. Like the arrival of foreign nations to Indonesia which basically have economic and political motives, it also brings cultural content. Indonesian culture has also been greatly influenced by various nations who have stopped and settled in the Nusantara region (Lombard, 1996). In fact, often these cultural contributions form a new culture which until now is recognized as the original culture of the Indonesian nation. Likewise with Malaysian culture which is not free from various foreign cultural influences. One of the contributors is Indonesian culture.

The influence of Indonesian culture can be said to be very large and because it has been going on for hundreds of years, cultures originating from Indonesia are often no longer perceived as a culture originating from outside or foreign. They consider it as part of Malaysian culture (Abdul Kadir, 1988). For example, in terms of food, Padang cuisine is a very common food for Malaysian people because it was brought by the Minang ethnic group who are concentrated in Negeri Sembilan. Likewise, Javanese food and its arts have become part of Malaysian culture because the Javanese ethnic group is concentrated in Johor and Selangor (Mohd Thamrin, 1987). Including the Barongan dance art which was once a problem in the relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia.

Below we will describe several examples of cultural products found in Malaysia, which have similarities with cultural products found in Indonesia. The first is Shadow Puppetry. This is an ancient traditional theater in

Malaysia. In Malaysia there are four types of wayang which are referred to by specific names, namely Javanese *wayang kulit* (*wayang kulit purwa*), *wayang gedhek*, *wayang Melayu* (Javanese *wayang*), and *wayang kulit Siam* (*wayang kulit Kelantan*). Javanese *wayang kulit* (*wayang kulit Purwa*) originates from Indonesia and was developed by people of Javanese descent living in Johor. In Malaysia, this type of wayang kulit still shows the characteristics of original wayang kulit purwa, including stories and characters from the Mahabharata epic. Musical accompaniment is also played with Javanese gamelan (Sweeney, 1976; Hardjowirojo, 1968).

Wayang is a performing art in the form of a typical drama. These performing arts include sound arts, literary arts, musical arts, spoken arts, fine arts, and others. Some people believe that wayang performances are not just art, but contain sacred symbols. Since the 19th century until now, wayang has been a topic of discussion and has been described by experts. Wayang is an original Indonesian (Javanese) word meaning shadow, comes from the root which with the prefix *wa* becomes the word *wayang*.

Words in Javanese that have roots with various vowel variations include: *laying*, *dhoyong*, *puyeng*, *reyong*, which mean always moving, not fixed, vague, and faint. The words *wayang* and *hamayang* used to mean showing shadows, then developed into shadow performances and became shadow performance art or wayang. *Wayang* as a depiction of the dualistic mind of the Javanese people. There are two things, parties or groups that are in conflict, good and bad, physical and spiritual, and refined and coarse. Both are united in humans to achieve balance. *Wayang* is also a means of social control, for example with social criticism conveyed through humor. Another function is as a means of strengthening social status, because those who can perceive *wayang* are respected people, and are able to provide large costs. *Wayang* also instills social solidarity, is a means of entertainment, and education. In general, the definition of wayang is a form of traditional performance presented by a puppeteer, using puppets or the like as a performance tool (Kusuma, 2021).

Wayang kulit is a puppet made of leather, carved, and sungging, so that it depicts forms that are not the same as real humans. It is used as a tool to depict human life. Wayang can create shadows on the screen (screen), and can be moved to the right, left, up, down, and certain angles. The word *purwa* comes from Sanskrit which means first, the previous, or the old. *Purwa* era means ancient times, and *wayang purwa* means puppets in ancient times. The word *purwa* comes from the chain of words *parwa*, meaning chapters in the Mahabharata. Thus, *wayang kulit purwa* is also called *wayang kulit* which takes the theme of the story from the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. The development of the form of wayang during this period is a new form of change in the initial concept. The clothing in *wayang* is also inseparable from the changes during this Islamic period, there was a stylization, so that it became harmonious and to distinguish the social level and position of each character. Some *wayang* costumes have symbolic and historical meanings, in addition to achieving harmony, and also to change the mission being conveyed (Maksum, 2017).

Unlike Malaysia, *wayang kulit* itself is an ancient traditional theater in Malaysia. In Malaysia there are four types of *wayang* referred to by certain names, namely Javanese *wayang kulit* (*wayang kulit purwa*), *wayang gedek*, Malay *wayang* (Javanese *wayang*), and Siamese *wayang kulit* (Kelantan *wayang kulit*). Javanese *wayang kulit* (*wayang kulit Purwa*) originates from Indonesia and was developed by people of Javanese descent who live in Johor. In Malaysia, this type of *wayang kulit* still shows the characteristics of the original *wayang kulit purwa*, including the stories and characters from the Mahabharata epic.

The second is Javanese *Gamelan*. The word *gamelan* refers to a set of musical instruments (usually made of bronze) that are beaten with a certain beater. Javanese *gamelan* was brought to the Malay Lands along with the arrival of Javanese people to the Malay Lands during the British colonial era. Many Javanese people inhabit the southern regions of the Peninsula, such as Selangor, Johor, and also Singapore.

The third is the *Zapin* dance. This dance art is one form of folk dance introduced to the Indonesian archipelago by Arab traders. The *Zapin* dance originates from the cultural adaptation and assimilation of *Zapin* (Arabic) which was presented to the general public by Malay people of Arab descent. *Zapin* initially developed in the Johor Sultanate, then spread among the Malay people of the Indonesian archipelago (Md Noor, 1993). In Indonesia, since the early 16th century AD, the *Zapin* dance has been entertainment for the nobility during the Riau-Lingga

Sultanate and has developed with the support of the palace. *Zapin* is also known among the Malay people in Kalimantan.

Fourth is *Randai*. This is a traditional dance and theater form of Minangkabau that combines dance movements, singing, music, storytelling, and acting. Today *Randai* has developed through several continuous influences at various levels. The word "randai" imagines a circle or movement formation in a circle around a certain location. This comes from the behavior of a group of people who surround a certain area and look for lost objects as they move towards the center of the circle.

Meanwhile, *Randai* also uses oral storytelling and martial arts as sources of its performances. *Randai* is famous among the Minangkabau people throughout Indonesia and Malaysia. This art was brought to Malaysia by migrants from Minangkabau who had come to the Malay Lands since the early 16th century AD. Immigrants from Minangkabau even later established a kingdom that is now known as the Negeri Sembilan Sultanate (Md Noor, 1986).

Fifth is traditional *Caklempong* music. This type of music was brought to Malaysia by the Minangkabau people who settled in Negeri Sembilan around the beginning of the 14th century AD. Since then the *Caklempong* tradition that developed in Malaysia has continued to be influenced by the Minangkabau tradition in Sumatra. In ancient times *Caklempong* was not only played as entertainment for the general public, but also at the Sultan's inauguration. Currently *Caklempong* music is played for various official state ceremonies and cultural celebrations, such as wedding ceremonies. *Caklempong* music also accompanies *pencak silat* performances, candle dance, plate dance and henna dance. This music is also found in the *Randai* dance drama.

Sixth is *Kompang*. This *kompang* is a type of traditional Malay instrument which has the same shape as the tambourine in Indonesia and the *dufuf* in the Middle East. The art of playing *Kompang* comes from Arabic art which developed in the Indonesian archipelago and ultimately influenced Malay art since the beginning of the 13th century AD. Initially, the singing of Arabic songs was accompanied by the game of *Kompang* which was similar to Arabic *Kompang* because the way of holding and hitting it was the same. Local people then imitated the *Kompang* game of Arab traders who used it to attract buyers. Because *Kompang* was promoted in Islamic culture, Arab preachers also used it to accompany Islamic poetry. At first, *Kompang* appeared only in villages, celebrating wedding ceremonies and religious ceremonies such as the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The examples of cultural products above are only a small part, so more in-depth research is needed regarding the similarities between cultural products in Indonesia and Malaysia (Sunarti, 2013b).

4. Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be seen that the geographical and geopolitical position of Southeast Asia has a very large impact on cultural, social and political changes in the Southeast Asian region as a whole. Indonesia and Malaysia as two countries that have the most strategic geographical locations and directly border each other by sea and land, have received many influences from outside which then form many similarities in terms of history and culture. Indonesia and Malaysia are two countries not only because of their geographical locations as neighbors but also because they have almost the same cultural diversity, because they have almost the same racial background, namely the Melanesian race.

From a historical perspective, it can be seen that the relationship between the Indonesian and Malaysian peoples has been going on for a long time and has caused several cultural similarities between Indonesia and Malaysia. It is more appropriate to say that part of Malaysian culture is Indonesian culture, or part of Indonesian culture is part of Malaysian culture. The many similarities between Malaysian and Indonesian cultures have given rise to a term that Malaysia often expresses towards Indonesia as "saudara serumpun".

Indonesian society itself rarely expresses the term. The existence of cultural similarities is seen as a blessing that brings one closer to another. However, in recent years, cultural similarities have become a "pebble in the shoe" in Indonesia's relationship with Malaysia. This problem arises due to the problem of cultural claims. In this case, the

majority of Indonesian people often feel that their cultural products have been hijacked by Malaysia. In addition to the lack of historical understanding of the Indonesia-Malaysia relationship, the problem of claims to a cultural product arises due to the continued view that links cultural boundaries with national boundaries. In fact, this way of thinking has long been known to be inappropriate. In domestic cases, it can be seen that various cultures cross several administrative regions that are not strictly limited by administrative regions. Likewise, if we look at the cultural boundaries between Indonesia and Malaysia.

The administrative boundaries of countries cannot distinguish between several cultural similarities. How can we claim that the Dayak Iban culture is only Indonesian culture? Because the Dayak Iban people also live in Malaysia. It is the same as recognizing "rendang food" as an Indonesian cultural product alone, even though the Minang people have brought it to Malaysia for a long time. Are Javanese who have long settled and become Malaysian citizens prohibited from developing their ancestral culture in Malaysia? What if one day Barongan or Gamelan is recognized as Surinamese culture?

In the issue of cultural claims, Indonesian society must realize that the Indonesian nation and its culture have spread widely to various regions for a long time. So that our culture also exists and is recognized as a culture by a community group in another country. On the other hand, Malaysia must be honest about history that some of its cultures have Indonesian roots. Although it has felt that some cultures that are the same as Indonesia are the original cultures of Malaysia. To show good faith and respect for its kindred spirits, on various occasions, the roots of the culture should be expressed by Malaysia, including for the promotion of its tourism.

In addition to understanding the spread of Indonesian culture, the two countries must also understand the new cultural map. The new cultural map emerged after the two kindreds were strictly limited by political boundaries, namely the state. Art and cultural products become an important part of the identity of the nation and state. Each party not only preserves the old culture but also forms a new culture. Cultural cooperation between the two countries is crucial for addressing cultural heritage claims, which often lead to misunderstandings. Examples include UNESCO's recognition of Indonesian cultures such as batik and wayang, and the recognition of pantun as a shared cultural heritage in 2020.

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