

Islam and the Malay Shadow Play

—Aspects of the Historical Mythology
of the Wayang Siam—

By

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Introduction:

Folk Islam as practiced by the majority of village Malays is a syncretic religion, bearing traces of the Hindu and Animistic influences present in the Malay Peninsula before the arrival of Islam in the fifteenth century. While Modernist Islam, particularly as practiced in Malaysia's urban areas in the current revivalist climate, disapproves of most of the traditional Malay arts, Malay Folk Islam is more tolerant. Islam and the *Wayang Siam* shadow play are linked in popular belief in Kelantan; the nature of this link, as well as Kelantanese ambivalence towards the arts and religion, is the focus of this article.*

The Setting: Kelantan

The state of Kelantan on the northeastern coast of peninsular (or West) Malaysia looms large in the Malaysian imagination. It is famous for the vitality of traditional Malay arts, which remain viable in few places other than Kelantan, and for the Islamic piety of its citizenry. It is geographically remote, and possessed of a dialect nearly unintelligible to speakers of Standard Malay. It is one of the poorest and least developed states; Kelantan's economy is agricultural, based upon rubber and rice, and much of its traditional economy and concomitant village

* This article is based on field research carried out in 1977–1979 in Kelantan, Malaysia, funded by the Yale Concilium on Interantional and Area Studies. My thanks to my teachers, the *dalang* Abdullah Baju Merah, Yusoff Hassan, Abdul Rahman Hassan, and Hussein Che' Lah, and to Harold C. Conklin, Rufus S. Hendon and Douglas A. Raybeck for their comments and criticism. All errors are of course my own. An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the Asia Society, October 29, 1979.

life-style is still intact.

Kelantan's population is nearly 93% Malay. The ethnically homogeneous character of the state, particularly in comparison to the polyglot nature of Malaysia's national population,¹ has made possible the varied and active complex of Malay arts native to Kelantan. It has also fostered a strong self-identity among the Kelantanese, set apart by their etiquette (*budi bahasa*), dialect (*loghat Kelantan*), and perhaps a certain cultural arrogance concerning their artistic heritage.

Kelantan enjoys a reputation as a particularly conservative Islamic state. To be a Malay is to be a Muslim, both according to Malay custom, and the constitution of the Federation of Malaysia. Kelantan has been, and continues to be, an Islamic center. It is renowned for its *pondok* (religious schools), and religious teachers.² The Kelantanese peasantry actively participates in Islam on the village level, obeying the precepts of Islam, for the most part. Certainly nearly all Kelantanese are 'believers,' even those who are lax in the observance of some of their religious duties.

As Islam is an integral component of Kelantanese Malay identity, no less so is Kelantan's artistic tradition. The Malay arts and crafts of Kelantan are a vital and thriving complex in which great numbers of Kelantanese participate. Kelantan has long been famous for its silk and *batik* (wax-print) fabrics, as well as its wood-carving and silver-work. At the turn of the century, Kota Bharu, the capital of Kelantan, was a well-known gaming center, featuring bull-fights, ram-fights, cock-fights, and fish-fights, in addition to the more placid contests of kite-flying and top-spinning. Animal fights have since been declared illegal, but tops and kites are still popular. Kelantan remains one of the few places in Malaysia where Malay performing arts draw large and enthusiastic crowds.

The Vehicle: Wayang Siam

Among the performing arts in Kelantan, the *Wayang Siam* (Siamese drama: so-called because of its alleged Siamese origins) shadow puppet play is the most popular.³ It is performed in Kelantanese dialect. The technique of shadow puppetry is found in many parts of Southeast Asia; notably Java and Thailand, both of whose traditions have influenced the Kelantan shadow play. The Kelantanese *dalang* (puppeteer) is the sole puppeteer, though he is accompanied by eight or so musicians. Both he and they perform in a raised hut, called a *panggung*, with a white screen (*kelir*), stretched across the front. The *dalang* sits behind the screen, manipulating the flat, carved, hide puppets in front of the lamp, which allows the audience to see the shadows cast on the screen by the

puppets.

Wayang Siam is the folk form of the shadow play in Kelantan. The court form, *Wayang Jawa* (Javanese *Wayang*) is essentially the Kelantanese version of the Javanese *Wayang Purwa*. It takes its aesthetics and repertoire from the Javanese, though it, too, is performed in Kelantanese dialect. *Wayang Jawa* was patronized by the Kelantanese court, and when this patronage ceased, *Wayang Jawa* fell into a decline.⁴ It is now rarely performed. In contrast, *Wayang Siam* was and is a village art, and not dependent upon the courts. Within the past fifteen years, performances of *Wayang Siam* have begun to be sponsored by village entrepreneurs as business ventures (see Sweeney 1972: 26); tickets are sold to shadow play audiences. *Wayang Siam's* potential for profit has encouraged the sponsorship of even more performances, and during its season (roughly from February through August) there is considerable *Wayang Siam* activity in Kelantan on any given night.

The repertoire of the *Wayang Siam* is based upon the Malay folk rendition of the Ramayana—the *Cerita Mahraja Wana* (Mahraja Wana's Story—Mahraja Wana is the Malay equivalent to Ravana. The literary version is the *Hikayat Seri Rama*: Seri Rama's Tale—Seri Rama is the Malay Rama).⁵ Stories most often performed are not 'trunk' stories—from the *Cerita Mahraja Wana* itself—but 'branch' stories—spinoffs from the main tale featuring the star characters in different setting. The stories are chosen, and branch stories often composed, or at least doctored, by the *dalang* himself.

The *dalang* manipulates the puppets, imitates the voices of the characters and guides the orchestra. He composes the dialogue spontaneously as he performs, fleshing out the plot as he does so. Thus the *dalang* can control the tone and character of the story by emphasizing either the comic or tragic aspects of the plot, by drawing out certain episodes, and minimizing or eliminating others.

The *dalang* is also responsible for the supernatural aspects of the *Wayang Siam* performance. An invaluable part of a *dalang's* training is the training he receives in *ilmu dalam* (inner knowledge, magic), and it is also the most difficult to find. Magical knowledge is a closely guarded secret; most teachers pass it down to pupils of whose loyalty they feel sure, and only after all the technical aspects of *Wayang Siam* have already been taught. All performances are prefaced by the reading of spells to protect the *dalang* and musicians from malign influences, to attract an audience, to keep it calm, to 'praise' the puppets, and to keep evil spirits away from the *panggung*. *Wayang Siam* can also be performed for magical reasons, and as a kind of exorcism. The *dalang's* role places him squarely within the magico-religious world of Kelantan.

Many *dalang* in fact earn outside income through their magic as *bomoh* (curers, magicians) selling charms, particularly love and hate charms, or by their involvement in *Main Puteri*, a theatrical spirit exorcism ceremony, or both. The most skillful and most popular *dalang* are believed to be the most magically knowledgeable, and as a *dalang's* reputation as a performer grows, so usually grows his reputation as a magician.

Religious Disapproval of the Wayang Siam

The magical aspects of the *Wayang Siam*, as well as the magical activities of *dalang* themselves, are often cited by pious Muslims as reasons for their disapproval of the art. The spells of the *Wayang Siam*—as is most if not all Malay magic—are syncretic in nature, combining Hindu and Animist sources with Islamic formulae (see Skeat 1967, Winstedt 1951).⁶ Rituals calling upon *Dewa* (Hindu demigods) and earth spirits, appealing to Siva or Visnu and their various avatars while using Hindu words of power, are an anathema to strict Muslims.

The pronounced Hindu influence in the repertoire and cast of the shadow play also brings it under suspicion. A particular focus for this is the character of Pak Dogol, the god/clown who is servant to Seri Rama, the shadow play's hero.⁷ Pak Dogol is really Sang Yang Tunggal (The One Great One); the highest *Dewa* of heaven. Sang Yang Tunggal descended to earth and, to remain unrecognized, adopted the ugly shape and humble occupation of Pak Dogol. From his own body dirt, he created a companion for himself, called Wak Long.⁸ Pak Dogol has kept his godlike powers, and, in spite of his lowly position, is the most powerful figure in the *Wayang Siam*. Although most *dalang* nowadays would not confuse the identities of Allah (the One God) and Pak Dogol (The One Great One), this would not have been the case in the last generation (Sweeney: personal communication).⁹ The sin of *Shirik*, or giving a partner to the One God, still falls upon the *Wayang Siam*; figures, though stylized, are certainly human.

Further cause for religious displeasure with *Wayang Siam* is the presumed immorality of its performers. This objection is not specific to *Wayang Siam*, and includes all actors, actresses, singers, dancers, musicians, and puppeteers in Kelantan. *Dalang* are rumored to be irresistible to some women, and to take advantage of it. The Religious Council (*Majlis Ugama*) of Kelantan has also worried about the morality of the audience, and in 1922 issued an ordinance to separate the sexes at all public entertainments (Sweeney 1972: 14). This was never obeyed. The Imam of Kota Bharu expressed his displeasure with *Wayang Siam* in the same terms. He objected to men and women mingling both in the audience and on the screen. If male and female puppets

on screen, and male and female people in the audience were separated, then he thought there would be no objection to *Wayang Siam* from the religious quarter.¹⁰ Nevertheless, both religious officials and the pious laity consider *Wayang Siam*, along with other traditional entertainments, *berdosa* (sinful), and usually avoid performances. Curiously enough, although there are some doubts the suitability of television for a Muslim society, there is no consensus of concerned opinion regarding television, as one finds regarding *Wayang Siam*. Religious Muslims who do not attend *Wayang Siam* performances often have televisions in their homes.

Historical Mythology of the Wayang Siam

In spite of orthodox Islam's opposition to the *Wayang Siam*, Kelantanese folk belief links the two together. Syncretic Malay village Islam, itself an amalgam of pre-Islamic beliefs and practices and Sufism (a mystical sect of Islam), has been incorporated into the cosmology of the *Wayang Siam*. The basic repertoire of the *Wayang Siam* itself contains Islamic elements (see Winstedt 1969: 26–27). The Prophet Adam (*Nabi Adam*) is present in the *Cerita Mahraja Wana* (Sweeney 1972: 93) as well as the *Hikayat Seri Rama* (Ziesenis 1963: 9, Shellabear 1964: 1–3). Islam and its heroes have been included in the historical mythology of the shadow play and provide its historical framework.

The origins of the *Wayang Siam* are unclear (for some speculation, see Sheppard 1965). Some evidence points to Java as its source: many of the technical names for the *panggung* and its fixtures are Javanese, but the evidence is not conclusive. *Dalang's* lore has it that *Wayang Siam* came to Kelantan from the west, the Kingdom of Patani, now in Southern Thailand.¹¹ Its Patani origins account for its name, *Wayang Siam*, which means Siamese *Wayang*. According to this version, the first *dalang* was a Thai woman named Mak Erit (or Mak Erok), who came to Kelantan with puppets made from mango leaves. Similar versions tell of a Thai couple, Mak Erok and Pak Erok, or a Chinese woman, bringing *Wayang Siam* to Kelantan.

Spiritually the *Wayang Siam* is believed to have come from heaven (*kayangan*). Most *dalang* agree that the originator of the shadow play was Haji Mula (the First Haji—Haji is one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca) who became Pak Dogol, the god/clown of the *Wayang Siam*. The origin tales of the *Wayang Siam* are essentially histories of Pak Dogol/Haji Mula's descent to this world (*alam dunia*), bearing the shadow play. These tales explicitly link the (spiritual) origins of the shadow play with Islam, and identify Islamic personage as those who bestowed the art upon mankind.

The Origin Tales

The *dalang* Deraman explains, "In the beginning, Haji Mula was the Angel Azizin. He then became Grandfather (*Nenek*) Haji Mula. He then became *Dewa* Sang Yang Tunggal. Only after that did his name become Pak Dogol, when he came down to earth. He was bored with heaven (*Kekayangan*). He wanted to become someone's servant, he didn't want to be an important person. Both Allah and the Prophet Mohammad were the original teachers (*guru yang asal*). Pak Dogol is the first *dalang*: Mak Erit¹² traces her origin to Pak Dogol."

The *dalang* Yusoff's version is more specific. It tells, "The *Wayang Siam* came from Haji Mula, who gave the shadow play to the Muslims. It is he who watches over *dalang* while they perform. He was the first *dalang*, who gave the shadow play to all people.

Haji Mula was spiritually powerful; he was a *Dewa*. Haji Mula was a Jew¹³ who lived in Mecca before Islamic times. He was a Haji, and when the Prophet Mohammad came to Mecca, Haji Mula gave the *Wayang Kulit*¹⁴ to him. He gave him the truth. The Prophet Mohammad gave the shadow play to Sang Yang Tunggal.¹⁵ Sang Yang Tunggal gave it to Betara Guru.¹⁶ Betara Guru gave it to Dewa Nerada, who gave it to *dalang* Wak Long.¹⁷ All the Malay arts are from this source."

A still more detailed version is told by the *dalang* Abdullah Baju Merah. "Haji Mula prayed all the time. He lived in Mecca as King of the Jews,¹⁸ practicing the religion of ignorance before Islam. He ruled the world for forty years in each place: on earth, in heaven (*kayangan*), in the sea, and underground.¹⁹ After forty years, Allah created Adam, and he commanded Haji Mula to bow.²⁰ He ordered Haji Mula to humble himself before Adam. Haji Mula asked, 'Why should I? I came first.'

"Allah was furious that Haji Mula didn't want to humble himself. He said 'If you don't wish to pay your respects to Adam, I don't wish for you to live on My earth.' He didn't allow Haji Mula under His sky. Haji Mula's power deserted him. He wanted to cry '*Lailah illa llah*' (There is no God but Allah) but because Allah was angry with him, he could only cry 'Lai, lai.'²¹ He fell into the sea Baharullah (the sea of God). He tried to cry *Ampun*, (forgive), but he could not, he said only "Abu, abu.' He lay on a rock in the sea for forty years, unable even to wash the dirt from his body, as the land and sea belonged to Allah, and they were forbidden to him, From his body dirt, he created a companion for himself, someone with whom he could talk.

"Haji Mula's story disappears, and the story of four people comes to light.²² The four friends meet with Allah, who gives them something from the Nile River, where Adam's form dwelt. Allah put this

thing into one of the four's fist, warning, 'Don't you open it.' The man went to meet his friends with his hands closed. One asked him, 'What's inside?' He answered, 'I don't know.' Another suggested, 'Try and open it.' The fourth said, "It's a long time gone.' He opened his fist, and the thing was gone. It was Adam's soul (*roh*) and it became the Angel Azizin. Adam as yet had no soul.

"The four returned to Allah, who was angry. They begged forgiveness. He gave this thing to them again, and put this thing in the man's right hand. This time, there was no talking. They just went. One stood behind Adam, one on his right, one on his left, and one in front of him. One put the soul in Adam's mouth, and Adam 'became himself.' When he became aware, he praised the name of Allah, saying, '*Asyadu lailah illa 'llah*' (I testify that there is no God but Allah).²³ When he became aware, the four friends became Adam's followers' and because they were five together, Muslims pray five times a day. They all entered paradise. Their story ends.

"Haji Mula is in the sea Baharullah. He went to meet Allah, to ask for knowledge (*ilmu*), but Allah ordered, 'Pay your respects first.' Allah did not allow him to ask for anything on earth. He told him, 'If someone is thinking of Me, you must leave them alone; but if they forget Me, you must hit them and remind them.' Haji Mula stayed for seven days, and his appearance changed. Before, he was beautiful, more beautiful than Adam. Now he became ugly. He disappeared, to emerge on earth: in Kelantan as Pak Dogol, in Java as Semar, in Thailand as Epong.²⁴"

Kelantanese *dalang* tend to identify Pak Dogol with Semar, the god/clown of the Javanese *Wayang Purwa*, servant to the five Pandawas. *Wayang Siam dalang* consider Pak Dogol the Kelantanese incarnation of Semar, while *Wayang Jawa dalang* (the court shadow play, after the Javanese fashion, where Semar is the primary clown) deny this, claiming that Semar is more powerful and the Javanese tradition more legitimate. They accuse *Wayang Siam dalang* of equating Pak Dogol with Semar in order to have Semar's power and legitimacy applied to the *Wayang Siam*. However, the following explanation of the origin of Semar by the *Wayang Jawa dalang* Hussein, is nearly the same as that told about Pak Dogol.

"Semar was a powerful man, living in heaven. He found that he enjoyed nothing, and decided to descend to earth, where he would find work and friends as a servant of King. He wanted to meet people. He changed his appearance; where once he was beautiful, he became ugly, but this was a covering (*sarungan*). When he was beautiful no one came near, his beauty was too bright. No one came close, no one could gaze

upon him. He became a servant to the Pandawas.

"He was a man of great wisdom. He didn't even have to see a thing to know it. Whatever Allah ordered, he did. Finally, Allah created man—he made the body of Adam, seen by Jibrael and Izrael;²⁵ he made it from earth. That is why when we die, we all become earth. Because we were originally made from earth. Allah ordered all the angels to pay respects (*sembah*) to the Prophet Adam. All went but Semar, who was unwilling. He was an angel, too. He said to Jibrael, 'Why should I bow? Jibrael answered, 'Because Allah ordered it.'

"Allah was furious at Semar. Semar spit. Allah told Semar He would not allow Semar to live in His earth or sky. Semar asked, 'Where can I go? Everything is Yours. I want to leave, but I can't.' He asked if he could build the heaven *Suralalaya*²⁶ (*Negoro Kekayangan Suralalalya*). He fashioned it himself, to stand between earth and sky; it stayed suspended, without supports. At the time of the Prophet Mohammad, it was smashed. There was great confusion among the *Dewa*. All the *Dewa* studied with Semar. His children²⁷ were Betara Guru, *Dewa* Indera, *Dewa* Nerada, all of them. After the Prophet Mohammad, *Dewa* no longer had a place to live. I don't know where they live now—in all sacred [*keramat*] places.²⁸ After the uproar, they came down to earth.

"This Semar, then was Haji Mula. Pak Dogol is from the Kedi Bermas.²⁹ He's a big man there. Semar is someone else. Semar is the *Dewa* Sang Yang Tunggal. Pak Dogol is someone else entirely. *Wayang Siam dalang* say these two are the same, but that isn't true."

Islam and the Wayang Siam in Kelantan

Wayang Siam is commonly believed to have been used as a propaganda device to spread Islam throughout Malaysia. However, it is just as commonly believed to have been used by the Hindus to spread their religion and philosophy in Malaysia.³⁰ Though organized Islam remains hostile towards the *Wayang Siam*, it has become an important part of *Wayang Siam* legend. Islam has been assimilated into the historical mythology of the shadow play, as Pak Dogol becomes an Islamic angel in an earlier incarnation, and the Prophet Mohammad gives shadow play to the world.

The assimilation of Islam into the *Wayang Siam* world view does not preclude the recognition of basic antagonism between the two. The *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) is one of the five pillars of Islam, and the duty of every Muslim who can afford it. A *dalang*, or any performer of the traditional arts, is believed to forget everything about his art on the *Hajj*. His mind, it is said, will be wiped clean of everything relating to

Wayang Siam (or any traditional art). Haji are reputed to be magically knowledgeable and powerful, and some *dalang* seek them out to learn *ilmu dalam* (magic power) from them.

An intense Islamic religious experience will also lead the *dalang* away from his art. The *dalang* Abdullah Baju Merah's first teacher had a dream in which he met the Prophet Mohammad in Mecca (I was told that to dream of meeting the Prophet Mohammad was a sign that the dreamer would enter heaven). Upon waking from the dream, he vowed never to perform *Wayang Siam* again, although he did continue to teach it.

Most *dalang* consider themselves good Muslims, and do not accept the essential sinfulness of the *Wayang Siam* as expounded by their more fervent co-religionists. It is only among the very strictly religious, or those whose Islamic education was of the fundamentalist/urban cast, that this concept arises.

One *dalang* in particular is concerned with the propriety of *Wayang Siam*. He is a bit more religious than other *dalang*—and other villagers—and, though still a young man, voices considerable anxiety about punishment to come after his death for being a *dalang*. He plans to retire from *Wayang Siam* after he amasses the money necessary to make a pilgrimage to Mecca (Other Kelantanese claimed that money earned in ways not sanctioned by Islam—winning the lottery, or performing *Wayang Siam*, for instance—could not be used to make the *Hajj*). On the pilgrimage, he will forget all about *Wayang Siam*, and he plans to ask forgiveness (*minta taubat*) from Allah, for being a *dalang*. He will then return from Mecca and be pious.

To my knowledge, no other *dalang* or musicians planned to make, nor had any made the pilgrimage. Indeed, another *dalang*, who rarely performs because his other occupation as a cloth merchant keeps him too busy, says that he plans to perform more actively when he becomes older, since as an older (and presumably retired) man, he will have more time for it. He is little concerned with the possibility of meeting his maker as an unrepentant *dalang*.

Conclusion

This ambivalence concerning Kelantanese arts is found primarily among the educated, and townfolk. While the arts of Kelantan, particularly the *Wayang Siam*, by dint of its popularity, in some sense symbolize Kelantan and the uniqueness of the Kelantanese, Islam is no less crucial to Kelantanese self-identity. Adoption of a more Middle-Eastern-type Modernist Islam, or the conviction that Islam and the *Wayang Siam* of traditional Kelantan are mutually exclusive activities has caused

confusion among Kelantanese who would like to cling to both as part of their heritage. Religious Kelantanese Muslims who were also ardent admirers of their state's reputation as the heartland of Malay culture, remarked that I was wise to choose Kelantan as my field-site, since it was the ideal spot in which to study all aspects of Malay culture. Chief among these was the *Wayang Siam*, and one man—a Haji who refused to attend performances of *Wayang Siam* since he believed them sinful—told me that one could gauge the vitality of Kelantanese culture, and its nature as the “true” Malay culture, by the frequency and popularity of *Wayang Siam* performances.

Most Kelantanese villagers do not find themselves in the same philosophical bind as their more self-consciously Muslim brethren. *Wayang Siam* has traditionally been an accepted part of village Kelantan life, and Islam as practiced in the village has accepted or ignored, the existence of *Wayang Siam*. For its part, *Wayang Siam* has incorporated Islam into its complex of belief.

NOTES

1. Figures from 1970 Malaysian Census: Total Population, 46.7% Malay, 34.1% Chinese, 9% Indian, 11.2% Other (including indigenous groups, Europeans).

2. Kelantan was the site of theological debates between Modernist and Traditional Islam (see Muhammad Salleh b. Wan Musa 1974). Similar debates raged throughout Malays in the first half of the century, and still continue. *Kaum Muda* (Modernists) believe in a more ‘dynamic’ interpretation of Islam, and more individual interpretation of the religion and its laws, while advocating a return to a more rigorous Middle-Eastern Islam as the first step in the modernization process for Malays. *Kaum Tua* (Traditionalists) believe in the interpretation of the Koran and Islamic law through the medium of the religious scholars, and are for the most part identified with the traditional order (The details of this debate are beyond the scope of this paper, and I refer the reader to Roff 1962, and Peacock 1978, for a more thorough discussion of *Kaum Muda* / *Kaum Tua* differences).

The rise of Modernist Reformist Islam exacerbated tensions between Islam and traditional Malay arts, although tensions between Islamic and Malay culture have been present since the introduction of Islam in the area. Maxwell commented at the turn of this century, “It is often said that the Malay of the Peninsula is a bad Muhammadan, because he has retained so much of his pre-Muhammadan beliefs. The truth more really is that he is an imperfect Muhammadan . . .” (Maxwell 1907: 299). “. . . this (British) civilization is making the inhabitant of the Peninsula more of a Muhammadan and less of a Malay. The more he learns of his religion the more he realizes how impossible is the compromise that has been allowed to exist for the last four or five centuries between his pre-Muhammadan beliefs and the precepts of the Prophet,” (Maxwell 1907: 305).

3. State law demands that all performances in Kelantan be licensed (although perhaps 10–20% are given without permission). In the year 1977 for all Kelantan, traditional performances were licensed as follows: *Wayang Siam* 359; *Main Puteri*

(Spirit Exorcism) 215; *Dikir Barat* (team choral chanting) 199; *Silat* (Martial arts) 67; *Makyong* (Dance drama) 44; *Menora* (Thai-Style dance drama) 24.

4. This decline was already evident in the early 1930's (Sweeney 1972: 11-12).

5. The *Cerita Mahraja Wana* tells of Seri Rama*, the refined and noble hero, his younger brother, Laksmana, their supernatural servants, Pak Dogol* and Wak Long*, and their struggle against Mahraja Wana, the Demon King of Langkapuri. The tale concerns both the exploits and origins of the heroes, but the action most often portrayed beings when Seri Rama and Laksmana attend an archery contest sponsored by Maharisi Mata Api*, where the winner will receive his step-daughter, Siti Dewi, as a wife. Mahraja Wana competes, but loses to Seri Rama. Seri Rama, Siti Dewi, and Laksmana return to their kingdom through the forest, but Mahraja Wana, who is smitten with Siti Dewi, and furious at losing her, kidnaps Siti Dewi, taking her back to his island kingdom. While searching for his wife Siti Dewi, Seri Rama meets his (unrecognized) son, Hanuman Kera Puteh—Hanuman the White Monkey. Together with his army of apes, Hanuman assists his father, Seri Rama, in building a causeway to Langkapuri, and rescuing Siti Dewi.

For a more detailed version of the *Cerita Mahraja Wana*, see Sweeney 1972, also Overbeck 1933. For the literary version of the tale, see Shellabear 1965, and Zieseness 1963.

* The asterisk indicates characters who will be mentioned in the texts.

6. More sophisticated and urbanized Malay *bomoh* (magicians, curers) are caught between Malay 'Animism' and Modernist Islam. Alatas (1972: 46) gives the example of a *bomoh* who is "gradually yielding" to Islam, and turning from his "magical animism." The *bomoh* in question, however (Pak Nik Abdul Rahman bin Nik Der of Kota Bharu, Kelantan) is not at all typical of Kelantanese magical practitioners, being far more 'citized' than most, and more conversant with the teachings and directions of Islam, particularly doctrinal Islam. The adherence of Malays to their *bomoh* ought not to be underestimated, modernization and its inroads notwithstanding. In 1907, Maxwell warned, "The pawangs (*bomoh*) are dying out" (Maxwell 1907: 305), but they are still with us.

7. Pak Dogol is a purely Kelantanese character. The shadow plays of the area are identified by their major clowns (all deemed sacred): Pak Kadir in Trengganu, Epong in Thailand, Pak Dogol in Kelantan (see Sweeney 1972: 21).

8. This is an episode from the *Cerita Mahraja Wana* (Sweeney 1972: 97). Pak Dogol is not mentioned in the *Hikayat Seri Rama*. A variant is reported by Rentse 1947: 13.

9. See Sweeney (1972: 127) for Jambul's version of the *Cerita Mahraja Wana*: "Sang Yang Tunggal is Chief Dewa. Has 99 Names," As does Allah.

10. My thanks to Mr. John-Paul Davidson for his interview with the Imam, March, 1979.

11. Patani remains an ethnically Malay area within Thailand, and still has close links with Kelantan. Kelantan was historically part of the Patani state, and the dialect and culture area crosses national boundaries.

12. Who brought the *Wayang Siam* to Kelantan.

13. *Yahudi*—but there it means non-Muslim, from before the advent of Islam.

14. A generic term for all shadow play.

15. Pak Dogol, mentioned above.

16. The Chief *Dewa*, strictly speaking, an avatar of Siva.

17. Pak Dogol's companion.

18. See footnote 13.

19. Ruling over the four worlds' motif is also found in the *Cerita Mahraja Wana*. Adam grants Mahraja Wana power over the "North, South, West, the Underworld and the Air . . ." (Sweeney 1972: 93).
20. *Sembah*—pay respects.
21. The cry *Lai*, or *Lao*, is used by some *dalang* to begin their opening invocations at *Wayang Siam* performances, and is said by them to come from this source. Also see Sweeney (1972: 127) for this motif in the version of the *Cerita Mahraja Wana* given by the *dalang* Jambul.
22. A common Kelantanese narrative device: *hilang royat* (the story disappears) . . . *timbul royat* (the story appears).
23. The Muslim confession of faith.
24. These are the god / clowns of their respective shadow plays.
25. Archangels.
26. Also called *Suralaya*.
27. The teacher-student relationship is often expressed in father or grandfather-child terms. Hence, *Tok Guru* (grandfather teacher)—*Anak Murid* (child pupil).
28. *Keramat* places are also frequented by strong spirits and Islamic saints.
29. Confusion exists here between Pak Dogol and Maharisi Mata Api (Great Sage Fire Eyes) "the big man at the Kedi Bermas." Maharisi is the step-father of Siti Dewi, the wife of Seri Rama. The Maharisi is a sacred figure in his own right in the *Wayang Siam* although not of the rank of Pak Dogol. Maharisi Mata Api was originally an aspect of Siva (Singaravelu 1974: 39) although this is neither known nor acknowledged in Kelantan. A *dalang* suggested that Maharisi Mata was the corruption of the Muslim name Musa Samiri—and that the Maharisi was originally a Muslim sage.
30. This echoes Javanese belief that *Wayang Kulit* was used and introduced in Java by Sunan Kalijaga, who also introduced Islam to Java (Geertz 1960: 123). The Shadow Play was used in Central Java as an instructional medium for a mystical Muslim Sect Adam Ma'rifat (Holt 1967: 125). Sasak *Wayang* on Lombok is closely identified with Islam and its teachings (Ecklund 1979).

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