

***BUDI* AS THE MALAY MIND:
A PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY OF MALAY WAYS OF REASONING
AND EMOTION IN *PERIBAHASA***

UNIVERSITY OF HAMBURG

***BUDI* AS THE MALAY MIND:
A PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY OF MALAY WAYS OF REASONING
AND EMOTION IN *PERIBAHASA***

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE ASIA-AFRICA INSTITUTE
FACULTY OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

DEPARTMENT OF AUSTRONESIAN STUDIES

BY

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**HAMBURG, GERMANY
2003**

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Datum der
Disputation: 20.06.2002

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ABSTRACT

Budi* as the Malay Mind: A Philosophical Study of Malay Ways of Reasoning and Emotion in *Peribahasa

This research is a first scientific and theoretical attempt to look into the logic and emotion of the Malays from their proverbs, *peribahasa*. Fascinated by the conclusions of Goodwin & Wenzel (1979/1981) that there are parallels between what the logic textbooks teach and what the Anglo-American proverbs teach, the author sets his objectives to explore whether the proverbs of Malay culture indeed illustrate a significant number of logical principles as well. The author proves that the same “socio-logic” as described by Goodwin & Wenzel (1979/1981) can also be discovered in *peribahasa*. Nevertheless, he rejects the dialectical approach (normally engaged by the western tradition), and believes that the ways of Malay argumentation are rather monolectical (non-dialectical). Apart from this socio-logic rationality, which represents the realm of the mind, there are also rather strong elements of emotions as shown by the regular use of *hati* as the source of passion in Malay proverbial literature. This interesting contrast of a reason-emotion relationship, according to the author, is always akin to the up-down movement of a thinking see-saw, and the focus of striking a balance between this ‘contradiction’ is how skilful an arguer will be in using the concept of *budi* as his fulcrum. The art of argument in this sense will then be determined by the acumen of a rhetor to synthesise the harmony between *akal budi* (the realm of *budistic* reason) and *hati budi* (the realm of *budistic* passion). As such, the ideal state of the Malay mind or the way of resolving disagreement (argument) is how reason and emotion can work together under the mediation of *budi*. However, at times when the arguer ignores the rational dimension of *budi* (*akal budi*), then *budi* (i.e. *budi pekerti*) will appear as something rather ceremonial, whereby if the *hati-budi* is being eclipsed, then the soul and sublimity of culture will be rather non-humane and monotonous. Therefore, the person who can motivate himself/herself into achieving the summit of this ideal state is a *budiman* (the person of wisdom). Drawing his evidences from various sources, viz. historical, etymological, geographical, sociological and philosophical, be it textual or contextual insight, the author further elaborates that this conceptual Malay mind – *budi* – is a Malay cultural construct, which was smartly assembled and developed as a result of culturing *falsafah air* (philosophy of water) – representing the physical form (body) of maritime culture, and adoration of *semangat padi* (the spirit of paddy) – representing the soul of their mind. This molecular *budi*, as he believes, is a crystallisation of cultural insight after going through centuries of various civilisation dialogues and intermarriages. The author, therefore, suggests that “the theory of *budi* and its networks,” what he would like it to be called, should be used as the important platform for researchers, who are interested to understand the Malay mind generally or the Malay logic, rhetoric or philosophy particularly.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG (ABSTRACT)

***Budi* als die malaiische Vernunft: Eine philosophische Studie über Logik und Emotion im malaiischen Sprichwort (*peribahasa*)**

Erstmals wird in diesem Forschungsvorhaben auf wissenschaftlichem und theoretischem Wege versucht, Logik und Emotion der Malaien anhand ihrer Sprichwörter näher zu bestimmen. Angeregt durch Schlußfolgerungen Goodwin & Wenzels (1979/1981) über die deutliche Parallelität von Aussagen in Textbüchern über Logik und Aussagen von Sprichwörtern aus dem angloamerikanischen Raum, untersuche ich, ob diese Prinzipien der Logik auch für die malaiische Kultur Gültigkeit haben. Es geht mir darum aufzuzeigen, daß sich die soziale Logik bzw. „*socio-logic*“, wie sie von Goodwin & Wenzel (1979/1981) dargelegt wird, auch in den malaiischen Sprichwörtern finden läßt. Gleichwohl lehne ich einen rationalen Ansatz, der sich durch eine dialektische Qualität auszeichnet und gewöhnlicherweise in der westlichen Tradition angewandt wird, ab. Meiner Ansicht nach legt die malaiische Art und Weise des Argumentierens vielmehr einen synthetischen Ansatz nahe, der sich durch eine monolektische (undialektische) Qualität auszeichnet. Neben der Rationalität sozialer Logik, die den Bereich der Bedeutung und Sinngebung im malaiischen Denken ausmacht, wird das emotionale Element in Form der Verwendung des Begriffs *hati* („Leber“) als Sitz der Gefühle in den Sprichwörtern deutlich betont. Die interessante Spannung in der Beziehung von Vernunft auf der einen und Emotion auf der anderen Seite führt zu einem ständigen Schwanken im Denkprozeß. Daher hängt das Erreichen eines Gleichgewichts zwischen den beiden Polen davon ab, inwieweit der argumentierende Sprecher auf überzeugende Weise das Konzept *budi* zum Angelpunkt seiner Darlegung und Überlegung machen kann. Die Kunst der Argumentation, auf diese Weise verstanden, zeigt sich dann in der Fähigkeit des Sprechers, zwischen dem *budi* der Ratio, d.h. der Dimension des vernunftsmäßigen *budi*, und dem *budi* der „Leber“ (*hati*), d.h. der Dimension des leidenschaftlichen, gefühlsmäßigen *budi*, auf harmonische Weise zu vermitteln. Daher zeichnet sich optimales malaiisches Denken bei der Lösung widerstreitender Auffassungen dadurch aus, daß Vernunft und Emotion unter der Vermittlung von *budi* bestmöglich zusammenarbeiten können. Gleichwohl scheint meiner Ansicht nach zu bestimmten Gelegenheiten, wenn der Sprecher die rationale Dimension von *budi* (*akal budi*) außer Acht läßt, *budi* in einer eher formellen Höflichkeit von unhinterfragter Qualität verwirklicht zu werden. Wird jedoch der emotionale Aspekt von *budi* übergangen, führt das dazu, daß Wesen und Feinheit der Kultur von monotonen und eher „unmenschlichen“ Tendenzen geprägt werden. Ein weiser Mensch (*budiman*) ist folglich der, der das Gleichgewicht zwischen diesen beiden Aspekten von *budi* in sich erreicht hat. Indem ich auf entsprechende Hinweise anhand verschiedener textueller und kontextueller historischer, etymologischer, geographischer, soziologischer und philosophischer Quellen hinweise, elabriere ich im Anschluß daran das malaiische Konzept von *budi* als einem mentalen Produkt (Mentifakt) malaiischer Kultur. Es baut auf brillante Weise auf der von mir so genannten *falsafah air* - „Wasserphilosophie“ auf, die für die physische Form der die malaiische Logik beeinflussenden maritimen Kultur steht, sowie auf der Verehrung der Lebenskraft des Reis (*semangat padi*), die für die Lebenskraft malaiischen Denkens steht. Die gleichsam molekulare Qualität von *budi* stellt meiner Ansicht nach einen Prozeß der Herauskristallisierung kultureller Weisheit dar, der auf jahrhundertlangen Dialog und kulturellen Kontakt zurückgeht und diese transzendiert. Meiner Meinung nach sollte die von mir so bezeichnete „Theorie des *budi* und seiner Netzwerke“ daher den Ausgangspunkt bilden für Studien, die malaiisches Denken allgemein oder seine Logik, Rhetorik sowie Philosophie im besonderen verstehen möchten.

ABSTRAK

Budi Sebagai Minda Melayu: Satu Kajian Falsafah Terhadap Kaedah Pendaliran dan Emosi Melayu dalam Peribahasa

Kajian ini merupakan percubaan saintifik dan teoretis yang pertama bagi melihat logik dan emosi orang Melayu melalui peribahasa mereka. Tertarik dengan kesimpulan Goodwin & Wenzel (1979/1981) yang merumuskan keselarian antara apa yang diajari dalam buku teks logik dengan apa yang disarankan oleh peribahasa Inggeris-Amerika, penulis bertujuan meneroka sama ada peribahasa Melayu sesungguhnya turut menggambarkan sejumlah prinsip logik seperti itu. Penulis membuktikan bahawa “logik sosial” seperti yang dideskripsikan oleh Goodwin & Wenzel (1979/1981) turut dapat ditemui dalam peribahasa. Bagaimanapun, beliau menolak pendekatan dialektikal (yang biasanya diamalkan dalam tradisi barat), dan mempercayai bahawa kaedah penghujahan orang Melayu sesungguhnya lebih bersifat monolektikal (non-dialektikal). Di samping wujudnya rasionaliti logik sosial yang mewakili wilayah minda, karya keperibahasaannya Melayu ternyata turut mengandungi unsur-unsur emosi yang agak kuat dengan hati biasanya digunakan sebagai sumber perasaan. Kontras yang menarik antara hubungan dalil dengan emosi ini, menurut penulis, sering menyerupai pergerakan turun-naiknya sebuah jongkang-jongkit pemikiran, dan tumpuan ke arah mencapai keseimbangan antara kedua-dua ‘pertentangan’ ini tertakluk kepada sejauhmanakah mahirnya seseorang penghujah dalam memanfaatkan konsep budi sebagai sangga tuasnya. Seni penghujahan dalam pengertian ini kemudiannya akan ditentukan oleh kepintaran seseorang perucap dalam mensintesiskan keharmonian antara akal budi dengan hati budi. Dengan yang demikian, tahap keunggulan minda Melayu atau cara meleraikan percanggahan pendapat (hujahan) adalah bagaimana dalil dan emosi dapat bekerjasama di bawah pengantaraan budi. Bagaimanapun, pada waktu-waktu tertentu apabila penghujah mengabaikan dimensi rasional budi (akal budi), maka budi (iaitu budi pekerti) akan kelihatan setakat memenuhi citarasa adat-istiadat sahaja, sementara jika hati budi menjadi gerhana, maka jiwa dan kemuliaan budaya menjadi agak tidak manusiawi, bersifat kaku dan membosankan. Oleh sebab itu, orang yang dapat meningkatkan diri ke arah mencapai kemuncak tahap keunggulan ini adalah seorang budiman (manusia berhikmah). Mengutip bukti-bukti daripada pelbagai sumber, iaitu historis, etimologi, geografi, sosiologi dan falsafah, sama ada kebijaksanaan yang berbentuk tekstual mahupun kontekstual, penulis selanjutnya menjelaskan bahawa minda Melayu yang bersifat konseptual, iaitu budi, merupakan konstruksi budaya yang dihipunkan dan dikembangkan melalui hasil pembudayaan falsafah air – mewakili bentuk fizikal (jasad) budaya kelautan, dan pemujaan semangat padi – mewakili jiwa minda mereka. Budi yang berbentuk molekul ini, seperti yang dipercayainya, terbentuk sebagai hasil daripada pengkristalan wawasan budaya selepas mengharungi dialog dan perkahwinan antara peradaban yang sudah wujud berabad-abad lamanya. Penulis, justeru itu, mengusulkan bahawa “teori budi dan rangkaianannya,” iaitu apa yang mahu dikenalnya, sepatutnya dijadikan wadah oleh para penyelidik yang berminat untuk mengetahui minda Melayu umumnya atau memahami logik, retorik dan falsafah Melayu khususnya.

PREFACE

Sewaktu muda saya beranggapan peribahasa merupakan ciptaan orang tua-tua, yang lusuh dan purba bunyi serta maknanya. Sekarang pada waktu saya mulai tua, saya dipertemukan dengan prasangka ini (When I was young, I considered *peribahasas* to be the creation of the elders, which are crumpled and ancient in their sounds and meanings. Now when I am getting old, I meet with this prejudice) (Muhammad Haji Salleh 2001, 76).

Peribahasa is the most forgotten wisdom of the Malays due to certain pre-conceived ideas about the nature of its existence. “... yang sering kita lupa ialah suatu khazanah purba dan luar biasa --- *peribahasa* (*peribahasa* --- an ancient and extra-ordinary property which we always forget),” says Muhammad Haji Salleh (2001, 76). As a renowned Malay scholar in Malay studies and Malaysian National Laureate, his admission at the beginning of the 21st century is important for me personally for two reasons: First, it will hopefully give *peribahasa* its proper place among scholars in the research circle in the future. Second, it enforces my personal insight; that my choice of exploring the Malay mind through *peribahasa* is indeed not a mistake.

My interest in the Malay proverbs emerged after reading a few proverbs of Anglo-American tradition, whereby I found that there are so many similarities between Anglo-American proverbs like “You can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs” and “Where bees are there is honey” with Malay proverbs *kalau tidak dipecahkan ruyung, masakan dapat sagunya* ‘If the outer part of the palm trunk is not broken, how is the pith to be obtained’ (MS 157) and *ada gula adalah semut* ‘Where there’s sugar, there will be ants’ (MS 223) respectively. Some scholars choose to see this similarity as influences but I am more interested and convinced by the universality of human experience and existence. This interest in *peribahasa* as representing the Malay mind is something rather natural to me. The interest in practical reasoning is related to my previous studies and my research interest in informal logic, rhetoric and philosophy. I have thought of exploring the Malay mind and their logic for quite some time by looking into their proverbs. The interest in analysing Malay proverbs and their reasoning however grew stronger in my mind after reading an article entitled “Proverbs and Practical Reasoning: A Study of Socio-Logic” (Goodwin and Wenzel 1981, first published in 1979), which later prompted me to write to Professor Emeritus Joseph W. Wenzel for advice. I also discovered that he had presented an article on African proverbs and practical reasoning some time in August 1988 in Italy. As a poet and student of philosophy, logic and rhetoric myself – two professions which are always considered to be falling apart – my love for the emotion and rationality of the Malay language kept me alive in transferring this interest into my doctoral dissertation.

It should be noted that Sweeney in the preface to his book: *A Full Hearing* (1987) raised a few ironical statements about the perception of Westerners towards Malay as people (*orang Melayu*) and as language (*bahasa Malaysia, bahasa Indonesia* or simply *bahasa Melayu*). He stated that “to many Westerners, a book dealing with Malay will immediately be associated with at best the exotic, at worst the obscure and peripheral” (p. vii). He later brought to attention that despite the number of speakers of this language rapidly approaching the two hundred million mark, ranks no lower than sixth among the world’s languages and more people speak Malay on a day-to-day basis compared to German, Japanese, French or Arabic, the language is still being sidelined and pushed into the peripheral. Let me quote him where he lamented:

A language spoken by such a sizeable portion of humanity should surely attract more attention from those impressed by force of numbers. Yet officialdom in the United States often appears to equate its importance with the likes of Igbo and Ga. Furthermore, a language which has served as a vehicle of the four major world religions, and has been the major language of scholarship and trade in Southeast Asia for over a thousand years, is surely not peripheral. And a glance of the modern panoply of print and electronic media demonstrates that the Malay world is very much in the international mainstreams (*Ibid*).

As for the research in the Malay proverbs, their status of importance is perhaps even lower than in Sweeney’s comparison of Igbo and Ga as there are quite a number of serious works on African proverbs around by many Westerners. The serious work on Malay classical literature, however, has always circulated around imaginative, illusionary, mystic and magical dimensions. Not to say that these works are not important but too much concentration in this direction gives a rather one-sided perspective in understanding the Malay mind. Furthermore, it has always been the emotional attitude like *amuk* (which found expression in the English vocabulary as “amok”), *latah* and their non-empirical dimension that occupy the centre-stage. Even the latest *Encarta’s dictionary on-line* is only adapting the emotional overtones of the word “*buaya*” (literally means crocodile and figurative language for play-boy, a person who likes to flirt around). It seems that there is nothing which can be explained rationally!

This work is not meant to deny the contribution of the past but hopefully will at least explore the rational aspect of the Malay logical thought, their ways of reasoning and their emotion, which together contribute to the crystallisation of the Malay mind. I do not claim that this work will give a full hearing to the Malay logical and rhetorical thought but, perhaps, it will change the channel of research voice to a more diversified one and dilute the way in which we are used to perceive Malay as the others, within a world of communities. The purpose of this analysis primarily is to introduce the notion that the Malays do have a rather clear logical framework in their proverbial thinking, as compared with the Anglo-American tradition and that this logical thinking had existed before the arrival of Islam, as

can be seen within their oral tradition like *peribahasa*. But due to the priority given to *budi* as the Malay mind, the logical thought (argument as product) failed to emerge in the form of dialectical attitude (argument as procedure) and can only be presented in their own rhetorical modes (argument as process). As far as the Malays are concerned, a subject of this nature – in unravelling the thread of the Malay mind – has not been attempted before. By virtue of this fact, one cannot presume to give a comprehensive theoretical and practical account. There are also of course many *peribahasas* that I might have overlooked and unwittingly ignored and therefore I dare not claim this research to be exhaustive. The quotation from the main page of www.deproverbio.com web-site is apt to explain this: “Proverbs are like butterflies, some are caught, some fly away.” With this sense of *rendah diri*, I present this work, and it is hoped that this research will be the beginning of and perhaps be regarded as the basis for future research on the philosophy of the Malay mind and its related subjects.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Any kind of pioneering inquiry normally has its own excitement and difficulties and this first attempt to understand the Malay mind logically, rhetorically and dialectically is no exception. As such, this academic work is just like an adventurous journey. You plan to explore places where no one has or not many have been before. As it is a new and alienated place to you, in the process, you are very likely to step on thorns or fall into a deep valley. But from that pain, you learn new things and learn how to solve it when it comes against you. It is a pretty self-exploratory and a rather lonely experience – where you alone will have to go through that labyrinth of thought although you gradually learn to persuade yourself about how sweet and beautiful it will be at the end of that labyrinth. Even though everything seems pretty lonely and you tend to engage in some kind of monologue and soliloquy in your inner self, your outer self is strengthened by the love, care, help and friendship of family, friends and scholars. It is through this support that we are provided with the momentum to continue with our leap in the field.

No man is an island. In finishing my dissertation, I would like to take this opportunity to express my most heartfelt gratitude to my *Doktorvater*, **Prof. Dr. Rainer Carle** for his care, tutelage, comments and guidance throughout this thesis. His *budi* for fighting on my behalf a full scholarship made it possible for me to stay in Germany – a place where many Malaysians are a bit reluctant to go for the studies of humanities and social sciences due to the problem of language and Malaysia's historical background as a British colony, which makes many more in favour of going to an English speaking country.

Besides my supervisor, there are many other scholars behind the writing of this thesis worthy of my mention. First, I wish to record my gratitude to **Prof. Dr. Ralph H. Johnson** (Head, Department of Philosophy, University of Windsor, Canada and Editor of *Informal Logic*) for his help, friendship and encouragement throughout my academic journey since my MA in University of Malaya back in 1992. It was him who showed me the way, supplying me with the materials that I could not obtain in Malaysia and getting me into the realm of informal logic and argumentation studies. He kept on his support, seeing me through my PhD. Second, for the idea and writing of this dissertation, I must say that I owe a lot of insight to **Prof. Emeritus Dr. Joseph W. Wenzel** (University of Illinois, USA) for entertaining my requests and questions about the ideas on logic, rhetoric and dialectic. He was the one who started the study on proverbs and practical reasoning that led me towards this direction. He even sent me an unpublished article on the studies of African proverbs that he had presented in Italy, which he considered as imperfect but which I should admit gave me some kind of comparative framework and inspiration to work out with my analysis of Malay proverbs and their reasoning. Without his

insight and his pioneering work, this thesis will be almost impossible. Both their comments and suggestions on my early proposal, I fully appreciated. Third, I should mention the name of an international paremiologist and paremiographer, **Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mieder** (Head, Department of German and Russian, University Vermont, USA and Editor of *Proverbium*), for his interest in my writing, comments and suggestions on chapter 1 and of course his kindness in sending me so many materials and books as a present for my research.

In addition to the above, others too have helped me in one way or another. I thank **Prof. Dr. Harvey Siegel** (University of Miami, USA) for his kindness and willingness to support me with his philosophical articles on rationality, critical thinking and multiculturalism. Thanks also for responding to some of my questions on argument quality and cultural differences. I would like also to thank **Prof. Dr. Robert J. Sternberg** (University of Yale, USA) for his articles on thinking and intelligence, especially on successful intelligence and **Prof. Dr. Michael A. Gilbert** (York University, Toronto, Canada) for his ideas and articles on coalescent and multi-modal argumentation.

For their encouragement and support, especially in applying for the scholarship in Germany, I fully appreciated my ex-colleague and friend in National University of Malaysia [UKM], **Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Korff** (who is now with the Universität Hohenheim, Germany), together with his comments on my research proposal, **Associate Professor Hajah Hamidah Abdulhamid** (University of Malaya [UM]) and **Prof. Dr. Muhammad Haji Salleh**, when he was still in ATMA (Institut Tamadun dan Atma Melayu, UKM). My thanks should also be extended to the German Embassy in Kuala Lumpur for their help in obtaining the scholarship. A special remembrance, *budi* and thanks also to the late **Prof. H.M. Dahlan** (ex-Dean of Faculty of Development Science, UKM), who trusted me to serve the faculty and indirectly encouraged me to explore the inner dimension of the Malay oratory, their *budi* and argumentation. I really missed him for his art of rational argumentation. My gratitude to **Prof. Madya Mostafa Kamal Mokhtar**, former Dean of the faculty, who fought on my behalf the bureaucratic battle and all colleagues and ex-colleagues in Faculty of Development Science (Menggatal, Sabah and Bangi, Selangor), especially **Julia Unggai** (who is now in Boston, America) for getting me materials from UKM.

In the writing of this dissertation, many have extended their helping hands, either by sending me articles or accompanying me to go through tedious library search. My sincere appreciation goes to **Moch. Nur Ichwan** and **Agus Sarjono** for helping me when I was doing my research in Leiden, Netherlands and to **Nancy Mancilla** for assisting me in the University of Amsterdam. This research will not be possible as well without the help of **Look Su Lee**, **Chong Chiew Kiok**, etc. when I was in the National University of Singapore; and especially to **Seah Siew Too**, my ex-student for sending me several articles from UKM and **Lim Hui Ling** for her comments. To all of them: *Xiexie!* Most

importantly, I will never forget my deepest gratitude to all librarians in *Bibliotheken der Universität Hamburg* and officers in the computer centre, *regionales Rechenzentrum* (RRZ) for providing their service and excellent access to Internet resources.

For friendship and help during my stay in Goethe Institut Bremen, I thank my *Lehrerin*, Trudi Breuer and all my classmates in Goethe Institut Bremen (2 August 1999 – 24 September 1999) and while I was in Universität Hamburg, **Dr. Arndt Graf, Dr. Martina Heinschke, Bettina David, Karen Stadlander, Stella Schmidt, Heike Schmäser, Jens Holzheuer** and two of my *LehrerInnen* **Jacomijn** and **Juliana**, including all my classmates in *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* Winter semester 1999/2000, Universität Hamburg. I also thank my guest family in the *Familienaufenthalt für ausländische Studierende* (FAS) programme, **Adelheid u. Siegfried Cramer von Clausbruch** (Lähden, Germany), **Drs. Dami N. Toda, Dhani** and family, **Dr. Ichwan Azhari** and **Netty, Ibu Gretha, Pak N.D. Hutabarat, Joko, Dede, Mora, Fuad, Rini, Agar, Agus, Qu Fei** and **Chou Ming** as well as friends in “*Mari Bersama*” (Malaysisch-Singapurianisch-Deutscher Kulturverein e.V. Hamburg) especially Peter Lopez and my friends at my hostel, Überseekolleg. Thanks should also be extended to **Dr. Platz, Dr. Brennecke** and **Dr. Widjaya** for taking care of me when I was ill while in Hamburg. To all my ex-students from UM, UKM (Sabah and Bangi) and Kolej Yayasan Melaka (KYM), I shall never forget their presence, care, friendship, love and respect. It was a pleasure to know them.

My research in University of Hamburg would not have become a reality without the financial assistance from *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* (DAAD) through a three years stipend, which afforded me “a bed of roses” as a student financially and my employer, UKM for granting me a three-year fully paid study leave so that I could give my full attention to my research and reading. Words will not be enough to confess my gratitude to my brother **Lim Kim Chong** and my colleague, **Dr. Junaenah Sulehan** for taking up the risk to be my guarantors. Without all these material support, my scattered non-material thoughts would not have been able to take the shape of a thesis. I should also thank **Chee Keng Lim** and **Er Ah Choy** for their willingness to look after my house in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan while I was abroad.

Last but not least, I am especially grateful to my family, especially my brother **Lim Kim Ean**, and my niece, **Chew Chooi Hong** who took up their time to help me settle some of my personal documents in Malaysia, which allowed me to concentrate on my research work. No words can suffice to record my true appreciation to my lovely mum **Eau Chong Liao** who always wishes me in Thai: *paidi madi* (go in good form, and back in good shape), luck and success, teaches me multiculturalism and how to go through the many hurdles in life and indirectly guides me along my academic journey even though she herself does not understand even a single written word. Through her, I learned to appreciate the

important of oral communication, before I was ushered away to explore myself in the jungle of words through the medium of talks and chalks. To my late father, **Lim Oo Seah**, who brought me closer into the world of Chinese oral folklore and performing arts (e.g. Chinese opera) while I was still a kid and a teenager, I shall be forever more grateful. Despite their illiteracy, I am always proud of their spirit in supporting my education. The names of so many people have been cited in the improvement of my work and if there are errors and fallacious thinking in this dissertation, they should not be held responsible. Instead, I bear full responsibility, ironically even as an idiot, as one of the African proverbs goes, quoted by Godfrey Tangwa (in Schweizer 2002: 28) that *nur ein Idiot interpretiert ein Sprichwort* (only an idiot interprets a proverb), and will shoulder all kinds of criticism with open-mindedness and the feeling of *rendah diri* and *jahil*. But without being an idiot, no research on paremiology would have been possible! The difficulties in doing this research are perhaps all too evident due to its pioneering nature. As this work is perused by the readers, it will be equally evident that not all of the problems I mentioned have been fully resolved. My highest claim perhaps is to have done my best and I do hope that others will be sure to do better. To record my full acknowledgement, let me end with one of the most oft-quoted *pantun*:

*Pisang emas dibawa belayar
Masak sebiji di atas peti
Hutang emas boleh dibayar
Hutang budi dibawa mati*

Sail away with a bunch of bananas
one ripe fruit remains on the box
Debts of money we can repay
A debt of kindness, we take to the grave

Lim Kim Hui
University of Hamburg
Germany
2 May 2002

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BKI</i>	<i>Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van het Koninklijk Instituut</i>
<i>IL</i>	<i>Informal Logic</i>
JMBRAS	<i>Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JSBRAS	<i>Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
KIPM	<i>Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu</i> (Abdullah Hussain 1991)
KSB	<i>Kamus Simpulan Bahasa</i> (Abdullah Hussain 1966)
MB	<i>Mestika Bahasa</i> (Mohd. Yusof Mustafa 1965)
MBRAS	Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (1992)
MS	<i>Malay Sayings</i> (Brown 1951)
PB	<i>Peribahasa</i> (Pamuntjak, Iskandar and Madjoindo 1961)
PRM	Parti Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysian People Party)
TB	<i>Tikaman Bahasa</i> (Mohd. Adnan Mohd. Ariffin 1992)
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation

A NOTE ON STYLE, SPELLING, TRANSLATION ETC.

Generally, the style of my citation and works cited in this research is based on Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (6th ed., 1996) and *Publication Manual of American Psychological Association* (5th ed., 2001) with certain adjustments according to my convenience and purposes. Most of the manuals, as a common practice, normally use the system of family name, followed by personal name in citation and bibliography. I have no exception for the non-Malay authors. For the sake of courtesy, however, I have used *Gaya UKM* in citing the Malay names (if I know it to be so). Thus, it is "Abdullah Hussain" and not "Hussain, Abdullah." It would be rather awful and impolite to address Abdullah Hussain using his father's name "Hussain" when cited.

The spelling of Malay names, book and journal titles, and those used within quoted passages published in Malay-Indonesian words have been left unaltered in old spelling for the publication published before the spelling reforms of 1972. Therefore, it is Sanoesi Pane and not Sanusi Pane; *Poedjanga Baroe* and not *Pujangga Baru*. Otherwise I have tried to use, as far as possible, words spelled in accordance with modern new spelling system, *sistem ejaan baru* (post-1972). The main changes brought about in *bahasa Indonesia* were:

Old Spelling	New Spelling
J	y
Dj	j
Tj	c
Nj	ny
Sj	sy
Ch	kh

For all of the quotation of Malay proverbs and words, I have changed them into the new spelling as a way of standardisation between various years of publications (prior and after 1972). For words where there are differences between Malay and Indonesian, I have used the Malay spelling suggested by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Malaysia and not the Indonesian spelling as a matter of my own convenience. The spelling and pronunciation from Chinese sources (i.e. Author's names and books) that I have used are based on the *Hanyü Pinyin* (and not the Wade-Giles system of Western origin) and the Chinese characters have been quoted in the simplified instead of traditional version (except books published in Taiwan). For the German sources, I have stayed with the spelling as published, either in

the old spelling or with the standard new spelling, *neue Rechtschreibung* (officially after 1st of August 1998).

All translations from Malay, Indonesian, Chinese and German are of my own, unless indicated or taken from an already translated source. Translated proverbs in English which are taken from available sources will be modified in order to make it rather “gender-friendly”. Therefore, words like “he,” “him” etc. will be changed to “one”, “he/she” or “him/ her” when necessary. The English translation of Malay proverbs however is a mere approximation of the more poetic expressions of the *peribahasas* and their *budi*. No doubt linguistic subtleties might have been lost in the translation, but the intention of this research is not to deal with its aesthetics but rather logical principles of *peribahasas*, which will not be greatly altered by linguistic nuances. In order to suit the English grammar and contextual understanding, Malay words which commonly appeared like *peribahasa* in the text will be treated as singular and plural will be written as *peribahasas*. Words like *budi*, which are rather ambiguous in nature will be written as it is with explanation after it in superscripts if necessary in accordance with the grammatical flow. For instance, *budi*^{intelligence}, *berbudi*^{grateful} and *budiman*^{human of wisdom}.

Since this research is dealing more with the Malays, the majority of whom are non-Christians, I will therefore use the accepted designation of “B.C.E” or what is somewhat oddly designated as “before the common era” and not “BC” (before Christ). As such, “A.C.E” and not “AD” is also used throughout this dissertation. I will indicate uncertainty about dates with “ca.”

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To enable us to fully understand the national character of an Eastern people, who have no literature worthy of the name and who are divided from us by race, language, and religion, a study of their proverbs is almost indispensable. An insight is then obtained into their modes of thought, and their motives of action, and from the principles inculcated, it is possible to form some estimate of what vices they condemn, and what virtues they admire (Maxwell 1878a, 85).

Introduction

The history of philosophical and logical thoughts has always been widely discussed and dominated by the Western tradition through early Greek philosophers from the time of Aristotle, and their ideas have since become the foundation for the study of philosophy and logic today.¹ Even though certain Oriental² ways of thinking, viz. various non-Aristotelian logical traditions too have their niches and identities, they are however, relatively less influential: the Islamic world has its own logical tradition called *al-mantiq*; Buddhism has its own Buddhist Logic (e.g. see Stcherbatsky 1962), especially through the works of Dignaga (ca 550) and Dharmakirti (fl. 625); Indian philosophical tradition recorded the brilliant idea of *Nyaya-sutra* (ca. 200)³; and the emergence of Chinese logical thought can be seen, for example, through the emergence of Mohism (e.g. Mozi) and the School of Names (e.g. Gong Sunlong).⁴ Even though many works on the logic of the East can be quoted, despite its deficiency as compared to the Western logical tradition, it is, however, quite unfortunate that efforts so far have left the ways of thinking, idea of logical thought and its philosophical roots in Malay tradition relatively unexplored, neglected and never been put into serious attention by the scholars of philosophy, linguistics or Malay studies from both traditions (West and East). Solomon and Higgins's *From Africa to Zen: An Invitation to World Philosophy* (1993) does not include the Malay world⁵, their people and their philosophy, despite their wide coverage of almost all non-western traditions, including the philosophy of the Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Arab, Persian, African, American Indian and Latin America.⁶ Moreover, even one of the most authoritative writings on eastern peoples, *The Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* (1964) by Hajime Nakamura only concentrated on the thinking of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan origin. According to him, "an examination of the ways of thinking of these four is, in effect, a study of the most influential peoples of the East" (Nakamura 1964, 4).⁷ Nakamura might have his reason for not including the Malays as he tried to look at the ways of thinking from the

Buddhist perspective, but his statement should not be taken to justify the Malay way of thinking as not influential, and as a result, not worth investigating.⁸

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to trace, analyse and understand the Malay mind, especially its proverbial reasoning and logic (i.e. patterns and ways of argumentation), conceptual importance of emotions and wisdom throughout their proverbs – *peribahasa*.⁹ The starting point of this research will be a positive one, *vis a vis* by studying the “logic” of the Malay, while at the same time comparing it to the logic of the West, after which we should be able to apprehend the similarities and the differences of the ways of their argumentation (e.g. Are there evidences of implicit formal logical principles? Are there evidences of the rejection of formal logical principles? Are there evidences of the existence of the practice of argumentation? Are there evidences of the awareness of fallacies? Are the Malays in favour of direct or indirect patterns of expression? Does emotion play an important part in their process of reasoning? Do the Malays dichotomise between the aspects of rationality and emotion in justifying the soundness of their reasoning?). The final objective of this research will be to perhaps at last arrive at a clear understanding of whatever theory of reasoning and cultural ideal that is implicit in the tradition of the Malay culture, principally the proverbs – *peribahasa*; and to make a generalisation on how the Malays resolve their conflicts. The cultural ideal of the Malays, however, should not be confused with what the Malays are “really” or “actually” doing now, just as we should not mix up the ideals in a particular religion with the attitudes and actions of their believers.

Statement of the Problems

There are various problems in the study of logical reasoning and culture. By looking at the various claims of different logical traditions (i.e. Aristotelian, Chinese and Indian), two interesting philosophical questions arise when we try to relate it to the Malay tradition: Firstly, are logical principles actually universal and not culturally biased as claimed by formal and informal logicians (as what we have been taught in typical textbooks of logic in university today)? If the answer is yes, then we will be able to trace those logical patterns in the Malay reasoning; Secondly, if logic is something which is culturally-dependent as portrayed and explained by different oriental school of thoughts (i.e. Buddhist, Islamic, Chinese and Indian), then it is simply an acknowledgement, thus an implication that the Malay tradition can possess its own style of logic. These are two crucial questions among philosophers of logic and culture. So far, no research has been

carried out in approaching this subject from the Malay perspective. There is also no serious research on the relation between the Malay language and cognition. Tham Seong Chee (1977, 9) stated: “It is unfortunate that efforts so far made to modernise the Malay language have left relatively unexplored some of the salient problems associated with language and thought; language and cognition; and language and categorisation.” Tham’s opinion is still valid even at the end of the twentieth century and perhaps also at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Besides the philosophical dispute between those who believe in the universality of logic and those who champion the cultural-dependent logic, there is also great debate and disagreement in discussing about the general conception of rationality within communities of Western and Eastern scholars. Thus, there is the generalisation that the Oriental way of thinking is represented as “spiritual,” “introverted,” “synthetic” and “subjective,” whereas the Occidental is represented as “materialistic,” “extroverted,” “analytic” and “objective” (Nakamura 1964, 3). There is even a rather dichotomous categorisation that Westerners are rationalistic while Easterners are non-rationalistic. The concepts of knowledge and rationality in the West are generally believed to be derived from or rooted in the Aristotelian conception of rationality, whereas Eastern tradition inherited “rationality”, which is believed to be different. The most obvious difference, as is always claimed, lies in the important role of emotion in the Eastern thinking, which the Western conception of rationality chooses to ignore.¹⁰

The general perception of this dispute lays down a few interesting research problems to be pondered on: Should we accept Aristotelian ways of definition and conclude that Oriental tradition has no philosophy and no logical thought? Does this notion really represent the whole picture of Eastern tradition, that Easterners are in lack of some values/criteria which Westerners want them to obtain or is it due to the failure of certain scholars from the West to understand the Oriental thinking by using different kinds of criteria or values? Is non-rationalism (i.e. emotion-centred thinking) really bad for the survival of human civilisation? Is the rationalistic approach the only rational way in resolving conflicts? For example, as we usher ourselves into the mysterious dimension of the Malay tradition, can we infer that the richness of the supernatural world, mysticism and magic (i.e. mantra) show that Malays tend to be more metaphysical, emotional and non-rational rather than empirical and rational in handling their daily problems in life? This can be perceived in the Malay folk belief of *semangat* (soul/ spirit) and the role played by the *pawang* or *bomoh* (traditional medicine-man, curer or shaman) (See Skeat 1900; Winstedt 1956, 18-44; Endicott 1970. For Malaysian magic, see Shaw 1975).

Kessler (1992) synopsis various objections to the Aristotelian conception of rationality.¹¹ One of the criticisms that he mentions comes from those who have studied Chinese philosophy. Hall and Ames (1987) in their book, *Thinking Through Confucius* (See also Kessler 1992, 11-12) claim that Chinese philosophy is far less dependent on rigid, logical laws of thought and is more holistic, emotional, and intuitive. For them, more attention is paid to the aesthetic aspects of experience, and rationality is not restricted only to those beliefs supported by logical argumentation. They argue that Chinese culture employs what they call an immanent model of reality with an emphasis on aesthetic order in contrast to the Western transcendental model, which emphasises the rational order. A transcendental model implies disjunctive categories (God/world, being/non-being, subject/object, mind/body, reality/appearance, good/evil, knowledge/ignorance etc.) which are always dichotomous and assumes that a given situation can be rationally understood through the application of an antecedent pattern of logical categories. The immanent model, however, holds that no ideas or events are transcendental, and hence a conceptual or correlative polarity in which all opposites are seen in unity and harmony dominates Chinese thought. In their other writing (Hall and Ames 1993, 8), they claim that, according to the Chinese, the things of nature may be ordered in any number of ways is the basis of philosophical thinking as *ars contextualis*. They argue that western rational order depends on the belief in a single-ordered world, a cosmos. Chinese aesthetic order, however, speaks of the world in much less unitary terms. In China, the cosmos is simply “the ten thousand things.” Thome H. Fang’s *The Chinese View of Life* (Hong Kong: The Union Press, 1956; cited in Kessler 1992, 12) echoes similar ideas when he characterises the Chinese view of life as a “philosophy of comprehensive harmony.” Rationality, in such a context, takes a more organic quality. Balance, harmony and reciprocity are prized over the Aristotelian emphasis on hierarchical, disjunctive, and unequal relations. From those two writings, it would seem that logic is but only one aspect of rationality and logical categories are often inadequate for expressing the concrete truth about a situation. Logic misses the richness, ambiguity and depth of life.

The limitations of logic (so-called formal deductive logic or Aristotelian logic) have become the centre of criticisms, especially in the second half of the twentieth century. These can be observed through Edward de Bono’s works on Lateral Thinking,¹² the emergence of Informal Logic and Critical Thinking Movement in North America¹³, works on Multiple Intelligence by Howard Gardner¹⁴, the concept of Emotional Intelligence popularised by Daniel P. Goleman¹⁵ and lately Robert J. Sternberg’s efforts to advocate his concept of Successful Intelligence.¹⁶ Do these criticisms denote that to reduce rationality to logic, especially Aristotelian logic, is to chain rationality too tightly? Does it also indicate that previous works which tried to equalise logical skills and language skills with intelligence have been proven wrong?

In terms of the concept of approaching knowledge (whether it should be rationalistic/analytic or synthetic), there are also various differences between how Western thinkers approach the universe as compared to Eastern thinkers. In the Malay world, *Nusantara*, for instance, as early as 1934, Sanoesi Pane in his article put forward the question of why the Western world discovered knowledge and technology whereas the Eastern world developed into their mystical world and *tassawuf*. According to him:

Di benua Barat orang pergi dalam filsafat dari bawah ke atas, dari kebanyakan kepada persatuan, dari benda kecil (microcosmos) kepada alam (macrocosmos). Orang Barat menyelidiki electronen dan molekul, logam dan tumbuh2an, binatang dan bulan, untuk melihat persatuan dunia. Dari dunia jasmani ia mendirikan jenjang ke dunia rohani. Dari pengalaman ia membentuk undang2 yang umum, bahagian2 disatukan jadi jumlah (Sanoesi Pane 1934, 330).

(In the Western continent, people approach philosophy from bottom to top, from many to one, from micro-cosmos to macro-cosmos. Western people investigate electron and molecule, matter and plants, animals and moon, to see the oneness of the world. They establish the spiritual world from the physical world. General laws are formed from experience and parts are united as a whole.)

Di Timor orang pergi dari atas ke bawah, orang turun dari dunia rohani ke dunia jasmani, menurunkan undang2 kehidupan dari undang2 yang umum. Kebanyakan dipandang dari persatuan, waktu dari kebakaan, keadaan dari ketetapan (Sanoesi Pane 1934, 330).

(In the East, people go from top to bottom; people descend from the spiritual world to the physical world and derive the law of life from the general law. Manyness is seen from one unity, time from eternity, situation from determination.)

Sanoesi Pane's ideas clearly define the general approach to knowledge between these two civilisations. Western epistemology is based on analysis, whereas Eastern theory of knowledge is rooted in the idea of synthesis. This East-West dichotomy may seem to be simplistic, but Sanoesi's idea reflects a kind of personal jealousy as to why Westerners are more successful in the realm of knowledge. Does the Malay thinking ignore analytical skills, logical reasoning and empiricism completely? Should knowledge only be restricted, constricted or constrained to rational thinking? Does separation between logic and emotion lead to a proper way of understanding the Malay mind? Have we ever heard that "Malays are just too emotional and too uncritical to be logical as displayed by the attitudes of *melatah* and *mengamuk*?" Do Malays have their own structure of logical thought? Does rational order really matter to them? If not, what is more important in order to understand reality, life and surroundings? Should the Malay tradition be treated

differently from the Western tradition as how Hall and Ames (1987) and Fang (1956, cited in Kessler 1992) used different criteria to discuss Chinese philosophy? So far, these questions have either not been approached at all or have been improperly addressed. In order to trace the logic and rationality of the Malay folk, it is appropriate and best that we look into their proverbs, as proverbs are always considered as a “reason-language discourse.” Furthermore, *peribahasas* represent all walks of life as compared with most of the literatures which either represent the idea of a single author or a small group of readers (e.g. elite, aristocrat).

Discussions on the Malay culture and logic, as I have observed so far, were either superficial, wrongly-defined, not properly covered or centred on the claim that there was only logical and scientific thinking after the arrival of Islam. Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1972) who tried to reconstruct his understanding of Islam in history and Malay culture, represents this so-called rationalism of Islamic philosophy. He claimed that there was no real philosophy, logical or scientific thinking prior to the arrival of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world (e.g. pp. 21, 31-32 *passim*)¹⁷ and the Malay society at that time tended to be more artistic than philosophic. Let me quote his own words to justify his claims:

Masharakat Melayu-Indonesia lebih chenderung kepada sifat kesenian daripada sifat falsafah: mereka tiada benar2 berdaya merangkum kehalusan metafisika Hindu, atau pun dengan sengaja dan oleh sebab bawaan dirinya, mengabaikan falsafah dan menuntut hanya yang kurang sulit dan kusut untuk disesuaikan dengan keadaan jiwanya. Falsafah telah diubah-ganti menjadi seni, dan dengan demikian unsur2 akliah dan ilmiah menjadi terkorban. Pemikiran akliah dengan sechara mendalam, dengan menitik-beratkan unsur2 tatatertib logika dan rasionalismanya, tiada ternampak sebagai umum digemari (p. 13).

(The Malay-Indonesian society tends to be more artistic than philosophic: they were not truly capable of embracing Hindu metaphysics, or purposely and because of their own innateness, ignored philosophy and demanded something which was less complicated and less tangled in order to suit their mental states. Philosophy was altered and replaced by arts, and as such the rational and academic elements were sacrificed. In depth rational thinking, which stresses on the elements of logical disciplines and rationalism, did not seem to be favoured generally.)

The name of Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas was also always mentioned as a leading scholar for being able to prove that Islamic thinkers like Hamzah Fansuri and Hamka were two great Malay logical thinkers, as compared to those who wrote prior to the arrival of Islam (See Mohamad Radzi Mustafa 2001).¹⁸ There are at least three other brief discussions that can be cited, which tend to relate the arrival and influence of Islam as the starting point of the emergence of logical-philosophical tradition among the Malays. Shafie

Abu Bakar (1984, 173) remarked that terminology related to the logical mind was only obvious after the arrival of Islam:

Kalau orang Melayu sebelum Islam tidak begitu ketara di dalam pengistilahan yang berkait dengan akal – sebaliknya lebih bersifat rasa, tetapi melalui pengaruh Islam terdapat banyak istilah-istilah (sic) yang merujuk kepada akal di dalam bahasa Melayu seperti perkataan akal itu sendiri, fikir, bahas, taakul, takwil, kias, dalil dan sebagainya. Melalui teologi Islam pula orang Melayu diperkenalkan dengan kaedah-kaedah logika dan hukum-hukum akal seperti wajib, mustahil dan harus. Dengan mempelajari kaedah-kaedah logika seperti yang dibahas mengenai sifat-sifat Tuhan orang Melayu secara tidak langsung berkenalan dengan kaedah logika Yunani, khususnya logika Aristotle yang banyak digunakan di dalam kaedah logika Islam.

(If the Malays before Islam were not obviously noted in the use of terminology related to *akal* (mind) – as contrasted to emotion-centred, but through the influence of Islam, there are many terms which refer to the mind in the Malay language, like the word *akal* itself, *fikir* (to think), *bahas* (to argue/debate), *taakul* (to reason), *takwil*, *kias* (to compare), *dalil* (reason) etc. Through Islamic theology, the Malays were introduced to logical methods and rules of thought like *wajib* (must), *mustahil* (impossible) and *harus* (should). By learning those logical methods, i.e. which argued about the characteristics of God, the Malays were indirectly acquainted with the logical methods of the Greek, especially Aristotelian logic, which was very much used in Islamic logical methods.)

Shafie Abu Bakar (1984) had tried to analyse as a whole the development of the Malay language and literature in order to see how far the emergence of Malay philosophical thinking in the Malay world was. Elements of philosophical ideas he discussed include nature, human beings, ethics, aesthetics, logic and metaphysics. He divided his brief analysis into four different periods: (a) pre-Hindu-Buddhist period, (b) period of Hindu-Buddhist influence, (c) period of Islam and (d) modern period. He later concluded that:

... menerusi bahasa dan sastera Melayu kita dapat melihat falsafah pemikiran Melayu pada zaman sebelum Hindu-Buddha lebih bersifat asli, bersahaja dan alamiah yang lebih bersumberkan perasaan. Kedatangan pengaruh Hindu-Buddha terutamanya membawa falsafah inkarnasi --- penjelmaan. Dengannya gambaran tentang alam, insan lari dari realiti kepada fantasi-dongeng dan bertentangan dengan logika serta rasional, sebaliknya ia lebih bersifat estetika.... Manakala Islam membawa keyakinan tentang alam nyata dan metafizik berfalsafah tauhid. Ia bersifat pengisian dalaman dan luaran;... Pengaruh moden pula kelihatan lebih membawa kesan kepada yang bersifat luaran (Shafie Abu Bakar 1984, 176).

(... through the Malay language and literature, we can see that the philosophy of Malay thinking during the pre-Hindu-Buddhist period was more genuine, simple and natural, which originated more from emotion. The advent of Hindu-Buddhist

influence carried especially the philosophy of incarnation. With it, *the description of nature, human beings ran away from reality to myth-fantasy and contrasted with logic and rationality*, on the contrary, it was more esthetical... Whereas Islam brought confidence about reality and metaphysical *tauhid*. It was characterised by internal and external fulfilment... Conversely, the modern influence seemed to be bringing effects that are more external in nature (emphasis added)).

Shafie is right that most of the terminologies related with the mind were influenced by Islam, but to claim from such argument that it was the Islamic influence that brought forward the emergence of logical tradition among the Malays seems to be a rather hasty conclusion.¹⁹ Furthermore, as what Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1972) did, Shafie's understanding of logic is closer to something factual or reality (as he contrasted it with myth and fantasy) and not the "the science of reasoning" as what logic is normally understood as a discipline. According to Syed Hussein Alatas (1977):

If it is true that the absence of a word means the absence of the phenomenon, then we shall reach the absurd conclusion that before the coming of Islam, no Malay ever thought because the word "think" in Malay is an Arabic introduction, "pikir"; there is now no original Malay word for "think" (p. 170, *pikir* is originally spelled and not italicised).

Another scholar which tried to relate the emergence of logical thought to the arrival of Islam is Mat Rofa Ismail (1994, 143), who concluded that:

Mantik, dituntut sebagai ilmu pengantar kepada seluruh ilmu. Karya-karya mantik seperti al-Sullam fi'l mantiq serta syarahan-syarahan oleh al-Damanhuri, al-Akhdari dan lain-lain telah dikaji dalam sistem pengajian tradisi di seluruh pelusuk (sic) Alam Melayu Islam sejak sekian lama. Ilmu ini dianggap sebagai ilmu yang menyediakan kaedah berfikir yang sistematik, mengelakkan seseorang pelajarnya melakukan kesilapan ketika berfikir serta membuat keputusan yang ma'qul lagi tepat dalam masa yang singkat.

(Mantic is claimed to be the medium to all knowledge. Works on mantic like *al-Sullam fi'l mantiq* and the lectures of al-Damanhuri, al-Akhdari and others have been studied in the traditional education system in every crook and cranny of the Malay Islamic world for a very long time. This knowledge is considered as knowledge which prepares systematic methods of thinking to prevent a student from committing fallacies of thought and arrive at a right and *ma'qul* decision within a short period.)

Rofa's idea is perhaps only valid in the perspective of Islamic logic (mantic) and mathematics but does not give us an answer whether logic existed in Malay Archipelago before Islamic influence. Moreover, he was only referring to academic treatises on mantic and certain thinkers, and not that of the Malay folks. The

question is whether the elements of logic can also be found in the thinking of the Malay folks. Shafie's and Rofa's treatment of logical thinking should not be restricted only to Aristotelian or Islamic logic alone. The understanding of logical thinking among Malays should be widened as a package, to include not only their formal aspect of rationality, but also their informal aspect or rhetorical strategy (e.g. style of argumentation and emotion) and dialectical dimension (e.g. attitude towards direct and critical argumentation).

In a one-page article, Mustafa Hj. Daud (1980) claimed that there are more than 40 Malay proverbs which touched on the element of Islamic faith; and according to him, this Malay proverbial thinking was generally influenced by the school of *Ahlussunah wal Jamaah*, and not *Mu'tazilah* or *Jaabriah*. Mustafa might be right to a certain extent, but he should not forget that there were also other non-Islamic traditions existing prior to the arrival of Islam, which might have also exerted their influences. As we scrutinise the proverbs cited by him, it can easily be noticed that it is difficult to differentiate between what is universal and what is Islamic. Take his example *hendak seribu daya, tak hendak seribu dalih*. A Malay reader who knows either English or German would easily come to the following conclusion for its equivalent, e.g. where there's a will, there's a way (English proverb) and another German proverb, *wo ein Wille ist, da ist ein Weg*. Based on the uncertainties of the relationship between logic and culture, this research is therefore interesting and significant here, even in Malay studies, despite certain problems and philosophical disputes, to surf into the mind of the Malays in search of an understanding of their ways of reasoning and emotion.

Research Questions

At the end of their essay, "Proverbs and Practical Reasoning: A Study of Socio-Logic" (1981, first published 1979), Goodwin and Wenzel speculated on the importance of undertaking cross-cultural studies on proverbs and their use to explore similarities and differences in the everyday argumentation practices of different language communities in order to understand each other better. Based on the platform laid down by them, which claimed that proverbs of Anglo-American culture do indeed illustrate a significant number of logical principles, this study will try to find out whether it is possible as well for Malay proverbs and their culture to reflect on a fairly elaborate logical system (See also Lim 1998). If there is a certain kind of folk logic, which is equivalent to a logic textbook, then I hypothesise that this logical system and the Malay mind should also reflect at least the following: (1) an implicit typology of legitimate reasoning; (2) rules to guide correct inference (with proper pattern); and (3) caution against specific fallacies as being proven by them for the Anglo-American culture. This research will focus on a few important research questions which

are prompted to put Malay proverbs and their proverbial reasoning as potential sources of insight in understanding the Malay mind:

- i. What kinds of logical principles and/or rhetorical strategies can be established implicitly in Malay *peribahasas*, and can those *peribahasas* be categorised within the framework of logical thought (i.e. logical methods, caution against fallacies etc.)?
- ii. What are the main ideas or general principles of rationality and emotion among Malays as reflected from their *peribahasas* and how do the concepts of “*Budi*”²⁰ and “*Hati*”²¹ play their roles in the Malay thinking? Is “*Hati*” more dominant than “*akal*” (mind) in the Malay thinking? Is emotion directly opposed to rationality in their tradition? What is the role of “*Budi*” in the Malay ways of reasoning?
- iii. What are the similarities and differences between the Malay ways of argumentation and that of the Western tradition if we compare them from the perspectives of rhetoric, dialectic and logic?

The findings of all the above questions will, I hope, enable us to finally arrive at the conclusion that the Malays did possess a clear logical framework in their proverbial thinking as logic is something rather universal, and the claim that logical thinking exists only after the arrival of Islam as did some of the scholars above, for example, is unconvincing. What is lacking in the Malay world is not the logical aspect of their mind but, as I have argued, the dialectical dimension (See Chapter 6). It is very unfair to claim that logical thought exists only after the arrival of Islam, which implies that Malays were not logical before Islam. Similarly, it is also rather unfair for us to claim that logical thought was introduced through Western influences, just because the Malay proverbs share the same logical patterns and argument types with the Anglo-American proverbs (see Chapter 4). Both claims, to me, sound like an effort to reduce the dignity and universality of human thinking into some kind of Islamic or Western propaganda. I am more in favour of the general arguments that logical thought is something universal. Since all human beings are basically rational, the Malays as part of the human community are sure to possess some kind of universality in their thinking patterns (e.g. analogy, cause and effect, generalisation). If the statement “logical thought is something universal” can withstand challenge, then logic should also exist within the Malay oral tradition prior to the arrival of Islamic or Western influences.²²

Importance of the Study

There is very little (perhaps none) written research papers or even attempts to study the Malay ways of reasoning, and as a consequence, this study might suffer from its pioneering nature. Its pioneering nature, however, underlines its significance. This research is rather important in at least three different ways:

Firstly, if we were to look into the current landscape of paremiological research, it would not be surprising to find that the logical analysis of proverbs in itself is relatively few and the study of Malay proverbial reasoning even fewer, perhaps none. Dundes (1975, 971) signalled the importance of the involvement of logicians in the study of proverbs when he stated: “It is also likely that insofar as proverbs are traditional propositions, they should properly be studied by scholars with expertise in symbolic logic and related disciplines.” The logical analysis (either formal or informal logic) of proverbs should be given more attention if we are to approach the mind of certain communities or cultural groups, which will further contribute towards inter-disciplinary studies of logic, culture and paremiology.

Secondly, too little attention is given to the study of the Malay mind as a whole despite its great importance. The importance of the research into the Malay mind as a collective whole has been raised by *Laporan Panel Anugerah Sastera Negara 1991 (Panel Report on National Literature Award 1991)* (Urusetia Panel Anugerah Sastera Negara 1991). Even though it is important to look at the collective mind of the Malays, the literature available so far reveals a rather individualistic approach or hero-centricity as more attention is given to a certain individual (be it politician or non-politician) in various publications of biographical writings. Even if there were efforts to look into the mind of the Malay folk as a collective entity, the focus was overly genre-biased. The study on the Malay mind, for example, is dominated solely by the Malay quatrain, *pantun*. The study on Malay proverbs has been very much suppressed and neglected. The Malay philosophical and logical thought should be understood as the Malay’s worldview or philosophy. It is not the philosophy of any single individual thinker (e.g. Hamzah Fansuri) that I am going to discuss but the philosophy of the Malay folks and their *budi*, which attracted my attention.

Thirdly, this research will try to peer at the differences between the so-called Western rhetorical conceptions of argumentation as compared with the Malay ways of argumentation. Since the study of argumentation has become more international and global, such an investigation could potentially yield logical categories of the Malay mind and which at last can be used to facilitate cross-cultural study of proverbs bearing on attitudes toward the rational process in general within the language of different communities. As such, this research can also perhaps be recognised as making inroads into the philosophy of the Malay mind and cultural studies as a whole.

Definition of Terms

There are various terminologies which need to be addressed: argument, mind and proverbs.

Argument

The word “argument” is very much ambiguous and elastic, which can indicate different things to different people. Brockriede (1990, first published in 1974) defines argument as “*a process whereby people reason their way from one set of problematic ideas to the choice of another*” (italic in the original, p. 5). O’Keefe (1977; 1982, cited in Hample 1990, 301) says that argument should be distinguished into two kinds: argument₁, which refers to something a person makes, such as a speech; and argument₂, which is something people have, such as a dispute. Hample (1985) has suggested a third kind, argument₀, which represents the cognitive processing which is necessary for the production of either argument₁ or argument₂ (cited in Hample 1990, 301). Of the several sense in which scholars use the term “argument” and its relations, for the purpose of this research, three are of immediate importance: rhetorical (argument as *process*), dialectical (argument as *procedure*), and logical (argument as *product*) [Wenzel 1992]. As we know, there are various ways how people resolve disagreement: through rationality, emotion, war etc. In order to see the Malay ways of reasoning and argumentation, this research defines argumentation according to what was suggested by Charles Arthur Willard in *A Theory of Argumentation* (1989) of how one seeks to understand the way people manage disagreement and Gilbert’s definition: “An argument is any disagreement --- from the most polite discussion to the loudest brawl.” (Gilbert 1996, 5; See also Gilbert 1997, 30)

Mind

The meaning of the word “mind” is pretty problematic when we are trying to conduct a research beyond the Anglo-American culture. According to Jahoda (1992), even dictionaries are not much help for current usage of the word “mind,” just as there is no precise equivalent of ‘*esprit*’ in English, as the expression ‘*esprit de corps*’ indicates. For Jahoda, if one looks up ‘mind’ in an Anglo-German dictionary, one finds ‘*Seele*,’ ‘*Verstand*,’ and ‘*Geist*’ which when retranslated are ‘soul,’ ‘reason’ and ‘spirit’; the corresponding terms listed in an Anglo-French dictionary are ‘*ame*,’ ‘*intelligence*’ and ‘*esprit*’ (p. 3). German words like *Angst*²³ and *Schadenfreude* will not easily find an accurate translation in English either. The same thing occurs when we make reference to the word ‘mind’ in an Anglo-Malay dictionary, where the word is translated as ‘*fikiran*,’ ‘*kesedaran*’ etc., which if to be retranslated are ‘thinking’ and ‘consciousness.’

One of the attributes that sharply distinguishes human beings from the rest of nature is their highly developed ability for thought, feeling, and deliberate action. “You have a mind if you think, perceive or feel” (Honderich 1995, 569). Mind, in the Western tradition, is the complexity of faculties involved in perceiving, remembering, considering, evaluating and deciding. Mind is in some sense reflected in such occurrences: sensations, perceptions, emotions, memory, desires, various types of reasoning, motives, choices, traits of personality, and the unconscious (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1988, Vol. 8: 151). In order to understand the Malay mind, *Urusetia Panel Anugerah Sastera Negara* (1991) gives a very useful suggestion:

Konsep minda ini adalah sesuatu yang masih baru dan kompleks serta longgar. Untuk meringkaskan pembicaraan boleh dirangkumi semua proses yang dinamik dalam istilah-istilah yang difahamkan secara biasa seperti: alam fikiran, hati, rasa, akal budi bagi mentakrif minda Melayu. Dalam masyarakat Melayu traditional yang mengutamakan perasaan kekitaan, sikap dan pandangan bersama, pembicaraan tentang minda kolektif (collective mind) menjadi lebih relevan kepada kita (Urusetia Panel Anugerah Sastera Negara 1991, 35).

(This concept of the mind is something new, complex and loose. To make discussion brief, it can include all dynamic processes in commonly understood terminology like *alam fikiran* (the realm of thought), *hati* (literally liver), *rasa* (taste), *akal budi* (thought or common sense) to define the Malay mind. In traditional Malay society which stressed on the importance of collective feelings, attitudes and views, the discussion on the collective mind become more relevant to us.)

In the context of this research, the concept of mind will be derived from this understanding, which tends to combine the element of thinking and the element of emotion.

Proverbs²⁴

There are positive and negative attitudes in seeing how proverbs can be defined. Archer Taylor (1996b), a great paremiologist, presents a rather defeatist statement in his classic *The Proverbs* (1931), in which he maintains that “an incommunicable quality tell us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not. Hence no definition will enable us to identify positively a sentence as proverbial.” Taylor’s idea, despite his pessimism, is correct in the sense that we cannot really define what we feel; we just feel that emotion exists. Taylor’s pessimistic view was shared by Barlett Jere Whiting. Despite his pessimism, however, Whiting (1932) had indirectly given us a good critical review on various definitions of “proverbs” from ancient to the present. But the difficulty in positively identifying a sentence as proverbial and another as not does not

imply that we are not able to provide a general guideline of what a proverb is. Generally, *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1988, Vol. 9: 750) states that a proverb is a “succinct and pithy saying in general use, expressing commonly held ideas and beliefs.” Röhrich and Mieder (1977, 15) define proverb (*Sprichwort*) as: “*die Form eines abgeschlossenen Satzes in fester und unveränderlicher Formulierung.*” The complexity of defining a proverb had prompted several researchers (e.g. Milner 1969; Barley 1972; Dundes 1975), to try to go for a structural linguistic approach. Dundes (1975), for example, in attempting to analyse the general structure of proverbs came out with a structural definition that a proverb “appears to be a traditional propositional statement consisting of at least one descriptive element, a descriptive element consisting of a topic and a comment. This means that proverbs must have at least two words.” (p. 970)²⁵ Dundes’s definition generally applies to both categorisation of Malay proverbs, *peribahasa* and *simpulan bahasa*²⁶ (literally means the knot of language). *Peribahasa* was regarded as the same as *pepatah* or *bidal* by Husny (1972). According to him, *pepatah*, *peribahasa* or *bidal* carries the meaning of:

Kesimpulan sesuatu jang dinjatakan dengan padat dan singkat, jang kadang2 merupakan sebuah pantun, kadang2 hanya merupakan dua baris kalimat dan malahan ada pula jang hanya dilukiskan dalam satu kalimat pendek sadja (p. 173).

(A conclusion which is compactly and pithily stated, sometimes in the form of a *pantun* (quatrain), sometimes consisting only of two sentences and some even being drawn in only a very short sentence.)

Simpulan bahasa is even shorter. It has only two words normally but “*kadang2 ia terdiri hanya dari sepatah kata sadja* (sometimes it can consists of only one word)” (Sabaruddin Ahmad 1954, 22). *Simpulan bahasa* or *ungkapan*, according to Za’ba (1965) refers to “*rangkaian perkataan-perkataan yang telah tetap tersimpul atau terbeku dengan susunan yang khas dan dipakai dengan erti yang khas berlainan daripada asalnya*” (The string of words that are fixedly knotted or frosted together in a special sequence and used with special connotation different from its original meaning) (p. 151). Za’ba (1965) defended the Malay origins of *simpulan bahasa*:

Rangkaian-rangkaian simpulan itu perkataan asalnya terkadang kata nama, terkadang kata perbuatan, dan terkadang kata sifat; tetapi hampir-hampir semuanya terjadi daripada perkataan Melayu betul. Perkataan-perkataan pinjaman jarang-jarang menerbitkan simpulan bahasa, iaitu hanya mana yang sudah mesra jadi seperti perkataan Melayu betul sahaja (p. 152) (bold added)

(The original words for those strings of proverbs sometimes contain nouns, sometimes verbs and sometimes adjectives; but **almost all were constructed**

from true Malay words. Borrowed words seldom produce *simpulan bahasa*, only those which have become intimate just like the true Malay words.)

However, Dundes' idea that "proverbs must have at least two words,"²⁷ does not indicate that it is true without exception as the concept of a "word" is rather a single physical semantic unit and not a line of reasoning. In the Malay context, even though there are very few, a single statement or sentence can sometimes be contracted into a single word. Take an example, *berdiri di atas kaki sendiri* (one stands on his/her own feet) is now known as *berdikari* 'self-standing or independent,' which refers to a person who is not dependent on others (See *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* 1991, 122). There is also another proverb which is presented only in a single word, *terijuk*, which means frustrated or feels ashamed. *Terijuk* is regarded as a proverb with Minangkabau origin and is cited in *Peribahasa* (Pamuntjak, Iskandar and Madjoindo 1961, 174: 1117, later will be cited as PB only) and *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991, 367), the most authoritative dictionary of the Indonesian language. Another single-word proverb as collected in MBRAS (125: 49) is *lembap*, which means moist, but not very wet. By metaphor, the word is used for idleness in a worker. In this context of research, my definition and scope of *peribahasa* are used as a generic term in a broader perspective to include *bidalan*, *pepatah*, *perumpamaan*, *perbilangan*, *simpulan bahasa* and other forms of proverbial sayings.²⁸

Literature Review

Paremiology has become the interest of researchers throughout the world even when it is comparatively few. The study of the proverb has fascinated many scholars from a variety of disciplines as can be shown in Mieder's "Bibliography on Proverb Studies" from 1992 until 2000 (see Mieder 1995c-f, 1996a, 1997a, 1998a, 1999a and 2000). Early research has tended to be historical in emphasis, which tried to locate the possible places and times of origin of individual proverbs (See several articles of Archer Taylor and Wolfgang Mieder)²⁹. According to Taylor (1996c):

The study of proverbs deals with: the bibliography of proverbs and proverb collections; the assemblage of new materials and the availability of old sources; the origin, history, influence, reliability, and the value of collections; the history of individual proverbs with the interpretation and the evaluation of their changing forms; the rise and use of proverbial types and formulae including proverbial phrases; Wellerisms; proverbial comparisons; the translation of proverbs from one language into another; literary conventions in the use of proverbs; etc., etc.

Historical analysis places a significant role in providing origin, influence, proverbial pattern and how different cultural background might influence the emergence of certain proverbs as we can see today. The review of proverb scholarships of modern age will only be appropriate by starting with the name of Archer Taylor (1890-1973), who was depicted by Mieder (1996b) as “the proverbialist par excellence of the modern age” and his classical work *The Proverb* (1931) has become the most oft quoted paremiological bible. Others who are equally important and necessitate mention are Grigorii L’vovich Permyakov (1919-1983), Barlett Jere Whiting (1904-1995) and Matti Kuusi (1914-1998). Taylor and the other three have been described by Mieder (1998b) as “major paremiologists of the 20th century.” Many studies pertaining to proverbial sayings also become the centre focus of the journal – *Proverbium*. Such interests as in the origin, history, collection, translation, etc. of proverbs are served by many paremiologists, especially through the works of the late Archer Taylor (See Mieder 1996b, 1996c).

Nonetheless, in the second half of the twentieth century, there was a shift away from purely literary and historical studies of proverbs, as a result of the influence of the social sciences.³⁰ Recent theoretical researches on proverbs primarily can be deemed as more linguistically oriented, which give attention to structural, semantic and semiotic aspects of proverbs on a rather comparative basis. Permyakov’s work which was first written in Russian in 1970 as *Ot pogovorki do skazki*, was an important source of influence on international paremiological scholarship, especially after its English translation edition *From Proverb to Folk-Tale: Notes on the General Theory of Cliche* appeared in 1979. Another work which exerted the same impact was Matti Kuusi’s *Towards an International Type-System of Proverbs* (1972), which discussed the criteria of systematisation that have been used in the collections of proverbs.

One of the problems which had plagued paremiologists is that of definition. The magnitude of the problem is evident if one begins from Archer Taylor’s classic, *The Proverb* (1931), which is widely quoted and also much criticised due to its pessimistic approach towards the definition of proverb. Beginning from Taylor’s pessimistic approach and based almost exclusively upon Anglo-American proverb data, Alan Dundes’s article “On the Structure of the proverbs” (1975) tackled the definition question with a relatively new means of analysis that involve the use of structuralism. Shirley L. Arora’s article “The Perception of Proverbiality” (1995a, first published in 1984), however, tends to position empirically the idea of proverbial marker as a way of determining a proverb. Both these articles tend to be definitional in nature, interesting and significant in responding to Taylor’s defeatism on proverb definition. While Dundes believes that proverbs may best be defined in structural terms as purely functional definitions are inadequate considering that other genres of folklore may share the same function(s) as proverbs. Arora argues in her essay that

proverbiality depends on traditionality, currency, repetition, certain grammatical or syntactical features, metaphor, semantic markers (parallelism, paradox, irony, etc.), lexical markers (archaic word, etc.), and phonic markers (rhyme, meter, alliteration, etc.). These theoretical considerations are followed by a discussion of a “proverb survey” which she presented to Spanish-speaking residents of Los Angeles, California. Based on the statistical analyses of the informants’ responses to proverbs and pseudo-proverbs presented to them, Arora sought to prove her claim that statements with the most “proverbial” markers would most likely be perceived as actual proverbs. Another attempt to understand proverb definition was by Mieder (1999b). Mieder (1999b) deals with the popular definition of “a proverb is a short sentence of wisdom” which he derived from a sample of 55 non-academic definitions by non-specialists on proverbs, consisting of students, friends and acquaintances and augmented by a discussion of what authors of general magazines and newspapers articles have to say about proverbs. Based on his judgement, Mieder argues that there obviously exists a considerable difference between scholarly definition attempts and the common view of the proverbs held by the folk. To Mieder, it was rather surprising that such nouns as meaning, message, comment, occurrence, paradigm, form (rhyme, alliteration, etc.) did not play much of a role in these definitions, whereas scholarly definitions tend to focus on these elements.

The logical and rhetorical view of proverbs also attracts researchers’ interest. The problem of contradictory proverbs is one of the important concerns among paremiologists. Many scholars have dealt with this supposed contradiction of proverbs from philosophical, linguistic and logical points of view (especially formal deductive logic). Indeed, it was as early as in the seventeenth century when Nicholas Breton (1616) drew attention to or alluded to the issue of conflicting proverbs, or proverbs advocating opposing philosophies. Yankah³¹ (1994, 128) said that among those works from various traditions that discussed about it were Firth (1926, from Maori proverbs), Andrzejewski (1968, from Somali proverbs), Jabo proverbs from the work of Herzog (1936), English proverbs (Taylor 1950), proverbs in Chinese (Lister 1874) and Yoruba proverbs (Lindfors and Owomoyela 1973). Yankah (1994) argues that the problem of contradictory proverbs exists primarily due to the people’s ignorance about the social context. According to Yankah, when one deals with proverbs only as a concept of a cultural fact or truism, contradictions are easily found in any proverb tradition.³² For him, the meaning of any proverb is only evident once it has been contextualised. Yankah is right that proverbs should be treated in their proper social context. Furthermore, they should be treated in the proper perspective. Take the proverb “the early bird gets the worm” for instance. The particular proverb is in itself contradictory: it is good for the bird to be early but not for the worm, as in this case the bird will be the winner but the worm will be the loser. Therefore, is it good to be early? Perhaps this might only be a sophistic trick. Cram (1994) states that the proverb should be viewed as

a lexical element with a quotational status. The proverb is a lexical element in the sense that it is a syntactic string which is learned and reused as a single unit with a frozen internal and external structure. From a logical point of view, Cram draws upon a distinction drawn by Sperber's *Rethinking Symbolism* (1975) between encyclopaedic and symbolic statement, and argues that since proverbs have not been used in the same way as encyclopaedic statements, so proverbial systems have the idiosyncratic property of allowing valid contradictions.

The study of practical reasoning in proverbs was first conducted by Goodwin and Wenzel (1981, first published 1979). Even though it was stated that they used rhetorical strategy and technique, instead of informal logic, nevertheless the use of typology of arguments presented by Ehninger and Brockriede (1963), who had elaborated them from the Toulmin's model in *The Uses of Argument* (1958), have brought their research closer to the interest of informal logic and argumentation studies. The reason why Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) did not try to differentiate between rhetoric and informal logic might have been due to the fact that the informal logic movement only emerged some time after this article was published.³³ Goodwin and Wenzel's article should be perceived as one of the pioneering efforts in analysing proverbs through the non-formal logic approach. Wenzel (1988) was later prompted to think of proverbs again as potential sources of insight into the logics of different communities by analysing the African proverbs. He suggested that African proverbs used as argument seemed more concerned with maintaining harmony within a group in contradistinction with Western concerns for decision-making and/or victory.

Besides capturing the interest of paremiologists, current research also show some forms of empirical tendencies through the involvement of psychologists and cognitive scientists. Psychologists and psychiatrists have long been interested in proverbs for testing intelligence, attitudes, aptitudes, and various mental illnesses.³⁴ Most psychologists assume that understanding the figurative meanings of proverbs requires various kinds of higher order cognitive abilities. Numerous so-called "proverbs tests" have been devised as a means of attempting to measure various mental skills or reasoning skills. Other proverb tests apparently serve as diagnostic tools in the identification of possible schizophrenics. Donald R. Gorham (1956)³⁵, for instance, has developed a tool for diagnosing schizophrenia, since this illness has been known to result in difficulty in understanding metaphors of proverbs. This test is now best known as the Gorham Proverbs Test. Works by Honeck, for example, represent the interest in that direction (See Honeck and Hoffman 1980, Honeck et al. 1980 and Honeck 1997). However, Gibbs and Beitel (1995) rejected the widely held idea that failure to provide a figurative interpretation of a proverb necessarily reflects a deficit in specialised

abstract thinking. Let us now concentrate on the Malay proverb scholarship and collections to see how Malay proverbs were being treated and if such treatment were adequate.

Malay Proverb Scholarship and Collections

The term “Malay” specifically refers to the civilised Malays of Sumatra and the Malay peninsular and in a broader sense, it also includes almost all the inhabitants of the Malay Archipelago, Formosa and the Philippines as well as some of the tribes of Indo-China (Winstedt 1956, 4). Even though there are more than 200 million Malay speakers today, their proverbs have not really attracted international attention. It seems that Overbeck was quite right when he said that “*Malaiische Literatur ist tot* (Malay literature is dead)”³⁶ if we were to refer his comment on the past interpretative scholarship on Malay paremiology. The current research on Malay paremiology can be said to have declined today to an alarming state. Among Malay folklore, the study of Malay proverbs today is only peripheral to other literary studies. This is very unfortunate indeed. The use of such aphorisms in everyday discourse has been generally declining. This declining trend has been well observed by Sweeney (1987) when he said that:

A case in point is the cultivation of proverbs and “sayings.” Over the past twenty-five-odd years I have observed a relative decline in the use of such aphorisms in everyday speech on all levels of society. A survey of Malay writing over the past half century reveals a similar trend. The publications of numerous collections of such sayings in the recent past (particularly in the fifties) does not belie this trend; it rather confirms it, and serves as another example of the undermining of the old medium by the new: there is a certain irony in the fact that these sayings, mnemonically patterned for easy retrieval in an oral society where they function as repositories of knowledge, are made available as itemized, alphabetically arranged (!) collections by the very medium, print, which has made them obsolescent. Having been removed from the arena of everyday life, they have then been consigned to the fate of a lingering death in the schoolroom, where generations of schoolchildren are subjected to studying them as texts which will have little practical use (Sweeney 1987, 70-71; ! is original).

This unfortunate tendency is further confirmed if we were to open up Mieder’s *Proverbs in World Literature: A Bibliography* (Mieder and Bryan 1996). In this compendium, no literary Malay proverb studies were included. Even his most authoritative three-volume *International Proverb Scholarship: An Annotated Bibliography* (1982, 1990 and 1993a), which contains more than 4,500 entries of interpretative scholarship (not including proverb collections) listed only limited titles³⁷ on Malay proverb scholarship. The scenario is no better even if we were to refer to his annually updated “Bibliography on Proverb Studies”

from 1992 until 2000 published in the electronic journal, *De Proverbio* (as mentioned earlier in the beginning of my literature review). His comprehensive bibliographies did not cite any work on Malay proverbs. This leads one to conclude that either no serious work on Malay proverbs is currently published or Malay proverbs have never been put onto the international map of paremiology. Discussion on Malay proverbs in *Proverbium* can only be found, e.g. in Paczolay (1993), in the form of comparisons between European, Far-Eastern and some Asian proverbs. Paczolay (1993) cited three Malay proverb collections in his comparison, i.e. Hamilton (1937), Atan (1962) and Izhah (1962?, ? original).³⁸

The term “Malay paremiology” has never been noticed and the official journal on paremiology – *Proverbium* – to my knowledge has never published a single article on Malay proverb scholarship.³⁹ Review of literature on Malay proverbs is also rare. Teeuw (1961, 30-31) provided a small section of review on Malay proverbs, but he only touched on collections of Malay proverbs without any review on Malay interpretative proverb scholarship.⁴⁰ My literature review here will be my preliminary attempt to look into the realm of Malay paremiology. My discussion will be divided into three sub-sections: (a) The bibliographies, sources, history and collection of Malay proverbs; (b) Malay proverbs studies and analyses; and c) The application of Malay proverbs in writing.⁴¹

a. The Bibliographies, Sources, History and Collections of Malay Proverbs

In the Malay classical literature, *pantun* (quatrain) is always like a “big brother” from a big literature family tree, dominating the scene of academic or non-academic research circles. It has always played an important role in attracting the majority of researchers until its other member in the family, *peribahasa* (proverbs) can be said to be so pushed into the research periphery or has become a so-called stepbrother in this literary family. When researchers were intending to look into the thinking of the Malays, they were most attracted to the *pantun*⁴² and it seems that they were exalting the *pantun* as representing the Malay mind.⁴³ Wilkinson and Winstedt (1923, 3), although showing their suspicion towards the originality of *pantun*, still made a strong suggestion to the study of *pantun* when they remarked: “No one can estimate the mental scope of the Malay without an understanding of the *pantun*, the love verse and lampoon of his race.” For a long time, due to the above perception, another form of Malay literature *peribahasa*, which I think should be given equal importance, has been slowly neglected.

There are also some “chicken and egg” arguments between *pantun* and *peribahasa* – which one comes first? Raffel (1967) said that “the proverb (*peribahasa*) probably preceded and even developed into the *pantun*.”⁴⁴ However, Taylor (1996b) stated: “Some have maintained that the proverb came before the

quatrain; others, declare that the germ of all poetry is the strophe and not the line, have zealously defended the contrary opinion.” This confusion was alluded to by Wilkinson and Winstedt (1923, 3) on the origin of Malay quatrain when they wrote:

The origin of the Malay quatrain is still uncertain. In early literature, in *Hang Tuah*, for example, the word *pantun* is used for a proverb or simile, such as *rosak bawang di-timpa jambak*, “the bulb is spoilt by the weight of its bloom,” that is a useful life is ruined by inordinate display,...⁴⁵

The collection of Malay proverbs was not as intense as *pantun* during its early history as it was treated merely as certain kinds of verbal expression. This was so until the eighteenth century. Even though there were certain notations on the usage of *peribahasa* in *Sejarah Melayu* (Malay Annals), *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (The Legends of Hang Tuah), *Kisah Muhammad Hanafiah* (The Story of Muhammad Hanafiah) and *Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah* (The Voyage of Abdullah), there were no specific works on the collection of Malay proverbs prior to Klinkert’s (1866, 1869) oldest collections, whose interpretations, according to Teeuw (1961), were often disputable.⁴⁶

Maxwell in his first part of “Malay proverbs” published in the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (JSBRAS) (July 1878a, Vol. 1: 85-98) reveals to us that he was not aware that of any collection printed in English language with exception of Newbold’s translation of a few Malay proverbs published in his “Political and Statistical account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca” (Vol. II: 335) in 1839. According to Maxwell, the first published collections of Malay proverbs that he knew of was a collection of 183 Malay proverbs, with a preface and notes in the Dutch language, as early as 1863 by M. Klinkert, a Dutch gentleman. This was mentioned in the preface of the Malay and French dictionary of Abbe Favre, which was published in 1875 wherein he acknowledged his obligations to M. Klinkert’s work in his dictionary: “*C’est ainsi M. Klinkert qui, dans un ouvrage special, nous a servi a completer notre collection de proverbes Malais, extraits partiellement de divers auteurs: nous lui devons aussi les enigmes*” (Cited in Maxwell 1878a, 86). However, Maxwell had only seen a copy of M. Klinkert’s book, a thin pamphlet of 51 pages, and the copy did not contain the enigmas as mentioned in the quotation. M. Klinkert stated in his introduction that his collection of Malay proverbs were partly taken from the works of Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munshi, especially from his “*Hikayat Abdullah*” and his “*Pelayaran*” and partly also, but less, from other “*Hikayat*”, native “*pantun*”, and the lips of Malays themselves (Maxwell 1878a, 86). For many proverbs, M. Klinkert acknowledged his indebtedness to the late Mr. Keasberry of Singapore, “a man who, from his youth until he became an old man, studied the Malays and their language, and who had the advantage of having the above-mentioned Abdullah as his teacher and assistant” (pp. 86-

87). After his first part of Malay proverbs were published, part two in Vol. 2 (pp. 136-162), part three in Vol. 3 (pp. 19-51) and part four in Vol. 11 followed (pp. 31-82)(Maxwell 1883).

Other Malay proverbs collections published in JSBRAS were “A new collection of Malay proverbs” by Hugh Clifford (1891) in Vol. 24 (pp. 87-120) and J. L. Humphreys’s (1914) “Collection of Malay Proverbs” in Vol. 67 (pp. 95-123) as well as “A Malay-English Dictionary” by R. J. Wilkinson (1932, first published in 1901; See Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society [MBRAS] 1992). The most influential *peribahasa* collection was done by W.G. Shellabear bearing the title *Kitab Kiliran Budi* in 1906. The first work by a local on the collection of *peribahasa* was by Mohd. Adnan Mohd. Ariffin – a Malay himself – which appeared in 1934 and was first published in Kelantan⁴⁷ by Pejabat al-Matbaah al Asasiyah as *Tikaman Bahasa*. This collection was later republished by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka in 1992. There were also collections with English comments by Hamilton (1955, first published 1937), Winstedt (1981, earlier edition 1950) and Brown (1959, first published 1951).⁴⁸

Besides, there were also other titles and versions of publications. Malay proverbs have been included in Malay-English Dictionaries compiled by Clifford and Swettenham (1894) and Wilkinson (1932/1901). Numerous publications appeared after the Second World War. For example: *Kamus Peri Bahasa Melayu* (Darus Ahmad 1956), *Mestika Bahasa* (Mohd. Yusof Mustafa 1965, first published 1959) and *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu* by Abdullah Hussain (1991, first published by Oxford University Press in 1965) (See also Ishak Ramly 1990: 57). Besides his *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu*, Abdullah Hussain also compiled *Kamus Simpulan Bahasa* published in 1966.⁴⁹ The interest in *peribahasa* collections also blossomed in the 1980’s and 1990’s especially to fulfil the needs of education. Several titles can be mentioned: *Peribahasa dalam Penggunaan* (Mohd. Tajuddin Hj. Abdul Rahman 1984), *Kamus Peribahasa Lengkap Utusan* (Abdullah Hassan and Ainon Mohd. 1993) and *Mega Peribahasa* (Zulkiflee Yazid 1996).

Moreover, six volumes of work entitled *Cerita Peribahasa* were published by Penerbitan Kintan Sdn. Bhd. in order to promote student understanding of *peribahasa* through stories. *Cerita Peribahasa* is divided into three categories of *peribahasa*: *perumpamaan* (Yahya Haji Samah, Amir Hamzah Shamsuddin and Zainal Mokhtar 1992a, Vol. 1 and 1992b, Vol. 2), *pepatah* (Yahya Haji Samah, Amir Hamzah Shamsuddin and Webah Salleh 1993, Vol. 3; Amir Hamzah Shamsuddin 1993, Vol. 4) and *simpulan bahasa* (Rejab F. I., Ronifira Rejab and Fatimah Taha 1994a, Vol. 5 and 1994b, Vol. 6). Each volume contains 25 *peribahasa* (*perumpamaan*, *pepatah* and *simpulan bahasa*). There are also proverb collections with illustrations (e.g.

Moonyra Baharuddin and Izuddin Sharifuddin 1997). The latest interesting proverb collection was compiled, translated and illustrated by Kit Lee (2001). His collection *Keli Dua Selubang (Dan 99 Peribahasa Melayu)* was published by Times Books International in 2001 (for a simple book review, see Azman Anuar 2001). Malay proverbs were also compiled according to their geographical origin like Riau's Malay (See Tenas Effendy 1989) or themes like leadership (See Tenas Effendy 2000). There were also certain collections of proverbs published in Indonesia, for example: *Peribahasa* (Pamuntjak, Iskandar and Madjoindo 1961), Badudu's *Belajar Memahami Peribahasa* (1988) and proverb collections of other folks (e.g. Minangkabau, Java) in the Malay world in their respective languages like Anas Nafis's *Peribahasa Minangkabau* (1996). Java proverb collections which can be cited are *Kamus Peribahasa Jawa* (Darmasoetjipta 1985) and *Peribahasa dan Saloka Bahasa Jawa* (Mardiwarsito 1992). For an analysis of Javanese proverbs from the aspects of structure, style, meaning and message, reference can be made to Adi Triyono *et al.* (1988). The list of Malay-Indonesian proverbs can go on without end, but most of these collections do not show very much differences, which are only either compiled alphabetically or thematically.⁵⁰

b. Malay Proverbs Studies and Analyses

The Malay proverb not only plays its role in the scholarly environment or among the writers in the literary circle, but it belongs to the general public – especially during the early times. As part of the verbal arts, *peribahasa* has become part and parcel of their everyday life. The Malay fondness for proverbs in their early times, for instance, was stated by Swettenham in his book, *British Malaya: An Account of the Origin and Progress of British Influence in Malaya* (1906):

Reference has been made to the Malay's fondness for proverbs, for epigrams and wise saws; in his conversation he never fails to introduce one or other, when he sees an opportunity for their fitting application (Swettenham 1906, 169).

The observation of Swettenham, however, showed a drastic decline in the Malay conversation, especially in the modern era, at the end of the twentieth century (Cf. Sweeney 1987, 70-71). The average Malay does not show such fondness towards their proverbs by using them in everyday conversation, except being quoted only by certain politicians as an “appeal to tradition.” Even though there were efforts made to compile dictionaries on Malay proverbs, nonetheless, they are more for the sake of commercial education. Sweeney (1987, 104-5) asserted that the decline in the use of the traditional formulaic expressions began after the introduction of mass education. Taking M. B. Lewis's *Teach Yourself Malay* (1947) as a revealing example, Sweeney (p. 104) said that Lewis's ideas of stressing upon the importance of the proverbial expression were “excellent for its time but now so outdated that, unlike most of the *Teach Yourself*

language books, it is no longer reprinted. It is not that Lewis's ideas are not valid; rather the level of Malay she wished to impart has changed so much that the language of her book now reechoes the idiom of the past."

However, to think in formulas is intuitively understood by the governments of Malaysia and Indonesia. This is done by deliberately creating formulas, in the form of slogans, mottoes, and catchphrases for adoption by the masses (Sweeney 1987, 98). The practice of slogan or "neo-proverbs" (e.g. *Pemuda harapan bangsa, pemuda tiang negara, kebersihan pangkal kesehatan*) as Sweeney (p. 98) called it, might be said to be such that the slogan or sometimes propaganda has become the new proverb. A search at the library shows that real serious works are rather limited (check *Bijdragen*⁵¹, *Indonesia and Malay World*⁵², *JSBRAS*⁵³, *Rima*⁵⁴, *Indonesia*⁵⁵ for the past 20 years or more and *Dissertation Abstract International* [the search for the recent dissertation published between 1999-2000 under proquest digital dissertations through the keyword search – "proverbs" and "Malay" – produced no results]).

Many Malay proverbs studies however seem to be rather local-based. The interpretative studies on Malay proverbs in the Malaysian context for instance are mostly published in *Dewan Bahasa*. Since *Dewan Bahasa* is a journal on Malay language, it is thus understandable why most of the studies on Malay proverbs had been published in this journal (see e.g. Edward Djamaris 1985, Indirawati Hj. Zahid 1998, Nathesan 1989 & 1998). Graduation exercises in the local universities are another source of interpretative studies on Malay proverbs. So far, based on my literature review, a few themes that attracted the most attention are, for example, philosophy and thinking of the Malay (Ahmad Ibrahim 1996, Noor Fazidah Mohd. Ismail 1996 and Yunus Ujang 2001), a comparative studies between Malay-Chinese proverbs (Gan Hiong Huat 1991 and Tang Lai Chan 1994) and a lexical semantic study (Indirawati Hj. Zahid 1995).

Even though two graduation exercises can be cited which are supposed to explore the philosophy in the Malay proverbs and helpful in my research area, when we scrutinise them thoroughly and look at their selected references, I am generally quite doubtful that they have a full knowledge of what paremiology is. For instance, a word like "paremiology" was not even mentioned and works by great paremiologists viz. Taylor, Dundes, Mieder and many more were being ignored totally. Yunus Ujang (2001) was inclined to use the word *falsafah* (philosophy) loosely, but it faded away under a stricter academic sense of the word "philosophy." He tended to confine himself to the popular usage of philosophy, which according to Popkin and Stroll (1981) is "an attitude towards certain activities" (p. x) and do not really give us a real stuff of philosophy (i.e. logic, ethics, metaphysics), or at least supported by philosophical argumentation. Ahmad

Ibrahim (1996, chapter 3) tried to give us what his conception of Malay philosophy (viz. knowledge, values and world view) is, but rather superficial and therefore does not serve the purpose of exploring the Malay mind.

The development of research among the Malay paremiologists is much more education centred in nature – or perhaps literary. The Malay linguists, or Malay proverb scholars, so far gave more attention only to the pragmatic problems in teaching the language generally and the learning of proverbs while none I noticed were seriously involved in the development of theoretical-based studies on Malay paremiology. Falling into this category, there are, for example, numerous articles in the form of journalistic writing, which touched on various themes pertaining to *peribahasa*, its meaning and uses (See Nik Safiah Karim 1995, 1999a, 1999b and 2000).⁵⁶ There is an alarming sign of the unpopularity of proverbs either in school or everyday life. Goh Suzie (1998, cited in Mohd Tajudin Abdul Rahman 1999) gave a rather cloudy picture of the future of Malay proverbs. Her research “*Penggunaan Peribahasa Melayu Pelajar Menengah*” (The Uses of Malay Proverbs Among Secondary School Students 1998) stated that all respondents (Malay, Chinese and Indian students) said that they do not like to use Malay proverbs in their everyday life and amongst the reasons given were that proverbs are out-dated.⁵⁷ Proverbs are seen to be out-dated and this is true if paremiographers’ definitions of Malay proverbs always remained confined to the same old collections and have no intention to change and take account of the modern invention which is taking place among the Malay users. There are quite a number of modern *simpulan bahasa* (i.e. *mulut laser* ‘laser mouth’, *otak komputer* ‘the brain of computer’, *ali baba* ‘A Malay-Chinese joint-venture in business, but Malays are always the sleeping partner’, *bahasa kutu* ‘lice’s language’, *kotak hitam* ‘black box’) and *peribahasa* (e.g. *harapkan tin jaga biskut, tin makan biskut* ‘In hoping that the container will take care of the biscuit, however, it is the container that eats the biscuit’), which are rather common now but not compiled. *Peribahasa* should also be reformed in order to make it suitable for modern consumption. Zailiani Taslim’s call for such a reform (1999a) and search for the positive functions of *peribahasa* (1999b) in order to make *peribahasa* more dynamic (1999c) should gain the attention of the Malay paremiographers.

There are also some brief comparative works between Malay proverbs and proverbs from other traditions, i.e. Chinese⁵⁸ and Philippine (See Sahlan Mohd. Saman [1981]). Eugenio (1992, xxxiv) for example, explained, “Of the proverbs of Asiatic nations, Philippine proverbs bear closest affinities with those of the Malayan peoples.” According to her, “Philippine-Malay point to many similarities in ways and customs stemming from a common cultural and linguistic origin.”⁵⁹ There are also proverbs studies and analyses of other folks (e.g. Minangkabau, Java) in the Malay world. Fanany and Fanany (2000) for example, analysed

the idea of flora that can be identified in the Minangkabau's proverbs. Their corpus of Minangkabau's proverbs was based on Anas Nafis's *Peribahasa Minangkabau* (1996).

(c) *The Application of Malay Proverbs in Writing*

Besides the works of Malay paremiographers and paremiologists which I have already discussed, I noticed an example of a good Malay proverb practitioner in writing. One of the Malay proverbial icons when it comes to writing in Malay should be Abdul Samad Idris – or normally appearing as A. Samad Idris – to whom I will give my due credit here. His writings, which mostly appeared in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Mingguan Malaysia*,⁶⁰ (two of the mainstream newspapers) were quite interesting. As a veteran politician from the current leading party, United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), he had on and off raised his ideas and comments on the contemporary issues in Malaysian politics. His skills in citing Malay proverbs in his political argumentative discourse should be encouraged.⁶¹ An on-line search of *Utusan Malaysia* for the period between 7th of March 1998 and 21st of June 2000 had successfully yielded ten of his articles: four articles in the year 1998 (See 1998a till 1998d), five in the year 1999 (See 1999a till 1999e) and two in the year 2000 (See 2000a & 2000b). On 17th January 2001, I was able to access another article by him (See 2001). He is also the compiler of one of the collection of Malay proverbs, *Buat Baik Berpada-pada.... A. Samad Idris dengan 300 Pepatah* (1989).

Method of Study

This research is a first scientific and theoretical attempt of using analytical-philosophical perspectives at judging the Malay mind through the repertoire of Malay proverbs. It is analytical in one aspect as thousands of proverbs were scrutinised and analysed, but it is also philosophical from another aspect as I will be deriving my conclusion through argumentation. It should be noted that all proverbs will be interpretively analysed with the purpose of tracing: (1) What kinds of logical principles are embedded behind all those proverbs, and to match them to a conventional classification of patterns of reasoning or argument; and (2) How emotional and intuitive patterns go into hiding behind those proverbs.⁶² The word “logic” throughout this research will be regarded generally as “the science of reasoning” or “the art of argumentation” and not the popular sense of “*logika* (logic)” as found in the common discourses among Malays, which normally

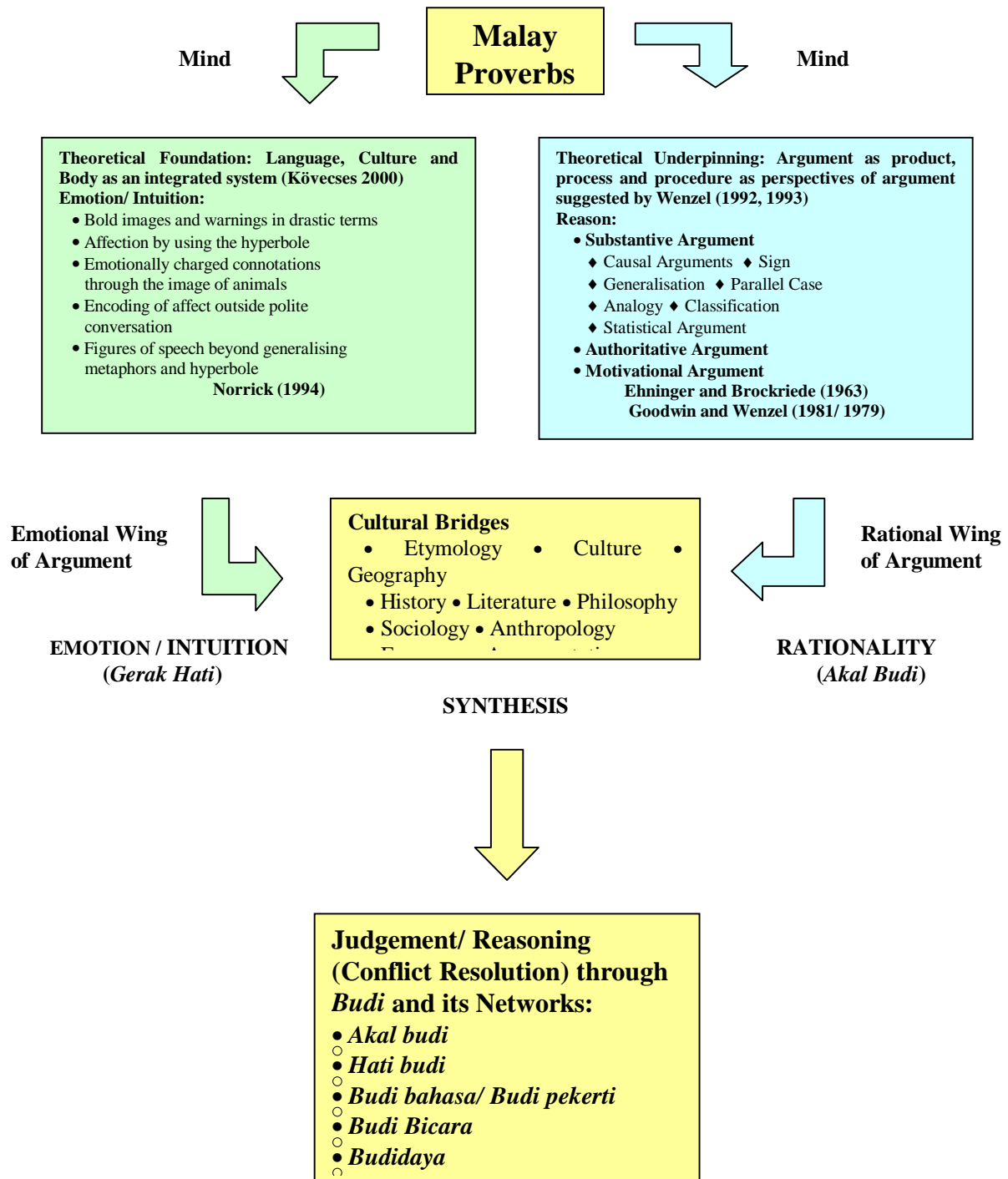
refers to common sense or what happens in reality. Popularly, something will be treated as “illogic” or “irrational” when they are in confrontation with reality. Take Umar Junus’ (1985) example of asking us not to rationalise the proverb: *Guru kencing berdiri, murid kencing berlari* ‘If the master stands up to make water, the pupils will do it running’ (MS 12). In order to rationalise that this proverb is illogic as “students can’t discharge their urine while they are still running” is doing a commonsensical judgement or using what happens in reality as the yardstick. The conception of logic in *peribahasa* as something in accord with reality was also touched on by Abdullah Jusoh (1993). By using the example *hujan naik ke langit* ‘rain goes up to the sky,’ Abdullah claimed that *peribahasa* applied the hyperbole or analogy which is not logical, is being more effectively delivered. His idea of the meaning of logic is clear. In reality, rain falls down from the sky and not vice-versa. Another normal conception of commonsensical logic criticism of the Malay proverb that can be found in the Malay context is *biar mati anak, jangan mati adat* ‘Let the children die but not the custom.’ It is usually argued that if *anak* (children) was left to die, then who will inherit the *adat* (custom) (See Abdullah Ahmad 2000).⁶³ In this research, I do not refer to this notion of logic and rationality. Besides the confusion surrounding the word “logic”, there might be many proverbs of obscure, uncertain, or even unknown meaning in proverb collections, and the problem of explanation and interpretation. Therefore, the use of a classificatory system is a matter of interpretation; the categories themselves may be construed in different ways, and many arguments (and proverbs) may be assigned to more than one category. It should be noted philosophically as well that this study attempts to approach the Malay mind as a universal category (or the concept of human as a Platonic idea) and not Ahmad, Ali etc. as a particular human being. As such, the contextual issue for the individual proverb use by particular individual does not become a matter of importance to me. It is also impossible to treat every single proverb in its real context to be recorded before making a generalisation.

In order to give an analytical insight, the procedure of my analysis will be generally guided by a model of study which I have sketched (See Figure 1.1). This model will lead us to two parts of analysis: Firstly, as I believe that some ways of reasoning about human experience are truly universal, therefore the conclusions of Goodwin and Wenzel (1981, first published 1979) for Anglo-American proverbs should also generally be reflected on Malay proverbs that: (i) there are parallels between what the logic textbooks teach and what the proverbs teach and (ii) a significant number of logical principles can be obtained. I believe that there is a universal, general notion of logical categories and hypothesise that the Malay folks will basically possess the same logical principles but with different rhetorical-dialectical attitudes, and these can be traced from their culture and *peribahasas*. In my first part of analysis (Chapter 4), I will start looking into the Malay proverbs that might be said to contain or suggest a principle or rule of thumb for reasoning, a logic of the

Malay people. Three categories of argument will be discussed: Substantive, Authoritative and Motivational as elaborated by Ehninger and Brockriede (1963) to provide a structured academic logic and a system of logical principles with which to compare my Malay "folk" logic.

Secondly, since all human beings are generally rational but at the same time full of passion, I believe that it would be quite natural for the Malay folks to locate their sense of passion as well in their proverbs. In order to guide my discussion and analysis on this part, I will be using Norrick (1994) as my platform of analysis (see Chapter 5). Norrick (1994) affirmed the existence of the "markers of affect" in familiar proverbs and how these proverbs evaluate proverbial emotions in American proverbs. Taking his idea as a stepping stone, I would further justify my arguments that emotions do play an important part as well in the Malay proverbs. I hypothesise that the two important sources of identifying their passions are pertinent: (i) Creative and symbolic application of metaphorical animals and plants; and (ii) *Hati* as the source of passions.

The purpose of this research is not an ethnographic study of the Malays; it is neither a content analysis⁶⁴ nor is it to seek for the origin of any single Malay proverb, but rather to address some more general philosophical and conceptual questions on how the Malays approach conflict resolution or resolve disagreement (argument, i.e. monolithic versus pluralistic approach, rational versus emotional or synthetic approach of *budi*). It will be rather theoretical and philosophical in this sense as I will be arguing on my points that the Malay ways of argumentation is not a monolithic rational approach as portrayed and reflected by the study of Anglo-American proverbs (Goodwin and Wenzel 1981) and it is also not Wenzel's (1988) conclusion for African proverb that it was used for creating harmony (even though creating harmony will be one of the purposes) *per se*. I believe that the Malay folks are following a rather synthetic model of resolving conflict where "*budi* and its networks" (i.e. *akal budi*^{common-sense}, *hati budi*^{emotion}, *budi bahasa/ budi pekerti*^{conduct/moral}, *budi bicara*^{opinion/judgement} and *budidaya*^{pragmatic} as a package) play the pivotal role of synthesising rationality and emotion-intuition; and the person who is able to achieve this ideal state is a *budiman*^{person of wisdom}. In order to justify my hypotheses, I will be deriving my evidences and argumentation from various sources, viz. etymology, culture, geography, history, literature, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, economy and argumentation as "cultural bridges" or "historical forces" to substantiate the preposition that the fulcrum of such a balance between reason and emotion is "*budi*." I believe that if one is interested to understand the Malay mind and their reasoning, they should first understand the role of *budi* as developed throughout the whole history of their civilisation dialogues and cultural intermarriages.

Figure 1.1: Model of the Study

In this model, there are a few theoretical underpinnings which I should well elucidate before setting out my reasons in the next few chapters. In order to treat argument as a social entity, we should not treat argument

as an entity which consists of a purely single-dimension but rather a product in a three-in-one package; this means that we should consider what Wenzel (1990, 1992, 1993) has said on perspectives of argument: *argument as product* (logical dimension), *argument as process* (rhetorical dimension) and *argument as procedure* (dialectical dimension). This general fusion of “argument as product-process-procedure” is what I call **Rational Wing of Argument**. According to my interpretation, if we ponder and contemplate seriously about this Rational Wing of Argument, we will find out that they are generally quite in line with three integrated aspects of human feelings, viz. *language, culture and body*, suggested by Kövecses (2000). For these three aspects of human feelings, I will call them the **Emotional Wing of Argument**. In this context, the word “emotional” shall not be treated as a purely negative overtone as what we normally feel semantically or with its emotive meaning. How well are these two wings incorporated and submerged into our sub-consciousness?

Let us begin from my understanding of how Wenzel’s and Kövecses’ ideas are inter-related in my model: (1) *Argument as a product* (logical dimension) appeals to the general form, where form in this context should be treated rather loosely, not strictly and as rigid as in the sense of formal deductive logic, but as appeared in the universal conception of cause-effect, analogy etc. [perhaps as in the sense of Ehninger and Brockriede’s (1963) categorisation]. This general form as a product of argument is generally universal as it is a physiological product of our *body* (brain) that arises from a certain fundamental bodily experience. Bodily functions of our brain are biologically universal; (2) If we look at *argument as a process* (rhetorical aspect), then it is a matter of culture, where different cultural milieu gives rise to the different rhetorical styles and patterns of effective communication. Some cultures stress on the direct, clear and plain rhetoric, others might go for veiled criticism; (3) Finally, people argue or solve their problems according to certain procedure (*argument as procedure*), some choose to deal with their problem through direct confrontation (e.g. the rule of war, verbally or through weapons) where individual pride of the participant is more important; whereas others might resort to a non-confrontational one (e.g. hiding the actual fact by presenting excuses to avoid conflict, the art of silence) with the intention to achieve social harmony and the well-being of the whole society. These procedural aspects of argument are determined by the rules of language of a speaker (whether English, Chinese, German, Malay etc.), either linguistically (e.g. grammar, semantics) or metaphorically (different kinds of metaphors and metonymies) and forms of language-games (e.g. persuasion, argumentation, narration), of which perhaps Wittgenstein would have argued for and agreed with. American football will have the different rules and regulations as compared with soccer: hands are allowed in American football but prohibited in soccer (except when the ball is out of touch and for the

goalkeeper). Language and dialectical dimension of argument are comparatively the same; they go for rules and procedures.

Analogically, let us just compare it with a pair of wings of a bird, and let us symbolically take this bird as *garuda*. *Garuda* is a type of big, meat-eating eagle-like bird, which was said to have the extraordinary ability to fly but which is already extinct now. Its extinction describes even better the idea of an ideal state. In order to achieve this ideal state, it will be best if a person could achieve the balance of these two wings, and know which wing to use in order to soar to the right, and which wing to use to soar to the left. How a person resolves his or her conflict will very much depend on how and when he or she should use his or her rationality, when he or she should use his or her emotion and when to create a sense of balance between them. The same logic goes well with *garuda* as which direction this bird will fly is very much dependent on the movement of its wings. A person might fail, in the process of heading towards this ideal, but he or she should bear in mind that rationality and emotion should not be treated as contradictory and mutually opposing but complimentary and situational instead. For those who think that the predator image of *garuda* is not suitable to be used as a symbol in the Malay context, then *jentayu*, which refers to “a kind of *garuda* or a kind of rain bird” (*Kamus Dewan* 1986: 451) will be more appropriate to them. All this while, *jentayu* has been used by the Malays to symbolise a person who is *berbudi* ^{grateful} or a person who is willing to sacrifice himself or herself for a good cause (see e.g. the image of *jentayu* in *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* and Usman Awang’s poetry by the title of “*Jentayu*”).⁶⁵

It is generally agreed that in order to trace the logical and rhetorical thought of a discourse, there must be a concept of argument. Are *peribahasas* relevant in that sense to represent the logical and rhetorical thought of the Malay folks as demanded by the method outlined above? The answer depends on how we look at *peribahasas*. It should be understood that *peribahasa* normally performs at least three different roles in Malay discourses, viz. as a literary tool of figurative language (this function can be applied in the non-argumentative discourses [i.e. exposition, narration, description]), a didactic tool (i.e. to teach, to instil moral values) or a rebuttal tool in the argumentation arena. For example, when an arguer is presenting the *peribahasa*, *biar lambat asalkan selamat* ‘it is better to be slow as long as it is safe’ to justify his argument, his opponent may suggest *siapa cepat dia dapat* ‘those who are fast will get what they want’ as a counter argument. The rhetorical or argumentative functions of proverbs will become clearer if we look at various pairs of combating or duelling proverbs, which are contradictory on the surface, as some proverbs apply in certain rhetorical situations, whereas others are appropriate for other occasions. A few examples of pairs of duelling proverbs, which were often discussed, can be seen from Anglo-American proverbs: Too

many cooks spoil the broth vs. Two heads are better than one; The pen is mightier than the sword vs. Actions speak louder than words; Clothes make a man vs. Don't judge a book by its cover; Silence is golden vs. The squeaky wheel gets the grease and Ignorance is bliss vs. Knowledge is power. At face value, proverbs are seen only to be propositions but in the real context of argumentation, proverbs have always functioned as folk *enthymemes*⁶⁶ (See Green and Pepicello 2000). White (1987, 152), although did not directly relate the proverb with *enthymemes*, his idea nonetheless seemed to connote the notion of proverb as *enthymemes*:

Interlocutors comprehend proverb meaning through *a process of inference that allows them to link the saying with prior understandings and to fill in unstated propositions*. Even though this is so in much of natural discourse, proverbial sayings tend to be particularly figurative, partial, and indirect [italics added].

It should be understood that besides serving its aesthetic purposes and ethical functions, proverbs also serves their argumentative role as part of traditional communication, often serving to persuade, exhort, or criticise. These roles (aesthetic, ethical and argumentative) are always intertwined and act as a whole in presenting a general idea of Malay rhetoric. However, in this research, I will put more attention into their logical function, rhetorical strategy and dialectical criticism rather than their literary beauty or ethical advices.

The argumentative role of Malay proverbs is also quite obvious. Za'ba (1965, 166), when discussing *pepatah*, a type of Malay proverbs, has equated it with *pematah* as he puts it in the bracket "*pepatah (pematah)*" to show that they are similar. According to him, not all of the proverbs should be substantiated with ethical and moral values: "*bidalan tetap mesti berisi pengajaran dan fikiran yang benar, tetapi pepatah itu ada juga yang terpakai bagi yang tiada berisi apa-apa pengajaran (bidalan must always contain true teaching and thinking, but there are pepatah which do not contain any teaching)*" (p. 167). Za'ba's opinion casts doubt on the idea that all proverbs are used to inculcate moral values. He further elaborates that the origin of the word "*pepatah*" came from the words "*patah-patah*" which mean "*patah-patah perkataan* (pieces of words)" (p. 167). Gazali Dunia in his book *Langgam Sastera Lama* (1969) shared the same idea with Za'ba.⁶⁷ He addressed the importance of Malay proverbs as a rebuttal tool in the Malay argumentation tradition, but expressed doubtfulness at the idea of classification:

Bidalan, pepatah, petitih, tamsil, perumpamaan sebenarnya tidak ada perbezaan. Kalau ada orang yang membahagi-bahagikan demikian, hanya satu pembahagian yang dibuat-buat sahaja. Misalnya, pepatah asalnya daripada

pepatah, yakni mematahkan bicara orang. Bidal dan peribahasa pun dapat juga dipakai untuk mematahkan bicara orang (1969, 156; bold added)

(Actually there are no differences between *bidalan* (maxims, guides, metaphors), *pepatah*, *petitih* (sayings alluding to social customs), *tamsil* (comparison, similes) and *perumpamaan* (proverbs). If anyone tries to classify them into such categories, they are only an artificial division. For example, ***pepatah* (sayings) originated from the word, *pepatah*, which means to refute other people argument. Maxims and *peribahasa* (proverbs) could also be used to refute other people argument.**)

Gazali Dunia (1969) seemed to contradict his earlier work, which was written in 1959. Perhaps it was a shift in his stand on the origin of the word “*pepatah*.” In his earlier version, he had denied that *pepatah* was derived from the word “*patah*” when he wrote:

Pepatah bukanlah berasal dari kata: patah, jang di-pakai untuk mematahkan (mengalahkan) pembijaraan orang lain, tidak! Pepatah adalah satu kata jang mengandung kias-ibarat utjapan tak langsung, terhadap pihak kedua. Jang disentuh oleh pepatah, ialah pikiran, perasaan seseorang. Seseorang jang punja perasaan atau pikiran dapat memahami makna pepatah, sekurang-kurangnya dapat mendorong pikiran untuk memahami makna pepatah tersebut (1959, 14; Bold added).

(Pepatah did not come from the word: patah, which was used to refute (to knock down) other speeches, no! Pepatah is a word that contains indirect analogical expression against the second party. What is touched by the pepatah is one’s thoughts and feelings. One who has feeling and thinking can understand the meaning of pepatah, at least to motivate his/her mind to understand the meaning of the proverb. (Cf. Bold parts of this quotation with bold parts of the previous quotation).)

The debate on the origin of the word “*pepatah*” will continue and keep going without agreement.⁶⁸ But one thing for sure where there is agreement is that proverbs can be used to support or refute one’s arguments, and this for sure, will very much depend on the argumentative acuity of an arguer.

Sources of Data

The main sources of Malay proverbs in this research are: (1) *Tikaman Bahasa* (Mohd. Adnan Mohd. Ariffin 1992, 2249 *peribahasas* in this collection which will be written as TB when cited), (2) *The MBRAS Book of Over 1,600 Malay Proverbs: with Explanations in English* (Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society [MBRAS] 1992; will be cited as MBRAS) (3) *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu* (Abdullah Hussain 1991; will be cited as KIPM, contains of 4359 *peribahasas*) and (4) *Peribahasa*

(Pamuntjak, Iskandar and Madjoindo 1961, consists of 3017 *peribahasas*, and will be cited as PB when quoted). The first title is chosen because it is the first compilation by a Malay, as most of the previous compilations were done by Western scholars. On the other hand, the second source is preferred as the proverbs involved were in many cases written down for the first time by pioneering British civil servants, such as Hugh Clifford, William Maxwell and inside the dictionary of R. J. Wilkinson (1932). The third title is selected as it was recognised as the most complete title of Malay *peribahasa* collection published in Malaysia.⁶⁹ Finally, the fourth title is picked as it is one of the complete collections to represent the Malay proverbs and/or *peribahasa Nusantara* that is compiled in Indonesia from various ethnic groups but has become part of the Malay proverbial wisdom like those from Palembang, Makassar, Minangkabau⁷⁰, Bengkulu and Betawi. *Peribahasa* which is quoted will be cited according to the title-page-number system, for example, *air pun ada pasang surut* (TB 107: 911) 'Even water has its high and low tides' (MBRAS 23: 143), *mulut manis mematahkan tulang* 'Gentle words lead to bones being broken' (MBRAS 152: 168), *akal akar berpulas tak patah* 'The cunning of the creeper' (KIPM 6: 104) and *Sebab budi boleh kedapatan* (PB 86: 523) 'By means of kindness profit accrues to us' (MBRAS 194: 65). The proverbs will also be taken from *Malay Sayings* (Brown 1951), especially for the translation, which will be cited as MS, and then followed by the page. Apart from the translation that comes handy, this collection is chosen as various proverbs from different literary sources, viz. *Hikayat Abdullah*, *Sejarah Melayu* were included. Besides the above mentioned collections, certain selected proverbs are also taken from *Mestika Bahasa* (Mohd. Yusof Mustafa 1965, to be cited as MB when quoted), *Kamus Dewan* (1986, 1989) and *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991) when appropriate. For the references and discussion on *simpulan bahasa*, *Kamus Simpulan Bahasa* (Abdullah Hussain 1966) will be used. All these proverb collections do not claim to be exclusive, but will at least be able to act as a corpus for my investigation in order to see the Malay mind. According to Hassan Ahmad (2001a, 10): "*Daripada korpus ini kita dapat melihat akal budi Melayu, pandangan hidup mereka, nilai sosial mereka, epistemologi mereka, dan sebagainya* (From this corpus, we can see the Malay *akal budi*, their worldview, social values, epistemology, etc.)."

Organisation of the Study

This research will be divided into six chapters: Chapter 1: Introduction, where the author lays down the objectives of the study, statements of the problems, definitions of terms, method of study, and review of the literature. In chapter 2, the author gives a general overview of the Malay worldview, their classification of proverbs and the uses of *peribahasa*. Explanation of certain key terminology (i.e. *hati* and *budi*) and the theoretical framework of this research will be elaborated in Chapter 3. The analysis of proverbs will then be

presented in Chapter 4, where logical proverbial patterns of reasoning in *peribahasa* and various types of arguments will be discussed. Chapter 5 will touch on the extra-logical elements (i.e. emotion) in *peribahasa*. Finally, in the concluding Chapter 6, the findings of this research will be presented with argumentation and will include suggestions of further study.

Conclusion

From the literature reviewed, it is clear that much work is needed in order to make the Malay proverbs known to the international paremiologists. It will be rather unfortunate if the Malay proverbs are left unattended when the Malay language is one of the important languages of South East Asian countries with a total of more than 200 million speakers. It is also rather unfortunate for us to ignore the importance of this language, which had been successfully used in carrying out the task of spreading the message of four religions, viz., Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. More work need to be done to unravel the mind of the Malay through their proverbs. To end this chapter, the words of Winston Churchill are perhaps relevant: “This is not the end, and not even the beginning of the end. It is perhaps the end of the beginning.” Only with that can we as paremiologists at least give the Malay proverbs “A Full Hearing” as Sweeney (1987) might have phrased it. To me, despite his first pessimistic statement in the first paragraph of his introduction to *Malaiische Erzählungen* (1925), which I cited at the beginning of my literature review, it should not be forgotten that Overbeck in the introduction of the same work (the first sentence of the second paragraph) also wrote a positive sentence: “*Noch ist Hoffnung* (Yet there is hope).” Hopefully this will bring us to shiny days in the study of Malay proverbs! With this hope, let us proceed to chapter two to understand the Malay worldview and how this worldview was presented in their proverbs before venturing into the realm of thought and emotions of the Malay folks in the following chapters. It is hoped that this study will pave the way for further discussions towards a more systematic analysis of the traditional Malay mind, their proverbial logic and their theory of argumentation.

Notes:

¹ The historical details of Western philosophy, see Copleston (1961, Vol. I-IX), Russell (1945) and Zhao Dunhua (2001). For more details on the development of western logic, see Kneale and Kneale (1962). To know the whole history of logic, including logic in non-European cultures, see Dumitriu (1991).

² The word “Oriental” here refers to the non-West and non-Christian tradition. It is actually difficult and problematic to divide the world into East and West or between Oriental and Occidental. I use the term here in a very conscious manner for the convenience of my discussion. I will explain when confusion occurs.

³ *Nyaya*, “Logic”, the Realist school prominent throughout the classical period, combined with *Vaisesika* in the later centuries; focused on issues in epistemology but took positions on a wide range of philosophic topics; proponents are called *Naiyayikas* (Phillips 1993, 259). *Sutra*, literally “thread”; a philosophic aphorism (Phillips 1993, 262). For the discussion on the brief history of Indian philosophical tradition, see Phillips (1993). To see the character of logic in India, see Matilal (1998).

⁴ A very brief discussion on Gong Sunlong’s linguistic logic, see Lim (1997a). For an in-depth study of the Chinese language and logic, see Halbsmeier (1991) and Halbsmeier (1998). In Halbsmeier (1998), the author gives a special emphasis on the conceptual history of logical terminology in ancient China and an overview of the development of logical reflection in ancient China in terms of the forms of arguments that were deployed in ancient Chinese texts and their theoretical concerns with logical matters. In order to have a better understanding on the Chinese mind, see Allinson (1991a, 1991b). See also Hongladarom (n.d.) for his discussion on the emergence of Indian and Chinese logic. For a discussion on a critical comparison of Indian, Chinese, Islamic and European modes of argument, see Daor (1978). Tan Yuquan (1988) agrees up to a certain extent that there is a logical tradition in China, but he claims that logical tradition of Moism and School of Names were not dominant as compared with Confucianism and Daoism. To him, the backwardness of the Chinese in science was due to their lack of logical reasoning application.

⁵ By Malay world in this research I mean a Malay speaking world (See Hassan Ahmad 2001a). The studies of pure philosophy in the context of Malay world are hardly obtainable. Efforts that can be mentioned so far are the works of Finngeir Hiorth (1987). Hiorth’s analysis of a few classical texts (e.g. *Jnanasiddhanta*, *Sutasoma*) is interesting to be mentioned, but limited to the Hindu-Buddhist philosophy within Javanese-Balinese context and not the indigenous view of the Malays as suggested from their folklore (i.e. *peribahasa*). Hiorth’s other work which is relevant to the study of philosophy in the Malay world is *Philosophers in Indonesia* (South East Asian Monograph Series, No. 12, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia, 97 pp., 1983).

⁶ No philosophy of the Malays or Melanesians is included. The philosophy of Melanesians, however, is discussed in Mercado (1994). Biderman and Scharfstein’s (1989) compilation of Eastern and Western views of rationality also do not include the perspectives of the Malays and Melanesians.

⁷ For whatever reason it might have been, it is abundantly clear that discussion on the ways of thinking of the Malays (as Eastern peoples) or so-called the Malay mind, has never become the centre of attention for most of the scholars; and works on their logical thought, as far as I know, none. Perhaps one work that can be quoted that discussed the Malay language and their thinking is Asmah (1988). There is also a general exploration of the Malay thinking trait in their socio-economic and political life to confront the challenges of the twentieth century (Mohamad Abu Bakar 1999). I have tried to focus on the Malay mind, especially from the perspective of Informal Logic through their *peribahasas* in Lim (1998), but feel that the discussion should be deeper and requires more insight and contemplation.

⁸ It is really an irony indeed if we are to turn over the coin. It was said that actually through Palembang, Sumatra that the Buddhism mind training programme was spread to Tibet as Atisha, the pioneer of Buddhism in Tibet was previously studying in Sumatra. Even I-Ching had to come over to Sumatra to learn about the teaching of Buddha.

⁹ Other thinking, like aesthetics and metaphysics will not become my focus; it will only be touched upon when necessary.

¹⁰ This is not to deny totally the contribution of scholars of emotion in the West, especially the contribution of William James. Lately, the study of emotion has attracted the interest of philosophers and psychologists. See e.g. Calhoun and Solomon (1984).

¹¹ There are various objections to Aristotle’s conception of rationality, viz. feminism, Hegel, Chinese philosophy etc. in Kessler (1992). In this section, however, I will only look at the use of argument in Chinese philosophy to portray a contrast between the West and the East.

¹² Edward de Bono's works on thinking are just too many to be cited. See e.g. *I Am Right You Are Wrong: From Rock Logic to Water Logic* (Viking, 1990). However, due to the problem of having no academic references (i.e. footnotes), he was criticised, for example, by John McPeck in *Critical Thinking and Education* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1981).

¹³ Blair and Johnson (1980) cited Toulmin (1958), Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969, first published 1958 in French) and Hamblin (1970), as three grounding works for the emergence of Informal Logic. For the development of informal logic, see also Johnson and Blair (1980), Blair and Johnson (1987), Johnson (1996) and Groarke (1998).

¹⁴ Howard Gardner challenges the traditional conception of intelligence, which according to him is rather too logical, mathematical and linguistically oriented. He criticises the monolithic logical-mathematical intelligence that shapes the western civilisation. In his *Frames of Mind* (1993, first published in 1985), he proposes the idea on Multiple Intelligence (MI), that there should be at least seven types of intelligence, viz. Verbal/ linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, visual/ spatial intelligence, intra-personal intelligence and interpersonal intelligence. Later he adds-in another type of intelligence, viz. naturalist intelligence.

¹⁵ The term "Emotional Intelligence" (commonly known as EQ, as contrasted with IQ) was first coined by Peter Salovey and J. D. Mayer. This term was later popularised by Daniel P. Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence* (Bantam Books, 1995).

¹⁶ For Sternberg (1997), the success of a person in life is not only based on the logical abilities or what he called as analytical intelligence, but also practical and creative intelligence. He calls the three as successful intelligence. In his book *Successful Intelligence: How Practical and Creative Intelligence Determine Success in Life*, he stresses on the importance of successful intelligence over EQ and IQ.

¹⁷ Hiorth (1987, 99) even argues that he has not found any proof of interest in Islamic philosophy in Indonesia or Malaysia before 1950, with the exception of the booklet *Sejarah failasuf Islam* by Yusuf Ahmad Lubis (Sungai Patani 1936, 81 pp.), and this according to him, seems likely to indicate that there has been such interest, but the evidence is lacking. He has also pointed out (in Hiorth 1983: 6 – see bibliographical details in note 5) that until our century the philosophical elements of Sufism seem to have been the only form of philosophy among the Indonesian Muslims. For some aspects of Sufism as understood and practised among the Malays, see Syed Naguib al-Attas (1963). For an analysis on pure scientific research, focusing on astronomy, geophysics and physics in the Dutch East Indies, viz. Java during the ninetieth and twentieth centuries, see Pyenson (1989).

¹⁸ Mohamad Radzi Mustafa (2001), however, does not agree with Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas. According to Mohamad Radzi, even myths and pseudo-scientific are logic and rational in that particular context. It was only due to the clash of civilisation that certain thinking was considered as unable to explain this nature, and as such it was considered as irrational and unscientific.

¹⁹ There are of course various possibilities as to why indigenous thinking-related words (e.g. *akal*, *fikir*) were borrowed from Arabic through Islam. But one of those possibilities perhaps was due to the Malay sense of *hina diri*, where languages from the Islamic world or from the West are always considered as more accurate and precise. This attitude has forced the indigenous words to die. The word *tetuang udara*, for example, which means radio, is not known at all to most of the youngsters now.

²⁰ The word "*budi*" originated from the Sanskrit word, *Buddhi* which means wisdom, understanding or intellect. It has always been translated into English as courtesy or kindness. This word however is rather ambiguous and represents some kinds of mixture between ethics, feelings and intellect in practice. I will discuss the pivotal role of "*budi*" in the Malay ways of argumentation dialectically and rhetorically.

²¹ "*Hati*" literally means liver, a human organ. But it has always been translated into "heart" in English. In *peribahasa* (especially *simpulan bahasa*), it carries the concept(s) of feeling and/or mind.

²² However, I do not think that we can resolve all the philosophical problems between particularity and universality of logical thought in this single research. Are logical thought and critical thinking something universal or culturally biased? I personally believe that generally we share quite a certain amount of the same logical patterns across cultures, just like we share a rather universal linguistic pattern despite the differences of languages we use. For those who are interested in various arguments on particularity and universality of argument quality, see Siegel (1999) and also R. H. Ennis. 1998. Is critical thinking culturally biased? (*Teaching Philosophy* 21, pp. 15-33).

²³ The difficulty of getting a proper translation in English for the German word, *Angst* made certain scholars reluctant to translate it but chose to use the word "*Angst*" as it is. See Marks and Ames (1995, 256). For a case study of emotion in culture from the perspective of German "*Angst*", see Wierzbicka (1999, Chapter 3).

²⁴ In this definition, proverb is to be treated generally as *peribahasa* in Malay. But it will be unwise and inappropriate to claim that proverb is *peribahasa* and *peribahasa* is proverb due to the differences of cultural interpretation on the concept of genre among folklorists within different traditions. Dundes (1972) raises the above issue when he questioned: “Are genres cross-cultural or not? Is what American folklorists consider the genre label “proverb” the same as what a German folklorist calls a *Spruchwort* or what a Japanese folklorist calls *kotowaza*?” (p. 94).

²⁵ For various attempts to define proverbs, see Charteris-Black (1995, 260-261) and Harnish (1993, p. 265 ff). Harnish (1993) also attempted to distinguish the differences between idiom, metaphor, saying and proverb.

²⁶ *Simpulan bahasa* is a term normally known in Malaysia. It is normally known as *ungkapan* in Indonesia and *perambahan* in Brunei.

²⁷ Dundes’s definition that proverbs must at least contain two words and Sabaruddin’s idea that there are certain proverbs (read: idiom) which contain only one word might be due to the way how proverbs have been classified and the problem of whether genres are cross-cultural. Sabaruddin (1954) includes the Malay idiom (*simpulan bahasa*, *kiasan* or *ungkapan*) as part of his corpus of Malay proverbs. For more example of one word Malay idiom (e.g. *bujang* [servant], *bumiputera* [the son of the soil]), see Abdullah Hussain (1966). See supra, note 24.

²⁸ As far as I know, there has been no serious work so far, which convincingly differentiated between the characteristics of one category of *peribahasa* and the other categories of *peribahasa* (e.g. what is the difference between *pepatah* and *perumpamaan*). Cf. Sweeney (1987, 290). *Peribahasa* as generic term for *bidalan*, *pepatah*, *perumpamaan*, *perbilangan*, *simpulan bahasa* and *ungkapan* have various responses. Some agree that *ungkapan* and *simpulan bahasa* should fall into the same category, but there are others who tend to oppose (See Daniel Jebon Janaun 2001, 27; Tan Chin Kwang 1981, 5).

²⁹ Those works that could be mentioned are relatively many. See for example: Taylor (1996a); Mieder (1995a, 1995b and 1995g).

³⁰ For selected essays on proverbs studies from different perspectives, see e.g. Mieder and Dundes (1981).

³¹ This paper was originally presented in Professor Roger Janelli’s seminar on Folklore and Cultural Anthropology at Indiana University in 1982.

³² If we look at the proverb collections, we are certain to observe that there are contradictions between proverbs without context. For a discussion on a few examples of contradictory proverbs in German, see Gabriel (2000, 190-191).

³³ The informal logic movement was only official launched after a symposium in University of Windsor, Canada between 26-28 June 1978, and a book published after this symposium only appeared by the title *Informal Logic: The First International Symposium* in 1980 (See Blair and Johnson 1980).

³⁴ For the “state of art” of the psychology of proverbs, see Honeck *et al.* 1980.

³⁵ The real proverbs test can be obtained from Gorham, D. R. (1956a). *Proverbs Test* (Clinical forms I, II, and III. Test Answer Form Manual, Clinical Manual). Louisville, KY: Psychological Test Specialists. See also Gorham, D. R. (1956b). A proverbs test for clinical and experimental use. See *Psychological Reports*, 1: 1-12.

³⁶ Hans Overbeck, *Malaiische Erzählungen* (Jena, Diederichs, 1925).

³⁷ Those limited titles are listed under Malayan proverb (see Mieder 1990, item no. 2708) and Malay proverb (see Mieder 1993a, item no. 4352).

³⁸ Hamilton, A. W. *Malay Proverbs. Bidal Melayu*. Singapore; Donald Moore, Eastern Universities Press Ltd. 1971 (1st ed. 1937); Atan, H. A. *Malay Proverbs with Translations and Explanations*. Singapore: Qayam, (1962); Izhab, Ismail. *Malay Proverbs-Sayings and pantuns of Old. With Translations and Explanations in English*. (2nd Ed.) Penang: Sinaran Bros, (1962?) (Cited in Paczolay 1993, 275- 276).

³⁹ This was an observation prior to the year 2000. However, there are exceptions lately. Two articles on proverbs in the Malay-Indonesia world have been published in *Proverbium*, viz. Fanany and Fanany (2000) and Lim Kim Hui (2001).

⁴⁰ He reviews the collection of Malay proverbs under a sub-topic “Proverbs, Sayings, *Pantuns* (Quatrain) etc).”

⁴¹ This review is rather preliminary and not to be treated as exhaustive. The thorough literature review should be up-dated from time to time.

⁴² For a collection of Malay *pantun*, see Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (1990).

⁴³ I do not connote that *pantun* is unimportant but the trend that exists among research circles seems to give us an impression that we can only go into the Malay mind via *pantun*. No doubt *pantun* is seen as a unique literary genre and genuine constitution of Malay literature to “world literature” as *Haiku* to the Japanese; whereas proverb is elsewhere present. But should we not think that it is more suitable to trace the logical mind through reasoned-

language like *peribahasa* than other genres? Furthermore, even proverbs can be obtained everywhere. Hence, we should not be deceived by our parochial outlook on the way we see the concept of genre, as Dundes (1972: 94) has asked: “Are genres cross-cultural or not?”

⁴⁴ Raffel’s idea seems in accord with that of Sabaruddin Ahmad (1954, 8) who says that: “*akhirnja dari bentuk peribahasa jang bersahadja tetapi indah itu dibentuk oranglah puisi jang berbait2, ada kalanja berbentuk karmina, ada kalanja berupa pantun atau gurindam* (at last from the plain and beautiful form of proverbs, people has constructed poem in verses, sometimes in the form of *karmina*, *pantun* or *gurindam*).”

⁴⁵ *Pantun* here could have the meaning of a simile. Cf. Brown (1959, 95).

⁴⁶ Those two works mentioned by Teeuw (1961) were (i) Klinkert, H. C. 1866. *Eenige ophelderingen omtrent de Maleische spreekwoorden en spreekwijzen*. *BKI* 3. 1, p. 51-87; cp. P. 495 and Van der Tuuk, Gids 1866, p. 174 sqq. And (ii) Klinkert, H. C. 1869. *Vervolg op de Maleische Spreekwoorden benevens eenige Maleische raadsels en kinderspelen*. *BKI* 3. 4, p. 24-66.

⁴⁷ Kelantan is a state in Malaysia, situated at the North Eastern part of the Malay Peninsulas, bordering with Southern Thailand.

⁴⁸ For a discussion on collections of Malay sayings, see Tan Chin Kwang (1981, 8-12).

⁴⁹ There is a second edition printed in 1990 which I only discovered later. This new edition includes also *simpulan bahasa* Brunei, which is normally known as *perambahan*. This however does not really alter the findings of my analysis as there is also more than 200 *hati*-related *simpulan bahasa* in the new collection. For a very brief review of this new edition, see Nursurya Amien (2002).

⁵⁰ For those who would like to know more about the title of the other collections of Malay proverbs, they are advised to refer to *Lontar Web – Malay Studies Web Site* (<http://lontarweb.umlib.um.edu.my>) of University Malaya Library and also Library of the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology (KITLV), the Netherlands website: (<http://ijas.leidenuniv.nl:80/institutes/kitlv/bibliot.html>). There is also an interesting website that can be referred to under the title *Kamus Peribahasa Melayu Digital* published by The Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA); see (<http://www.atma.ukm.my/peribahasa/index.html>).

⁵¹ No article could be obtained prior to 1950.

⁵² No article was published on Malay proverbs in *Indonesia and the Malay World* (1979-2000, Vol. 18-81). Prior to 1997 (Vol. 71), it was known as *Indonesia Circle*.

⁵³ There were only a few articles in the form of Malay proverbs collections published but all were very old. There were Maxwell (1878a, 1878b, 1879, 1883), Clifford (1891, Vol. 24) and Humphreys (1914). JSBRAS was later to be published as JMBRAS and no article on interpretative proverb scholarship was noticed.

⁵⁴ No article was published on Malay proverbs.

⁵⁵ A bird-eye’s view into the journal, *Indonesia* from 1966 till April 2000 (Vol. 1-69) did not reveal any positive results about Malay proverb scholarship.

⁵⁶ Various themes had been touched in these short articles: *peribahasa* and custom (Nik Safiah Karim 1995), the Malay mind in *perumpamaan* (Nik Safiah Karim 1999a), elements of animals in *simpulan bahasa* (Nik Safiah Karim 1999b) and flora and fauna in *simpulan bahasa*, see Nik Safiah Karim (2000).

⁵⁷ For reasons why proverbs are generally never out of season, see Mieder (1993b). For the Malay context, see Chapter 2 of this research under the section, “The Uses of *Peribahasa*.”

⁵⁸ For a comparative Malay-Chinese proverbs, see Saidatul Nornis Haji Mahali 2001 and Tan Lai Chan 2000.

⁵⁹ See also Sahlan Mohd. Saman (1981) for the comparison of Malay-Philippine proverbs.

⁶⁰ *Mingguan Malaysia* is the Sunday edition of *Utusan Malaysia*.

⁶¹ His ideas and comments on politics might be seen as supporting UMNO but this should not be reason to totally ignore his contribution in popularising the Malay proverbs among readers.

⁶² I am quite aware that human beings are well integrated systems and any effort to separate the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual is rather artificial. Therefore, my separation of logical principles as the realm of the mind and emotional patterns as the realm of the heart is merely for the purposes of analysis. However, the overall analysis is tightened by an integrated system.

⁶³ The meaning of logic in *pepatah* as mentioned by Sabaruddin Ahmad (1954) is also referred to as reality and not “*hal jang gandjil atau jang takkan mungkin terdjadi* (things which are strange and impossible to be materialised)” (p. 13).

⁶⁴ This research is neither a thematic study nor purely a content analysis. Certain analyses and statistical figures obtained, however, were chosen and analysed conveniently or by purpose in order to pose a trend-cluster (for e.g.

why the word “*air*” is more frequent than other words) on certain keywords within the Malay proverbs, like various types of animals, *air*, *padi*, *hati* etc (See especially chapters 5 & 6).

⁶⁵ In choosing *garuda* as the symbol of my explanation, I have thought of the bird in the official seal of Indonesia, but when I browsed through Malay literature, *jentayu* seems to be more appealing and positive to the Malays. However, the choice of *garuda* or *jentayu* in this section is only something symbolic and interpretative, which carries no serious substantive understanding.

⁶⁶ *Enthymemes* are a kind of syllogism with unstated premise or conclusion.

⁶⁷ According to Sabaruddin Ahmad (1954, 12-14), linguists actually hold different viewpoints on the origin of the word “*pepatah*”; some claim that *pepatah* is a kind of *peribahasa*, which tends to be used as a tool to refute other people’s argument, whereas others claim that the word “*pepatah*” originated from the word “*patah*” in Kawi language, where the word “*patah*” was taken from the word: *pa* + *atah*, which means “*pe-njuruh*” or “*perintah*” (command). For other arguments on why “*pepatah*” does not originate from “*patah-patah*”, but “*perintah*”, see Mudakir (1953). Despite all those etymological disputes, one should, however, agree that *peribahasas* can be used to refute other people’s argument.

⁶⁸ See *supra*, foot-note 67.

⁶⁹ Asmah Haji Omar (cited by Sujak Rahiman in the first edition preface of *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu*) quoted her as saying that this proverbs dictionary “... *adalah kamus peribahasa yang lebih lengkap daripada kamus-kamus peribahasa lain yang terdapat dalam bahasa Melayu dan Indonesia*” (more complete than any other dictionaries, which can be obtained in the Malay or Indonesian language) (Abdullah Hussain 1991, v).

⁷⁰ For those who want to know more specifically about Minangkabau proverbs, see Anas Nafis (1996).

CHAPTER 2

THE MALAYS AND THEIR PROVERBS: WORLDVIEW AND CLASSIFICATIONS

The real Malay is a short, thick set, well-built man, with straight black hair, a dark brown complexion, thick nose and lips, and bright intelligent eyes. His disposition is generally kindly, his manners are polite and easy. Never cringing, he is reserved with strangers and suspicious, though he does not show it.... *He is a good talker, speaks in parables, quotes proverbs and wise saws, has a strong sense of humour, and is very fond of a good joke.* He takes an interest in the affairs of his neighbours and is consequently a gossip. He is a Muhammadan and a fatalist but he is also very superstitious (Swettenham 1900, 2-3; italics added).

Introduction

The Malay people are known to be gentle. It was told that even if they engage in a disagreement or they dislike certain ideas, they will choose the most polite diction or proverbial saying in conveying their thoughts so that the hearer would not get hurt. They prefer *bahasa kiasan* (similes and allegories), which sounds like *pukul anak sindir menantu* ‘beating the daughter to vex the daughter-in-law.’ Swettenham (1900) once described the Malay as “good talker, speaks in parables, quotes proverbs and wise saws” (p. 2). Their language is renowned for its beauty and sweet melody. It was composed in *Devanagiri*, *Pallava*, Sanskrit, Arabic or *Jawi* before taking on its present Latin characters. This seemingly old language, before having its written form, began at one time as nothing but oral tradition. One of the Malay oral cultures which confirms the beauty and rhythmic nature of the language is proverbs or *peribahasa* which is sometimes also known as “*perkataan orang tua-tua* (the words of the elder)” (Mohd. Yusof Mustafa 1965, v). The other is their quatrains or *pantun*. Every nation possesses its own collections of proverbs – the Malays being no exception – which have been accumulated over the past centuries and have become their diamonds of thought. Their first appearance in literary form is often an adaptation of an oral saying. The Malay proverbs have always been considered as the work of society and therefore no individual author or sources of texts can be found. The study of folklore in the twentieth century has brought renewed interest in the proverb as a reflection of folk culture, and Malay proverbs should not be left behind. In this chapter, I would like to discuss the worldview of the Malays and how this worldview had been presented in their proverbs; what functions proverbs play in their early history and in this new millennium; how these proverbial phrases had been categorised – in which styles or forms; and what content that really dominated the Malay thinking behind their *peribahasa*.

Malays and Their Worldview

The worldview and civilisation of the Malays had gone through various stages of beliefs: from the primitive understanding of animism to Hinduism, from Buddhist thought and religion to the establishment of the idea of monotheism, through the acceptance of the concept of Allah in Islamic tradition. All these differences have, either directly or indirectly, influenced how they perceive the creation of the world, natural phenomena, creation of man, issues on mind and body or the concept of the soul today. It is not that easy to really separate between what is the worldview of the Malays and what kind of influences were introduced by the other traditions. To add salt to the wound of this problem is that their tradition was entirely oral. Oral traditions easily die out when overwhelmed by colonial conquerors or external influences. In order to reduce the possibility of being influenced, the closer solution will be using the folkloristic approach and examining their early belief.

Winstedt apparently had a very clear-cut idea of the cultural development of the Malay people as expressed in the title of his book: *The Malay Magician Being Shaman, Saiva and Sufi* (1982). In Winstedt's mind the Malay people had passed through three distinctive phases in their cultural history: the primitive stage symbolised by the Shaman, the Hinduistic stage symbolised by *Saiva* and the Islamic stage symbolised by the Sufi. Ismail Hussein (1966), however, commented on Winstedt's method of strictly compartmentalisation, which to him was partly true but also dangerous as it would compel one to look at the whole development as problems of clear borrowing and adaptation, and in many cases to emphasise this borrowing and adaptation at the expense of admitting the obvious creative ingenuity of the native people (p. 12).

Putting aside his concentration on borrowing and adaptation, Winstedt (1982) was doing an interesting cultural generalisation. He was creative rhetorically in dividing the development of the Malay mind by playing with words that start with "S". It is true that the Malays had gone through three stages of religious experiences (animism, Hinduism and Islam), which had later "enriched and influenced"¹ their metaphysical thinking. Nevertheless, the arrival of Western colonisation did play a significant role as well on how the Malays perceive themselves and their surrounding. Although the authority of "Saint" did not really impart Christian orthodoxy into the development of Malay magic and their metaphysical thinking, ironically the social hierarchy of Sir vs. Servant mentality had pushed the Malays into a state of self-denigration with no confidence, which later altered their mindset and conceptual worldview of *rendah diri* into *hina-diri*, after more than 500 years of cultural camouflage.

I do not purely reject Winstedt's conception of the three-stage Malay worldview but think that it will be more complete if Western elements can also be included to better facilitate the whole spectrum of Malay cultural developmental history. My research here however is rather focused and closer to the

early stage² of development of the native Malay mind (without totally rejecting the possibility of any influences). I will set my discussion and construction of the Malay worldview through my own observation, interpretation and data from their folk tales and folk dramas.³ Perhaps this approach will also indirectly respond to Ismail Hussein's (1966) call for a study of the creative ingenuity of the native people.

The word "worldview" is rather broad indeed and can be approached from various dimensions. It is believed that the worldview of an ethnic group can be traced from their folklore too. Many folklorists have attempted to explore this issue (e.g. Dundes 1972, Kuusi 1957). A close look at the Malay worldview from their folkloristic approach, to my knowledge, was undertaken by Md. Salleh Yaspas (1985), who defined "worldview" study as "an attempt to study how a group of people view themselves, their society, nature and the supernatural" (p. 254). Md. Salleh Yaspas's (1985) approach seems closer to what Dundes (1972) had called "folk ideas"⁴ as units of Malay worldview. It is not possible to deal exhaustively with the Malay worldview according to what has been defined in this limited section. As such, only those which are salient and basic to this study will be discussed here. Those salient features are the relationship between human and society (i.e. the creation and origin of human, the concept of human nature such as mind-body relationship), between human and nature (i.e. the concept of *semangat* [spirit/soul]) and between human and the supernatural (i.e. *tuhan*, *hantu*).⁵ I will generally discuss these features in toto and not under separate sections as they are inter-related. I shall also propose my own conception of the Malay *semangat*, its relationship between *semangat*, self (i.e. *atma*, *sukma*), nature and supernatural so as to see how the interplay between these various aspects had been developed into the conception of Malay mind, *budi* and its networks.

The Malays have their own cosmological and metaphysical interpretations of how and of what element a person had been created. Generally, they believe that a human consists of body and mind. According to their cosmology, the Malays believe that humans were created through the combination of four basic elements: *tanah* (earth), *api* (fire), *air* (water) and *angin* (wind). Anatomically, each of these four elements was supposed to represent each organ of the human body respectively, viz. *Almak* (sic?), *hempedu* (gall), *paru-paru* (lung) and *hati* (liver) (A. Samad Ahmad 1988, 12-13). These organs are the physical parts of a human that we call "body." A human's body will perished when he or she passes away, but not his "mind."⁶ "Mind" in the context of Malay metaphysics consists of non-material entities (as contrasted with bodily brain, *otak*) like thinking, feeling, *nyawa* (life), *semangat* (spirit/soul) and what have been left behind (i.e. ideas of good and bad, *budi*^{kindness, virtue, good deed}, *badi*). Out of these various components, *semangat* (soul) is the most dominant and well-discussed topic (see Skeat 1900; Endicott 1970). In this universe, the Malays believe that it is not only human and animals that are animate, that is, having *semangat* (spirit or soul) and powers, but plants and other objects also share these attributes. Consistent with Skeat (1900), the root idea of the Malays seems to be "an all-

pervading Animism, involving a certain common vital principle (*semangat*) in Man and Nature, which for want of a more suitable word, has been here called the Soul” (p. 579). From this perspective, the Malays are not alone. African and American Indian tribal societies typically embrace animism – the belief that entities throughout nature are endowed with souls, often thought to be souls of ancestors. They believe that we have ecological responsibilities; the world around us, “nature,” is not just a resource or a source of aesthetic or scientific fascination, but as a whole, we are nature. Since nature (i.e. objects, animals and plants) do possess the *semangat* as well, it is therefore our responsibility as humans to respect them as well, and its existence in the Malay worldview has always been well represented in *peribahasa*, in which their characters were used metaphorically as having human characters. Generally, there are two types of spirits: *semangat baik* (good spirit) and *semangat jahat* (bad spirit) from which good and bad values originated. The Malays, for example, believe that paddy has a good spirit and therefore *semangat padi* (the soul of paddy) must be respected (Ismail Hamid 1991) but not the monitor lizard (*biawak*).

The most obvious example of anthropomorphism in this context is the existence of *semangat padi*. As mentioned by Frazer (1922, 412), “if Europe has its Wheat-mother and its Barley-mother, America has its Maize-mother and the East Indies their rice-mother.” Taking the Malays and Dyaks as representing the East Indies, he commented on what he has termed “the soul of a plant”:

Now the whole of the ritual which the Malays and Dyaks observe in connexion (sic) with the rice is founded on the simple conception of the rice as animated by a soul like that which these people attribute to mankind. They explain the phenomena of reproduction, growth, decay, and death in the rice on the same principles on which they explain the corresponding phenomena in human beings (Frazer 1922, 413-414).

Asmah Haji Omar (1985) further elucidated the importance of this spirit. According to her:

The *padi* plant is treated with more “reverence” than any other plant. The *padi*, inclusive of the grains, is said to have a soul or *semangat* which has to be “cared for” all the time. Any crudity in the handling of the *padi* plants or grains may drive the *semangat* away. This explains the succession of rituals that the *padi* farmer has to conduct and taboos that he has to observe from the moment the seeds are sown to the time the *padi* grains are stored away (p. 232).

This philosophical conception of the good spirit of paddy, I believe, was probably later developed into the philosophical notion of *budi* as can be observed through a few proverbs that commend the knowledgeable person who imitates the culture of paddy, “*semakin berisi semakin tunduk*”, the more knowledgeable you are, the more humble (*rendah diri*) you become; the more *rendah diri* you are, the more *berbudi*^{intelligence} you become. Those proverbs are, for example, *Baik membawa resmi padi, daripada membawa resmi lalang* ‘It is better to follow the nature of paddy than the nature of *lalang*

[tall grass]' (KIPM 28: 527); *Bawa resmi padi, makin berisi makin tunduk* 'Follow the nature of paddy, the more it possesses the more it will bow' (KIPM 31: 600) and *Ilmu padi, makin berisi makin rendah* 'Like an ear of corn which the fuller it is of grain, the lower it bends' (KIPM 88: 1618; MBRAS 41: 131) (See also Chapter 6).

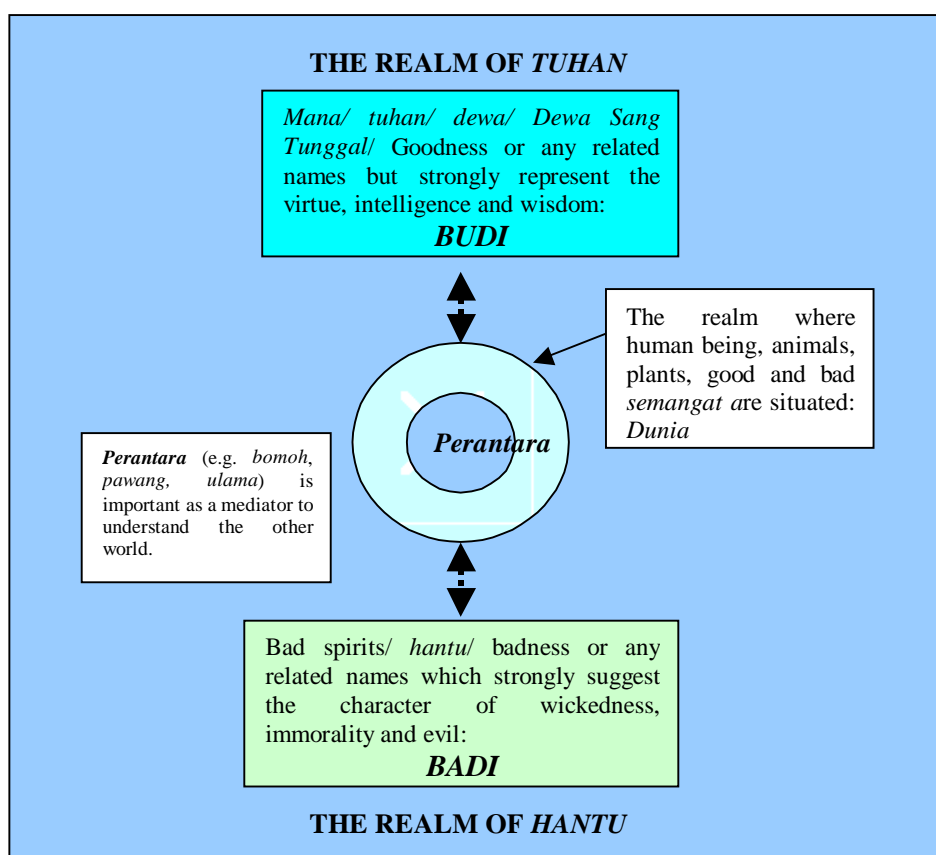
In spite of all the religions mentioned above, the Malays generally believe that any event that occurred was directly or indirectly related to two mutually opposing good and bad *semangat*. This conception of good and bad *semangat* was used later to explain how the Malays perceive the idea of causal relationship of what had happened, is happening and will happen. For example, when someone is sick, it is believed that the cause of his/her illness is due to bad spirit, *hantu*, *jin*, *jembalang* etc. (or because his or her *semangat* has been driven away), and hence, this *semangat* should be recovered again if he or she wants to recover from the illness. According to Wan Abdul Kadir (1993a, 55), there are not so many differences in terms of the framework of thought between the previous society and the modern one in shaping their worldview. The tendency to search for a cause and effect relationship is something which is formed within the brain, and with this framework of thought, humans have used it from time to time in advancing their knowledge. The search for the causal relationship between certain phenomena and events has existed since the very beginning between human and nature. To Abdul Kadir, when causes cannot be traced from something that can be obviously felt or seen, the Malays will be forced to frame them from their supernatural being. He elaborated further that "*pemikiran yang berlandaskan kepada sebab dan akibat itu dapat melahirkan corak world-view di kalangan orang Melayu dengan corak dan bentuknya yang tersendiri*" [thinking which is based on cause and effect can give birth to the Malay worldview with their own patterns and forms] (Wan Abdul Kadir 1993a, 57).

The concept of good and bad *semangat* that are inherent in certain objects, animals and plants which the Malays have observed and believed also determined their generalisation (e.g. *biawak* is generalised as negative symbol). This conception of good and bad values has also directly and indirectly influenced their patterns of analogy (e.g. as stupid as a water buffalo or a cow). As the Malay folks believe that all objects, animals and plants are inter-related in this universe with one common internal element, *semangat*, therefore, we should know when, where and how to emulate the values of good spirit and to avoid the bad spirit in order to have a harmonious way of living. For instance, the Malays accept that the actions and attitudes of animals in their surrounding might carry certain metaphysical interpretations and meanings: During a journey, when a *biawak* crosses in front of a person, it suggests that something bad will occur and therefore he or she should be careful in the journey. "*Biawak*" is a sign of bad luck and always signifies the negative connotation of bad spirit. Many proverbs can be substantiated to justify this argument. Among them are *bagai biawak mengulangi bangkai* 'Like a monitor lizard, which keeps on visiting the carcass' (KIPM 18: 322), *bercabang bagi lidah biawak*

‘Splits like the tongue of a monitor-lizard’ (KIPM 36: 692)”, “*mendukung biawak hidup* ‘To fondle a live monitor lizard’ (KIPM 142: 2583)” and *seperti biawak, masakan hilang kesatnya* ‘Like the skin of a monitor lizard, which coarseness will not disappear’ (KIPM 186: 3439).

Elements of good and bad are not confined to plants and animals alone, but do emerge in their understanding of space and time. The Malays believe that no matter where, there is always a space which belongs to the *makhluk halus* (spirits) and therefore that place is not suitable for them to stay in or to build a house since that particular piece of land is said to become *tanah keras* (lit. hard land), which means that that piece of land is owned by certain bad spirits. This good-bad dichotomous conception also exists in their understanding of time. Hence, for instance, they will choose the right moment to start their journeys or work. Let us now visualise this general good-bad dualistic thinking and its relation with *budi* in order to assist the explanation of the Malay worldview (See Figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1: Relationship of Good and Bad in the Malay Worldview



The general understanding of good and bad *semangat* among the Malay folks was further developed into the notion of *budi* and *badi* respectively.⁷ *Budi* is said to correspond to the good (virtue, wisdom, intelligence, kindness etc.) whereas *badi* is said to signify the bad (i.e. bad influence, weirdness,

animal-like). According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991, 73), *badi* stands for “*pengaruh buruk (dari orang mati, binatang yang terbunuh, pohon keramat, dsb)*” (Bad influence [from human or animal which was killed, *keramat* tree etc.]). This mutually opposing character between the good and the bad is no accident if we look at the ways of primitive animistic thinking where everything has been categorised in duality or either-or polarity (i.e. cold or hot, edible things or poisonous things, fast or slow). There is no intermediary category and the scientific precision of up to the most accurate degree is of course beyond the scope of our discussion. The reverse of syllables between *tu-han* (god, the Lord) and *han-tu* also suggests their dualistic world-view between good and bad. Good is the reverse of bad as *tuhan* is the reverse of *hantu*.⁸ Human who is located in this world or *dunia* should try to achieve the state of *budi*^{virtue} and to flee from *badi*. In this process, however, the normal person should depend on a mediator (e.g. *pawang*, *bomoh*) to communicate with the supernatural being. Various rituals should be performed as a form of respect.

Mercado (1994) in his philosophical study about the Filipino mind, especially from the aspect of soul and spirit concluded that Filipino thought on the matter of soul-spirit is quite oriental. Does Mercado's idea also reflect the matter of soul-spirit among the Malays? To me, the answer should be a positive one and that the Eastern philosophical models are closer to the Malay mind. In the Malay worldview, we saw the oriental family resemblance in the concept of soul and spirit. If we were to look at the Malay worldview on *budi* and *badi*, which I have constructed from their folklore and folk beliefs, we will see that the Malay concepts of soul and spirit are closer to that of the Chinese rather than that of the Europeans. As early as 535 B.C.E., for instance, a learned Chinese statesman, Tzu-ch'an, had said that humans have two souls, the *p'o* and the *hun*. *P'o* is related to the contraction of *yin*. *P'o* is also related to *kuei*, the negative spiritual force or ghost (See Chan 1963, 11-13, especially p. 12). In this context, it is similar with the aspect of *badi* in the Malay worldview of *semangat*. Hence, we know that both *p'o* and *badi* are the negative spirit, which will emerge after a violent death and that they are situated in the realm of *hantu* (ghost). On the other hand, *hun* is related to the expansion of the *yang*. *Hun* is also related to *shen*, the positive spiritual force, or the realm of *tuhan* (God). In comparison with the Malay worldview, *hun* is closer to the aspect of *budi*. Mercado (1994) argued that while Western philosophy generally does not distinguish soul from spirit, Eastern philosophy however believes that “man is the totality of body, soul and spirit.” Mercado's analysis also suits well with the Malays as they too distinguish between soul (*roh*, *atma*) and spirit (*semangat*), and out of these two elements, it is their *semangat* – *badi* and *budi*^{virtue} that differentiates them from other Eastern models (for various interpretation and relation between soul, *semangat* etc. and *hati* in the Malay, see Chapter 5, especially Table 5.4).

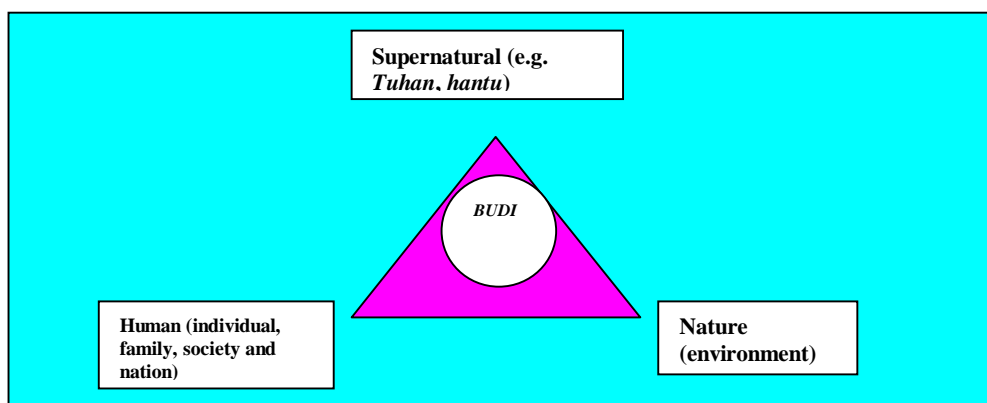
The above explanation seems to suggest that human, nature, and the supernatural overtly demonstrate a rather different mode of existence, but in reality they are actually inter-related as they are not

completely separated or differentiated. According to Md Salleh Yaspar (1985), this difference is due to the ideas of “pan-animism” and “universal kinship” prevalent in the worldview of the people. He further added that:

Plants and objects may be different from man in physical structure, but they share with the latter a common internal element, the *semangat*. In another respect, man too cannot be completely differentiated from the gods, for he has his origin in them. And neither can he be totally differentiated from nature, since some natural elements are actually in his direct transformation (Md Salleh Yaspar 1985, 276).

Despite the differentiation, the question arises: What is the common internal mediator or nucleus of commonality whereby a harmonious triangular relationship between human, nature (plants, animals and objects) and the supernatural (e.g. *tuhan*, *hantu*, *jin*) can be sustained? Since the ultimate nature of human in this universe – as the Malays believe – is to achieve the higher state of goodness or *budi*, there is no doubt then that they are tied-up by this common virtue of *budi* as the most appropriate way of resolving or avoiding conflict (See Figure 2.2):

Figure 2.2: *Budi* as the Nucleus of Human, Nature and Supernatural Relationships⁹



Besides the understanding of good and bad, the Malay worldview has always been divided into two worlds, the physical world or this world (human, nature) and their mirror world or the other world (the realm of supernatural, i.e. *tuhan*, *hantu*). This is partly true perhaps, even as reflected from their construction of *pantun* (between *pembayang* and *maksud*) and proverbs, which are both mostly connotative and sometimes metaphorical. The idea of cultivating good values and avoiding bad values, and the relationship between human and nature (i.e. objects, animals, plants) as seen from their worldview can be easily discovered if we analyse the contents of their *peribahasa*. Before we go into the content of Malay proverbs on how the Malay worldview was portrayed, it will be important to know first what it means by *peribahasa*, how *peribahasa* can be classified and how it was used.¹⁰

The Definition of Malay Proverb – *Peribahasa*

Peribahasa first emerged in the form of oral tradition. According to Gonda (1973: 103), etymologically the word *peribahasa* in the present Malay language was taken from Sanskrit: *Paribhāsā* परिभाषा ‘speech, any explanatory rule, maxim, general definition’. A few curious words that originated from Sanskrit are Bare’e (Celebes) *parumbasa* ‘ambiguous speech, i.e. words liable to be understood in more than one way, to say something in covert terms, adage’ which, though is connected with *basa* ‘speech, language’, must be considered identical with Javanese *paribasa* ‘adage, proverb’, Malay *pərběhasa*, which carries the same meaning. Abdul Samad Ahmad (1966, 1) contended that the Malays had been using all kinds of language patterns which are to be found in their everyday speech before they got to know about alphabets and started to write. This kind of language forms were arranged with words and patterns which become known as *bidalan*, *pepatah*, *petitih*, *peribahasa*, *perbilang*, *tamthil*, *ibarat*, *kiasan*, *perumpamaan* and the like.¹¹ These proverbial sayings were normally used to conclude their arguments as they were meaningful, neat and appropriate.

Peribahasa was invented through the experiences and observations of the old Malay society of their surroundings and they were then passed on from one generation to the following one. There were various sources from which the proverbs originated. According to Abdullah Hussain (1991, vii), *peribahasa* came from three sources. The first source was the *rakyat jelata* (folk), who created *peribahasa* through their living experience. The second source was from those who were *arif bijaksana* (people who are knowledgeable and learned), who uttered the phrases as a result of their *renungan* (contemplation). The third source was derived from the *kitab suci* (sacred books).

“Literature” as extracted from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1883) written by Reinhold Rost divided Malay popular literature into two types: one in prose and the other in poetry. The former comprises the proverbs, the latter the “*pantuns*” (Rost 1885, 99). According to Za’ba (1965, 165): “*Peribahasa itu segala susunan cakap yang pendek yang telah melekat di mulut orang ramai semenjak beberapa lama oleh sebab sedap dan bijak perkataannya, luas dan benar tujuannya, dipakai akan dia jadi sebutan-sebutan oleh orang sebagai bandingan, teladan dan pengajaran* (*Peribahasa* is all kinds of short arranged speeches, which have stuck to the mouths of the general public for a considerable time because of their aesthetic values and wisdom, the vastness and truth of their purpose, and their usage for comparison, as examples and for teaching).” *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991, 755) defined *peribahasa* as:

1. *Kelompok kata atau kalimat yang tetap susunannya dan biasanya mengiaskan maksud tertentu (dll peribahasa termasuk juga bidal, ungkapan, perumpamaan);*

2. *Ungkapan atau kalimat-kalimat ringkas padat, yang berisi perbandingan, perumpamaan, nasihat, prinsip hidup atau aturan tingkah laku.*

1. A group of words or sentences which is has a fixed arrangement and normally connote certain meanings (etc. *peribahasa* includes *bidal*, *ungkapan*, *perumpamaan*).
2. Compact and pithy phrases and sentences which contain comparison, analogy, advice, principle of life or the rules of behaviour.

Classification of Malay Proverbs

Malay proverbs are to be categorised as one of the verbal folklore with its own uniqueness. Taylor (1962) agreed with this point in his preface to his classics on paremiology *The Proverb and an Index to the Proverb* which is the reason why he excluded the Malay proverbs from his book. He said that “it has seemed inadvisable to seek examples outside the ordinary European languages, where we have a fairly distinct cultural tradition and clearly proverbial types.” He further remarked that there were basically differences between Western and Eastern traditions:

What is true of the English proverb is, in the main, true of the German or the French proverb. Oriental, African, *Malay*, Japanese, or Chinese proverbs involve such widely differing cultural spheres and have in general so little connection with European proverbs that I have not hesitated to leave them out (1962, n.p., italics added).

Malay proverbs can be categorised into various proverbial types and categories. However, there is no single standard categorisation that can be offered so far. There are so many different ideas on how Malay proverbs should be classified. Za’ba (1965) divided Malay sayings into three important categories in his book, *Ilmu Mengarang Melayu*, namely *simpulan bahasa*, *peribahasa* and *bahasa kiasan*.¹² Tham Seong Chee (1990, 46), however, stated that “The *peribahasa* are made up of *kata-kata Melayu* (Malay sayings); *perumpamaan* (proverbs), *pepatah-petitih* (sayings alluding to social customs); *bidalan* (maxims, guides, metaphors), and *kiasan* (similes and allegories).” Arifin Nur in his book, *Sastera Melayu Klasik* (1971, 38-39, cited in Ishak Ramly and Goh Ong Sing [1990]) divided *peribahasa* into *perumpamaan*, *bidalan*, *pepatah*, *perbilang*, and *simpulan bahasa*. Abdullah Hussain (1966, v) placed *simpulan bahasa* as one of the categories of *peribahasa* when he said: “*Simpulan bahasa* ataupun *ungkapan*, seperti juga *bidalan*, *pepatah* dan *perumpamaan* digolongkan dalam *peribahasa* (*Simpulan bahasa* or *ungkapan*, like *bidalan* and *perumpamaan* are categorised as *peribahasa*).” *Peribahasa & Sinonim Malaysiana* (Ensimal 1994) included *simpulan bahasa* together with other types of *peribahasa* in their collection. Through these few categorisations, two pertinent but divided ideas appear on the different ways of classifying *simpulan bahasa*: one on its own (not part of *peribahasa* but exists in its own right) and the other as part of the *peribahasa*. The differences in terms

of categorisation between various authors and scholars show that there is no single classification that has been accepted so far with consensus. Western collectors of Malay sayings like Favre (1875), Humphreys (1914) and Hose (1934), for instance, included idiomatic expressions (*simpulan bahasa*) in their collections. Maxwell (1878a, 1878b, 1879, 1883), however, excluded them. The problem of categorisation and definition of each kind of saying becomes difficult in the written composition, where many words like *pepatah*, *petitih*, *peribahasa*, *perumpamaan*, *tamsil*, *ibarat* and *bidalan* were defined as synonyms. This scenery is rather odd and in the long run will erode the richness of the Malay oral tradition.¹³ Sweeney (1987) observed that “the practice of delineating categories which corresponded to no formal distinctions made in the Malay tradition has provided a strange model for Malays” (p. 290). He further claimed that this tendency was obvious “with the spread of the literacy that collections of these terms came to be listed together” (p. 290). Another problem with the Malay proverb collection is the inclusion of “*teka-teki* (riddle)” and also *pantun*¹⁴ (quatrain) (too many to be cited, see e.g. MBRAS p. 59: 23) as part of the proverbs collection. In MBRAS, quite a number of riddles were included, for example: *kecil-kecil pakai kain, besar-besar telanjang* ‘When young, clothed; when grown up, naked’ (MBRAS 107: 124); *Burung cenderawasih, ekor panjang dada putih, terbang turun boleh, terbang naik tak boleh* ‘A bird of paradise with a long tail and a white breast, which can fly down but not up’ (MBRAS 49: 199). MBRAS itself admitted that the answer to this riddle is *upih luruh daripada mayang* ‘The leaf-sheath falls from the palm flower.’ But why was the riddle included in a so-called proverb collection? These are more suitable to be treated as riddles and not proverbs.

Brunvand (1968, 40; cited in Danandjaya 1991, 29) when studying American proverbs stated that proverbs can be categorised into five big groups: (a) True proverbs, which display characteristics of being a complete sentence, less variation in their form and containing truth or wisdom; (b) Proverbial phrases, which are made up of incomplete sentence, always changing in form, seldom expresses wisdom and normally metaphorical; (c) Proverbial comparisons, which normally begin with words such as “if” and the like; (d) Phrases that look like proverbs; and (e) Wellerism. However, the form of Wellerism, according to Danandjaya (1991), was never noticed in Indonesia although no reason was given. For Danandjaya (1991), Brunvand’s classification of American proverbs is, for the time being, still relevant for Malay-Indonesian proverbs as long as there is no other proper way of classification.

There were also other efforts undertaken by other folks in the Malay world to classify proverbs. Javanese proverbs had been classified into five categories by Keyzer in “*Een Verzameling van Javaansche Spreekwoordelijk Uitdrukkingen* (pp. 161-201)” and “*Javaansche Spreekwoorden en Dergelijk* (pp. 221-237)” (BKJ VI, 1862): (1) proverbs related to animals (fish, birds, insects and mammals); (2) proverbs about plants (trees, fruits and other plants); (3) proverbs about humans in general; (4) proverbs about members of the family and (5) proverbs about the function of limbs and

other parts of the human body (Cited in Danandjaya 1991). The Balinese had also classified their traditional expressions into three categories: (1) *sesongan*, which can be equated with true proverbs; (2) *sesenggakan*, which can be equalised with aphorism and (3) *seloka*, which can be likened to metaphor (See Swellengrebel 1950-1951 and Eck 1872 & 1875, cited in Danandjaya 1991). Other collections of proverbs in *Nusantara* (Malay world) that documented proverbial wisdom of other racial groups from Palembang, Macassar, Minangkabau, Bengkulu and Betawi can be obtained from *Peribahasa* (1961, first published in 1943) edited by Pamuntjak, Iskandar and Madjoindo. This collection of proverbs had been translated from its original languages into Indonesian. The first Malay language proverbs collection, which was first written and published by a Malay in the *Jawi* script was known as *Tikaman Bahasa* (1934) and its first transcription in the form of Roman letters was published by Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka in 1992. In his collection, *Tikaman Bahasa* (1992), Mohd. Adnan Mohd. Ariffin categorised his collection of proverbs into 11 chapters which show the richness of the Malay proverbial wisdom. Chapter 1 includes: knowledge, education and advice; chapter 2: marriage and family; chapter 3: search for the living, wealth and poverty; chapter 4: lucky and unlucky differ between humans; chapter 5: friendship, enmity and fight; chapter 6: wicked or bad behaviour; chapter 7: happiness and hardship; chapter 8: attitudes and actions; chapter 9: honourable and lowly peoples and their respective attitudes; chapter 10: customary council and state governance; and the last chapter, chapter 11: miscellaneous topics.

The Uses of *Peribahasa*: What functions do *Peribahasas* Play?

It is generally argued that proverbs are not so widely used nowadays as they were in the past. Those who are against the usefulness of proverbs in this century claim that old wisdom is not suitable as time has changed and it is no more relevant for us to follow the advice of the past (i.e. cited in Mieder 1993b). On the other hand, proverb has been claimed by supporters of proverbial wisdom (i.e. Mieder 1993b; Taylor 1996b) as leading us very directly “to estimate the world of different manners of expression and to perceive currents of ideas – ethical, political, scientific, or aesthetic – in the history of humanity” (Taylor 1996b). It was claimed that proverbs will not be fade away as they had evolved and developed based on the progress of society and throughout the history of mankind, as can be seen from the evolution from agrarian proverbs to the emergence of business proverbs and perhaps proverbs that deal with information technology, such as “Garbage in, Garbage out.” This general perception on the usefulness and the useless disputes of proverbs do occur as well for the Malay *peribahasa* (See Mohd. Tajudin Haji Abdul Rahman 1999). Despite the pessimistic perception on the use of *peribahasa* in everyday verbal discourse and education (i.e. Sweeney 1987, 70-71), *peribahasa* as I have observed in writings published in the printed media (i.e. *Utusan Malaysia*, *Berita Harian*, *Kompas*) and also in the Internet media (i.e. *MalaysiaKini*) remains very encouraging. In this section,

let us look at the usefulness and application of Malay proverbs in various perspectives and what are the challenges that lie ahead.

Proverbs continue to be a very important element in Malay classical literature if we were to retrace the path of the Malay civilisation and thought. They perform various functions based on the needs of the speaker and the context of its usage. Many proverbs appear to be entirely context-bound and should be understood within this semantic understanding, either literary (as figurative language), rhetorical (persuasive) or logical (argumentative). According to Obelkevich (1994, 213), proverbs though “much used in writing, they are primarily an oral genre, and an often witty and artful one at that, employing a wide range of poetic and rhetorical resources within their limited compass.” Erasmus in his *Prolegomena*, pointed out four specific ways in which proverbs could be valuable to students of classical literature and to speakers and writers who wish to develop a graceful and effective style: “(1) to promote the understanding of philosophy; (2) to strengthen argument; (3) to add ornament and gracefulness in speech and writing; and (4) to clarify the meaning of some of the best authors” (Cited in Eugenio 1992, vii-viii). To Za’ba (1965, 165), *peribahasas* play three important roles: (1) As a tool to decorate the writings and speeches of an individual, (2) strengthening the motive of writing and speaking – acting as a tool that strengthens the argument of an arguer, because the objectives of the writing that is produced will become more relevant and strong if they are supported by suitable *peribahasa*; (3) most of the *peribahasas* can be used as a guidance in life because its contents are true and expounded, whether literally or figuratively. Erasmus’s and Za’ba’s second function is very relevant in stressing on the importance of proverbs as a tool for strengthening arguments within the logic of argumentation. Erasmus’s and Za’ba’s ideas on the function of proverbs in strengthening the discourse or argumentation had also been voiced by a famous paremiologist. Mieder (1993a, xvii) argued that “when we use proverbs, we wish to strengthen our arguments or explanations with traditional wisdom that supposedly has withstood the test of time. We will always use those proverbs that fit our reasoning and wishes best, ignoring those that express a contradictory viewpoint.” In addition, proverbs can also be used to train critical thinking skills (See Aldridge 1997).

Nonetheless, *peribahasa* does not only exist for the sake of purely empty rhetorical argumentation. It is said to be result-oriented and uttered with practicality and problem-solving in mind. It is really pertinent to say that *peribahasa* actually plays the role of an argument, which had been defined by Willard (1989) as how people manage and resolve their conflict or disagreement. Maarop Md Noh (2001) said that Malay proverbs consisted of highly intellectual values and a culture of precision thinking among the Malays for various centuries and it was even used to suggest solutions when there is a conflict.¹⁵ According to him, “*Pepatah dan peribahasa tidak dilafazkan sebagai pengucapan harian. Ia hanya digunakan apabila berlaku sesuatu peristiwa yang menuntut keperluan penyelesaian intelektual yang tinggi* (*Pepatah and peribahasa were not being expressed as everyday utterances.*

They were used only when an incident occurred that demanded a highly intellectual solution).” What is even more accurate, as he put it, is that “*pepatah and peribahasa digunakan untuk menyelesaikan masalah paling rumit* (Pepatah and peribahasa were used to solve the most complicated problem).” For instance, according to him, when there is a conflict within a family or society, proverbs like *biduk lalu kiambang bertaut* ‘The water-weed will merge again after the small boat has gone,’ *carik-carik bulu ayam, diraup bercantum jua* ‘You may tear a fowl’s feathers apart, but they will eventually grow together again’ (MS 22) or *air dicincang tidak akan putus* ‘Water can be slashed but it will not be severed’ (MS 22) can be a very useful prescription. In order to avoid political conflicts within a country, he suggested that we should contemplate on the usefulness of an old *peribahasa*, *jangan biarkan tapik dan simpai bersengketa, nanti parang makan diri* ‘Do not let the tapik [a kind of cleaver] and simpai [rattan ring] tussle, less the cleaver hurts its owner.’ In the Malay communities, for instance (as well as in many parts of Africa), proverbs have a special function in the village council, where the elders resolve disputes by means of proverbs which embody the *adat*, the rules of conduct (Knappert 1980, 4). According to Verzosa, “among Filipinos, like among other Orientals, the use of proverbs has the dignity of authorized finality. Proverbs may settle a feud, a long drawn litigation, even a dispute of long standing that may involve bloodshed” (Cited in Eugenio 1992, vii). According to Muhammad Haji Salleh (2001, 77), proverbs should be considered as the collective genius of a race, which contains all types of wisdom and philosophy that have been accumulated from the real experience. These are needed by the society to survive, avoid problems and enhance their standard of living. Furthermore, some of the societies depended very much on proverbs because in which the law of the society can be traced, through which their values and rights were being arranged. Muhammad also remarked that in the context of Malay world, before the existence of the Law of Malacca, Siak and the rest had already possessed *peribahasa*, which was used as their code of living. *Peribahasa* was not only important in Minangkabau, but also in Kampar, Riau and Jambi.

Besides its argumentative and problem-solving function, *peribahasa* can also be used in the sphere of education, either as a tool in language teaching or poetry instruction (Edward Djamaris 1990, 30-31). Edward further elaborated that through *peribahasa*, we could also understand the nature, character, worldview, custom, ways of thinking and value system of a particular ethnic group (p. 31). For Abdullah Jusoh (1993), “*peribahasa menjadi input pendidikan yang berkesan. Ia turut menyumbang menyemai serta mengentalkan sikap-sikap beradab, rajin, mengenang budi dan sebagainya selaras dengan nilai-nilai agama dan norma-norma budaya* (*peribahasa* becomes an effective educational input. It also contributes to the dissemination and strengthening of civilised behaviour, diligence, *mengenang budi* ^{grateful} and so on in accord with the religious values and cultural norms).” *Peribahasa* is also sometimes used to encourage positive working attitude (Noorizan Arifin 2001)¹⁶, and by a poet to express his idea about certain issues with some alteration according to their intentions, themes and creativity. Taufiq Ismail (1973) in one of his poems “*Pepatah-petitih Baru*” changed the original

Malay proverbs in order to suit his idea on nationalism where he said: *Hujan batu di negeri orang/ Hujan emas di negeri sendiri/Lebih enak di negeri sendiri* (p. 53).¹⁷ The use of proverbs as a language style and technique was also employed by Marwillis Hj. Yusoff in his novel *Buah Kering di Hujung Ranting* (see Azman Ismail 1998). Proverb usage can also be found in comic strips. As an instance, Oom pasikom used the proverb to criticise the involvement (as accused) of Abdurrahman Wahid, the then president of Indonesia, in the scandal of Bulogate and Bruneigate with the proverb *karena nila setitik rusak susu sebelanga* ‘because of a single drop of indigo, the whole pot of milk is spoilt’ (Kompas 2001). Proverb usage is not only confined to poetry, novel, comic strip, but can be discovered in a book’s title; for instance: *Dari Soeharto ke Habibie. Guru Kencing Berdiri, Murid Kencing Berlari. Kedua Puncak Korupsi, Kolusi dan Nepotisme Rezim Orde Baru* (George Junus Aditjondro, cited in *Berpolitik.com* 2001). Take a statement by Abdullah Jusoh (1993); then we will be able to see the popularity of proverbs in the context of various discourses:

Peribahasa terdapat di mana saja, dalam perbualan harian, akhbar, majalah, radio, televisyen, lirik lagu pop, iklan perdagangan, khutbah, ceramah, malahan ucapan atau kenyataan menteri.

Peribahasa ‘kecil tapak tangan nyiru kami tadahkan’ pernah terdapat pada iklan sebuah bank terkemuka; ‘Hidup segan mati tak mahu’ (dalam komentar sukan oleh seorang wartawan bukan Melayu); ‘cempedak menjadi nangka’ (dalam lirik sebuah lagu pop); ‘hati gajah sama dilapah’, ‘hati kuman sama dicecah’ (dalam Minda Pengarang, Berita Harian); ‘tikam dari belakang’ (dalam ucapan Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad pada Perhimpunan Agung Umno baru-baru ini).

(*Peribahasa* can be found everywhere, in daily conversation, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, popular song lyrics, commercial advertisements, preaching, talks, and even in speeches or minister’s statements.

The proverb *kecil tapak tangan nyiru kami tadahkan* ‘even though the palm is small, we will offer the winnowing tray’ had appeared before in an advertisement of a prominent bank; *Hidup segan mati tak mahu* ‘hesitating to live but refusing to die’ (in a sports commentary by a non-Malay journalist); *cempedak menjadi nangka* ‘*cempedak* has become *nangka*’¹⁸ (in the lyrics of a pop song); *hati gajah sama dilapah, hati kuman sama dicecah* ‘together we cut and share the liver of an elephant, together we dip slightly the liver of microbes’ (in the editorial of a Malay newspaper, *Berita Harian*); *tikam dari belakang* ‘stabbed from the back’ (in the speech of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in the recent Umno General Assembly.)

Besides its appearance in various mediums as we have just discussed, proverbs were also used as a writing tool in various discourses. According to Röhrich and Mieder (1977):

Sprichwörter können auch als Warnung, Überredung, Argument, Bestätigung, Trost, Besänftigung, Überzeugung, Mahnung, Zurechtweisung, Feststellung, Charakterisierung, Erklärung, Beschreibung, Rechtfertigung, Zusammenfassung etc. fungieren, und es ist durchaus möglich, daß ein und

dasselbe Sprichwort in verschiedenen Gebrauchszusammenhängen ganz verschiedene Funktionswerte übernimmt (p. 81).

Despite its diversified appearance in various patterns of writing, the most frequent use of proverbs is more obvious in political discourse. Proverbs have been used as an important rhetorical tool in regional, national and international political argumentation. It is expected by the audience that political leaders should be orators and that as orators they should have vast numbers of proverbs, quotations, analogies and/or lively examples at their command. Certain international figures like Lenin, Churchill, Roosevelt, Reagan or Chairman Mao knew or know how to use them for political argumentation. Even debates in the United Nations are often interspersed with proverbs which can become verbal weapons that are difficult to contend against. Mieder (1999b) explained that in such debates “the proverbs take on serious meanings and are used by intelligent people to strengthen their arguments with the emotions and spice of traditional wisdom.”

As for Malay politics, *peribahasa* too has its role as a tool for persuasion and argumentation. Several proverbs in current speeches by political leaders and in political writings show that proverbs remain as an important tool for the Malay political rhetoric. A few examples can be cited in order to explain this tendency. Dr. Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, president of Parti Keadilan, in her Parliamentary speech, quoted a Malay proverb *sesat di hujung jalan kembali ke pangkal jalan* ‘if you find that you have lost your way at the end of a path, return to your starting point’ (MS 82) when arguing that the government should return to the Constitution to protect democracy and the basic rights and freedom of the people (Wan Azizah Wan Ismail 2000). Cili api¹⁹ in his writing “*Demokrasi dalam UMNO*” (Democracy within UMNO) when commenting about Tengku Razaleigh’s statement whether he was going to contest in the May 2000 UMNO party election for the UMNO presidency or deputy presidency, noted that the latter used *bahasa berlapik* (literally padded language, which means connotative language). The indirect way of answering an issue is to avoid open confrontation and this can be further justified through the existence of proverbs like *ada udang di sebalik batu* ‘there is prawn behind the stone,’ *ada gunting dalam lipatan*²⁰ ‘there is scissors behind the fold,’ *telunjuk lurus, kelingking berkait* ‘The [prominent] forefinger is straight, but the [unobtrusive] little finger is crooked’ (MS 5) and *buang batu sembunyi tangan* ‘throwing a stone while keeping the hand out of sight’ (See PRM 2000). Meanwhile, an UMNO Supreme Council Member, Dr. Affifudin Omar, when asked to comment on the candidates who are vying for top posts, said that everyone had the right to contest. He said that Malay proverbs such as *ukur baju di badan sendiri* and *lihat cermin dahulu* (measure the shirt on your back and look in the mirror first) should not appear as there were thousands who had the right qualities to become leaders in the party (*Star* 2000a [February 21]). Mahathir Mohamad (2000) in his speech delivered at the Young Malay Professional Congress used *pantun* (*Buai laju-laju/ sampai balik sana/ Beli baju baru/ dari Kedai Cina/* swing really fast/ until the other end/ Buy a new shirt/ from Chinese shop) to capture the audience’s attention by explaining that the Malays had no confidence in doing business to

the extent that they had to get it from the Chinese, and the Latin proverb “*Vox populi, Vox Dei*” to stress on the importance of the voice of the majority (democracy) and that it should not be misused.²¹

Proverbial wisdom should be treated properly as it is like a knife, which can be used to upgrade human civilisation. In itself, it might be harmless pieces of folk wisdom; yet it can also be poisonous – when proverbial stereotypes become propagandistic tools in the hands of malicious persons, they can take on unexpected powers of authority, persuasion, and eventually cruelty (See Mieder 1993c). Proverbs can be expressed in the form of graffiti which is taunting of traditional wisdom²² (See Nierenberg 1994). Some proverbs contain certain kinds of discrimination and prejudices either towards different ethnic groups, genders, religions, ideologies, etc., and could be harmful to those who are discriminated and prejudiced against in the form of internal confrontation against certain races (See Mieder 1995a; Arora 1995b and Dundes 1994).²³ The misuse of folklore in general and proverbs in particular will be dangerous. This was shown by Mieder (1993c) on how such seemingly harmless bits of wisdom as proverbs were misused under the National Socialists to promulgate anti-Semitism and stereotypes.

In the local context, the use of proverbs to spread hatred among the Malays toward non-Malays, for example, can be seen in one of the writings of Khalid Salleh in *Berita Harian* (22 August 2000) by the title “*Jati Diri Jangan Me-la-yu*” (Identity Not To Be *Me-la-yu*-ed [fade-away]) (See Khalid Sall 2000, 15). It is morally right, therefore, to quote Obelkevich (1994, 213): “What defines the proverb, though, is not its internal layout but its external function, and that, ordinarily, is moral and didactic: people use proverbs to tell others what to do in a given situation or what attitude to take towards it.” Despite the use of *peribahasa* among Malay politicians who are trying to use *peribahasa* to show their Malay-ness and nationalism on one hand, there are however challenges ahead on the other hand. The challenging force comes from politicians who are trying to portray to their audiences that they are more Islamic than their opponents. This challenge occurs as the majority of the Malays are Muslims, and constitution wise, it is even stated that a Malay is a Muslim and Muslim is a Malay (see the Malaysian Federal Constitution²⁴). The status of *peribahasa* has been gradually replaced by the use of *hadith* and Koranic verses among certain religion-trained politicians who are trying to portray their Islamic image. To them, *hadith* and Koranic verses are believed to be more sacred and more authoritative. Barakat, however, considered both proverbs and *hadith* as devices which support the speaker’s point of view while shifting responsibility to the ancestors. He wrote:

... the basic reasoning behind the use of *hadith* in Moslem Arab society is not dissimilar to the application of proverbs. Similarly, the *sanad* of *Hadith*, with the stress on a chain of reliable attestors back to the originator further adds a ring of authenticity to the Traditions which, therefore, carry great wisdom and truth because they are links from the past. Proverbs, when used in conversational situations, also bear great weight because the speaker is linking his sayings to the past. By doing so, he shifts the responsibility of his content to past traditions and authorities whose wisdom cannot be questioned. To be a

successful conversationalist in the Arab world, and to be respected as a user of proverbs, such “documentation” or *sanad* is required by one’s audience (Barakat 1980, 12).

Barakat’s idea is correct at face value as both *hadith* and proverbs are used in effort to appeal to the authority of the past. But emotionally, I choose to disagree with Barakat, who seemed to see the use of *hadith* and the application of proverbs as similar based on the Malay political rhetoric. Within the Malay rhetorical context, a person well-versed in lengthy quotes from the *Holy Koran* and *hadith* will be more respected than the orators, who are capable in quoting only the Malay proverbs. I think Webster (2000) was right especially when we are to apply them to the Malay political rhetoric when he commented:

Barakat misses the most fundamental distinction between the two forms, and that is their contrasting statuses as secular and sacred items. Proverbs carry the authority of tradition, a potent but profane power. *Ahadith* (sic), on the contrary, glean their potency from their sacred status; only the *Quran* surpasses them as embodiments of religious authority.

One of the factors which Barakat mentioned as a device for distinguishing a *hadith* from proverbs is *hikma*. *Hikma* is a term with multiple meanings, the basic one being “wisdom,” but also science and philosophy, which according to Goichon (1971), includes the science of expression in speech, firstly logic, then rhetoric and poetry (See p. 377-378).

The tendency to use *hadith* has pushed *peribahasa* into the third line of reasoning as Koranic verses (first line of reasoning) and *Hadith* (second line of reasoning) are sacred, whereas *peribahasa* is secular. Previously, the Malay politicians who were trying to prove that they are well-versed in Malay literature will cite proverbs and *pantun* in their speeches to show that they were concerned with the Malay tradition and to display their Malay-ness as part of their rhetorical persuasion. With the so-called Islamic revival in the Malay world, particularly in Malaysia, lengthy quotes from the *Holy Koran* and *hadith* are preferred compared to *peribahasa* which is deemed secular, in order to show that they are more Islamic than their opponents. M. Bakri Musa (1999, 69) right argued:

They pepper their speeches with lengthy quotes from the *Holy Koran* or *hadiths* (sayings of the Prophet) much like the politician Sutan Baginda, the lead character in Shahnnon Ahmad’s satirical novel of the same name. Like Sutan Baginda, their knowledge of Islam is often limited to parroting holy passages. At times, their speeches are nothing more than steady streams of Arabic incantations. The fact that most Malays do not understand the language does not perturb these orators. Their objective is not communication or illumination, but simply to dazzle their listeners.

He further proved his argument by citing Mahathir’s second book, *The Challenge*, which according to him, “is embellished with Koranic verses and religious quotes. Often the citations bear no relevance to

the ideas discussed, their purpose seems purely decorative, or perhaps to suitably impress readers of the writer's familiarity with the Holy Book" (M. Bakri Musa 1999, 69).

The Content of Malay Proverbs

Malay proverbs range over a wide variety of subject matters and touch on almost every aspect of life, politically, economically and socially. Despite the richness of the Malay sayings, the content or theme of the Malay proverbs, however, tend to benefit more from the richness of the Malay flora and fauna or perhaps as Maxwell pointed out "Agriculture, hunting, fishing, boating, and wood-craft are the occupations or accomplishments which furnish most of the illustrations, and the number of beasts, birds, fishes, and plants named in a collection of Malay proverbs will be found to be considerable" (1879, 48; Cited also in Rost 1885, 99). The content of the Malay proverbs should be treated as a thoughtful store of sources for folklorists, social historians or anthropologists in their research to see how the changing pattern of a society (e.g. from agrarian to industrial society; static to pragmatic) is portrayed in their proverbs. The Malay proverbs can also become important sources for identifying the nature and the character of the Malays as had been done by R. J. Wilkinson (1925, first published in 1907) in one of his writings "Malay Proverbs on Malay Character."

The content of Malay proverbs is rather diversified and covers various aspects from do's and don'ts in everyday life to higher philosophical contemplation like ethics (see Ismail Hamid 1991, chapter 6), metaphysics, epistemology and logic (see chapter 4). Since they are so divergent, for the sake of convenience and to guide the direction of this discussion, I will arrange my thoughts into the following: (a) Ethical aspect, which will touch on do's and don'ts or likes and dislikes among the Malay; (b) Political governance, economy and other related issues like class distinction and the relation between folks and their ruler; (c) Nature and character of human, which discuss about the behaviour and attitudes of the Malays; (d) Family; (e) Women²⁵; and (f) Friendship and Enmity.²⁶

Ethically, the Malay people put honesty and sincerity at a high place. Criticisms are directed at persons who are double-faced and guilty of breach of trust. In order to express a double-faced attitude, they use proverbs like: *talam dua muka* 'the tray has two faces' (MS 4), *telunjuk lurus, kelingking berkait* 'the forefinger is straight, but the little finger is crooked' (MS 5). Cynically, the Malays condemn those who expect something without any effort as *menantikan nasi tersaji di lutut* 'to expect to have the dish served right in front of you' (MS 8). Malays consider human words as the word of trust and therefore should not be taken for granted and the consequences can be very costly if we were to misuse the words: *terlajak perahu boleh diundur, terlajak kata buruk padahnya* 'if you go too far with your boat, you can turn around; but once you have said something wrong, there is no turning back' (MS 19). Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that words can be a kind of promise: *Kata itu biarlah kota*

'Let what you say be a stronghold to those who trust in you' (MS 9). The Malay perception of time through their proverbs can be seen by *masa itu emas* 'time is gold,' so don't waste it as you like. Therefore, one should be serious when doing something: *Genggam bara api, biar jadi arang* 'if you grasp live embers, grasp them till they become charcoal' (MS 92).

Generally, Malays are quite politically conscious and patriotic. Home country should be of foremost importance: *hujan emas di negeri orang, hujan batu di negeri sendiri, baik juga di negeri sendiri* 'Though it rains gold in a foreign land, and it rains stone in the home country, it will still be the best staying in the home country' (MS 63). The Malays are very critical about the government if more attention is given to the welfare of outsiders but that of their own countrymen are neglected. This is labelled as *anak kera di hutan disusui, anak sendiri di rumah kebuluran* 'A baby monkey in the forest is breastfed while the child at home is left dying of hunger' (KIPM 9: 153). On international politics, they treat the clash between developed nations or superpowers as really bad for the poor countries because when *gajah sama gajah berjuang, pelanduk mati di tengah-tengah* 'when elephants meet in conflict, a mouse deer that gets between them is sure to perish' (MS 97). The Malays also believe in what is said to be "leading by example" as pointed out by the proverbs: *Guru kencing berdiri, anak murid kencing berlari* 'If the master urinates standing up, the pupil will do it running' (MS 12) and *ketam menyuruh anaknya berjalan betul* 'the crab tells its young to walk straight' (MS 21). The Malays sometimes can be too loyal and afraid of those in power until they are manipulated by some of their leaders due to their attitude of *siapa jadi raja, tangan aku ke dahi juga* 'whoever becomes king, my hand still goes to my forehead' (MS 94). They relate themselves to those in power with the proverb *seperti mentimun dengan durian* 'Like cucumber and durian.' Sometimes, due to loyalty and lack of confidence in themselves, they take their criticism against the people on the corridors of power by the proverbs *seperti anjing menyalak bukit* 'like dogs barking at the hill' or *seperti anjing menyalak di pantat gajah* 'like dogs barking at the stern of an elephant' (MS 95). However, occasionally they condemn also injustice or unfair ruling: *Orang lain makan nangka, aku kena getah* 'someone else gets to eat the jackfruit, I get only sticky fingers' (MS 123) or *karam berdua, basah seorang* 'two are shipwrecked, but only one gets wet' (MS 123). When a judge is unfair, they labelled that situation as *berhakim kepada beruk* 'to go to the monkey for justice' (MS 133). Consciousness about the equality and the concept of class distinctions are very obvious among the Malays too, either economically or socially. Proverbs like *enggang sama enggang, pipit sama pipit juga* 'hornbills with hornbills, and sparrows with sparrows'; *tebuan nak meminang anak lelabah* 'the hornet wishes to wed the spider's daughter' are enough to affirm this. In terms of competition, they believe in a level playing field and not like *pipit berperang dengan garuda* 'the sparrow is matching himself against an eagle' (MS 95). For them, they should be based on a first come, first served basis: *Siapa cepat boleh dahulu, siapa kemudian putih mata* 'he who is quick gets what he wants, he who comes after is made to look like a fool' (MS 76). They place priority on quality rather than price: *Kalah membeli menang memakai* 'what

you lose on the cost, you will gain in the wearing' (MS 92). In order to describe the state of poverty, the Malays use the proverb *Bertikarkan bumi, berselimutkan langit, bersuluhkan bulan* 'to have the earth as sleeping mat, the sky as blanket and the moon for one's light' (MS 106).

The Malays are basically kind in character and always propose that we should be thankful for the kindness of others. When someone is really kind to you, you should be kind enough in return as the Malays believe in *budi* ^{kindness}. *Hutang emas boleh dibayar, hutang budi dibawa mati* 'a debt of money can be repaid, a debt of kindness goes with one to the grave' (MS 125). So, do not have an ungrateful attitude like *kacang lupakan kulit* 'the bean forgets the pod' (MS 118) or *melepaskan anjing tersepit* 'freeing a dog that has been nipped' (MS 184). When someone gives us something, we should be grateful and not greedy like *diberi betis hendak paha* 'give him the calf of your leg and he will want the thigh' (MS 88) or *makin murah makin menawar* 'the cheaper the price is, the more he tries to bargain' (MS 88). However, we should not take for granted that Malays sometimes can be vengeful and will retaliate if they are ill-treated: *Ada hujan, ada panas* (or *ada ubi, ada batas*), *ada hari boleh balas* 'a day will come when retaliation will be possible' (MS 87). They are relatively shy and would not blow one's own trumpet. Those who work and keep quiet about it will be well-respected: *penyu bertelur beribu-ribu, seorang pun tak tahu, ayam bertelur sebiji riuh sekampung* 'the turtle lays thousands of eggs and no one is the wiser; a hen lays one egg and the whole country hears about it' (MS 23).²⁷ However, the Malays sometimes can be over believing in predestination from one angle but still encourage people to work hard from the other angle. Certain Malay sayings can be quoted about their belief in fate and destiny: *Untung sabut timbul, untung batu tenggelam* 'Husk is destined to float, stone is destined to sink' (MS 72); *secupak tak kan menjadi segantang* 'A quart cannot become a gallon.' There are also quite a number of proverbs that denies the role of predestination like *tanam lalang, tak kan tumbuh padi* 'if you plant *lalang*, you will not get a crop of *padi*' (MS 9) and *kalau tidak dipecahkan ruyung, masakan dapat sagunya* 'if the outer part of the palm trunk is not broken, how is the pith to be obtained?' (MS 157). The two pairs of proverbs mentioned above will appear contradictory in terms of proposition alone when we take them without considering the context of the discourse. How can a person believe in predestination and also hard work (not believing in fate or destiny) at the same time, which is, logically speaking, contradictory? However, the knowledge and skill of knowing seemingly contradicting proverb-pairs can be very useful in countering proverbial reasoning and argumentation (See Figure 3.3). Syed Hussein Alatas's (1977, 169-170) refutation of *Revolusi Mental* (1971)²⁸, which cited *rezeki secupak tidak boleh jadi segantang* 'a gain of one *cupak* cannot become one *gantang*' as proof that the Malays are fatalists, by quoting three proverbs to indicate that the Malay belief in a person as a free agent is a good example of how contradictory proverbs can be used as a counter-argument. The three proverbs that Syed Hussein Alatas (1977) quoted as his counter-argument are: *Tanam lalang tidak akan tumbuh padi* 'If we plant wild grass we shall not get a rice crop,' *malu berdayung perahu hanyut* 'ashamed of rowing, the boat drifts' and

sega bertanya sesat jalan ‘too shy to enquire, and we lose our way.’ The Malays also believe that humans are not perfect as to err is human: *laut mana tidak berombak? Bumi mana tidak ditimpa hujan?* ‘What sea is always still? Where is the spot on earth on which no rain falls?’ (MS 65).

Malays give family an important role in society. Therefore any institution (i.e. marriage and divorce), relationship (i.e. between lover and between relatives) or individual in the family (mother, father, son, women) appear quite often in their proverbs. They believe in the upbringing and education of a child from a young age: *kalau melentur buluh, biarlah dari rebung* or *melentur biarlah waktu rebung* ‘If you want to break a bamboo, do it when it is still a shoot, for what use will it be (for food) when it is a grown bamboo?’ (KIPM 133: 2421; Cf. MBRAS 164: 6). A family’s background will determine the quality of the people: *usul menunjukkan asal, bahasa menunjukkan bangsa* ‘character reveals descent and manners show breeding’ (MS 59). (The intimate relationship between members of the family are described as *cubit paha kanan, paha kiri pun sakit juga* ‘Pinch the right thigh and the left will feel the pain too’ (MS 116). They treat the quarrel between brothers and sisters as only temporary, *air dicincang tidak putus* ‘slashed water is never severed’ (MS 22) or *carik-carik bulu ayam, lama-lama bercantum juga* ‘you may tear a fowl’s feathers apart, but they will eventually grow together again’ (MS 22). Malay community is basically a patriarchal society, where the father acts as the leader of the family. For that reason, fathers should set a good example. Otherwise, his good or bad actions will be modelled by his children as the proverb goes: *Bapanya borek, anaknya tentu rintik* ‘if the father is speckled, the child will surely display spots’ (MS 33). For them, if the father is a good example, there is no reason the son will be wicked, as for instance *Adakah pernah telaga yang jernih itu mengalir air yang keruh?* ‘Will you ever get dirty water from a clean well?’ (MS 76). Even if the family is bad, it should be the responsibility of the members in the family to conceal it and not to spread it around like *ludah ke langit, timpa batang hidung sendiri* ‘spit to the heavens and the spittle falls on your own nose’ (MS 56).

As a rather conservative society, the Malays believe that it is the human nature of man-woman relationship that the first move should come from the man in courting. A woman who makes the first move or is doing the wooing will be sure to get condemned as *lesong mencari alu* ‘the mortar has gone to look for the pestle’ (MS 81), *seperti perigi mencari timba* ‘the well has gone to look for the pitcher’ (MS 81) or a stronger condemnation as *rebung tak miang, bemban pula miang* ‘the bamboo has no fine hairs, but the *bemban* has!’ (MS 81). However, the Malays have many proverbs that worship the happy or harmony combination between couples. There are, for example *seperti pinang dibelah dua* ‘like the two halves of a betel-nut’ (MS 101), *seperti cincin dengan permata* ‘like a ring and the stone with which it is set’ (MS 101) and *seperti raja dengan menteri* ‘like a ruler and his minister.’ There are also proverbs that praise the beauty of woman: *seperti gading dilarik* ‘like polished ivory’ (MS 15). However, there are more proverbs that tend to touch on the ethical aspect

dealing with women (i.e. virginity, unmarried woman and widow) like: *nyiur ditebuk tupai* ‘the coconut has been punctured by a squirrel’ (MS 52) or *mumbang ditebuk tupai* ‘the immature coconut has been punctured by a squirrel’ (MS 183). *Nangka dibalut makin sehari makin besar masak di tangkai* ‘if you wrap a jackfruit on the tree, it gets bigger and bigger every day as it ripens on the stem’ (MS 99) is used to describe an unmarried woman who is trying to conceal her pregnancy. Those who are deserted are described as *bergantung tidak bertali, bersalai tidak berapi* ‘hanging – but there is no rope! Roasted, but there is no fire’ (MS 52). A woman’s physical and sexy posture or movement is likened to: *Lenggang-lenggok bagai cupak hanyut* ‘swaying from side to side like a drifting coconut-cup’ (MS 137).

Many Malay proverbs also deal with friendship. These are strong enough to explain the fact that they are easy to approach and like to make friends. The closeness or the inseparable love of friendship will be expressed by *seperti kuku dengan isinya* ‘like the nail and its flesh’ (MS 9) or *seperti aur dengan tebing* ‘like the bamboo and the river bank’ (MS 120). When someone has been betrayed by one’s friend or suffered a breach of trust, this unfaithful friend will be described as *sokong membawa rebah* ‘the prop brings about the fall’ (MS 16) or *pagar makan padi* ‘the fence eats the crop’ (MS 17). Someone who discards his old friend after having a new companion is described as *sudah dapat gading bertuah, tanduk tak berguna lagi?* ‘Now that he has got a lucky ivory, he has no further use for the common horn’ (MS 75). In friendship, they believe that one’s *hati* should come first and not appearances. They contend that appearances are sometimes deceptive and therefore we cannot judge a book by its cover. In order to elaborate this idea, the Malays use: *Rambut sama hitam, hati lain-lain* ‘we all have black hair, but our dispositions are different’ (MS 7); *buah macang buruk kulitnya* ‘the horse mango has an ugly rind, but the fruit is worth eating all the same’ (MS 7); *kecil tak boleh disangka anak, besar tak boleh disangka bapa* ‘He may be young, but you cannot assume that he is a child; he may be grown up, but you cannot assume he is a father’ (MS 8); *masak di luar, mentah di dalam* ‘Cooked outside, but uncooked within’ (MS 8). We should not mix with those people who are bad, as this will bring bad name for the whole group of people: *Seekor kerbau membawa lumpur, semua kerbau terpalit* ‘if one buffalo is muddied, the whole herd is (thought to be) dirty’ (MS 48) or *sebab nila setitik, rosak susu sebelanga* ‘because of a single drop of indigo, the whole pot of milk is spoilt.’

Forms, Patterns and Images of Malay Proverbs²⁹

Malay proverbs are traditional wisdom, which are constructed under different forms, patterns and images with the assistance of different rhymes and beautifully arranged rhythms. They can be obtained in various forms: from the shortest (but isolated) one-word proverb (e.g. *terijuk*) to the most common two-word *simpulan bahasa*³⁰ (e.g. *panjang tangan, kaki bangku*); and from a simple single

perumpamaan (e.g. *seperti isi dengan kuku*) to a lengthy and complex proverbial saying (e.g. *adapun buah pria itu, kalau ditanam di atas batas sago, dan dibaja dengan madu lagi disiram dengan manisan, serta diletakkan di atas tebu sekalipun, apabila dimasak pahit juga* ‘You may plant the bitter cucumber on a bed of sago, and manure it with honey, and water it with treacle, and train it over sugarcane, but when cooked it will still be bitter’ [MBRAS 3: 14]). Therefore, the common definition of proverb as “sense, short, salt” does not fit in the Malay context. Even though it is very rare, proverbs sometimes do also appear in the form of a quatrain, or known as *pantun* in Malay. *Pantun* in its most basic form is a four-line verse. Each line is normally composed of between eight to twelve syllables and usually about four to five words. Physically it is divided into two sections. The first two lines are called *pembayang* (foreshadower) by the Malays (or *sampiran* by the Indonesians); the latter two lines are known as *maksud* or meaning. The external music of the poem depends on its ab-ab rhyme scheme. There are a handful of examples quoted in MBRAS (1992):

*Bangsai di hulu kerapatan,
Sayang durian gugur bunganya;
Sesal dahulu pendapatan
Sesal kemudian apa gunanya?*

Have a hut upstream hard-by,
alack, the *durian* has shed its blossom:
Repentance in time is profit,
repentance afterwards – of what use can it be?
(MBRAS 29: 37)

*Anak angsa mati lemas,
Mati lemas di air masin;
Hilang bahasa kerana emas,
Hilang budi kerana miskin.*

The gosling died drowned,
it died drowned in briny water;
Wealth ruins courtliness,
and poverty ruins discretion
(MBRAS 9: 47)

In terms of the Malay proverbial patterns, there are two which are rather commonly found: (i) Proverbial comparison; and (ii) Cause-effect proposition. Proverbial comparison or analogous proverbs are proverbs which use comparative markers like *bagai* [e.g. *bagai pinang dibelah dua* ‘like an areca nut split in two’ (MBRAS 175: 87)], *bak* [e.g. *bak anjing tersepit* ‘like a dog that is sandwiched’]³¹, *laksana* [e.g. *laksana bunga dedap, sungguh merah berbau tidak* ‘like the *dedap* flowers, crimson but scentless’ (MBRAS 47: 179)], *seperti* [e.g. *seperti pinang pulang ke tampuk* ‘like a betel nut which returns to its calyx’ (MBRAS 175: 89)], *ibarat* [e.g. *ibarat dakwat dengan kertas, bila boleh renggang terlepas?* ‘like ink on paper, when can the two be sundered and parted?’

(MBRAS 57: 12)], *umpama* [e.g. *umpama kijang dirantai dengan mas, jikalau ia lepas, larilah ia juga ke hutan makan rumput* ‘like a deer secured with a golden chain, which if set free runs off to the forest to eat grass’ (MBRAS 113: 168)] and *pantun*.³² These kinds of proverbial comparison are normally known as *perumpamaan*. The use of simile and analogy are quite common among the Malays. The state of poverty is to be compared like a fowl: *seperti ayam kais pagi makan pagi, kais petang makan petang* ‘like a fowl which eats in the morning what it scratches up in the morning, and eats in the afternoon what it scratches up in the afternoon’ (MS 100). A state where people are left without a leader is said to be *seperti anak ayam kehilangan ibunya* ‘Like chicks losing their mother’ (MS 57). The use of dog as analogy in Malay proverbs is quite numerous. The situation where brothers are always engaged in a quarrel is metaphorically compared to the relationship between a dog and a cat: *Seperti anjing dengan kucing* ‘like dog and cat’ (MS 46). The person who is very happy to get what he wanted is described as *bagai anjing berjumpa pasir* ‘Like a dog finding a sandbank [running heedlessly hither and thither for sheer joy]’ (MS 122). There are also proverbs which are metaphorical like *masa itu emas* ‘Time is gold.’ The richness of analogous proverbs can be shown through the own words of the compiler of *Mestika Bahasa* (1965), Muhammad Yusof Mustafa. According to him in his preface, it is difficult to arrange proverb collections alphabetically as there are just too many proverbs which use the comparative marker (e.g. *seperti, bagai*). As he put it: “*banyak benar peribahasa yang berawalkan dengan perkataan-perkataan tersebut*” (too many words begin with those words) (1965, vi).

Cause and effect proverbs are proverbs that stress on the causal relationship between two inter-related events. This causal relationship is presented either through a hypothetical proposition or a non-hypothetical proposition. Hypothetical causal proverbs are proverbs confined to the use of the hypothetical “if” (*jika, seandainya, kalau, jikalau, sekiranya*) or “if... then...” (*Jika... maka...; Kalau... masakan...*) to elaborate a relationship. These can be seen in proverbs like: *kalau benih yang baik jatuh ke laut menjadi pulau* (if a good seed falls into the sea, an island will spring up – MBRAS 93: 29) and *kalau tidak dipecahkan ruyung di mana boleh mendapat sagu?* ‘If you do not split the trunk of the palm, how can you get the sago?’ (MBRAS 95: 38).³³ Causal relationship sometimes can also be presented without the use of a hypothetical marker. Such proverbs are *ada gula, ada semut* ‘where there is sugar, there will be ants’ (KIPM 1: 10; MS 223), *ada bangkai, adalah hering* ‘where there is a carcass, there will be vultures’ (KIPM 1: 4; MS 223), *siapa makan cabai dialah merasa pedas* ‘he who eats chillies will get his tongue burned’ (MS 9) and *siapa makan nangka dialah kena getahnya* ‘He who eats the jackfruit will get sticky fingers’ (MS 9) (For a detailed analysis of logical proverbial patterns, see Chapter 4).

Besides having their own identity of forms and patterns, Malay proverbs also demonstrate the colourful choices of local images like plants, animals and objects that can be available in their

surrounding or of what they have experienced in life. The image of plants or flora can be found quite commonly in their sayings. A few examples can be quoted here in order to elaborate how the Malays have been creating their proverbs by using the richness of their environment – plants (e.g. *pohon/pokok/* tree, *rumput/* grass) and certain parts of a plant (e.g. *duri/thorn*): *Kalau tidak kerana angin, masakan pokok boleh bergoyang* ‘If not for the wind, how could the tree sway’; *Bicarakan rumput di laman orang, di laman sendiri rumput sampai ke kaki tangga* ‘To concern oneself with the weeds in someone else’s garden and have them growing up to the doorstep in your own garden’ (MS 144); *adakah duri dipertajam?* ‘Does one sharpen torn?’ (MS 29); *Umpama Akar seruntun, sungguh pahit menjadikan ubat* ‘Like a handful of roots, though they be bitter, they make good medicine’ (MS 39), vegetables (e.g. *cendawan/mushroom*, *mentimun/* cucumber): *Seperti cendawan tumbuh selepas hujan; Mentimun dengan durian* ‘Like cucumber and durian,’ fruits (e.g. *amra, kedundung, cempedak, nangka, tembikai/* water-melon, durian): *Amra jangan sangka kedondong* ‘Do not mistake a hog-plum for a kedondong’ (MS 6); *daripada cempedak baik nangka* ‘The nangka is better than the cempedak’ (MS 99); *bagaimana tembikai nak berlaga dengan durian?* ‘How is a watermelon going to take on a durian?’ (MS 215) and rice and things that are related with it (e.g. *padi, nasi, kerak, dedak, beras, sekam*): *Ada beras taruh di dalam padi* ‘If you have rice, keep it among the unhusked grain’ (MS 185); *ada nasi di balik kerak* ‘There is (edible) rice behind the kerak’ (MS 40) and *api di dalam sekam* ‘Like fire in chaff’ (MS 104). There is no doubt that rice (and things that related with it) becomes the favourite choice in Malay proverbs as the Malays are an agrarian society. They earned their living mainly through the paddy industry and rice is also their main food.

Malay proverbs sometimes also exploit the behaviour of animals to represent the meaning of life or situation. Animals which get the attention of the Malay proverbs are mammal types (e.g. especially dogs, elephants, tigers and buffaloes as well as cats, deer, *badak/* rhinoceros, *kera/* monkey, *kuda/* horse, *kaldai/* donkey, *pelanduk/* mouse deer and *babi/* pig): *Gajah sama gajah berjuang, pelanduk mati di tengah-tengah* ‘When elephants meet in conflict, a mouse deer that gets between them is sure to perish’ (MS 97); *seekor kerbau membawa lumpur, semua kerbau terpalit* ‘If one buffalo is muddied, the whole herd becomes dirty’ (MS 48); *asal kuda itu, kuda juga; dan kaldai itu kaldai juga* ‘If you are born a horse, a horse you are; and if you are born a donkey, a donkey you are’ (MS 73); *anak badak dihambat-hambat* ‘Chasing a young rhinoceros’ (MS 80); *anak kera nak diajar memanjat* ‘Giving lessons in climbing to a young monkey’; *berhakim kepada buruk* ‘go to the monkey for justice’ and *anak harimau menjadi kucing* ‘The tiger cub has turned into a pussy’ (MS 89). Proverbs that are related with birds (e.g. *ayam, bangau, itik, enggang, helang, pipit, gagak, kukur*): *Burung gagak pulang ke benua, hitam pergi, hitam balik* ‘The crow goes home: black he goes forth and black he returns’ (MS 152), *bangau kekasih kerbau* ‘The paddy bird’s sweetheart is the buffalo’ (MS 138) and *bagai pungguk rindukan bulan* ‘Like the owl moping for the moon’ (MS 107). Fishes (e.g. *ikan/* fish, *ikan belida/* catfish, *seluang, sepat/* sprat, *cencaru/* horse-mackerel, *yu/* shark, *setoka/* ray,

haruan/ a kind of freshwater fish, *channa striatus*) also attract their attention and play a significant part in the Malay proverbs; for example: *Ada air, adalah ikan* 'Where there is water, you will find fish' (MS 222); *ikan belida, sisik ada, tulang pun ada* 'The catfish has scales as well as bones' (MS 222); *cencaru makan petang* 'The horse mackerel feeds late' (MS 19); *anak seluang tipu umpan* 'The young *seluang* cheats the bait' (MS 153); *anak sepat ke tohor* 'like a sprat in the shallows' (MS 52) and *belut jatuh ke lumpur* 'the eel falls into the mud' (MS 71). Proverbs that are related with amphibians (i.e. *kura-kura*/ tortoise, *katak*/ frog) are: *Kura-kura memanjat kayu* 'tortoises can climb trees' (MS 166) and *seperti katak di bawah tempurung* 'like a frog under a coconut shell'. The use of reptiles (e.g. *ular*, *sawa*, *buaya*) as images can be seen from: *Seperti ular kena palu* 'Like a stricken snake' (MS 227); *ular menyusur akar tidak akan hilang bisanya*; *Adakah buaya menolak bangkai?* 'Is a crocodile going to say no to a carcass?' (MS 31). Insects (e.g. *nyamuk*/ mosquito, *lalat*/ fly, *semut*/ ant, *belalang*/ grasshopper) and other types of invertebrate (e.g. *udang*/ prawn, *lintah*/ horse leech, *pacat*/ leech), even those that cannot be seen through our eyes (e.g. *tungau*/ mite, *kuman*/ mite) are also included in the Malay proverbs that bears testament to the colourful features of the Malay animal kingdom. These include: *Marahkan nyamuk kelambu dibakar* 'angry with the mosquitoes, mosquito net gets burned', *Ada gula, adalah semut* 'Where there is sugar, there will be ants' (MS 223); *lalat cari puru* 'The fly flies straight to a sore' (MS 223); *ada padang, ada belalang* 'Where there is a grassy plain, you will find grasshoppers' (MS 222); *lintah menghisap darah* 'Like a horse leech sucking blood' (MS 199); *banyak udang, banyak garamnya* 'Many prawns, many flavourings' (MS 53); *macam pacat, sudah kenyang tanggal* 'Like a leech, which falls off the victim when it has had its fill of blood' (MS 28) and *seekor kuman di benua China dapat dilihatnya, gajah bertenggek di batang hidungnya tak sedar* 'A mite in China can be seen, but an elephant sitting on one's own nose escapes notice' (MS 144) (For the most dominant images appearing in the Malay proverbs repertoire and their frequency, see Table 4.3).

Conclusion

The Malay proverbs are part of the Malay worldview. They have been created as the result of how the Malays perceive the relationship between human and human, between human and nature and also between human and the supernatural. The conception of good and bad values which they believe have given rise to do's and don'ts is as suggested in the content and meaning of proverbs. Various forms, patterns and images have been used to convey these messages in the form of proverbs and this wisdom of the past has been used by authors and speakers from all walks of life and in different genres of writing and speaking. Despite the challenges ahead, proverbs continue to be a part of Malay culture that has displayed the values of *kehalusan* (fineness) and *budi bahasa* ^{courtesy} of that race. How we should look at the Malay proverbs as a source to understand the ways of Malay thinking, I have

demonstrated. Chapter 3 will later usher us into the theoretical dimension for us to understand the Malay mind and reasoning.

Notes:

¹ I do not use the word “influence” alone, but prefer to use the words “enriched” and “influenced” together to suggest the advantages and disadvantages of various religious experience as the word “influence” has become rather negative and emotionally contaminated. To put on the emotive dimension of a word, perhaps Thouless (1953) will agree with me that “enriched” suggests a “strongly approval” attitude, whereas “influenced” provokes a “strongly disapproval” attitude.

² By early stage, I mean in this context, in a rather loose sense, to the oral tradition, where *peribahasas* and other folklore were assumed to have originated.

³ The worldview of Malay folk tales and folk dramas is based on Md. Salleh Yaspar (1985).

⁴ Dundes (1972) defines “folk ideas” as “traditional notions that a group of people have about the nature of man, of the world, and of man’s life in the world” (p. 95).

⁵ For those who are interested in knowing more about the Malay worldview from various perspectives (See Mohd. Taib Osman 1985a): (i) Malay magic, see Skeat (1900) and Endicott (1970); (ii) indigenous, Hindu and Islamic elements in Malay worldview, see Mohd. Taib Osman (1989); (iii) Islamic worldview of man, society and nature among the Malays in Malaysia, see Mohd. Nor bin Ngah (1985); (iv) the worldview of peninsular Malaysian folk tales and folk dramas, see Md. Salleh Yaspar (1985); (v) the traditional Malay socio-political worldview, see Mohd. Taib Osman (1985b); and (iv) language and the worldview of the Malay peasants, see Asmah haji Omar (1985).

⁶ In philosophy, a human is generally divided into two components, viz. mind and body. “Body” is something that can be perceived with our sense perception, whereas “mind” is something that cannot be perceived and does not occupy space. Therefore, soul, *semangat*, thinking etc. will automatically fall into this category.

⁷ Generally, one of the important functions of *peribahasa* is to serve the ethical function, which stresses on the good and bad values of human affairs. In this construction, *badi*, mischief or badness is coined as a terminological contrasted to the element of goodness, *budi*. Besides being an interesting word play, the word “*badi*” is also theoretically applicable and meaningful based on the Malay worldview as can be seen through the eyes of Skeat (1900: 94) in order to understand the Malay metaphysics.

⁸ I treat the construction of *tuhan* and *hantu* as rather speculative but interesting. However, I fail to trace the comparative origin between these two words so far. But both words are of Austronesian origin. In Malay language, *tuhan* is *Herr-gott* (Mr. God) (Dempwolff 1938: 144). There are also a few words in Dempwolff (1938), which are either directly or indirectly related with *tuhan* (God), viz. *tua*’ (*Altsein*, being old) (p. 141) and *tuan* (*Herr*, Mr.) (p. 144); whereas *hantu* or *antu* is *Gespenst* (ghost) (p. 62). No real research can be cited so far. But an interesting contrast is also highlighted by Chen Die (2002). Chen finds it very mysterious and wonders how our ancestors have created those words. According to Chen, it seems that Malay words like *tuhan* and *hantu*, English words god and dog, and Chinese words like *fo* (Buddha) and *zei* (thief) do have certain etymological mystery!

⁹ This relationship was first constructed based on my own understanding of *budi*. Later, I found out that it also goes well with the five characters of *budi pekerti* ^{morality} from Edi *et al.* (1997). I have also included “*hantu*” in this model as “*budi*” itself, semantically, does carry the negative connotation also.

¹⁰ I have discussed generally the concept of proverb in my definition of terms (See Chapter 1). The following section will only touch on *peribahasa*.

¹¹ For the general discussion on various kinds of *peribahasa*, see Alisjahbana (1948).

¹² These three categories were discussed in Chapter IX (*Simpulan Bahasa atau Ungkapan*), Chapter X (*Peri Bahasa, Bidalan dan Perumpamaan*) and Chapter XI (*Bahasa Kiasan*).

¹³ The confusion between various categories of *peribahasa* has become an age-old but important and interesting research question to up and coming Malay paremiologists. The problem of differentiating one category of *peribahasa* from another category of *peribahasa* prompted the editorial of *Pembina Bahasa Indonesia* to come out with a tentative answer, which is general without convincing analysis and data; see Alisjahbana (1953, 120-121).

¹⁴ In *Kumpulan Pantun Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka) edited by Zainal Abidin Abu Bakar (1984), for example, there are also *pantuns* which are also *peribahasas* at the same time: *banyak udang banyak garam/ banyak orang banyak ragam* ‘many are the shrimps, much is the salt/ many are the people, many too are their ways’ (Cf. KIPM 30: 570).

¹⁵ Besides *peribahasas*, *pantuns* are used also to suggest conflict resolution (See Muhammad Haji Salleh 1990).

¹⁶ For further discussion on various functions of *peribahasa* in terms of generating positive working attitude, see Othman Mamat (1975), in which he discussed how *peribahasa* was used to explain the ideas of philosophy of life, cooperative and hard-working character, relationships between men and women, marriage etc.

¹⁷ The original *peribahasa* reads: *hujan emas di negeri orang, hujan batu di negeri sendiri, baik juga di negeri sendiri* (Though it rains gold in the land of strangers and stone in our own, yet it is better to be in our own country) (Translation in MBRAS 80: 71). There are so many *peribahasa* mentioned in that poem. For the details

of the whole poem, see Taufiq Ismail, *Sajak Ladang Jagung* (Jakarta: Budaja Djaja Dewan Kesenian Jakarta), 1973, 52-53. For other examples and discussion on literary use of proverbs, see Abraham and Babcock (1994).

¹⁸ Both *cempedak* and *nangka* are known as jackfruit. *Cempedak* is *artocarpus champeden*, whereas *nangka* is either *artocarpus heterophyllus* or *artocarpus integer*.

¹⁹ “*Cili api*” is a pen name in one of *Parti Rakyat Malaysia* (PRM) political newsletters “*Pedas-pedas Cili Api*” (as spicy as hot chillies), which appeared in <http://www.prm.tsx.org>. This column carries political comments and criticisms with cynical connotations. The proverbs and related issues discussed above were taken from *Cili Api* 24 (18 February 2000).

²⁰ The equivalent proverb is *gunting makan di hujung* ‘Like scissors which cut at the point’ (MBRAS 72: 53).

²¹ There are just too many examples that can be mentioned, which appeared almost as a daily affair and being quoted by politicians every now and then: “*Serkap jarang* (a wild accusation)” by Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia (see Nick Leong 2000), “*Seperti katak di bawah tempurung* (like a frog under a coconut shell)” by Dr. Nasir Hashim, protem chairman of Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) (*Star* 2000b [March 6]).

²² Although the use of proverbs as graffiti from one angle might be taunting traditional wisdom, psychologically, there is a positive dimension – as a way of expression by using the aesthetic phrases. It might also be seen as a way of expressing grievances towards unjust government or against colonialism (to fight for independence). This will be dealing with a rather philosophical question as “can the end justify the means.”

²³ For a more detailed argumentation on certain proverbial stereotypes and discrimination in Malay proverb, see Chapter 5.

²⁴ According to Article 160, Malaysia Federal Constitution:

“*Melayu*” ertinya seseorang yang menganuti agama Islam, lazimnya bercakap Bahasa Melayu, menurut adat istiadat Melayu dan – (a) lahir, sebelum Hari Merdeka, di Persekutuan atau di Singapura, atau ibu atau bapanya telah lahir di Persekutuan atau di Singapura, atau pada hari Merdeka itu, ia adalah berdomisil di Persekutuan atau di Singapura; atau (b) ia adalah keturunan seseorang yang tersebut; (Lembaga Penyelidikan Undang-Undang 1999, 238).

“*Malay*” means a person who professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom and – (a) was before Merdeka Day born in the Federation or in Singapore or born of parents one of whom was born in the Federation or in Singapore, or is on that day domiciled in the Federation or in Singapore; or (b) is the issue of such a person; (The English version was taken from *Malaysia Federal Constitution* 1986, Kuala Lumpur: MDC Sdn. Bhd. p. 156).

²⁵ Proverbs on women are more dominant in most proverbial traditions as compared with those on men (See e.g. Storm 1992; Kuusi 1998). For the gender stereotyping in Malay proverbs, see Chapter 5.

²⁶ There are just too many themes to be covered or discussed. This section is just to give a quick bird’s eye view and is not intended to be really extensive.

²⁷ Brown (1951, 23) quoted the proverb as *Penyu bertelur beribu-ribu, seorang pun tak tahu: ayam bertelur sebiji pecah khabar sebuah negeri*; however, *ayam bertelur sebiji riuh sekampung* is more common now.

²⁸ See Senu Abdul Rahman, Ali Ahmad, Rais Sariman et al. 1971, especially chapter 4, on *peribahasa*. For a specific criticism on *Revolusi Mental* (1971), see Syed Hussein Alatas (1972).

²⁹ For a more detailed analysis on the logical patterns of Malay *peribahasa*, see Chapter 4.

³⁰ A collection of *simpulan bahasa* can be referred to Abdullah Hussain (1966).

³¹ For other examples of proverbs beginning with the word “*bak*”, refer to Abdullah Hussain (1991), pp. 28-29, nos. 532-545.

³² The word “*pantun*” sometimes is used with its old meaning of *seperti*, but very rare. See the proverb quoted by Brown (1951, 95): *Pantun lang dengan ayam, lambat-laun disambar juga* ‘like a hawk and a fowl, sooner or later the fowl will be taken.’

³³ To view more examples of *peribahasa* which begins with the word “if”, see MBRAS 1992 (pp. 93-101, proverbs nos. 27- 76).

CHAPTER 3

UNDERSTANDING THE MALAY MIND: SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

While every individual is affected by the quickening flow of world events, he is still strongly influenced by the ways of living and thinking in his own nation and culture (Nakamura 1964, 3).

Introduction

In this chapter, I will be taking the general conception of argument and their disputes among scholars as my platform and proposing my general criteria on what is to be considered as “good” argument and how the Malays perceive the realm of argumentation in their own way by taking *peribahasa* as their argumentative discourse. I believe that there should be a general, universal and transcultural pattern of reasoning if we are to take argument *per se* by looking from a logical perspective. However, I suspect that there must be a difference in ideas on what is to be considered as “good” and “effective” use of argument in different cultures and their central focus rhetorically. I propose that they are basically focusing on “*budi*” instead of pure reason when dealing with the differences of ideas. But before that, I will first proceed to review the differences between logic, rhetoric and dialectic, explaining a few terminologies and how this underlying framework and general model should become the cornerstone in explaining the mind of the Malays and their ways of arguing and argumentation. Finally, this research will try to reinvent a possible theory for Malay argumentation, which is implicit in their proverbial culture and to see what are their similarities and differences as compared with their Western counterpart. I will be using *peribahasa* to test my general assumptions in Chapter 4.

The Malay Oral Tradition and Its Literature

The Malays are basically a group of people, who have a very strong tradition of oral literature. They are rhetorically skilful and are said to be natural orators. This can be seen clearly through their rich and colourful tradition of verbal folklore. Generally, most of the folklore, either in the forms of folk tale, folk song or folk play are used to fulfil the entertainment needs (Cf. Szemerkenyi 1974, 936). This tendency is also quite common in the Malay tradition of verbal folklore as can be observed from their *cerita rakyat*, *lagu rakyat* and *permainan rakyat*. Folksay, according to Szemerkenyi (1974), however, is something different, basically being used for rhetorical purposes or as the tools of argumentation – to persuade and convince at the same time. Szemerkenyi’s observation is true as well when we are referring to the Malay proverbs. *Peribahasa* as a verbal folklore for that matter plays a

significant role in representing the Malay mind as compared with the other oral traditions. The wisdom and knowledge within *peribahasa* were created through their experience of dealing with nature, informal learning and communication. They learn from each other within the same community, inter-communities and from the universe. Ong (1982, 9) argued that human beings in primary oral cultures, those untouched by writings in any form, learned a great deal and possessed and practiced great wisdom, but they do not 'study'. According to Ong (1982, 9) again: "They learn by apprenticeship – hunting with experienced hunters, for example – by discipleship, which is a kind of apprenticeship, by listening, by repeating what they hear, by mastering proverbs and ways of combining and recombining them, by participation in a kind of corporate retrospection – not by study in the strict sense."

They created certain specific patterns and forms to facilitate their ability to recall or to retrieve their thoughts since writing and technology had not yet emerge. This happened to every culture and they created proverbs to record their thought and thinking; the Malays being no exception. They created *peribahasa* to keep their ideas on do's and don'ts, good and bad to guide their life and as rules or reasons in resolving differences among them either for the sake of self argumentation or within the rhetorical game between proponents and opponents. These are the rules that they applied in a critical discussion or a dialogue game. In order not to forget about the rules, they arranged them under certain forms, patterns and structures of arguments. In a primary oral culture, Ong (1982, 34) said that:

to solve effectively the problem of retaining and retrieving carefully articulated thought, you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence. Your thought must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulaic expressions, in standard thematic settings (the assembly, the meal, the duel, the hero's 'helper', and so on), in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone so that they come to mind readily and which themselves are patterned for retention and ready recall, or in other mnemonic form.

Ong's observation is right. Even until today, the laws of *adat* (customary laws) are kept written in the form of formulaic sayings or proverbs within some parts of Malay world. For example, there are proverbs on the administration of the *Adat* among Naning¹ Malays.² Hamilton (1955, n.p.) in his introduction said that:

In a community where the written word came late and was the privilege of the few, the customary law of the land and accumulated moral precepts together with many practical injunctions for everyday life, based on the shrewd observation of natural phenomena, were handed down in the form of maxims which are still current and in frequent use.

Ong (1978, p. 5; cited in Ong 1982, 35) also affirmed the important of proverbs in the society:

The law itself in oral cultures is enshrined in formulaic sayings, proverbs, which are not mere jurisprudential decorations, but themselves constitute the law. A judge in an oral culture is often called on to articulate sets of relevant proverbs but of which he can produce equitable decisions in the cases under formal litigation before him.

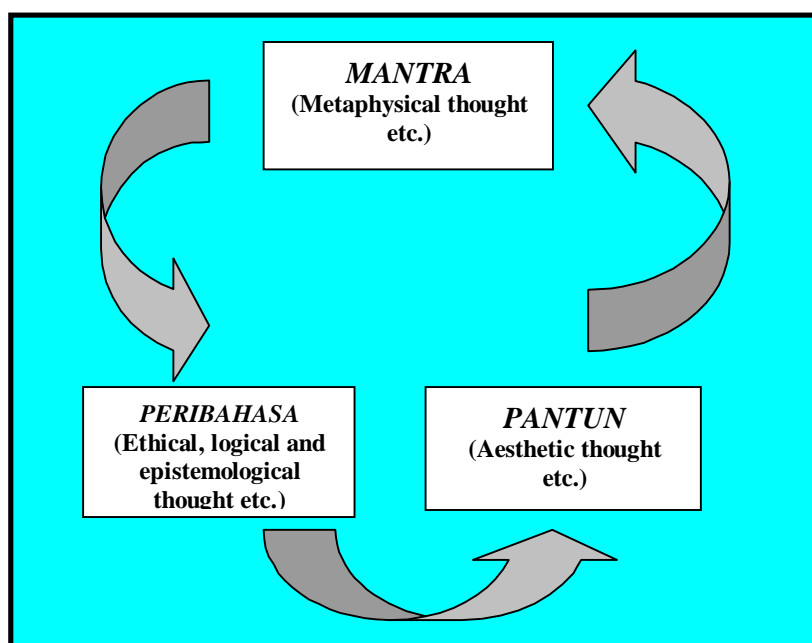
Geography of the Malay Mind

The research on Malay philosophy, their thinking and their ways of arguing and reasoning has never been getting serious attention even by the Malay themselves until today. Whether the Malay thought or mind can be generalised and plotted into certain kinds of philosophical categories still remain unexplored and much serious research need to be done. Do the Malays as an ethnic group have their own philosophical tradition in general? This is rather tricky when it comes to which definition of “philosophy” we are referring to. Should we take the Greek-medieval-European tradition of Socrates through Sartre as the prototype of what philosophy should be as what Solomon and Higgins (1993) might ask? Solomon and Higgins (1993, xi) claimed that the very narrow strictures on what deserves the honorific name of “philosophy” had hampered the appreciation of those other cultures and their philosophies. Taking the current emphasis on argumentation, which is often summarised as rationality, as the essence of philosophy has, for instance, excluded much of the more poetic and non-disputational wisdom of non-Western cultures, and has even given rise to the remarkable suggestion that these cultures are therefore either non-rational or pre-rational. According to them, the ideas by which Eastern and Southern people guide their lives were often expressed in song, slogan, and poetry, not disputational prose, and of course poetry had been banned from philosophy since the time of Plato. Generally, it should not be denied that a single civilised group of people possess their own way of philosophical thought in order to guide their life and resolve differences among themselves. If we look superficially into the development of Malay literature, we should realise that the elements of philosophical thinking did exist and became obvious (not to say dominant) in various dimensions and categories. As a general construct, it can be shown that the philosophical thinking of the Malays can be constructed into a circle of philosophical domain through the evidences of other research, i.e. from the logical dimension through *peribahasa*,³ aesthetic dimension through *pantun*,⁴ and metaphysical dimension through *mantra*⁵ (See Figure 3.1).

The Malay ways of thinking can be basically divided into three important categories: the logical dimension, the aesthetic dimension and the metaphysical dimension, which represent the realm of the ideas on truth, beauty and goodness in the Malay mind.⁶ Through their *peribahasa*, elements of various logical patterns can be disclosed. The ideas of beauty, *indah* and the idea of taste, *rasa* can be fully explored through *pantun*.⁷ The metaphysical elements of existence or issues related to it: reality and appearance, *semangat* (soul), mind and body etc. are very rich and can be analysed within the realm of *mantra*. In this work, however, I will only be concentrating on the logical dimension of the

proverbs. The critical question arises automatically as to whether there is something that Malays can redeem as Malay logic and critical thought which flourished under a feudal system of government, as compared to the emergence of logical thought which prospered under a democratic setting in the old times of Greece?

Figure 3.1: Circle⁸ of Malay Philosophical Thought through *Peribahasa*, *Pantun* and *Mantra*



**Logical Practice:
Argumentation and Rationality in the Malay World**

In the Malay world, there is no clear sign and interest so far in defining the terms of argument, their attitudes toward argumentation and what more can be said as the criteria for good and effective arguments rhetorically, dialectically and logically. No theoretical works can be cited as the handbook for Malay logic, rhetoric or dialectic. The academic works that can be quoted so far are the criteria on the concept of beauty or *indah*, but not logic, rhetoric or dialectic. Braginsky (1979) had attempted to unravel the foundation of Malay-Muslim literary aesthetics from *Hikayat Isma Yatim* and concluded that there were three fundamental ideas. In Braginsky's mind, beauty, firstly, is related to divine power and God's infinite riches (*kekayaan*). Secondly, *indah* had a wider meaning – it carries connotations of wonder, magic, the supernatural and the like. Thirdly, the beautiful object will bring about a feeling of wonder and *pengsan*, faintness, which is further related to cure and therapy. Muhammad Haji Salleh (1991, 109) commented that Braginsky's study was very interesting indeed but limited to *Hikayat Isma Yatim* and works of the same nature and age. However, he revealed certain basic values in the Malay narrative. To Muhammad Haji Salleh (1991, 109-120), a beautiful work of art, firstly, tells of

real life, as it teaches and guides its readers and listeners, which means that it carries the didactic quality of literature and secondly, the originality. The beautiful is usually linked to the original, which is composed by its first author, the wise one, and therefore closer to the source of truth. Another quality which seems to hail from Malay oral traditions is its episodic style of narration. These episodes carry scenes that are often independent of the other scenes, but may also be strung together with the preceding parts. The Malay *hikayats* are heavily interspersed with magical scenes, along with characters brought to earth in extraordinary circumstances and manner. The last element of beauty in Malay literature is the dramatic quality. What their criteria are regarding argumentation and rationality has yet to be studied and known. How did they resolve their disagreement in the cause of differences of ideas? How did they handle their rationality and emotion? Even though no work can be found so far on their rationality and argumentation, to deny the use of mind power as sources of rationality, creativity or whatever it is that is related to the thinking among the Malays is equal to erasing history. For example, it had been noted that about a thousand years ago when the Malays were still under the governance of the Empire of Sriwijaya in Palembang, they had developed a centre for the study of Buddhism. It was said that Atisha (982 A.C.E – 1054 A.C.E) was a teacher who brought the Mind Training teaching from Sumatra to India and then transmitted it to Tibet.⁹ Wishing to study with the master of compassion Dharmakirti (Tibetan: Serlingpa), he travelled to the faraway land of Suvarnadvipa (present-day Sumatra). Atisha stayed there for twelve years (1013 A.C.E - 1025 A.C.E), learning, among many other things, the Mind Training practice. Within such an advanced environment of mind training, it would be unbelievable if the Malays did not possess certain kinds of thinking!

During the Islamic era, under the governance of Sultan Iskandar Thani for example, we can see a great debate in the palace of Aceh, between the followers of Hamzah Fansuri from the School of *Wujudiyah* and Nuru'l-Din al-Raniri and his followers.¹⁰ The work of Hamzah Fansuri was debated by Nuru'l-Din al-Raniri.¹¹ As the result of the polemic, Sultan Iskandar ordered those books authored by Hamzah Fansuri to be burnt at the square of Bait al-Rahman mosque (*perkarangan Masjid Bait al-Rahman*) in 1637.¹² This incident also shows that argumentation and debate did exist, but the attitudes towards the real spirit of argumentation had succumbed to the authority and orthodoxy of religion and this was enforced with the involvement of the Sultan. There was perhaps argumentation without an attitude of open-mindedness as a prerequisite of rationality. Furthermore, the Malay attitude towards argumentation can also be perceived indirectly from various events and traditions under a wider conception of the Malay world (including Java, Minang etc.) as the following section will go to show.

Ancient Malay Attitudes to Argumentation and the Tradition of Rhetoric

The concepts of “argument” and “argumentation” in the Malay language cannot be traced directly. There is no such word which can be directly equated with “argument” prior to the arrival of Islam or

the West. The present term for argument “*hujah/ hujahan*” (argument) and “*penghujahan*” (argumentation) and their related terminologies like reasoning (“*taakulan*”) are borrowed from Arabic.¹³ There is also another term for reasoning in the Indonesian language, *penalaran* (root word *nalar*) which is also of Arabic origin. The term “*argumen*”, which has also been used, is derived from Latin. Without those terms, does it mean that the Malay never reasons and never argues? My answer for that is “No.” To say “yes” to that question would be rather absurd as it means that the Malays never engage in any kind of argumentation, which is quite unforeseeable and unthinkable. It is impossible to imagine a world without differences of opinion. In order to understand the concepts and attitudes to argumentation among Malays, we should return, reinterpret and unravel them from the stories, verses and paragraphs as it is within these works that the thoughts of the Malay race are still to be found intact. The Malays, who are known to excel in orating might not argue exactly like the Western model of argumentation, but they do argue in their own rhetorical way, by using their *peribahasa* and other ways of quotations (i.e. quotation from Koran and *Hadith*) within their own cultural settings. Abrahams (1968; 1972, cited in Ong 1982, 44) described it very well: “Proverbs and riddles are not used simply to store knowledge but to engage others in verbal and intellectual combat: utterance of one proverb or riddle challenges hearers to top it with a more apposite or a contradictory one.”

The Malays did argue on various important issues in order to settle their disagreement. Tee (2000) argued that the existence of Malay argumentation and debate had been existing as late as at the end of the first millennium:

Bukan kali pertama Melayu berdebat sesama sendiri dalam sejarah tentang sesuatu perkara. Bukan juga Melayu ini suatu bangsa yang terbentuk pada alaf kedua. Orang Melayu sebenarnya dapat dikesani telah mula berdebat selewat-lewatnya pada akhir alaf pertama (Tee 2000).

(It is not the first time that the Malays have been known to debate among themselves in history about a single issue. The Malays are not a race formed in the second millennium. The Malays can in fact be traced to have first debated latest at the end of the first millennium.)

Even though the tradition of argumentation did exist among the Malays, it was however confined to *budi*. They would not purposely make the opponents feel ashamed of being defeated, especially when the opponents come from a higher rank (i.e. king, sultan, prince) to show their *budi* not to *menjatuhkan air muka* (lit. To drop one’s water face, which means to spoil one’s dignity or make one feel ashamed). For instance, this tendency can be found in what Tee (2000) has written:

Malahan Dharmakirti sendiri nyaris terguling dalam perdebatan ini jikalau bukan disebabkan kedudukannya sebagai anak raja Sriwijaya menurut Hikayat Seri Atisa dari Tibet-China itu! (Tee 2000)

(Even Dharmakirti himself was almost defeated in this debate if not because of his status as the prince of King Sriwijaya according to *Hikayat Seri Atisa* from Tibet-China!)

The Malays treat the authority of their orators as one of their important criteria when dealing with speeches. The strength of the argument alone is not enough to justify the goodness and effectiveness of a rhetorical situation. The charisma and background of an orator must be taken into consideration as an added value. In their proverbs, it is believed that fallacies like *tu quoque* and two wrongs make a right are something rhetorical. Within the context of Malay argumentation process, the background of the arguer is rather important to persuade. To the Malays, there should be a parallel between words and actions. This was justified by so many proverbs included in the Malay proverb collections. They were searching for self-purification before criticising and condemning the opponents (See chapter 4, caution against fallacies). Let us look at two traditions within the Malay world, first the Minangs and second the Javanese to see if the rhetorical and dialectical skills existed in this feudalistic system of the Malay world before arguing for the case of the Malays in this study.

The example of how an orator in the Malay world overcomes weaknesses and changes it into strength can be observed from one of the “*dongeng*” (myths) – *Minang Jual Sikat* (The Minang Who Sells Combs) – used to “*menyindir*” (wax) the Minangs, one of the ethnic groups. This story describes how a Minang comb seller displayed his oratory skill. It was told that he was supposed to advertise the strength of his comb through his oratory skills. He tried to bend his comb in an effort to prove that the combs that he was selling could not be broken. However, out of his expectation, the comb that he bent broke. So, the burden of proof went against him and he was put in a disadvantaged position in front of his huge audience. His earlier statement that his comb is strong was challenged. However, he remained calm and very quickly came out with another statement “look at the inside of the comb, clean and pure without any contaminated materials.” His rhetorical turn was excellent and the audience did not realise that the orator had changed the topic of discussion. Through this story we can actually see how cunning and rhetorically-talented the people of Minang were. They could turn a defeat into victory very quickly. Logically speaking, this example is seen as dropping into the pitfall of fallacy of red herring and running from the issue discussed. They are, however, rhetorically skilful. Umar Junus (in Jaafar Haji Abdul Rahim 1989, 325) cited this story to justify the idea of Edward de Bono’s Lateral Thinking. Umar Junus claimed that the Minang comb seller was talented in lateral thinking. He also argued that to the Minang folks, Aristotle’s syllogism is a world of knowledge which is only theoretically correct but not practical and also totally alien to them. Even though this example did not come from the Malays, it is nonetheless appropriate to justify the existence of rhetorical mind in the Malay world.

Does the Malay mind also value rhetorical strategy like the Minangs? Does the Malay mind caution against certain fallacies? Do the Malays really engage at the level of what Johnson (1997) termed as “dialectical tier” when dealing with argumentation? Did the Malays really encourage the art of argumentation as portrayed by the Greek tradition as part of their system of democracy and democratisation? Despite the existence of rhetorical skills as for the case of the Minangs, the so-called real dialectical argumentation was rather absent under a feudal system. The people from the Malay world considered “arguments as impoliteness” especially when talking to the elders. They are more in favour of with age, comes wisdom. Subagio (1999, 142) described that the culture of argumentation did not belong to the whole Malay world and did not even take root in their own original culture:

Berdebat tidak berakar pada kebudayaan asli kita. Sampai kini bicara kita mengikuti jalur satu arah: dari atas ke bawah dalam bentuk petuah atau petatah-petitih. Orang tua dan mereka yang dianggap tua, apakah saudara tua, kepala kampung, menteri di dalam kabinet, ketua partai, atau pemimpin perusahaan meneruskan tradisi memberi petuah itu, yang di dalam hubungan modern disebut briefing, pengarahan, atau penataran. Orang kecil di bawah diharapkan tinggal mendengarkan, mengangguk-angguk, dan melaksanakan perintah. Kebiasaan memberi dan menerima petuah itu cocok bagi suasana feodal, yang kita wariskan dari nenek-moyang.

(Argumentation is not rooted in our own original culture. Until now our discourse follows only one direction: from top to the bottom in the form of maxims. The elders and those we perceive as elders, whether older relatives, village head, Cabinet minister, head of a political party or industry leader continue with this tradition by giving maxims and guidelines, which in the modern context are called briefing, command, or induction. Small people at the bottom are expected to listen, obey and enforce the command. The normal practice of giving and receiving maxims and orders are appropriate in the context of feudalism, which we inherited from our ancestors.)

According to Subagio (1999), taking from the Javanese context, this scenery can be seen through the words “*sesepuh*”¹⁴ and “*panutan*”¹⁵, which emerged in the context of feudalism, in which those who are old and can be considered as or promoted to the status of “eldest” definitely have the right to lead society and to be supported by the masses. The people who are sitting in the lower hierarchy only have to perform their responsibility based on the advice given without their own thinking and can never oppose or say no. The leadership within the tradition tends to become authoritarian and can never tolerate different opinions. The ideas from the people and youngsters (*kaum muda*, in Javanese *mudha* means “stupid and no experience”), according to him, should be considered as equally “old” as the leaders and the elders.

This took place even in the real Malay context. Youth who displayed certain kinds of intelligence were seen to be a challenge to the leadership within a feudal system. This sentiment was recorded in the famous Malay historical “fiction,”¹⁶ *Sejarah Melayu* (The Malay Annals) (Shellabear 1977, chapter 10), in which it was told that one day when Singapore was attacked by *todak* (swordfish), the king at

that time, Paduka Seri Maharaja ordered the people of Singapore (then Temasik) to use their calves as fort in order to defend the sovereignty of the country. Many were killed until a small boy suggested that they use the stem of banana trees. Unfortunately, the intelligence of the small boy aroused the jealousy of the ministers who were reported to have said to the King: “*Tuanku, budak ini terlalu sekali besar akal nya. Sedang ia budak lagi demikian, jikalau ia besar berapa lagi banyak akal nya? Baiklah ia kita bunuh*” (My Lord, this small boy is too clever. He is already so at a young age, if he is older, how clever will he become? It is better for us to kill him) (Shellabear 1977, 52). Such an incident might be true or only a fiction, but what the author was trying to show is the anti-intellectual culture in that particular political system. Under such a political system, will there be any dialectical argumentation within the Malay culture?

Perspectives on Argument and Rationality: In Search of a Synthesis

The general discussion on the developments in the argumentation theory in Western traditions is quite diversified. There are various schools of thought on the development of the argumentation theory, which seems to pull in different directions, especially between logic and rhetoric.¹⁷ The first direction is mostly dominated by Western philosophy, which tends to narrow the conception of reason and rationality. It defines the argument as essentially rational, where the sense of “rational” is taken as “reasoned.”¹⁸ The second is that of scholars in rhetoric, who have been more likely to embrace a broader notion of what it means to argue, deliberate and to think rationally; who have sought to broaden the concept of rationality. Their works are normally grounded in communication theory and the understanding of argumentation as a social phenomenon.¹⁹ The work of Charles Arthur Willard, *A Theory of Argumentation* (1989), a follow up to his earlier book *Argumentation and the Social Ground of Knowledge* (1983) is a good example. Against the traditional individualism of Western thought, he characterised rationality as a collective accomplishment. By deriving his idea from Toulmin’s *The Uses of Argument* (1958) and Willard (1989), Wenzel believed that our rationality is constantly being constructed, revised and developed in the discourses of the communities we belong to and this also comported nicely with Habermas’ notion of communicative rationality.²⁰ Generally, this major difference also tends to highlight the differentiation between Western and Eastern conception of argument and rationality: the Western model has been reduced to a purely logical, individualistic and masculine rationality, which stresses on a dichotomy between emotion and reason, and the marginalisation of non-discursive forms; the Eastern way of argumentation, however, tends to be grounded in emotion-centred thinking, which gives priority to collective accomplishment, femininity (not so aggressive in approach) and a merger between reason and emotion in a harmonious way of understanding. Both Eastern and Western ways of argumentation have actually given birth to strength and weaknesses in the knowledge, wisdom, values and excellence of the communities where they belong to in solving the differences and disagreement.²¹

The domination of argument as a linear rational process in the Western tradition had a long history beginning with Plato's rationalism and continuing through Popper to the present day. The negative image of Sophism tended to tarnish the image of rhetoric. Their concept of relativism as contrasted with Socrates-Plato's conception of truth and universality have at last become an age-old problem and conflict between rhetoric and logic or even more generally between relativists and absolutists in the whole history of philosophy. Even though the influences of Sophists and relativism became dominant in everyday life, their role in the study of argument appeared rather limited. Recent criticism moulded by Kuhn, continuing effort through the emergence of informal logic and critical thinking, and modern revival of rhetoric have opened up many issues regarding the nature of argument, either as a study or social practice – there seems to be a paradigm shift in the study of argumentation.²² It was Aristotle who first set up the forefront of reconciliation between logic (analytic) and rhetoric until logic once again resorted to formalism and symbolic logic through the influence of Russell and Whitehead with their logical atomism. The concept of rationality from then on was seen as directly opposing emotion. Russell and Whitehead believed that in order to analyse objectively, there should be a neutral symbol free from emotion, which at last give rise to symbolic logic – the use of symbolic language to analyse natural argument.

The present situation of logical treatment of rationality and argumentation in the West is fully understood for various reasons. The emergence of scientific inquiry and the positivist ideal, which treated emotions as fully irrational has provided logic a good reason to dominate the direction of the understanding of reasoning and rationality. Rhetoric which was deemed the counterpart of dialectic by Aristotle was pushed into the periphery because it was always considered and treated as the art of persuasion.²³ There is also always a pre-conceived idea on rhetoric and persuasion. Rhetoric has always been treated as something only for the sake of ornamentation and style (i.e. empty rhetoric) and persuasion as a skill that is never based on facts but has to resort to emotion. Logic, however, has been treated as more superior than rhetoric. It deals with the truth. Logic is to convince and rhetoric is to persuade. Both “convince” and “persuade” are words with highly emotive-overtones; “convince” is positively emotive as compared with “persuade”, which is negatively emotive. Besides the emergence of the positivist ideal, the tendency of compartmentalisation of knowledge under the name of specialisation divided logic, rhetoric and its cognate fields into their own territory. This mono-disciplinary approach might be acceptable in certain disciplines but will be more appropriate in the other. As a public, social and cultural practice, the study of argumentation from my point of view should not be the responsibility of philosophers and logicians alone. Rather, it should be multidisciplinary in action.

The sharp dichotomy between reason and emotion is ironical indeed in dealing with the study of argumentation and rationality, especially when the quest for universal, formal, indubitable foundations for reason or rationality is typically grounded in Aristotelian logic. Yet, Aristotle himself made room in his broad conception of deliberative reason for emotional factors. In his analysis of rhetorical argumentation, he recognised three grounds of appeal: *Logos*, consisting of the claims and evidence found in the subject matter being discussed; *Ethos*, which arose from the way in which the audience perceived the character and personality of the speaker; and *Pathos*, which is grounded in the audience's potential for emotional response. It is rather a mistake to equate "*logos*" with logic, hence the rational thought, whereas the other categories of appeal are in some sense irrational. In Aristotle's terms, it is entirely rational to believe someone whom we respect as a person of good character, good sense, and good will. Likewise, it is perfectly reasonable and rational to feel pity for someone who has suffered misfortune, anger for those who do wrong, and so forth.

It is the right time now to introspect and look ahead of the concept of a multidisciplinary approach that has emerged in the current research tradition and education. As far as I am concerned, logic, rhetoric and dialectic should be considered as a whole in the study of argumentation whereas reason and emotion should be treated as mutually complimentary and not mutually opposing. These tendencies can be seen for instance through the growing interest for a synthesis between rhetoric, logic and dialectic (e.g. Wenzel 1990, 1992) and the attempts to coalescence between various modes of argumentation, logical, emotional, visceral and kisceral [a word he derived from a Japanese word "*ki*," which signifies energy, life-force and connectedness] (Gilbert 1995a, 1997). Besides the demand for a synthesis, as a social and cultural practice, I believe any kind of argumentation studies should not totally neglect the cultural differences, from which the arguers come from.²⁴ Lately, certain intercultural communication scholars, sociolinguists, rhetoricians and argumentation theorists have expressed their dissatisfaction with Eurocentric models of deductive and inductive reasoning. John Hinds (1990, cited in Warnick and Masunov 2000), for example, noted that deductive and inductive patterns such as those used by native English speakers do not adequately describe communicative practices in some Asian cultures where writers rely on a *quasi* inductive pattern to get their recipients to think for themselves. Foss and Griffin (1995) argued that persuasion according to Eurocentric model "not only establishes the power of the rhetor over others but also devalues the lives and perspectives of those others" (p.3, cited in Warnick and Manusov 2000, 381). Nancy Wood (1998) noted that such Eurocentric models lead people to believe that "they will be required to take an opposing view, to debate, or to be contentious or aggressive" (p. 29, cited in Warnick and Masunov 2000). Gilbert (1997) noted that "anyone who has had contact with a variety of cultures knows that, in some, arguing calmly and politely may be taken as a sign of disinterest. In some cultures, arguing at all is a gross violation of etiquette, whereas in others, saying only that which needs to be said can be a sign of rude taciturnity" (p. 40). We are always taught to tell the truth, but for Bavelas, et al. (1990):

“in many cultures (including, arguably, his own) this rule simply does not apply in many situations. Insulting one’s host by not praising the food, drink, or accommodations is often considered a far greater fault than equivocating or, even, outright lying” (Taken from Gilbert 1997, 15). In their study, Warnick and Manusov (2000) argued that there are many ways people from diverse cultures organise their justificatory reasoning in conversation with others and that these patterns are connected, in part, to cultural beliefs and values.

The age-old problem arises as to what are the differences between logic and rhetoric and how logic and rhetoric²⁵ can be incorporated within a single platform in the study of argumentation. Johnson (1997) explained that the discipline of logic (though not under that name, but analytic) and rhetoric goes back to Aristotle and what distinguishes rhetoric from analytic as they first emerge is that rhetoric focuses on a different kind of argumentation. Analytics focuses on certainty achieved in demonstration; dialectics on probability; and rhetoric on persuasiveness. By introducing the concept of “argumentative space” as a subspace within rational space, Johnson said that to engage in the practice of argumentation is to enter argumentative space and he hypothesised that informal logic and rhetoric see this space in different ways, and define it somewhat differently. He identified three general differences: (1) Both logic and rhetoric are concerned with persuasion by means of argument and governed by rationality. Rhetoric is pre-eminently concerned with argumentation as effective persuasion, whereas logic is concerned with rational persuasion; (2) Rhetoric requires only the illative core; logic requires the dialectical tier as well. Through the phrase “manifest rationality”, Johnson argued that from the perspective of logic, rationality must not only be done, but it must be seen to be done, and anything that compromises the appearance of rationality must be avoided. However, rhetoric generally will not require a dialectical tier in the argument. If the arguer can achieve the effective argument, with what he called as the illative core, then the interest of rhetoric will have been satisfied. (3) Logic requires; rhetoric does not, that the premises of an argument satisfy the truth-requirement. Johnson proposed that it should be shown how a theory of evaluation can embrace both truth and acceptability, even though there will be what he termed as “The Integration Problem.” Despite the differences that he had identified, Johnson concluded that both logic and rhetoric perform a vital service when they explore the argumentative space, which emphasises the *telos* of rational persuasion and effective persuasion respectively. The differences between logic (formal and informal) and rhetoric, from my point of view, are still dealing with the debate between Socrates-Plato and Sophist’s conception of argumentation. Those differences are actually focused within the concepts of truth and ideal settings (where all of their audiences are to be assumed as fully conscious of the rational rules and they also tends to reduce the nature of human to only purely logical) as contrasted with the conceptions of acceptability/effective and pragmatic within the realm of rhetorical argumentation, which sees the argument as a form of social phenomenon or interaction. From my point of view, in

order to understand arguments and argumentation properly, we should look at the issue of argumentation within a synthesis. Charles Arthur Willard (1981, 191; cited in Gilbert [1994]) wrote:

My... proposal that argument be viewed as a form of social interaction has proved remarkably uncontroversial; but my arguments that non-discursive symbolism is a core element of argumentation's subject matter have provoked wide dispute. This is an odd result, since I do not see how one can take the argument-as-interaction notion seriously and still maintain that arguments are exhaustively or uniquely linguistic communications (... is original)

Gilbert (1994), in supporting the ideas of Willard, argued that since social sciences are concerned with people and that people argue in an intricate matrix composed of numerous forms of communicative methods. It is therefore essential that this matrix be examined and brought to bear as a tool of analysis upon argumentative interaction. Gilbert supposed that modes of communicating, persuading, convincing and disputing that are wholly or partially non-rational are equally integral to argumentation. Groarke (1996) broadened the definition of "argument" from a normal verbal account of reasoning which defines "argument" as a set of sentence to include the "visual arguments" which are communicated by non-verbal visual images and put informal logic and the study of argumentation further. His approach tended to bring the studies of argumentation in line with our present situation where people argue not only by words but also by other modes of communication. Willard's and Gilbert's comments should be equipped well with the general practice of practical argumentation and it is also in accord with the recent development in the studies on Multiple Intelligence (MI) by Howard Gardner (1993, first published 1983). According to Gardner (1993), there not only exists a single, universal and general intelligence or normally known as Intelligence Quotient (IQ), which is supported generally only by language and logical-mathematical skills, but also other types of intelligence. Gardner (1993) argued that humans are basically unique and diverse. He further noted that while the present Western tradition has been known to concentrate on language ("word smart") and logical-mathematical ("number/ reasoning smart" or "rational-order") skills, there are also six other aspects of intelligence, viz. spatial intelligence ("picture smart"), bodily-kinesthetic intelligence ("body smart"), musical intelligence ("music smart"), interpersonal intelligence ("people smart"), intrapersonal intelligence ("self smart") and naturalist intelligence ("nature smart")²⁶. These different kinds of intelligence actually play a role, either directly or indirectly, in resolving the disagreement among the various communities. Groarke's (1996) treatment of visual images in a way recognised the ability of a person who can argue not only with language and logical-mathematical intelligence but also "spatial intelligence."

With this understanding of their differences and purpose, now is the time to come to a synthesis between logic, rhetoric and dialectic in the study of argumentation. The research within the fields of argumentation sees the need for a synthesis between three core and important fields: rhetoric, dialectic

and logic as shown by the bridging works of Wenzel (1990, 1992 & 1993). For Wenzel, in order to analyse argument more effectively, three perspectives of argument should be considered: Argument as process, argument as procedure and argument as product. These three perspectives are actually in accord with rhetoric, dialectic and logic respectively. The concept of argument should not be limited to the so-called formal construct of mathematical logic alone but should be further enhanced by bringing in their ancient counterpart rhetoric and dialectic. The return of rhetoric²⁷ gives light to a proper understanding of argument in the everyday discourse as shown by the use of *peribahasa* in the Malay ways of communication. It has always been claimed that the Malay tradition is an oral tradition (i.e. Teeuw 1988, Kafil Yamin 2000). Sweeney (1987) observed that even up to university levels, the Malay students when asked to write their assignments tended to manifest their oral tradition.

In their article, Tindale and Groarke (1987) tried to propose a synthesis between logic and rhetoric in developing a theory of good effective argument. In the context of informal logic, the authors argued that any satisfactory theory of argumentation must address both concerns, logical and rhetorical aims. Citing works done by Thomas Farrell (1976), George Yoos (1984), Richard Burke (1984), Perelman (1969, 1982) and Alan Brinton (1985), which moved from logic to rhetoric and William Harpine (1985) who remained firm in opposing the move, the authors proposed the need for a rhetorical conception of rationality. *Ad hominem*, guilt by association, two wrongs reasoning and arguments from ignorance and slippery slope arguments all can be not merely persuasive but also logically correct. Tindale and Groarke's (1987) view are to a certain extent right as different cultures might have different criteria in judging which argument is good and which argument is fallacious. Gilbert (1997) suggested that we should not limit ourselves to a relatively narrow cultural tradition. He wrote:

In some cultures, for example, saying only the minimum is both the exception and a sign of potentially rude taciturnity. In others, the exact opposite is true. Consequently, due to these and other considerations, certain fallacies such as emotive language, equivocation, *ad hominem*, and *ad misericordiam* (to mention a few) might be applied according to totally different precepts (p. 15).

Gilbert's idea was in line with the idea of Solomon and Higgins (1993). We have to be careful, warned Solomon and Higgins (1993, xv):

What looks like a fallacy in the context of an alien argument may in fact be a legitimate piece of reasoning within an alternative mode of practical reasoning, and what at first appears to be nonsense in another culture may well make sense in the context of a large problem or way of thinking.

The study of arguments and the process of argumentation should explore the full scales of three sub-disciplines of argumentation: logic, rhetoric and dialectic or what Wenzel termed as "three controversial arts" (Wenzel 1993, 1). Brockriede's initial observations about argument as a person-

centred, open, and variable concept are useful starting points, particularly his observation that “argument is not a ‘thing’ to be looked for but a concept that people use, a perspective they take” (Brockriede 1990, 4; first published in 1974). His observation had actually brought forward the direction of the study of argumentation and its theory towards a direction that is not purely concentrating on the logical dimension, as was the case with formal logicians who were dealing with argument as a mathematical product. Wenzel’s idea (1979, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993) as mentioned above on argument rhetorically, dialectically and logically had been grouped together nicely in his article (Wenzel 1992) which includes purpose (practical and theoretical), situation, rules, standards, speaker and listeners (See Table 3.1):

Table 3.1: Three Perspectives Summarised

	Rhetorical Perspectives focuses on “arguing” as process	Dialectical Perspective focuses on “argumentation” as procedure	Logical Perspective focuses on “argument” as product
Practical purpose:	Persuasion	Criticism	Judgement
Theoretical purpose:	To understand conditions for effective arguing	To explain conditions for candid and critical argumentation	To establish standards for sound argument
Situation:	Natural rhetorical situations	Contrived arenas of discourse	Field of argument
Rules:	Tacit social rules	Explicit procedural rules	Explicit inferential rules
Standards:	Effectiveness	Candidness	Soundness
Speaker:	Naive social actor	Conscious advocate	Impersonal explicator
Listeners:	Particular audience	Particular striving for universality	Universal audience

Source: Wenzel (1992, 134).

Wenzel believed that argumentation is simultaneously rhetorical, logical and dialectical, because these are perspectives one can take to study what is going on at any given moment in discussion. From the rhetorical perspective, one is interested in who is trying to influence whom and by what means. From a logical perspective, are the arguments and appeals worthy of our acceptance? From a dialectical perspective, are the procedures (whether tacit social rules or explicit institutional rules) of the kind to produce maximally dialectical deliberation?

Another important work, which gave room to a synthesis, is perhaps Michael A. Gilbert’s. Gilbert’s coalescent argumentation (1995a) tended to be “a normative ideal that involves the joining together of two disparate claims through recognition and exploration of opposing positions. By uncovering the crucial connection between a claim and the attitudes, beliefs, feelings, values and needs to which it is connected, the disputing partners are able to identify points of agreement and disagreement” (p. 837). He argued for a more person-centred, less criticism-focused approach (Gilbert 1995b). He stressed on the important of “multi-modal argumentation.” In order to understand or analyse an arguer’s position, according to Gilbert (1994, 1995a, 1997), one requires exploration into all of the available modes of

argumentation. He categorised modes of argumentation into four categories: logical, emotional, visceral and kisceral (See Table 3.2). He is opposed to philosophical imperialism by logic and claimed that in many situations, ego, physicality and intuition play their roles in argumentative and communicative situations. It is rather unwarranted and neglectful of actual practice to put aside other modes of argumentation, emotional, visceral and kisceral as peripheral, worse or fallacious. His approach seems to be more “culture-friendly” and also received rather good responses from Latin countries.²⁸

Table 3.2: Position Analysis

Logical	Emotional	Visceral	Kisceral
Beliefs,	Attitudes,	Situation,	Intuition,
Claim-reason-complex (CRCs)	Feelings,	Socio-eco context	Insights,
Reasons	Emotions	Physicality	Hunches

Source: Gilbert (1995a, 844).

One of the important theoretical questions in analysing non-Western tradition of argumentation is the relation between argument quality and cultural differences. Does the argument quality tend to be cultural-biased? Siegel (1999) defended the goodness of arguments as characterisable in terms of “the argument itself.” To him, the conception of argument quality made no difference either to the attributes of the persons appraising the argument or to the context in which that appraisal was carried out. He challenged recent works by a wide range of philosophers, argumentation theorists, and social theorists, who rejected such an abstract and impersonal notion of argument goodness. These theorists, especially post-modernists, and normally under the banner of multiculturalism, emphasised the importance of cultural differences in argument appraisal. They argued that the quality of an argument depended upon culturally-specific beliefs, values and presuppositions. Siegel argued that the multiculturalist argument against impersonal conceptions of argument quality fails because they themselves, most fundamentally, presupposed just the kind of impersonal account of argument quality that they seek to reject, or what he called (the presupposition) as “transcultural normative reach.” The ideas of both Siegel (1999) and those of his critics are correct within their perspective when they deal with argument. One stressed more on the “truth-requirement” in argument evaluation whereas the other gave priority to “acceptability-requirement.” Both parties argued based on the ambiguity of the word “goodness.” An argument quality can be “good” if it is rhetorically persuasive. It can also be good if it is logically sound.

In order to understand the mind, logic and the way of argumentation of the Eastern people, the Malays in this context, I think it will be more proper to begin with a more synthetic approach by taking the cultural differences as the platform of discussion on how they argue, deliberate and think rationally. It

is also more appropriate if we were to consider the notion of the current research development in intelligence, whether the work on Multiple Intelligence by Howard Gardner, Successful Intelligence by Robert Sternberg or Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman. The purpose of argument in the Malay community should be treated as to achieve a higher understanding of *budi*^{virtue}, not the aggressive attacks or direct criticism on proponents and the tendency to pinpoint at disagreement and fallacies. The Malays consider open criticism as impolite. The attempt to settle differences or disagreement should be conducted in a spirit of *gotong-royong* (cooperation), to work together in order to achieve the most similarities out of the most differences. The reason why the Malay community has resorted to proverbs in argumentation is because they are more polite, and they believe that proverbial criticism is more *halus* (cultured) and will not hurt their opponents. Edward Djamaris (1990, 27) put it this way: “*Penggunaan peribahasa dalam hal ini ialah untuk menghindarkan perkataan-perkataan yang kasar dan tajam dalam mencaci perbuatan atau sifat seseorang yang kurang baik atau salah, supaya tidak melukai hati orang yang dimaksud*” (The use of proverb in this context is to avoid rude and rough words to condemn someone’s action or character, which is not so good or wrong, so that it would not hurt the person concerned). Before I attempt to discuss the probable model of the Malay way of argumentation with proverbs in the following section and analyse the Malay logical pattern, their emotional mode (i.e. *hati*) and how *budi* and its network play their parts in the following chapters, it will be proper to examine further two important keywords, which I think are playing important roles in Malay discourse.

Concepts

There are two keywords, which need to be addressed in this research as a preliminary step to understand the rationality and emotion of the Malays, viz. *budi* and *hati*. I do not include *akal* as part of my review unlike *hati* (what we normally do as a dichotomy between rationality and emotion) as *akal* is clearly an Arabic term, unambiguous and insignificant to the Malay mind as compared to *budi* and *hati*. *Budi* and *hati*, however, are too ambiguous and therefore need to be explained further. Furthermore, it is generally believed and argued that the Malays think with their *hati* (e.g. Tabrani 1987, Sibarani 1999, Saidatul Nornis Haji Mahadi 1999). From the Malay proverbial tradition, we can discover three dimensions of *hati*: good, neutral and bad (See Table 5.5). But I would rather settle with the concept of *budi* as representing the Malay mind and not *hati*. *Budi*, to me, is not an ethical term *per se* but is the highest Malay conceptual construct that incorporates various entities, viz. emotion (as normally represented by *hati*), rationality (*akal* is generally known as the source of reason), good character (ethics) and ability (practicality)(See Figure 3.4).

Budi: Guiding Discourse of Politeness, Reason and Wisdom in All Communicative Actions

The word “*budi*” originated from the Sanskrit word “*Buddhi*” which means wisdom, understanding or intellect. A *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* defines the meaning of “*Buddhi*” as “the power of forming and retaining conceptions and general notions, intelligence, reason, intellect, mind, discernment, judgment...” (Monier-Williams 1956, 733) However, once this word was accepted as part of the Malay vocabulary, its meaning was extended; not only restricted to intellect and reason but also ethics as well in order to accommodate the culture and thinking of the Malays. *Kamus Dewan* (1986, 152) provides a variety of the meanings of “*budi*”:

1. *akal, kebijaksanaan.*
 2. = *budi pekerti perangai, akhlak, tingkah laku.*
 3. *Sifat baik, perbuatan baik, kebajikan.*
 4. *Bicara, daya upaya.*
-
1. mind, idea, wisdom.
 2. = conduct, character, moral, behaviour.
 3. Kindness, virtue, good deed.
 4. Opinion, ability.

Budi now carries so many nuances of meanings in the Malay worldview and plays a pivotal role in every aspect of the Malay life. It can mean intellect as shown by the phrase *akal budi*, which means common sense or healthy mind. It can also carry the meaning of kindness or virtue as shown in the last two lines of the famous *pantun*: *Pisang emas bawa belayar/ masak sebiji di atas peti/ hutang emas dapat dibayar/ hutang budi dibawa mati* (Sail away with a bunch of bananas/ one ripe fruit remains on the box/ Debts of money we can repay/ Debts of kindness, we take to the grave – translation [Sim 1987, 30]). Commonly, however, it can be denoted as moral behaviour or moral character/action like *budi pekerti*.²⁹ It can also be understood as discretion or good judgement with flexibility as accorded to the use of *akal* (mind) and *hati* (feelings) and as reflected by *budi bicara*. *Budi* should also contribute to the aspect of practicality like *budidaya*. Overall, when we deal with the mind of the Malay, it is the *budi* and its networks³⁰ that determine their thinking (judgement), their moral attitudes, their goodness and how argument should be presented. Pure “*budi*” nevertheless can be led astray if not guided by the ethical aspect of “*budi*.” It should be noted that “*budi*” can also mean “*akal (dl arti kecerdikan menipu atau tipu daya)*” (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* 1991, 150)” like *bermain budi*, “to deceive” by using the intelligence of mind, which is rather rhetorical³¹ in terms of argumentation. The Malay mind develops through a spectrum of *akal budi* and *hati-budi* which include “mind-emotion-moral-goodness-practicality” as their scales of decision-making. A wise person, *budiman* should be thoughtful, considerate (*berhati perut*, literally means has liver and stomach, normally means not cruel in decision), of good conduct and his decision should be an enlightened and practical one that helps society towards prosperity. In order to understand the Malays’ thinking and their argumentation, we

should, therefore, bear in mind that their purpose of argumentation is to ultimately search for truth, goodness and beauty. The importance of *budi* can be further proven through two *pantuns* quoted in Hamka (1983):

*Diribut runduklah padi
Dicupak Datuk Temenggung
Hidup kalau tidak berbudi
Duduk tegak ke mari canggung* (p. 3).

Paddy was made to bow by the storm
Measured by Datuk Temenggung³²
If life were to go on without *budi*
Even sitting upright will be awkward.

*Tegak rumah karena sendi
Runtuh budi rumah binasa
Sendi bangsa ialah budi
Runtuh budi runtuhlah bangsa* (p. xi).

A house can stay upright because of joints
If *budi* collapses, the house will be destroyed
The joints of a nation is *budi*
If *budi* collapses, the nation will collapse.

Hati: Philosophy of Malay Passion

“*Hati*” literally means liver, an organ in humans or animals. It has always been translated as “heart” in English. At the superficial level, this translation seems quite alright and accurate but what “*hati*” really means to the Malay mind is yet to be discovered in depth. *Kamus Dewan* (1986, 379) defines “*hati*” as “*batin (tempat perasaan, pengertian dll)/ soul (the place where feelings, meaning etc. lie).*” When dealing with careful judgement, the Malays are in favour of using “heart (*hati*)” rather than mind as shown by the proverbs (*simpulan bahasa*) “*berhati-hati*”, which means “*memberi perhatian (pertimbangan dsb) yang teliti (sewaktu melakukan sesuatu)* [giving attention (judgement etc.) with care (when doing something)]” (*Kamus Dewan* 1986, 380). For example, one of the Malay proverbs “*ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa/ you will die if you follow your heart, you will be destroyed if you follow your emotions*” is closer to the meaning of “*kehendak*” or “*desire*.” In referring to cruelty, Malays compare it to a person without “*hati*”, “*awak tak ada hatikah?* (Are you heartless?)”, which means that someone is emotionless (without feelings). This “*hati*” which is equated with feelings is nothing special. However, there are just too many Malay proverbs that focus on “*hati*” like *suka hati*, *baik hati*, *buah hati* and *kecil hati* that remain interesting. What is the role of “*hati*” in the Malay mind? Sibarani (1999) argued that “*berfikir terutama dalam dunia masyarakat timur tidak hanya menggunakan akal, rasio atau otak, tetapi juga harus menggunakan perasaan agar terdapat hasil, pemecahan, dan kebenaran yang sesungguhnya* (to think especially in the Eastern world requires the

use of not only the mind, rationality or brain, but also feelings in order to obtain results, solutions and the real truth).” According to him, this can be supported as the word *fikir* (*fikr*) (to think) came from Arabic. The Malays like to think using their feelings as this is considered much more honourable. They do not even use the word “*rasa*” (to feel) as this was perhaps a borrowed word from Sanskrit. The Malays use the word “*hati*” as shown by the words that they used such as *memperhatikan*, *perhatian* and *berhati-hati*, which contain the combination of mind and feelings. *Memperhatikan* and *berhati-hati* means to direct one’s eyes, thinking and feelings with concentration and caution. The highest crystallisation of the Malay mind that combine mind and feelings can be observed through their proverbs, especially *simpulan bahasa*.³³ Does *hati* sometimes refer to the mind like its Chinese equivalent? In the Chinese language, the concept of “*xin*” << 心 >>, literally means heart, sometimes refers to “mind,” which Hansen (1991) described as heart-mind.³⁴ Or is Malay logic or argumentation closely related to India as written by Nakamura (1964, 4)?

I believe that the various other peoples of the East have nearly the same ways of thinking as one or another of these four. Specifically, one may say that Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, and western Indo-China (Cambodia and Laos) are akin to India. Central Asia and Mongolia are akin to pre-communist Tibet. Manchuria, Korea and eastern Indo-China (Vietnam) are akin to China.

Nakamura (1964, 8) further elaborated that “logic in the East originally appeared in India, but when it was introduced into Tibet, China and Japan, it was studied in different ways in each place, and in each country it was considerably modified.” Does it mean that logic show some sort of different appearance when it enters into the Malay world?

The Malay Argumentative Model: The Case of *Peribahasa*

There are various purposes when people use argument. Some use “argument as rational persuasion” (Johnson 1997) while others use argument as inquiry (Meiland 1989); and some use argument as the way people manage disagreement (Willard 1989) while others use argument for the sake of sustaining or reinforcing belief (e.g. religious reasoning). What purposes can proverbs as argument play? It is usually claimed that proverbs have been used to sustain belief, but this is not always true as proverbs may change with the alteration of social cultural practice. The analyses of Cousins (cited in Haring 1992, 70-71), for example, had found sentences or proverbs, which demonstrated that some Malagasy were sceptical about their own belief system. This is also true as well for the Malays. The Malays sometimes do challenge their own proverbs. Proverbs like *biar mati anak, jangan mati adat* ‘it is better to let the children and not the custom die’ were often being challenged. According to Abdullah Ahmad (2000), we should sometimes take the opposite view: *Biar mati adat, jangan mati anak* ‘Let the custom die and not the children.’ What role does the proverb actually play in the Malay tradition in

the context of argumentation? I believe that proverbs in the Malay tradition were used to settle disagreement. In the process of settling disagreement, the Malays theoretically choose to use their *hati budi* and *akal budi* which can be found in their *peribahasas*. This was done as the Malays believe that the authorities of the past are more trustworthy and wiser. It is with this kind of purpose that proverbs were used as a means to resolve argument. The Malays resolve their disagreement in the spirit of *budi*^{virtue} as they believe: *Orang berbudi kita berbahasa, orang memberi kita merasa* (If one is courteous, we should be polite in return; if one gives us, we should taste).

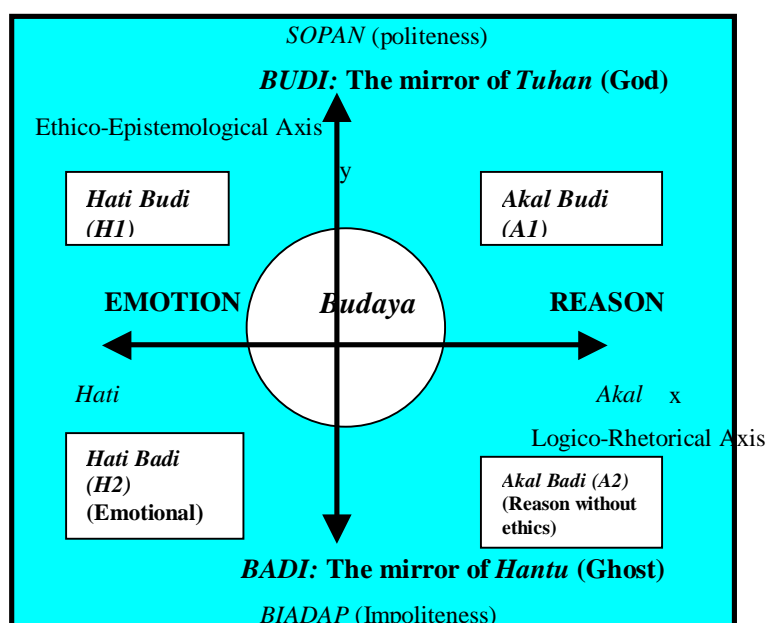
There are two general dimensions of proverbs use: rhetorical function and ethical function. However, Siran (1993) is more in favour of rhetorical function than ethical function when referring to the use of proverbs. According to Siran (1993, 231) when referring to African proverbs: “proverbs’ moral connotations, whether positive or negative, are secondary – they do not belong to the essence of proverbs.” Siran is right that moral connotations do not belong to the essence of the proverbs (in isolation) but it is almost impossible to take away the ethical function of a proverb in a rhetorical situation. It is impossible because the moment a proverb is used in a rhetorical situation, its moral connotations (either negative or positive) will be added or will surface through the interpretation of the speaker and listener. In the Malay context, it will become even more impossible as *budi*, the key concept of the Malay mind is not only ethical but also rhetorical, which generates the concept of *budi bahasa*. One should not only *berbudi* (ethical) but also *berbahasa* (rhetorically skilful).

In order to explain the Malay argumentative model in this section, I will consider these two functions as equally important: Firstly, proverbs are generally used to communicate (rhetorical function) or what I would call **logico-rhetorical axis (x-axis)**. This is because proverbs are not only used to persuade (rhetorical function) but also to convince (logical function). When two speakers engage themselves in a dialogue or an argument, they are inclined to convince or persuade each other through the use of reason and/or emotion. Since reason and emotion are two important keywords for this process, this x-axis should be identified through the polarity between reason and emotion. As compared to the Western tradition, which gives more room for reason, the Malays give room to both reason and emotion. Both reason and emotion are equally important to the Malays as long as they are tied-up by the highest form of *budi*.

Secondly, proverbs are also used to elevate one’s *budi* or morality (ethical function). Here in my model, I prefer to use ethico-epistemological (not only ethical) as *budi* in the Malay mind does not only refer to morality but also wisdom. As such, let me call this dimension **ethico-epistemological axis (y-axis)**. Normally, something is either ethically right or wrong, good or bad and epistemologically true or false and therefore, I use the terms *budi* (to represent right, good and true) and *badi* (to represent wrong, bad and false) which I borrowed from the Malay worldview that we

have already discussed earlier in Chapter 2. This axis shows the polarity between *budi* and *badi* or generally between what is good and what is bad. One should choose to convey the good values and not the bad ones in order to be a *budiman*. The ability to choose between *yang bermanfaat* (something which is beneficial) and *yang bermudarat* (something which is harmful) determines one's *budi*. A speaker who is going up the y-axis is a person who is trying to achieve the highest state of *budi*, whereas one who is running down the vertical y-axis will be blamed as *biadap* (rude or impolite) or entering the realm of *badi* from the perspective of ethico-epistemology (See Figure 3.2). These two functions (or two axes) will not happen in isolation, but in a particular culture (*budaya*) as represented by a circle in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: The Role of *Budi* in the Locus of Argumentation



To combine both of these axes, we will achieve four realms of priorities (H1, H2, A1, A2). H1 (the realm of *hati budi*) belongs to people who are *berhati* and *berbudi* whereas H2 (the realm of *hati badi*) belongs to people who are *berhati* but unfortunately they use their *hati* emotionally until they can be blamed as *biadap* (uncivilised). A1 (the realm of *akal budi*) belongs to people who are *berakal* and *berbudi* at the same time whereas A2 (the realm of *akal badi*) refers to people who are intelligent but immoral, and therefore also *biadap* (uncivilised). As we have discussed earlier, the Malays give the thumbs up for *budi* and not *badi* and as such, only the realms of H1 and A1 are areas of importance and should be developed.

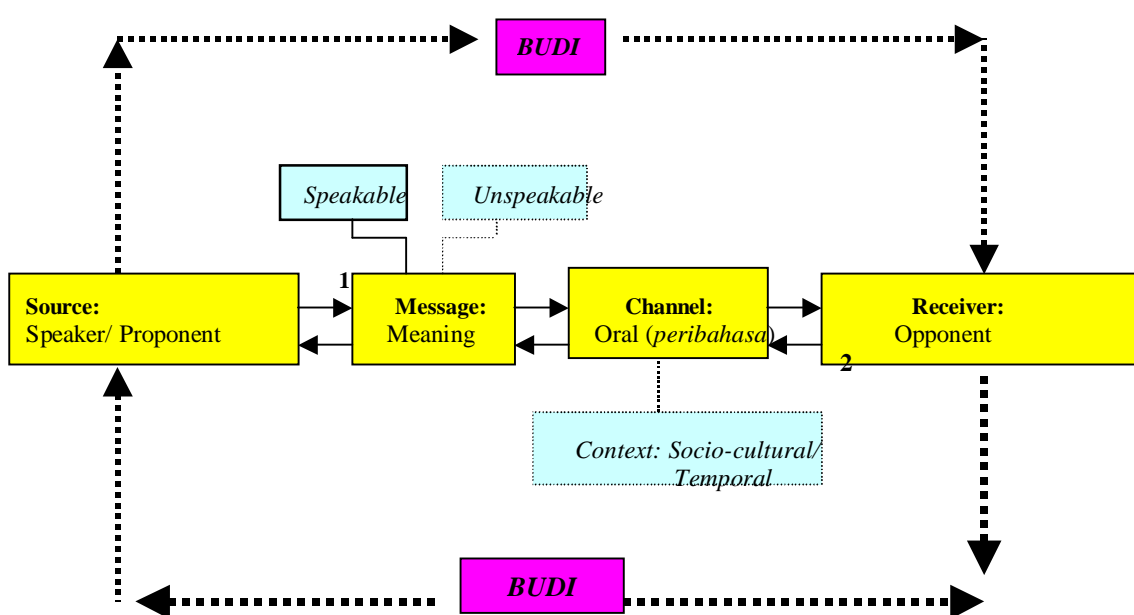
In order to communicate effectively and convincingly, the Malays believe that speakers should consider the two axes simultaneously: logico-rhetorical and ethico-epistemological. First, let me begin with the logico-rhetorical axis, which I have taken from the x-axis of Figure 3.2, and reformulated into

a larger picture of Figure 3.3 in order to see the details of how the process of communication is being carried out: whether one uses proverbs to convince, to persuade, to inform etc. Secondly, I will take the ethico-epistemological axis (y-axis) from Figure 3.2 and reformulate it into the larger picture of Figure 3.4 in order to see how a state of *budiman* can be achieved. Let us go to Figure 3.3 first.

Generally, proverb or *peribahasa* is used by the speaker in order to convey messages (meaning) through various patterns of arguments (e.g. deductive or inductive reasoning, see Chapter 4). *Peribahasa* as oral literature in this context is to be treated as a channel for the speakers to present their ideas. It is this logico-rhetorical function that *peribahasa* plays besides its usual moral connotations (ethical function). In order to interpret the meaning of proverbs, the listener should not only possess language competence but also cultural competence. This means that a listener should not only know the logical structure of a particular language but also the emotive aspect of that language. From Figure 3.3, we see that *perucap yang berbudi* (speaker with *budi*) is a person who uses a proverb to argue (route 1), and this will be counter-attacked with another proverb by his *pihak lawan yang berbudi* (opponent with *budi*) (route 2), as is normally practiced in the event of *berbalas pantun* (quatrains exchange) in the Malay tradition. The whole communication process, however, is determined and controlled by the rules of *budi* (what is underlying in the model) to minimise the chances of both parties being hurt by the message. As I have mentioned earlier, a pair of proverbs like *biar lambat asalkan selamat* ‘let us be slow as long as it is safe’ and *siapa cepat dia dapat* ‘he who is fast will get it’ or *siapa cepat boleh dulu, siapa kemudian putih mata* ‘He who is quick gets what he wants, he who comes after is made to look like a fool’ (KIPM 199: 3696; MS 76) may be considered as contradictory as one proverb promotes the value of being slow (*lambat*), and the other champions the value of being fast (*cepat*). An arguer sometimes can use another proverb (which is contradictory) to challenge the stand of the other arguer and this will force them to explore the possible rhetorical situation or context.³⁵ Malays do engage in verbal dispute but they normally tend to escape from the heat of argument. They will resolve their differences of opinion in light of “*budi* and its network”: A speaker should be *berbudi bahasa* ^{courteous} when communicating with his/her opponent(s). He or she must show a higher degree of *budi pekerti* ^{morality} as part of the qualities of being a good speaker. When dealing with problems between speaker and listener, he or she should be able to solve his problem by using his *budi bicara* ^{discretion} with the guidance of his *akal budi* ^{intelligence}. The function of the Malay way of argumentation is to communicate rhetorically and at the same time fulfil the rule of *budi*. When dealing with the *peribahasa* in the context of argumentation, there are two kinds of messages that should be considered: the logical dimension (speakable dimension like words, forms, claim-reason-complex [CRC] etc. which are grounded in verbal languages) and the extra-logical dimensions (unspeakable dimension like emotions, feelings, spirituality, intuition etc. which are hidden behind the physical-verbal aspect or non-verbal aspect of *peribahasa*). According to Langer (1960, 86): “This logical “beyond”, which Wittgenstein called the “unspeakable”, both Russell and Carnap regard as the

sphere of subjective experience, emotion, feeling, and wish, from which only *symptoms* come to us in the form of metaphysical and artistic fancies” (italic in original). We always tend to analyse the verbal dimension alone as it is used to be understood: “(1) That language is only means of articulating thought, and (2) That everything which is not speakable thought, is feeling” (Langer 1960, 87). In the context of the Malay mind, it will be rather proper for us to look at these two aspects as suggested by Langer, i.e., both thinking and feelings. In addition, both arguers should also obey the rules of the dialogue game, which are ethical and epistemological.

Figure 3.3: Malay Model of Argumentation Through *Peribahasa*



How can a person achieve the state of a *budiman* through the use of *peribahasa* as one of their polite communications? We should look at Figure 3.4 in order to understand this function. Besides conveying its logico-rhetorical function which I have discussed through Figure 3.3, the Malays also treat polite argumentation as a way to achieve the status of *budiman*^{person of wisdom}, or *cerdik pandai* (a wise person).³⁶ When engaging in a polite way of argumentation, the Malays believe that the speakers (proponent and opponent) should be treated as a combination of mind (e.g. reason), body (e.g. *budi pekerti* and other forms of non-verbal communication) and soul (e.g. a culmination of good spirit). The ability to argue is not only on the quality of argument and the skill of argumentation alone, but it should cover the ability to maintain or upgrade their *budi pekerti*^{moral conduct}.³⁷ *Budi*, a spiritual tool that combines “*hati*” and “*akal*” must be used in order to differentiate between “*yang bermanfaat*” (something which is beneficial)” and “*yang bermudarat*” (something which is harmful).” Once the ethical level (first level) has been achieved, the idea behind a single argument must be able to materialise and be beneficiary or *berfaedah*³⁸ and not remain merely as a theory. What has been argued should be pragmatic and able to be put into practice (*budidaya*). This is the second level of the

ethico-epistemological function. The importance of practical evaluation is very clear if we look at the Malay literature. Muhammad Haji Salleh (1993, 4) stated very clearly:

Malay literature does not consider it necessary to set down or polemicise theoretical treatises. Practical evaluation of literary works comes through laughter or sadness that flashes through the individual spectator while watching the puppet play or hearing the *syair* chanted, or *hikayat* romances being retranslated into the mellifluous voice of a reader. In some other instances evaluation comes through discussion during intervals of oral performances. This too is a concrete expression of literary opinion, natural, sometimes unspoken, but followed by a confirmation when the audience returns on the following night or season. A quiet response is a critical evaluation as much as the oral review of past episodes and characters during a pause.

The importance of practicality (*berfaedah, bermanfaat*) in the Malay narrative is also supported by Koster (1997). According to Koster's conception of Malay rhetoric:

The Malays expected the stories they listened to to be either predominantly 'profitable (*berfaedah, bermanfaat*)' or principally 'soothing' (*menghiburkan, melipurkan lara*). Those narratives which managed to blend profit with delight, giving instruction by their exemplariness and providing pleasure by their playful rhetoric at the same time, were apt the more readily to win appreciation (Koster 1997, 15).

According to Hassan Ahmad (2001c): If *akal* is to be equated with the cognitive process, which occurs in the left hemisphere of a brain, then *budi* should be treated as natural consciousness (*kesedaran fitrah*), resulting in the process of balancing and strengthening between *akal*, epistemological values, cultural values and morality. To him, therefore, when the Malays say that one is having brain ("berakal"), they mean that, one should use *akal* brilliantly (*bijaksana*). For Hassan Ahmad, a person who is *berakal* is a person who is not only brilliant or rational and theoretical but also capable of materialising his ideas for the betterment of society, and these ideas must not only be useful but should also be morally correct. According to him, the word "pragmatic" or "pragmatism" in the Malay context should not be treated as similar to the "theory of pragmatism" proposed by psychologist and philosopher, William James, who claimed that knowledge is pragmatic if it has useful functions even though that knowledge or values might not be true.

After going through the first (ethical) and second (pragmatic) levels, the speaker is now ready to go to the epistemological level (third level) where all aspects of *budi* are synthesised and materialised. A person can only be called a *budiman* ^{person of wisdom/ sage} if and only if all of the above criteria have been fulfilled. The Malay concept of reason is not pure reason but reason with the guidance of "*budi*", which means that reason should be rational and humane. In conclusion, the whole process of communication will finally determine whether both parties who engage in argumentation or any

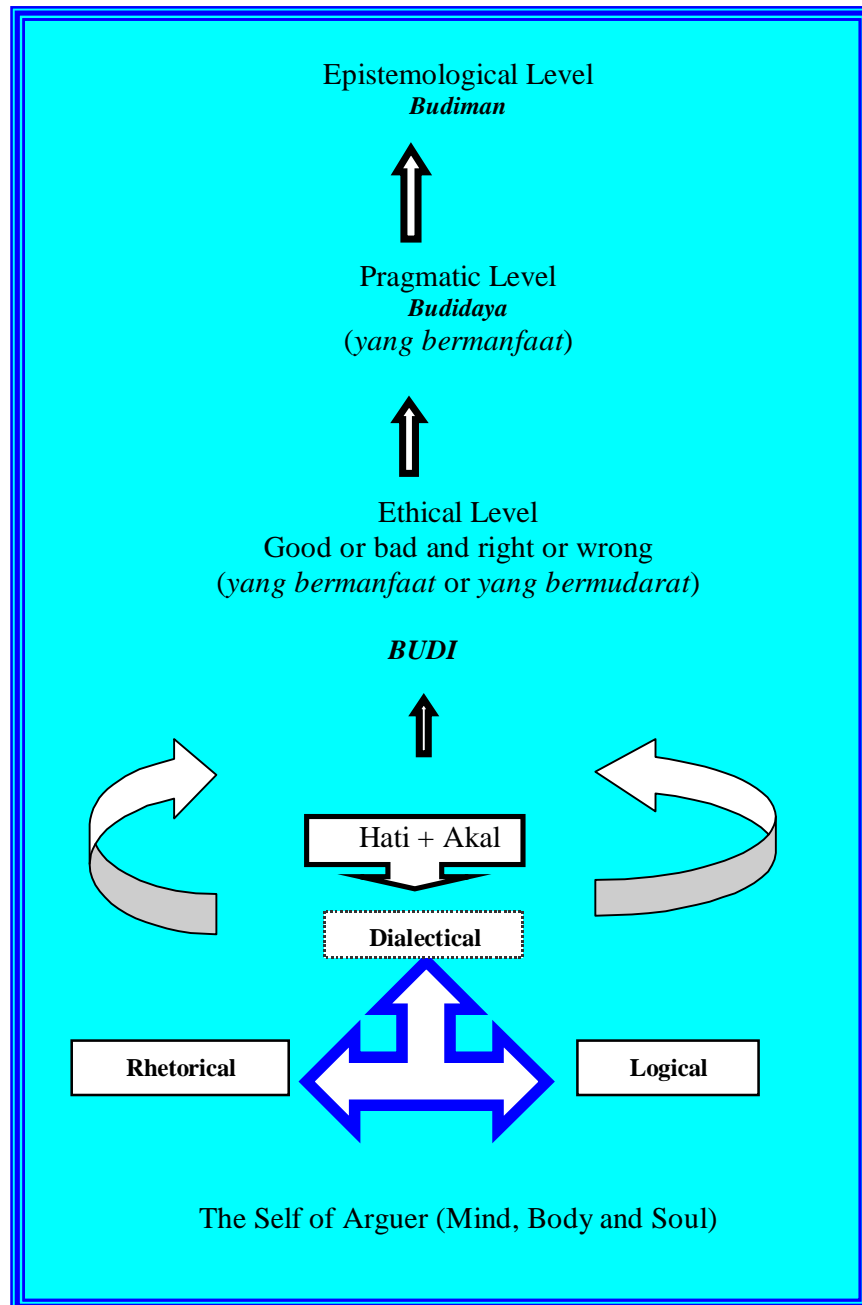
speech acts can be considered as “*orang yang berbudaya (budi+daya)*” (a cultured or a civilised person) (See Figure 3.4).

“*Budi*” as Underlying Reason in Malay Argumentation

The concept of argument as a product has always dealt with the relation between premise and conclusion. A good argument must fulfil three important criteria: relevance, sufficiency and acceptability (Johnson and Blair 1983)³⁹ or its “equivalent”⁴⁰ if it is to be accepted as the normative theory of argument. The premise must be relevant to the conclusion or otherwise it will become irrelevant reason. The premise must provide sufficient support for the conclusion for if not, it will become a hasty conclusion. The premise must also be acceptable or otherwise it will become a “problematic premise.” By taking the relation between Malay proverbs and practical reasoning as the context of Malay argumentation, I believe that there is actually “*budi*” which acts as the underlying reason behind the Malay way of arguing and reasoning. According to Malay tradition, a “good” argument should not be restricted to pure reason but should manifest politely the “*hati nurani*” (conscience) of the arguer. There must also be a balance between the judgement of “*hati*” (heart, liver) and “*akal*” (reason) or “*budi*.” The dispute between the philosophical or logical tradition and the rhetorical tradition is due to the nature and meaning of the word “good.” The word “good” itself is an adjective, which is rather vague, ambiguous and relative. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1995, 584) gives us fourteen meanings for that word. However, there are only four out of the fourteen, which are relevant in the dispute of the word “good” logically and rhetorically:

1. having the right or desired qualities, satisfactory, adequate.
- 2b. (of a thing) reliable, efficient
- 3b. morally excellent; virtuous
- 8a. valid, sound (a good reason)

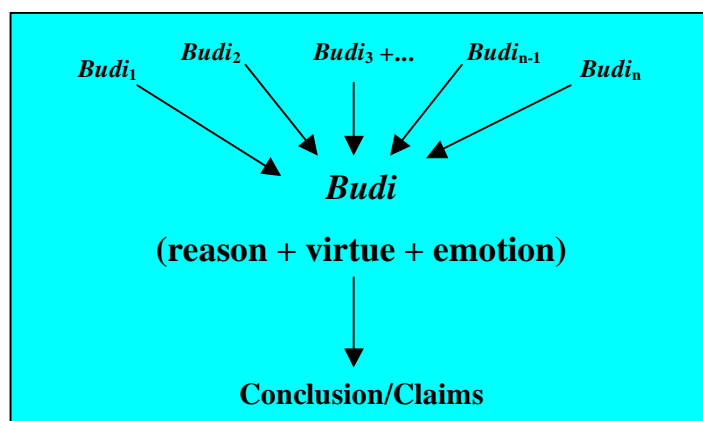
**Figure 3.4: *Budi* in Malay Argumentation Theory:
A Developmental Model of *Budi* in Striving for the Equilibrium
Between Emotion and Rationality**



The rhetorical tradition frequently tends to define “good” closer to sense 1 and 2b but Formal Deductive Logic (FDL) uses valid and even sound as their criteria (8a). The study of pragmatics will perhaps focus on 2b, whereas morally-speaking, 3b will be the appropriate meaning. From my point of view, the Malay tradition perceives a good argument as “simple, effective, promoting *budi*^{virtue} and pragmatic.” The Malay understanding of a good argument (as seen in their proverbial reasoning) is a

blended one, usually a combination or a synthesis between those four variations of meaning. The logical criteria are implicit within the concept of “*budi*” (See Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5: *Budi* as an Underlying Element in Argument



Source: My own interpretation. The arrangement of the relationship between the *budi* and conclusion is based on the normal relation between premise (or reason) and conclusion in an argument (See i.e. Fisher’s *The Logic of Real Arguments* [1988]).

Conclusion

Peribahasa has always been used by the Malays to discuss something serious, in the battle of words or in the rhetorical arena. As compared to some other genres of folk cultures (e.g. folktale, folksong, folk dance and folk-play), which have a function to entertain; proverb (*peribahasa*), which is categorised under “folksay” by Brunvard (1976, 57) is however “very seldom used among people who have met for some type of general entertainment” (Szemerkenyi 1974, 936). *Peribahasa* is something serious. For the above reason, I think that it is very proper for us to look at the logical thought of the Malays as compared with other discourses. Through this serious discourse, I hope that it will be possible to explore what logical pattern or what kind of argumentation theory that might be implicit in the thinking of the Malays – a race which has always been considered to be subtle and humble in its attitudes and communication process. With this general idea in mind about the concepts of *budi* and *hati* within the context of argumentation, the existence of proverbs as an argument within a possible model of communication and perspective (rhetorically, dialectically and logically), I will proceed in the next chapter (Chapter 4) with my analyses of Malay proverbs and practical reasoning. My general hypothesis here is that the Malay proverbs should reflect the universal, general and trans-cultural conceptions of argument patterns and reasoning. However, there should be differences of priority in identifying the concept of good argument rhetorically and dialectically due to the differences of cultural and socio-political settings.

Notes:

¹ According to Baker (1999, 117): “Naning was an area adjacent to Melaka and was settled in by the Minangkabau. To call it a state would be a misnomer. It was a group of villages stretching over an area of about 200 square miles (518 square kilometers) and owed allegiance to a dato penghulu, or hereditary chieftain.”

² See Humphreys (1914), especially Part II. Naning Proverbs, 2. Proverbs on the administration of the Adat, pp. 105-114.

³ See Lim (1998).

⁴ See for example “Preliminary Notes on the Aesthetics of the Malay Pantun” in Muhammad Haji Salleh (1991) and Daillie (1990).

⁵ For the analyses of Malay Mantra, see Skeat (1900), Endicott (1970). For a more general studies in magic and religion, see Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* (1922).

⁶ There are actually various philosophical elements inter-mixed within the Malay proverbs, *pantun* and mantra. I divided it into something that seems mutually exclusive merely for the sake of convenience for my discussion.

⁷ See Muhammad Haji Salleh (1991) and Daille (1990).

⁸ I use the word “circle” to show the wholeness of those elements, which exist continuously and in unity. Those elements however can only be separated theoretically.

⁹ Cf. Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1972, 15).

¹⁰ For a brief background of these two thinkers and their works, see Raja Mohd. Affandi (1974, 87-94).

¹¹ For a critical analysis of Nuru’l-Din al-Raniri’s refutation of Hamzah Fansuri’s mystical philosophy, see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1966). For the analysis of Hamzah Fansuri’s mysticism, see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1970).

¹² C. Snouch Hurgronge, 1906, *The Achenese*, Vol. II, Leyden, p. 13, cited in Ismail Hamid (1991, 148).

¹³ For this matter, Shafie Abu Bakar (1984) was right. However, the term used is only a formal terminology. Without a specific term to refer to either argument as a product or a process did not mean that they did not argue, debate or think rationally.

¹⁴ “*Sesepuh*” means the eldest people in the community or people who are to be considered as “old” or have been appointed as leaders because of their vast experience in certain organisations etc.

¹⁵ “*Panutan*” means to follow, guide or leader, whom one has to follow.

¹⁶ I use the word “fiction” rather loosely. There is an interesting debate among historians as to whether *Sejarah Melayu* can be considered a historical record or purely fictive. Muhammad Yusoff Hashim (1992) for example treated *Sejarah Melayu* as the work of history and according to him, the elements of history (fact) and literature (fiction) can be separated.

¹⁷ For a detail study on the developments in argumentation theory from the Western perspective, see Eemeren *et al.* 1996. *Fundamentals of argumentation theory: A handbook of historical backgrounds and contemporary developments*. Mahwah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum. See also Eemeren and Grootendorst (1994).

¹⁸ Perhaps one of the philosophers, Michael A. Gilbert is the exception to that tendency by giving room in his theory of argument – “Coalescent argumentation” for the influence of emotions, bodily sensation, intuition etc. See Gilbert (1994, 1995a-c, 1997).

¹⁹ This has been one of the major differences between argumentation theorists in speech communication/ rhetoric and the philosophers who make up the field of informal logic.

²⁰ I owe this idea to Wenzel (email, dated 10 May 2000). Wenzel’s idea and discussion on Jürgen Habermas and the dialectical perspective on argumentation, see Wenzel (1979).

²¹ I will touch generally on the strengths and weaknesses of both models in Chapter 6.

²² For various perspectives on argumentation, see Trapp and Schuetz (1990). For a general idea on the future directions in argumentation from the aspect of theory and practice, see Zarefsky (1990) and for future directions in argumentation research, see Hampe (1990).

²³ For the arguments on the differences between argument as inquiry and argument as persuasion, see Meiland (1989).

²⁴ In considering the cultural differences, I did not mean to resort to vicious relativism. I still believe that there are certain general, universal and trans-cultural ideals in terms of argument quality and evaluation if we look at the argument from the logical perspective. For this matter, I do agree with Siegel (1999). However, there must be various differences in the process of arguing (rhetorically), the procedure of arguing and the acceptance of dialectical view (dialectically).

²⁵ For a discussion on the systems of rhetoric during different historical periods: classical period, which was basically “grammatical,” “new British rhetoric” of the later eighteenth century which was “psychological” and from the early 1930’s to the present time, which was “sociological,” see Ehninger (1968). For a discussion on “What is Rhetoric?” see the whole issue of *Philosophy & Rhetoric* (1970, Vol. 3, no. 2), especially articles by McNally (1970), Wilkerson (1970), Campbell (1970) and Burks (1970). In order to know in specific terms about the analysis of the definition of rhetoric by Sophists, Aristotle, Quintilian and Campbell, read McNally (1970).

²⁶ There are only seven types of intelligence being discussed in Gardner (1993). Naturalist intelligence was added later in some of his other writings.

²⁷ For the return of rhetoric and the reasons why logic and rhetoric have been separated and why they have been engaged in conflict, see Gabriel (1997), especially “*Die Rückkehr der Rhetorik*” (pp. 13-16) and “*Der Konflikt zwischen Logik und Rhetorik*” (pp. 18-20).

²⁸ As told to me by the author, Michael Gilbert in an email dated 17th May 2000.

²⁹ Edi et al. (1997, 4) translated “*budi pekerti*” as morality, whether from the perspective of *adat-istiadat* (ceremony), *sopan-santun* (gentle) or *perilaku* (character). According to them, the most important of them all is the morality of our behaviour or character. For the meaning of *budi pekerti* and the characteristics of genuine *budi pekerti*, see Edi et al. (1997).

³⁰ More on *budi* and its networks and how these *budi* connections play their role in Malay ways of arguing and argumentation, see Chapter 6.

³¹ Rhetorical in this context refers to the common and popular meaning of rhetoric, which is normally to be considered as empty and flowery without content.

³² Datuk Temenggung refers to a chief in the Sultan’s court, who is in charge of defence, security and markets.

³³ For more arguments on the important of “*hati*” in the Malay mind, see Chapter 5.

³⁴ The idea of Malay *hati* and its comparison to the concept of *xin* in Chinese will be discussed in Chapter 5.

³⁵ For arguments against the accusation on the contradictory character of proverbs, see Yankah (1994). For the importance of context in interpreting Malay proverbs taken from Minangkabau tradition, see Danandjaya (1991, 31). Danandjaya’s argument on the importance of context in interpreting and understanding the proverb was based on the example: *Lapuk oleh kain sehelai* ‘rickety by a single cloth’ (see PB 258: 1644), which means a man who has only one wife is said to be not manly enough. This was interpreted based on the Islamic tradition, which generally allows a man to have four wives at the same time, if justice can be assured. This context however is not given by the compilers of PB (If we check through PB, the meaning given for that proverb seems to convey loyalty of a man or a woman who sticks to his or her first spouse after marrying).

³⁶ The Malays also use *budi* to represent intelligence and wisdom when they refer to a person who is smart and intelligent as “*tambun budi*” (Abdullah Hussain 1966, 391) (literally, *tambun* means fat, or heap in Minang) which can be interpreted as a person who is full with *budi*.

³⁷ This, from my point of view, should comport nicely with the idea of Siegel (1993) that the theory of critical thinking or the ability to argue rationally should also cover the role of character.

³⁸ For the idea on the concept of “*yang indah, berfaedah dan kamal* (beauty, useful and perfect),” see Braginsky (1998).

³⁹ Johnson however has shifted to the true-requirement instead of only acceptability. For him, it should be able to integrate between truth and acceptability; see Johnson (1997, 2000).

⁴⁰ Govier (1985, 60ff) for example replaces the term sufficiency with “adequacy of grounds.” But the general criteria are still the same.

CHAPTER 4

PERIBAHASA AND PRACTICAL REASONING: A STUDY IN THE MALAY SOCIO-LOGIC

Sesuatunya bangsa itu boleh diketahui bagaimana pandangan orang-orangnya di atas kehidupan dalam dunia ini dan bagaimana senang sukar yang telah dilalui mereka jika diperiksa bidalan-bidalan dan perumpamaan-perumpamaan pada bahasanya sahaja (One can know about people's world-view and how easy or difficult these people have gone through this world by examining the language of their proverbs [*bidalan* and *perumpamaan*]) (Za'ba 1965, 166).

Introduction

Shellabear (1963, first published in 1906) alluded to the status of Malay proverbs as a tool to sharpen one's thought in his collection of Malay proverbs: *Kitab Kiliran Budi*.¹ The phrase "*Kiliran budi*" means "*pengasah budi*" or "*alat untuk mempertajam pikiran*" (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* 1991, 502), which can be translated as "tool to sharpen one's thought." Mohd. Adnan Mohd. Ariffin (1992, first published in 1934) considered *peribahasa* as "*tikaman Bahasa*" (The stab of the language). Both labels, "*kiliran budi*" or "*tikaman bahasa*" indirectly describe the uses and functions of the proverbs in the Malay ways of arguing, besides connoting the depth and fineness of proverbs as a tool of criticism. According to Syed Othman (In Azman Ismail 1998), *peribahasa*² is the example of a fine insinuation and criticism, full with aesthetic values, besides its sharpness and accurateness in presenting its meaning. In order to sharpen their thinking skills and argumentation skills, Malays resort to their proverbs as one of the most serious argumentative discourse if we compare it with other genres like *pantun* (quatrain), folksong and folktale, which are more toward entertainment and creative discourse. In this chapter, I will try to unravel the mind of the Malays, their ways of arguments and proof, their criteria of a good argument, which are implicit in their proverbs. How do the Malays use their proverbs to argue and can those *peribahasas* be categorised into certain proof patterns (substantive, authoritative and motivational)? The discussion of this chapter is divided into five main sections: the first three sections are based on the proof patterns available under normal logical categories: (1) substantive argument, (2) authoritative argument; and (3) motivational argument; the following two sections briefly discuss the general rational principles in the Malay proverbs: (i) caution against rationalisation and (ii) caution against fallacies in the Malay proverbs. The analysis conducted here will be based on few collections of Malay proverbs as mentioned in Chapter 1 (See sub-topic Sources of Data).

The Importance of Method in the Malay Mind

In order to think rationally and scientifically, it is the method that determines the outcomes. For that reason, the Malays hinted at the importance of method in doing things; wrong method will make a job harder and the results will not be obtained as hoped. The importance of method in the Malay worldview can be further supported by some of their proverbial wisdom. One of their sayings can be quoted which uses the nature of bamboos to compare a situation where something is done without following the correct way: *Bagai aur ditarik songsang* ‘he/she pulls a bamboo in the wrong way (i.e. against the branches)’ (MS 27), which means that when you are performing a task, you should approach it from the right direction (method) or otherwise you will tend to fail to achieve the results. Another proverb that can be cited here as equally important which carries the meaning that we should use the proper method in carrying out the proper task and the right terminology in defining the term is *Memikul di bahu, menjunjung di kepala* ‘memikul on your shoulder and menjunjung on your head’³ (PB 52: 279). Another proverb which expresses the same connotation is *menumbuk ke lesung, bertanak ke periuk* ‘Pound rice in a mortar, cook rice in a pot’ (MBRAS 147: 133; Cf. KIPM 149: 2722). It is impossible to put one’s activity in the wrong category. You cannot use a certain methodology but call it with an improper name. This proverb also justifies the importance of terminology when describing an activity. This idea is in accord with our modern way of doing research where we should put our terms right, as Voltaire was quoted as saying “if you want to converse with me, define your term.” There is also another proverb which stresses on the importance of putting the right method into the right place. The Malays however did not criticise the idea directly, as ironically, they presented this idea as their common rhetorical strategy of “*sindiran* (allusion)”, which is usually somewhat cynical. One of their proverbs says: *Kerbau (= lembu) diberi berpelana, kuda diberi berpasangan* ‘Water Buffalos [= cows] were given the saddle, horses were supplied with clothing’ (KIPM 111: 2005). The Malays also believe in doing things in their order and caution against works that have not been done according to their sequence: *Dahulu bajak daripada jawi*⁴ ‘A plough precedes a water buffalo’⁵ (PB 49: 265).

The Concept of “Form” in Malay Thinking:

Logical Forms and Patterns in Peribahasa

Studies on the relation between proverbs and practical reasoning have attracted very little attention. The literatures obtained in this area of study show that Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) were the first who tried to analyse the so-called “socio-logic”⁶ of the folk based on the Anglo-American proverbs. By using the typology of arguments presented by Ehninger and Brockriede (1963), who had elaborated them from Toulmin’s model in *The Uses of Argument* (1958), Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) were

trying to look for the parallels between what the textbooks taught and what the proverbs taught. They concluded that “the proverbs of Anglo-American culture do indeed illustrate a significant number of logical principles” (p. 157) and they hope that “such an investigation could potentially yield categories to facilitate cross-cultural study of proverbs bearing on attitudes toward rational processes in general” (p. 159). However, thus far, the suggestion has not been picked up by scholars of paremiology, folklore studies, logic or even rhetoric. Wenzel (1988) was later prompted to think of proverbs again as potential sources of insight into the logics of different communities by analysing African proverbs. In this research, he was simply trying to give a broad descriptive account in order to show that proverbs did serve as resources for argument in a number of ways and in various contexts. In conclusion, he suggested that African proverbs used as argument seemed more concerned with maintaining harmony within a group in contrast to Western concerns for decision-making and/or victory. However, he further turned around the differences to establish similarities, which according to him:

When we appeal to the authority of experts of one kind, Africans appeal to experts of another kind, but we all seek authority. Where we prefer direct speech acts, Africans prefer indirect expression, but we all perform speech acts. Where we tend to hold speakers accountable for whatever they say, Africans hold them accountable for insightful application of what has been said before, but we all hold speakers to some standard (p. 22).

Wenzel’s analysis into “African proverbs” seems too wide as a category, but it should be able to treat his generalisation as an important and speculative platform in order to facilitate future proverbs research on specific subethnic groups in Africa and their reasoning.

The relation between the Malay proverbs and practical reasoning so far has never been explored. Do the Malay proverbs display some kind of similarities in terms of their logical principles as have been proven by Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) in the case of the Anglo-American tradition? Do the Malay proverbs share some kind of similarities with the Anglo-American proverbs as they exist in widely differing cultural settings? Taylor (1962) in his preface to his classic work on paremiology *The Proverb and an Index to the Proverb* said that “it has seemed inadvisable to seek examples outside the ordinary European languages, where we have a fairly distinct cultural tradition and clearly proverbial types.” Taylor was right that there are clearly distinct proverbial types between English proverbs (and other European languages proverbs) and the Malay proverbs, but despite their differences in their categorisation, I think they at least to a certain extent share common mental structures (logical principles) which I would like to test and confirm throughout this research.

The aspects of logic and rationality from the scientific perspective in the Malay proverbs were touched on very briefly by Tham Seong Chee (1977, 80-84). Among the aspects that he discussed were the Law of Gravity [e.g. *Ludah ke langit, timpa batang hidung sendiri* ‘Spit to the heavens and the spittle

falls on your own nose' (MS 56)], the concept of combustion [e.g. *Hendak memadam api tengah menyala, disiramkan minyak pula ke atasnya* [You want to extinguish a burning fire, yet you pour oil over it] and water forms a unity [e.g. *air dicincang takkan putus* 'Slashed water is never severed' (MS 22 & 174)]. According to Tham Seong Chee (1977, 84), the Malay proverbs suggested two sets of facts about life and values of the Malay. From one aspect, proverbs are seen as presenting values, morals and ideals through the use of various devices like accumulating elements within the eco-cultural system and developing relationships between those elements. From another aspect, there are enough evidences in the proverbs to show the existence of logic, rationality and objectivity in the environmental cognition. Tham's first idea on the Malay proverbs is a common one, as it has already become a common acceptance that proverbs are the sources of morals and values. But his second idea is indeed interesting because he was suggesting a logical dimension for the study of proverbs besides reinforcing the age-old belief that proverbs were used as presenting ethical truth and moral values. Tham's general idea on Malay proverbs shows some kind of parallel with the idea of Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) when they were analysing Anglo-American proverbs. Goodwin and Wenzel (1981, 159) submitted in their conclusion that "Others have recognised the value of the study of proverbs as an entree to cultural studies generally. We submit here that proverbs may also illuminate the uses of arguments, and the character of socio-logic." The concept of logical form is not something totally alien to the Malay proverbs. The law of logical identity, $A \text{ is } A$, can be well observed from these proverbs. A perfect identity for example is *asalnya kuda itu kuda juga, asalnya keldai itu keldai juga* 'If the origin is a horse, it will remain as a horse; if the origin is a donkey, it will remain as a donkey' (PB 233: 1488)⁷. The proverb *asalnya kuda itu kuda juga, asalnya keldai itu keldai juga* can also mean, structure wise, that "a horse is a horse and a donkey is a donkey." This proposition perhaps will be the answer to a question raised by Dundes (1975, 971), i.e. "which cultures have equational proverbs consisting of perfect identities as 'Enough is enough'?" In addition, there are also a few examples of so called imperfect identities like $a \times b = A$: *dua kali dua empat* 'two time two is four' (KIPM 69: 1289), *dua kali lima sepuluh* 'two time five is ten' (PB 122: 784).

Despite its logical function in the Malay society, proverbs were also being used to support their arguments very rhetorically where values, emotions and rationality were incorporated together to express the relationship among the data of the external world through their experience. The same relationship among the data of the external world might be expressed by using different variants or can be presented through different versions of proverbs. "A variant is nothing but a different way of saying exactly the same thing, whereas a version is saying something related to but different from another version. A variant is a change in form at the pure linguistic level; a version on the contrary implies a switch in semantics," remarked Crepeau (1981, 89). In this analysis, for example, there are different ways of presenting the same proverbs, normally to be quoted as *rambut sama hitam hati lain-*

lain ‘We all have black hair, but our dispositions are different’ (MS 7), which advise us not to judge by appearances – as shown by the following forms which I call variants:

Rambut sama hitam hati lain-lain (MB 263: 10);
Kepala sama berbulu, hati lain-lain (MB 160: 160);
Kepala sama hitam, hati lain-lain (MB 160: 161);
Rambut sama hitam, hati masing-masing berlainan (KIPM 169: 3107);
Kepala sama berbulu (= hitam), pendapat (= hati) berlain-lain (KIPM 110: 1989);
Rambut sama hitam, hati berlain-lain (MS 7);
Rambut sama hitam, hati masing-masing (MS 53) (PB 364: 2326);
Kepala sama hitam, hati berlain-lain (MS 53);
Rambut sama hitam, hati berlain-lain ‘the hair may be equally black but the heart may be very different’ (MBRAS 182: 10).⁸

In the case of different variants (as shown above) only one or perhaps two *peribahasas* will be cited as it will not change the purpose of this research. I will, however, choose to cite different versions of *peribahasa*, which carry the difference in meaning literally but show the same proverbial meaning in order to justify the richness in the Malay proverbs. Version in this context refers to the same proverbial meaning but is different from another version. Six of the proverbs below, for instance, are used to refer to the character of a person who is stubborn or stingy:

Direndam tak basah ‘Soaked in water but does not get wet’ (TB 53: 421; MBRAS 183: 15);
Direbus tak empuk ‘Boiled but does not spill’ (TB 53: 422; MBRAS 183: 14);
Dijemur tak lekang ‘Sun dried but not cracked’ (TB 53: 423);
Dibakar tak hangus ‘Burnt but not consumed’ (TB 53: 424; MBRAS 27: 27);
Bangsa balur liat ‘Tough and slithery as a hide’ (TB 53: 425; MS 193/ 209);
Kikir pari belulang kering direndam tujuh hari tak basah ‘A skate-skin grater, a dry hide, soaked for seven days but not moistened’ (TB 53: 426; MBRAS 113: 169).

In this analysis, I am also treating Malay proverbs (e.g. *peribahasa*, *simpulan bahasa*, *pepatah*, *perumpamaan*, *perbilang*) as a single category and interchangeably. Such treatment, which violates folklore orthodoxy,⁹ was also applied by Lieber (1994, first published 1984) because “these otherwise discrete categories appear to form a unit functionally to the extent that they are used rhetorically in the same manner” (p. 102). They are considered as a single category because all of them play a similar role in the process of argumentative communication. They can take the form of various kinds of arguments, viz. substantive, authoritative or motivational, when people engage in the process of argumentation. Ehninger and Brockriede in *Decision by Debate* (1963) described that since evidence may be carried to a claim through one of three routes, three general categories of proof patterns may be employed to establish or deny any statement:

1. Proofs in which the warrant asserts a relationship among phenomena of the external world – these may be called *substantive* proofs.
2. Proofs in which the warrant asserts an assumption concerning the credibility of the source from which the evidence is derived – these may be called *authoritative* proofs.
3. Proofs in which the warrant asserts an assumption concerning the emotions, values, or motives which direct the behavior of those persons to whom the proof is addressed – these may be called *motivational* proofs (pp. 125-126, italics in original).

Substantive Argument

Every pattern of substantive arguments employs warrant that expresses a relationship between different data of the external world. Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, chapter 10) said that all such warrants make three common assumptions: (a) The facts of our world are not separate and isolated, but interdependent and connected; (b) Such connections are not disorganized and random, but systematic and regular; and (c) These systematic connections are not temporary and fluid, but sufficiently permanent and invariable to support present judgments and values and to provide a ground for predictions concerning future policy (p. 126). Such patterns of relationship according to them can be divided into seven categories: (1) cause, (2) sign, (3) generalisation, (4) parallel case, (5) analogy, (6) classification and (7) statistics.

Causal Arguments

There are two kinds of proofs which involve causal relationship: (a) cause to effect, assumes that one set of data, to be known as cause may be related to another set of data, effect; and (b) effect to cause is a reverse for (a), which assumes that a set of data (effect), is related to another set of data (cause).¹⁰ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1995, 208) defines the word “cause” as “that which produces an effect, or gives rise to an action, phenomenon, or condition” whereas “effect” expresses the meaning of “the result or consequence of an action etc.” (p. 432). When speakers discuss the relationship between cause and effect, they are normally using the propositions that were being constructed in the form of a conditional statement:

If p, then q

(where p is the antecedent and q is the consequence for that statement)

or the Malay equivalent

*Jika (Jikalau/ Kalau/ Sekiranya/ Seandainya) p, maka q*¹¹

The classical example which is always quoted in textbooks of logic is: if it is raining, then the road will get wet. The causal relationship of this statement is the road will get wet on condition that it is raining.¹² The statement that always carries the causal (cause-effect) relationship like this can often be seen in the Malay proverbs, for example: *Bermain air basah, bermain api letup* 'If you play with water, you will get wet; if you play with the fire, you will get burned'¹³ (PB 20: 56). The sign of causal relationship (i.e. cause to effect and effect to cause) in the Malay proverbs normally uses the logical indicator like *kalau* or *jika* (if) and *sebab* (because). A few proverbs, which uses conditional statement can be cited through the following proverbs:

Kalau tidak kerana angin, masakan pokok bergoyang 'If not for the wind, how would the tree sway' (MS 195);¹⁴

Kalau tidak dipecahkan ruyung, manakan dapat sagunya 'If the outer part of the palm trunk is not broken, how is the pith to be obtained?' (MS 157);

Kalau tak ada api, masakan ada asap 'If there is no fire, how can there be smoke' (PB 43: 218);

Jikalau tidak berada-ada (=ada berada-ada, ada mengada), masakan tempua bersarang rendah 'If there is no single reason, why should weaver-finches make their nests at the low branches?' (KIPM 97: 1763).

Sebab berkelahi dengan perigi, akhirnya mati dahaga 'If you quarrel with the well, in the end you will die of thirst' (MBRAS 194: 63);¹⁵

*Sebab mulut badan binasa*¹⁶ 'Because of the mouth the body suffers' (MS 123).

Causal reasoning in the form of cause and effect in the Malay proverbs is quite familiar. This cause-effect reasoning is portrayed in the form of "as a man sows, so shall he reap." There are a few examples here, which can be considered:

Tanam lalang, tak kan tumbuh padi 'If you plant lalang, you will not get a crop of padi' (MS 9);

Siapa makan cabai dialah merasa pedas 'It is the man who eats chillies that gets his tongue burned' (MS 9);¹⁷

Siapa makan nangka dialah kena getahnya 'It is the man who eats jackfruit that gets sticky fingers' (MS 9);

Bagaimana bunyi gendang, begitulah tarinya 'If that is how the drum sounds, that is how the dance will be' (MS 9; Cf. MBRAS 25: 9)

There is also causal reasoning, which resembles the form of reasoning from effects to causes. In the Malay tradition, a group of proverbs that well illustrate this kind of reasoning are:

Ada gula, ada semut 'Where there is sugar, there will be ants' (KIPM 1: 10; MS 223);

Ada bangkai, adalah hering 'Where there is carcass, there will be vultures' (KIPM 1: 4; MS 223);

Kerbau di mana rumput hijau di sana terkam 'Where the grass is green, the buffaloes make for it' (MS 223);

Lalat cari puru 'The fly goes straight to a sore' (MS 223);

Di mana padi masak, di situlah tekukur jinak ‘Where the paddy is ripe, there the ground doves will be bold’ (MS 28);
Di mana bunga yang kembang, di situ kumbang yang banyak ‘Where the flower blossoms, there will be more bees’ (PB 93: 576);
Tak tumbuh, tak melata ‘No growth, no creeper’ (MS 195);
Tak sungguh, orang tak kata ‘If it were not true, people would not be saying it’ (MS 195).
Jikalau tidak berada-ada (=ada berada-ada, ada mengada), masakan tempua bersarang rendah ‘If there is no reason, why should weaver-finches make their nests at the low branches?’ (KIPM 97: 1763);
Kalau tak ada angin, tak kan pokok bergoyang/ Tak sebab kerana angin, pokok kayu mahukah bergoyang/ tiadakan angin bertiup, manakan daun kayu bergerak? ‘If there was no wind, would the tree sway?’ (MS 195)

These proverbs above are basically similar with the proverb “Where there is smoke, there must be fire”¹⁸ which can be found in the Anglo-American tradition. Maxwell (1883, JSBRAS, XI: 71) explained that “a man would not act in a particular way if there were not someone ‘pulling the strings’.

Sign

The arguers sometimes argue from the outward appearances of phenomena, and they draw conclusions accordingly from those phenomena. This is what is called reasoning from sign.¹⁹ A sign “is a thing indicating or suggesting a quality or state etc.; a thing perceived as indicating a future state or occurrence” (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1995, 1291). The Malays regard human character as a sign to evaluate a person’s well-being and trustworthiness: *Kerbau dipegang tali, manusia dipegang janji* ‘You hold on to a water buffalo by its rope, but you hold on to a person by his or her promises.’ This is because the Malays believe that *kata itu biarlah kota* ‘Let what you say be (as reliable as) a fort’ (MS 172). A handful of Malay proverbs that deals with this kind of reasoning can be drawn implicitly from the Malay tradition. For example, they warn that appearance is deceiving. The reality might look worse than the appearance or *indah khabar dari rupa* ‘Better as described than it actually turns out to be’ (MS 154). We must be very careful in judging something and not to confuse it with its appearance. What we can see by our eyes might not be a sign for judgement. A situation which seems to be stable might turn out to be dangerous, *apabila air tenang, jangan disangka tak ada buaya* ‘When the water is still, do not assume there are no crocodiles’ (MS 200). Another proverb which is equivalent is *jangan disangkakan ikan lais tidak menyengat* ‘Do not fancy that the *lais-lais*²⁰ fish will not sting’ (MB 128: 25; MBRAS 87: 13). The Malays strongly believe that outlook should not be used to draw a conclusion of what will happen, as when we sometimes turn to appearance to evaluate someone’s character. A person who looks ugly might be kind instead. Sometimes things will just turn out to be the opposite of what we believe as the sign of making judgment. It is germane to quote a few Malay proverbs here:

Harimau tak mengaum rajin menangkap ‘The tiger that does not roar is a diligent hunter’ (MS 200);

Buah macang buruk kulitnya ‘The horse-mango has an ugly rind [but the fruit is worth eating all the same]’ (MS 7);
Buruk-buruk kayu gaharu, dibakar berbau juga ‘Eagle-wood may not be much good to look at, but light it and it will give out a fragrant smell’ (MS 7);
Jangan difikirkan bengkok tebu itu bengkok juga manisannya ‘Do not think that because the sugar cane is bent, its sweet juice is equally crooked’ (MB 129: 30);
Air yang keruh-keruh kerak, alamat buaya di hulunya ‘Murky water is a sign that there will be crocodiles in the upper reaches of the river’ (KIPM 6: 102);
Gabak di hulu tanda akan hujan, cewang di langit tanda akan panas ‘dark clouds at the upper reaches of the river are a sign that it is going to rain; cloudy sky is a sign that it will be hot’ (KIPM 72: 1341).

Therefore, the Malays believe that we should not judge a book by its cover as it might be *masak di luar, mentah di dalam* ‘Cooked outside, but uncooked within’ (MS 8) and there are dozens of proverbs that can be quoted to support their belief against hasty sign reasoning. To the Malay community, outward sign should not be treated seriously as representing the fact of human character and capacities as *kecil tak boleh disangkakan anak, besar tak boleh disangkakan bapa* ‘He/she may be small but you cannot assume that he/ she is a child; he may be big but you cannot assume that he is a father’ (MS 8). A few examples can be quoted to represent the difference between what we perceive and how the reality turns out to be:

Bagai tabut Keling, di luar kilat, di dalam berongga ‘Like a Kling idol, brilliant without but empty within’ (MS 7);
Cakap tak serupa bikin ‘What is done is different from what is preached’ (Uncollected);
Seperti kain di dalam lipatan ‘Like a sarung not yet unfolded’ (MS 7);
Laksana buah kedempong, luar berisi, dalam kosong/ umpama buah kedepong, luar merah dalamnya kosong ‘Like an over-ripe fruit, promising to look at but empty when you open it’ (MS 7);
Bagai timun dendang, di luar merah, di dalam pahit ‘Like the dendang gourd, red outside but bitter inside’ (MS 8);
Muka sempuras bubuk bedak, hati siapa tak ingin? ‘Apply powder to a dirty face and who could resist?’ (MS 8).

A single sign does not represent every situation and should be treated differently in its own way due to the human nature that *rambut sama hitam, hati berlain-lain* ‘We all have black hair, but our disposition are different’ (MS 7). For that reason, we should not mistake between one sign and the other: *Amra jangan sangka kedundong* ‘Do not mistake a hog-plum for a kedundong’ (MS 6). The Malays cynically condemn those who cannot differentiate between the signs by saying: *Asal beringsang ikanlah* ‘Anything with gills counts as fish’ (MS 6) or *seperti rotan, asal beringsang dia cucuk belaka* ‘Like a rattan on which is strung anything that has gills’ (MS 6).

However, under certain circumstances, the Malays believe that we can look at certain signs through the nature of things as they claim *terkilat (sinar) ikan dalam air aku sudah tahu jantan betinanya* ‘I

need only to see the sparkle of fishes in the water and I already know which is male and female' (MS 98 & 177), *aku nampak olak, kelibat hang sudah kutahu* 'On seeing the ripples I recognise (the work of) your paddle' (MBRAS 6: 33) and *berketek-ketek ayam, tahu aku bertelur atau tidaknya* 'Let the hen cluck and I know whether she has laid eggs or not' (MS 98).²¹ A person's ways of communication, according to the Malays, is a sign to determine his or her origin or upbringing: *Bunyi bahasa tahulah bangsa* 'Let a man open his mouth and you can tell his ethnic' (MS 17). The Malays trust that it is nature that determines the character when they ask *adakah buaya menolak bangkai?* 'Is a crocodile going to say no to a carcass' (MS 31) and *anjing berulang bangkai* 'The dog keeps returning to the carcass' (MS 59).

Generalisation

When an arguer moves from a statement about a sample of items to the same statement about other items in the same class, one is employing a proof by generalisation.²² A generalisation is derived when someone reasons from part to whole or from some to more. Since it is impossible for us to look at every case or phenomenon that happens around us, we have to depend on certain selective cases to arrive at our conclusion. The Malays believe that they learn very much from their previous experience and that is why they created a proverb like *kemahiran itu sebaik-baik guru* 'skill is the best teacher' which is equivalent with "Experience is the teacher of all things." Two proverbs can be cited here: *Sekalilah si buta kehilangan tongkat* 'It is only once that a blind man loses his stick [he will take good care not to lose it again]' (MS 158) and the other one *kena jalan tahu, mengenai jalan boleh* '[Having once learnt your lesson] by striking the wrong road, you will be able to pick the right one' (MS 158). There are also other similar proverbs:

Sekali dipatuk ular talipun ditakutkan juga 'Once you have been bitten by a snake, even a piece of cord will frighten you' (MS 28);

Bagaimana cetak, begitulah kuihnya 'If that is how the mould is, that is how the cake will be' (MS 132);

Bapanya borek, anaknya rintih 'If the father is speckled, the child will show some spots' (MS 33);

Kalau di hulu air keruh, di hilir pun keruh juga 'If the water is discoloured in the upper reaches of the river, so will it be in the lower parts' (MS 132);

Jauhkah rebung dari rumpunnya? 'Will the bamboo shoot be far away from the clump?' (MS 132);

Ke mana tumpahkan kuah kalau tidak ke nasi? 'Where is the gravy to be poured if not on the rice' (MBRAS 101: 81).

Parallel Case

As we have discussed in the previous section, when an arguer is moving from a statement about a cluster of related items of a class to a claim concerning some or all of the remaining members of the class, he or she will be presenting proof by generalisation. Parallel case, however according to Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 139), "moves from a statement about a sample of one instance to a

similar statement about a parallel instance within the same class.”²³ This is a normal and simple comparison when we are dealing with everyday phenomenon, which can be abstractly characterised as follows: “Case A is known to have feature x; case B is similar to case A in essential respects; therefore case B will be found to have x also” (Goodwin and Wenzel 1981, 148). The Malays describe something as parallel when they say: *Dikati sama berat, diuji sama merah* ‘To weigh equally heavy, to test equally red’ (PB 204: 1317; See also *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* 1991, 453), a Minang proverb by origin, which means that they have the same status and similarity. The other common proverb which carries the same denotation is *bagai pinang dibelah dua* ‘Like an ereca nut split in two’ (MBRAS 175: 87). The other proverbs can be traced (just to name a few) are as below:

Bapanya borek, anaknya rintih ‘If the father is speckled, the child will show some spots’ (MS 33);²⁴
Tak membuang baka ‘Preserving the qualities one has inherited’ (MS 33);
Enggang sama enggang, pipit sama pipit ‘It is with hornbills that hornbills should go, it is with sparrows that sparrows go’ (MB 94: 11).

There is also a rich repertoire of Malay proverbs, which are used to explain the cases that are not parallel or caution against faulty comparison, especially between the great and the small (the rich and the poor, the mighty and the lowly etc.). Those proverbs are:

Pipit nak telan jagung ‘The sparrow would swallow a corncob’ (MS 94);
Burung pipit sama enggang, mana boleh sama terbang? ‘Sparrows and hornbills, how shall they fly together?’ (MS 95);
Bagai mentimun dengan durian ‘like a cucumber and a durian’ (MS 95);
Bagai kambing dengan harimau ‘like a goat and a tiger’ (MS 95);
Pipit berperang dengan garuda ‘The sparrow is battling the eagle’ (MS 95);
Seperti anjing menyalak di pantat gajah ‘like dogs barking at the rear of an elephant’ (MS 95).

Besides explaining the similarity between parallel case and general objection to ill-founded parallels, there are also proverbs which caution us with the intention that we should give close attention to essential characteristics rather than appearances as the proper basis for comparison. Take for example: *Bangsa anjing kalau biasa makan tahi, tak dimakan, diciumpun ada juga* ‘Like a dog, smelling of filth even when not eating it’ (PB 35: 164; MS 137). This is an example of how the normal character of dog was used as a basis for comparison in the Malay proverbs.

Analogical Argument

“There is a lurking ambivalence in our employment of analogies,” said Sacksteder (1974, 234). He said that we suppose that analogies to be associated with logic as they are applied in the justification of arguments from one angle, but from the other, we tend to accuse analogies as “illogical” as it is not the reality but “mere analogy.” Daor (1978), for instance, said that, “No one can deny the ubiquity, the usefulness, and the danger of arguing by analogy. Everyday, philosophical and scientific reasoning all

depends on it” (p. 173). This paradoxical dimensions cross over to the application of proverbs as analogical argument can be found quite commonly in the proverbs. Lieber (1994) explained that while proverb functions to disambiguate, the proverb itself is paradoxically inherently ambiguous, because its meaning depends on analogy. Ehninger and Brockriede (1963) differentiated between analogy and parallel case, which are normally defined under the same categories in texts on reasoning and practical logic. They make a distinction because “the proof by parallel case depends on a direct similarity between two cases, whereas an analogy involves a similarity in the relation which each of two cases bears to something else” (p. 142).²⁵ In the Malay context, for example, the proverb *pada tatkala rebung tiada dipatah, ketika sudah menjadi aur apa gunanya?* ‘If you do not break it while it is a shoot, of what use will it be [for food] when it is a grown bamboo?’ (MBRAS 164: 6) or normally to be cited as *melentur aur biarlah dari rebung* ‘If you want to bend a bamboo, make sure that when it was still a shoot’ can be applied to explain their logic of analogy. The moral behind this proverb is that education must begin when children are young. In this proverb, it is as relevant as Anglo-American proverbs “As the twig is bent, so grows the tree.” The quasi-mathematical form for the Malay proverb “If you want to bend a bamboo, make sure that you do it when it is young” can be identified as such: education: young: nurture: bamboo (while it is still in the form of *rebung*, or shoot) (Cf. Discipline: adult: nurture: tree in Goodwin and Wenzel 1981, 150). While the Anglo-American proverb stresses on the product through the process as “grows” (by using verb, active, activity), the Malays however stress on the product through temporal adjective “young”, which gives priority to when the process should be taking place (while it is young) and how it “grows” is underlying in the proverbs.

There are other proverbs that can be cited as examples to show the pattern of analogy in the Malay tradition, just to name a few in the form of A: B: C: D:

Banyak air sedikit minyak, minyak juga di atas ‘A lot of water and little oil, but still the oil will be on top’ (MB 30: 52)
Low status: High status: Water: Oil

Berketak ayam di darat, bersenyap mutiara di laut ‘Chicken makes a lot of noise when laying eggs on the ground, pearls keep quiet in the ocean’ (MB 44: 157)
Nature of Stupidity: Knowledgeable: Chicken: Pearl

Biar diam-diam ubi, jangan diam-diam tembilang ‘Let us be quiet as sweet potatoes but not quiet as the *tembilang* (digging instrument)’ (MB 54: 234)
Knowledgeable: Nature of Stupidity: Sweet Potatoes: *Tembilang* (an instrument used for digging holes).

Analogy is among one of the most basic and original human reasoning. Most people use analogical arguments to explain something. According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1995, 44), analogy means “a process of arguing from similarity in known respects to similarity in other respects.” Analogy generally carries the meaning of comparison²⁶. Malays like to compare human attitudes with

the animal character or the nature of certain plants. For example, one who is taking bath in a hurry without washing oneself properly is *mandi kerbau* (to bathe like a buffalo). Other common comparisons are *seperti mulut murai* (like the mouth of a magpie robin), *bodoh seperti lembu* (as stupid as a cow), *ikut resmi padi jangan ikut resmi jagung* (follow the nature of paddy but not maize), *pokok dedalu* (like *dedalu* tree, a kind of parasite plant) and *diam ubi berisi, diam besi berkarat* ‘The yam remains still but yet increases in bulk; iron lies quiet and wastes away the more.’ In the everyday life of the Malay, these proverbs are quite common:

Kacang lupakan kulit ‘The bean forgets its pod’ (MBRAS 90: 2);²⁷
Seperti aur dengan tebing ‘Like the bamboo and the river bank’ (MS 120);²⁸
Seperti anjing dengan kucing ‘Like cat and dog’ (MBRAS 13: 76);²⁹
*Seperti kuku dengan isi*³⁰ ‘Like nail and flesh’ (MBRAS 117: 197).

These proverbs attempt to compare two objects or two incidents in order to explain the real message that they communicate. For instance, to describe the intimate relationship between two friends, the Malay speaker uses “*isi* (quick)” and “*kuku* (nail)”, which are interdependent and not easily separated. The separation will bring hurt. There are just too many arguments by comparison that can be found in *peribahasa*. Besides using common comparative markers like “*bagai*” and “*seperti*”, there are also several other words that carry the function as comparative markers in the Malay proverbs. Look at the words that I have underlined in the following *peribahasas* and here we will encounter a group of other comparative markers: *laksana*, *macam*, *ibarat*, *umpama* and *bak*.

Laksana *binatang umang-umang di mana sarang udang di situ tempat menumpang* ‘Like a hermit crab, it will stay where the prawns hide’ (KIPM 118: 2142);
Macam *timun dengan durian: menggelek luka, kena gelek pun luka* ‘Like a cucumber and a durian: the cucumber will be wounded if it rolls against the durian or if the durian rolls against it’ (KIPM 127: 2300)/ *Durian berлага dengan mentimun* ‘Like a fight between a durian and a cucumber’ (MS 214);
Ibarat *ayam: tiada mengais tiada makan* ‘Like chicken, no scratching no food’ (KIPM 86: 1587);
Umpama *minyak setitik, di laut sekalipun timbul jua* ‘Like a drop of oil, it will still float even in the sea’ (KIPM 229: 4284);
Bak *cetus api* ‘Like sparkling fire’ (KIPM 28: 534).

Analogical argument can be presented in the form of a simile or a metaphor. *Peribahasa* in the form of a simile displays the use of comparative markers (e.g. *seperti*, *bagai*, *laksana*, *bak*, *umpama*, *ibarat* and *macam*) clearly. Whereas a metaphor is a kind of comparison, in which the comparative marker is not being mentioned. This kind of *peribahasa* normally can be found in the form of *masa itu emas* (time is gold), *ilmu itu pelita hidup* (knowledge is the lamp of life) and the like.

In discussing the analogical arguments here, I am only concentrating on the use of comparative markers which are obvious, or simile. The results of the analysis on 4359 Malay *peribahasas* in the

dictionary of Malay proverbs: *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu* (Abdullah Hussain 1991) reveal that a total number of 643 proverbs use the comparative marker words as simile (*laksana*, *macam*, *ibarat*, *umpama*, *seperti*, *bak* and *bagai*) or 14.8% ($643/4359 \times 100\%$) at the beginning of the phrases. Table 4.1 below shows the numbers and the percentage of each analogical marker use in the beginning of each proverb.

Table 4.1: The Numbers and Percentage of Malay Proverbs Which Used Analogy Marker According to Their Categories

Analogy Marker	Number	Percentage (%)
<i>Seperti</i>	269 (3392-3660)	41.8
<i>Bagai</i>	242 (279-520)	37.6
<i>Laksana</i>	39 (2135-2173)	6.1
<i>Sebagai</i>	30 (3235-3254; 3256-3265)	4.7
<i>Umpama</i>	23 (4267-4289)	3.6
<i>Bak</i>	14 (532-545)	2.2
<i>Ibarat</i>	13 (1587-1599)	2.0
<i>Macam</i>	11 (2291-2301)	1.7
<i>Sepantun</i>	2 (3389-3390)	0.3
Total	643	100.0

Source: Analysis Based on Abdullah Hussain's *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu* (1991).

From Table 4.1 above, the word “*seperti*” is the most favourite one. A total of 269 from 643 analogy markers can be traced, which represents 41.8%. “*Bagai*” comes in second with 242 proverbs (37.6%). The total of these two categories (*seperti* and *bagai*) forms nearly 80% (79.4%). Words like “*seperti*” and “*bagai*” are the most consumed words in the Malay daily life today. When comparing something, the Malay speakers feel more convenient using “*seperti*” and “*bagai*” because *laksana*, *bak*, *umpama*, *ibarat* and *macam* are closer to classical Malay. The percentage of those words is as follows: *laksana* (5.7%), *sebagai* (4.7%), *umpama* (3.6), *bak* (2.2%), *ibarat* (2.0%), *macam* (1.7%) and *sepantun* (0.3%).

Why are there so many proverbs created in the past by using the technique of comparison between the world of nature and the world of human? There are so many answers to this question. From my point of view, the important one lies in the nature of “primitive culture”, where the availability of the abstract and philosophical terms was rather limited. They had the ideas but not the terms. So, in order to make it explainable and concrete, analogy and comparison became the most effective communicative tool to present the knowledge of the past. Since their relationship with nature was so

close, objects (i.e. animals, plants, natural phenomena) were very handy to be picked from. Secondly, the language of the past was written in a more metaphorical and philosophical manner as seen from the language of the four biggest religions that had exerted their influence on the Malay world (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity) as it is beautiful.³¹ Collins and Gentner (1987, 243) argued that analogies are a powerful tool because they are “powerful ways to understand how things work in a new domain” and they thought that “analogies enable people to construct a structure-mapping that carries across with it the way the components in a system interact.” They believed that “people use them to create generative mental models, models they can use to arrive at new inferences” (*Ibid.*). According to Wan Abdul Kadir (1993a, 50-51), for the Malays, propositions which are presented in the form of analogy and symbolic are more effective and significant. He explained further:

pernyataan yang dilakukan dalam konteks demikian bukan sahaja dapat memberi pengertian yang mendalam malah dengan berbuat demikian dikira lebih sopan. Orang-orang Melayu sangat menekankan tentang budi bahasa, baik semasa berkata-kata mahupun perlakuan mereka. Budi bahasa itulah yang menerangkan kedudukan maruah seorang itu (p. 51).

proposition which was done in such a context was not only giving an in-depth understanding but also being treated as more polite. The Malays stress on the importance of *budi bahasa*^{courtesy}, both in their conversation and action. It is *budi bahasa*^{courtesy} that explains one's status of dignity.

The Malay proverbs also show some sort of caution against faulty analogical reasoning or faulty comparison in argument. There are quite a number in the Malay tradition which discuss and caution against the probability of this kind of fallacies. Take for example: Two persons who look identical in appearance and the way they walk do not mean that they are the same in character: *Sama menjulur sama menjalar, lain belut lain ular* ‘Both protrude and creep but an eel is not the same as a snake’ (MB 276: 53). They warn against the differences between those who are civilised and those who are not with *Adakah sama air hujan dengan air telaga?* ‘Is the water from the rain same as water from the well?’ (MB 3: 17). When comparing between love to our own family and love to others, they liken it to vegetables and the grass: *Seperti sayur dengan rumput* ‘Like the vegetables and the grass’³² (MB 283: 93).

Classification

Classification claims that what is true of a class will be true of the individual members in that class.³³ It is a very important category in the advancement of knowledge. When we look at the Library of Congress, we would search for a book according to the same subject heading (e.g. BC for logic, BF for psychology). All books are arranged according to the same subject. So, when something is known as coming from the same classification, we tend to think that they will share the same characteristics in general. In the proverbs we learn about the concept of classification through “Birds of a feather flock

together” or the Malay equivalent *yang enggang itu sama enggang juga* ‘It is to the hornbills that hornbills go’ (MS 20). All things are grouped together based on the same characteristics or nature that they share. If generalisation is an inductive process where we generalise individuals by looking at their similarities, classification is a deductive process where we name the character of the individual according to the character of the group. There are many ways in which the Malay proverbs are normally classified, e.g. by comparing the nature of animals and plants and putting a label to that class, viz. dogs, tigers, elephants and paddy. It was said that when we put something together in the same classification, they will have the same character and behaviour. There are many proverbs that can be quoted, which represent the same class and category. A rich man will be said to have the same characteristics of a group of rich people where he or she belongs to. Proverbial lore recognises the importance of arguments from classification and provides some general advice for dealing with them. To the Malay, one is admonished to look at the essential nature as shown in the following examples:

Tanam lalang, tak kan tumbuh padi ‘If you plant *lalang*, you will not get a crop of *padi*’ (MS 9);³⁴

Bapa borek anak rintik ‘If the father is spotted, the son will be speckled’ (MS 132);³⁵

Kuah tumpah ke nasi ‘Gravy is poured on rice’ (MS 132);

Air cucuran atap jatuhnya ke pelimbahan juga ‘Water from the roof will fall on low land’ (PB 14: 21);

Yang enggang itu sama enggang juga ‘Hornbills will still flock back to hornbills’;

Adakah daripada telaga yang jernih mengalir air yang keruh? ‘Will muddy water flow from a clean well?’ (PB 17: 40);

Asal ayam hendak ke lesung, asal itik hendak ke pelimbahan ‘as long as they are chicken they will want to go to the mortar, as long as they are duck they will want to go to the low lands which contain muddy water’ (PB 28: 107).

There are also certain Malay proverbs, which caution against faulty or hasty classification. The Malays believe that a certain character should not be accepted as the sole character of a particular group. The ability to fly for example does not belong to birds alone. To be included in the category or class of bird, that animal should possess other character or nature. The Malays use the following proverbs to criticise those people who show no discrimination on the nature of things:

Asal terbang burunglah ‘Anything that flies is a bird’ (MS 63);

Asal beringsang ikanlah ‘Anything with gills counts as fish’ (MS 6);

Seperti rotan, asal beringsang dia cucuk belaka ‘Like a rattan onto which is strung anything that has gills’ (MS 6).

The Anglo-American equivalent for the warning against hasty classifying is, for example, “All that breed in the Mud are not Eels.” But there are differences in expression between these two traditions: Malay versus Anglo-American, where the Anglo-American tradition tends to be direct by using the negation “not” as can be seen in the proverb “All that breed in the Mud are not Eels”; the Malays

however resort to “*sindiran*” (allusion, which is not directly expressed) to criticise the other interlocutor through the silencing of the word “not” as seen from their proverb *asal terbang burunglah*³⁶ ‘Anything that flies is a bird’ or according to my reconstruction in the form likely of Anglo-American proverb: “All that fly (in the air) are birds.” (See my own comparison of pattern as shown in the Table 4.2 below):

Table 4.2: An Example of Comparison Between Anglo-American and Malay Proverbs

Origin of Proverb	Subject	Predicate		
		Copula	Negation	
Anglo-American Proverb	All that breed in the Mud	are	not	Eels
Malay Proverb ³⁷	All that fly (in the air)	(are) ³⁸	-	Birds
	All with gills	(are)	-	Fishes

When we are dealing with the process of classification, we arrange things into classes or categories. Malay proverbs which deal with classifications are normally categorised under certain labels. For example, to represent people of high rank (e.g. king, wealthy people or people holding power), they use “*gajah* (elephant).” In this context, the character of people of high rank is juxtaposed with the character of elephants (e.g. big-eater, powerful and strong). There are many proverbs which use elephant as the symbol. This also shows that the Malays give an important place to their ruler, people with authority and people with wealth. There are 26 proverbs in *Peribahasa* (1961, see pp. 135-139: 865-886b) and 47 proverbs recorded in KIPM. The Malays classify those in power under the following proverbs with the label “*gajah* (elephant)”:

Gajah mati tulang setimbun ‘When an elephant dies its bones make a heap’ (PB 136: 869; MBRAS 66: 12);

Gajah berjuang sama gajah, pelanduk mati di tengah-tengah ‘When elephants meet in conflict a mousedeer that gets between them is likely to perish’ (PB 136: 871; MBRAS 66: 16);

Gajah masuk kampung, kalau kayu (pohon) tak tumbang, rumputpun layu juga ‘When an elephant enters a hamlet, even if the trees do not fall, the grass will wither’ (PB 136: 872);

Gajah hendak berak besar, kitapun hendak berak besar juga ‘The elephant wishes to release huge excrement; we too desire to release huge excrement’/
Gajah hendak berak besar, kancil hendak berak besar esok ke bebang ‘The elephant releases huge excrement; the mousedeer desires to do the same: in the end the latter will have a stoppage’;

Seperti gajah masuk kampung ‘Like an elephant entering into a village [destroying everything in its way]’ (PB 136: 873)

The Malays classify their thoughts metaphorically by using the names of animals, plants or other elements in their surrounding. Besides the label of elephant, there are various common labels which they prefer. A group of labels with higher frequency³⁹ can be quoted and testified by looking at the

index pages of KIPM (Abdullah Hussain 1991, 234-275). Those labels are, for example, *air* (water, 77)⁴⁰, *ayam* (fowl, 54), *gajah* (elephant, 43), *orang* (human, 42), *anak* (child, 41), *kerbau* (water buffalo, 37) and *anjing* (dog, 37). The detail of the categorisation can be seen in Table 4.3.

As can be seen from Table 4.3 below, one of the quite surprising features that can be observed is the absence of *kancil* (mouse-deer) from the table, the animal that is known to symbolise cleverness and smartness. This clear absence of *kancil* shows that in terms of reasoned-language, the Malays was not quite in favour of the character of “intelligence but cunning”, which has always been portrayed through the trickster image of *sang kancil*.⁴¹ The absence of *kancil* perhaps also shows that the influence of Indian culture in *peribahasa* is minimal.⁴² For Hassan Ahmad (2001c, 43), in Malay, there are a few words extended from the main terminology, *akal budi*, for instance, “*budi pekerti*”^{conduct} and “*budi bahasa*”^{courtesy}. The word “*berbudi*” (the possession of *budi*) in Malay does not only refer to human attitude (*tingkah laku*) or character (*pekerti*) but also means having brain and wisdom (*berakal dan bijaksana*). Thinking without *budi* ^{virtues}, values or unwise thinking is related to bad thinking (*akal buruk*); for instance, *akal “muslihat”*, or *akal bulus = akal ubi = akal kancil*, which means, “*tipu muslihat yang licin* (tricky tactics)”. There is also “*akal geladak*”, which means, “*tipu muslihat yang jahat* (bad tactics).” Logically, the Malays seem to believe that reasoned-language should be morally-bound. The message behind most of the Malay folktale, in which *kancil* has always been portrayed as ‘hero’ is basically didactic, morally orientated and to show indirectly how the people in power can be defeated as symbolised by the ability of *kancil* to deceive the tiger or the crocodile. The focus of these folktales was not logical but cynical thinking. The presence of certain classifications is a reflection of the Malay worldview on character. It is good to note that when the argument from classification is used in proverbs, an expressed or implied identification is posited between the subject of the proverb and the refinement in real life.

Table 4.3: Malay Proverbs and Their Categorisation

No.	Categories	Number of Entries
1	<i>air</i> (water)	77 (+2)* = 79 * proverbs no. 3393 and 3395 are not listed in the index.
2	<i>ayam</i> (fowl)	54
3	<i>gajah</i> (elephant)	43
4	<i>orang</i> (human)	42
5	<i>anak</i> (child)	41
6	<i>kerbau</i> (buffalo), <i>anjing</i> (dog)	37
7	<i>bunga</i> (flower)	30
8	<i>ikan</i> (fish)	29
9	<i>harimau</i> (tiger), <i>adat</i> (custom)	28
10	<i>ular</i> (snake), <i>padi</i> (paddy)	26
11	<i>nasi</i> (rice), <i>mulut</i> (mouth)	23
12	<i>tebu</i> (sugar-cane), <i>kayu</i> (wood)	20
13	<i>batu</i> (stone)	19
14	<i>kambing</i> (goat), <i>hujan</i> (rain)	18
15	<i>tali</i> (rope), <i>pucuk</i> (shoot), <i>bulan</i> (moon)	17
16	<i>kera</i> (monkey), <i>jalan</i> (road/ walk)	16
17	<i>burung</i> (bird), <i>minyak</i> (oil), <i>pisang</i> (banana), <i>garam</i> (salt), <i>itik</i> (duck), <i>laut</i> (sea), <i>mata</i> (eye)	15
18	<i>langit</i> (sky), <i>biduk</i> (canoe), <i>kucing</i> (cat)	14** ** The number of entries, which use the word, <i>kucing</i> (cat), as cited in the index is 15. But when we look at the content of Abdullah Hussain's (1991) book, proverb no. 3545 does not use the word " <i>kucing</i> (cat)" as suggested. Therefore, the number of entries is recorded here as 14 and not 15.
19	<i>batang</i> (stick), <i>emas</i> (gold), <i>katak</i> (frog), <i>kepala</i> (head), <i>rumah</i> (house), <i>perut</i> (stomach)	13
20	<i>tanduk</i> (horn), <i>pipit</i> (a kind of bird), <i>kaki</i> (foot)	12
21	<i>kuda</i> (horse), <i>hati</i> (liver), <i>telaga</i> (well), <i>telinga</i> (ear)	11
22	<i>ulat</i> (worm), <i>perahu</i> (boat), <i>enggang</i> (hornbill), <i>getah</i> (rubber), <i>buah</i> (fruit), <i>udang</i> (prawn), <i>tangan</i> (hand)	10

Source: Analysis based on Abdullah Hussain. 1991. *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, pp. 234-275.

Statistical Argument

In these modern times, we tend to trust figures and statistics more than anything else; otherwise certain findings might be accused as not empirical. Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 148) defined statistics as "numerical expressions of facts after they have been systematically selected and analysed."⁴³

According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1995, 1362), statistics is “the science of collecting and analysing numerical data, esp. in or for large quantities, and usually inferring proportions in a whole from proportions in a representative sample.” We are used to thinking that an argument will automatically get stronger by quoting some numbers or percentage. No doubt statistics is an important method to present the facts about phenomena or relationships and we can infer a cause or an effect, perceive a sign relationship, claim a generalisation or classification, cite a parallel case or analogous relationships; but figures can be misleading too when they are misused.⁴⁴ However, the status of statistics, which is supposed to play a neutral role, is always either to be worshipped or to be condemned. In Anglo-American proverbs, all proverbs which employ the statistical argument are of recent origin and negative like “Figures won’t lie, but liars will figure” and “You may prove anything by figures” (See Goodwin and Wenzel 1981, 152). Do Malay proverbs also represent this kind of negative worldview on statistics or are they totally silent during the old times? This is because it was not commonly employed in everyday discussions, perhaps until the emergence of positivism. From my observation, the uses of statistics as defined above cannot be detected in the Malay proverbs. The reason for this is understandable as statistics has not been developed during that period of oral communication. The concept of statistics, however, if it is to be broadened, can be traced in the Malay proverbs through the use of “numerical statistical terms”, “non-numerical statistical terms”⁴⁵ and also “enumerative proverbs.”⁴⁶

Numerical statistical terms in my discussion here involve the use of certain words, which denote the idea of accurate measurement, vague measurement and/or the concept of numerals. Accurate measurement means countable measurement based on the quantity of the object itself (i.e. *seekor*, *sehelai* and other *penjodoh bilangan*⁴⁷) or old Malay and imperial measurement system, which was used by the Malays at that time; for instance: *secupak*, *segantang* (a unit of capacity, 4 *cupak* = 1 *gantang*), *seela* (a yard), *sekaki* (a foot) and *seinci* (an inch). The concept of vague measurement uses vague terms, which cannot identify where the limits of the meaning start and where the meaning end, such as *segenggam* (a grasp) and *secubit* (a pinch). The concept of numerals refers to propositions which consist of number(s). Proverbs bearing the concept of numerals were named as “numerical proverbs” by Doctor (1993). Examples of “numerical statistical terms” *peribahasa* which fall within the accurate measurement, vague measurement and concept of numerals can be seen as (a), (b) and (c) respectively below (just to name a few) and words which are underlined are what I consider “numerical statistical terms”:

(a)

Sekali air besar, sekali tepian beranjak (= beralih) ‘Once flooded, the beach will change’ (KIPM 180: 3319);

Sekali jalan terkena, dua kali jalan tahu, tiga kali jalan jera ‘Once a person is cheated, he/she will know it the second time, and the third time, he/she will be frightened’ (KIPM 181: 3322);

Pipit bukan seekor, jagung bukan sebatang ‘There is not just one sparrow nor is there just one single maize’ (KIPM 166: 3056);

Penyu bertelur beribu-ribu, seorang pun tak tahu, ayam bertelur sebiji khabar sebuah negeri ‘The turtle lays thousands of eggs and no one is the wiser: a hen lays one egg and the whole country hears about it’ (MS 23);

Sakal mana boleh jadi secupak? ‘How can a *kal* become a *cupak*? (MBRAS 188: 22) or how can a pint become a quart’ (MS 190);

Secupak tak boleh menjadi segantang ‘a quart cannot turn into a gallon’ (MS 190).

(b)

Diberi sejengkal hendak sehasta, diberi sehasta hendak sedepa ‘Give you *sejengkal* you ask for *sehasta*, give you *sehasta* you ask for *sedepa*’⁴⁸ (KIPM 62: 1166);

Secubit tiada dapat menjadi segenggam ‘A pinch will not become a grasp’ (KIPM 178: 3282).

(c)

Kapal satu nakhoda dua ‘One ship but two captains’ (MS 208);⁴⁹

Masuk lima keluar sepuluh ‘Credit five, debit ten’ (KIPM 131: 2374);

Tujuh⁵⁰ kali pindah papa ‘Seven changes of residence make one a pauper’ (MBRAS 226: 168).

Sometimes we like to present our ideas by using “non-numerical statistical terms.” Words like *semua* (all), *sedikit* (a few/some) and *banyak* (many) are actually used to present our quantitative concept but without the usage of any numerals. This idea of “non-numerical statistical terms” can be observed from proverbs like: *Telur sesangkar pecah sebiji pecah semuanya* ‘Like a clutch of eggs, break one egg and you break all’ (MS 200). The word “semua (all)” is to stress the seriousness of a certain impact without any exception. According to White (1987, 153), “by using such quantifiers as *all*, *every*, and *no*, proverbs do not allow exceptions or hedges.” Another proverb which can be categorised under the “non-numerical statistical terms” is *sedikit-sedikit tekun, lama-lama jadi bukit* (work diligently little by little and gradually it will become a hill).

There is another category of proverb which is closely related to the concept of statistical term, by the name “enumerative proverbs.” Traditionally, this term is loosely applied to the studies of proverb to any proverb where numbers appear, irrespective of whether the numbers relate to any enumeration or not as can be seen in (c) above. It has also been called “numerical proverb.” “Enumerative proverb” here applies to proverbs in which there is the idea of “mention one by one” or “counting.” A few Malay proverbs in my corpus of study are *dua kali dua empat* ‘two times two is four’ (KIPM 69: 1289), *dua kali lima sepuluh* ‘two times five is ten’ (PB 122: 784) and *seduit dibelah tujuh* ‘To divide 1/20th of a rupee into seven parts’ (MBRAS 187: 9). The first two examples show the idea of multiplication, whereas the third one reflects the idea of division.

After analysing the so-called substantive argument that concentrates on the various patterns of argument, let us go to the next category of analysis in this chapter: authoritative argument, which will focus on the nature and character of the arguer.

Authoritative Argument

Malay proverbs stress on the importance and the reputation of the speakers. A good speaker should command the respect from his/her audience. They should possess the character of “*budi* and its networks”. Under certain circumstances, the *budi* ^{good deed} of a speaker is even more important than the quality of the argument.⁵¹ Perhaps due to their allegiance to the authority of the speaker, quite a number of proverbs have emerged. Proverbs themselves of course are arguments from authority. They are claimed as “*perkataan orang tua-tua*” (the words of the elder or experience) by the Malays or using Bakhtin’s term, “word of the fathers” in his *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981).⁵² The Malay proverbs exemplify well what M.M. Bakhtin called authoritative speech when he wrote, “The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher. It is so to speak, the word of the fathers. Its authority was already *acknowledged* in the past. It is a *prior* discourse.” (Bakhtin 1981, 342; italics original) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1995, 83) defined the meaning of authority as such: “1. The power or right to enforce obedience; 2. A person or body having authority, esp. political or administrative; 3. An influence exerted on opinion because of recognised knowledge or expertise,” where no. 1 and no. 2 can be categorised as what Walton (1989) has termed “administrative authority,” and no. 3 as “cognitive authority.” Cognitive authority involves the expertise in certain realms of specialisation; whereas administrative authority refers to either legal authority or political authority.

Cognitive Authority

Cognitive authority is an individual or a group that admonishes one to take and heed counsel. The characteristics of cognitive authority can be traced for its existence in the Malay proverbs through the use of words like *guru* (teacher), *hakim* (a judge) and *pendeta* (a wise man) or metaphorically applied by using the symbols or labels such as *itik* (duck), *ayam* (fowl), *tupai* (squirrel) as well as *buaya* (crocodile); whereas administrative authority or power can be detected from the choice of words: *raja* (King), *sultan*, *tuhan* (God) etc. The examples of *peribahasa* which portray cognitive authority are:

Kemahiran itu sebaik-baik guru/ Kemahiran yang diperoleh dengan penat lelah itu sebaik-baik guru ‘Skill is as good as a teacher’ (TB 2);
Hendak belajar berenang dapatkan itik, hendak belajar memanjat dapatkan tupai ‘If you want to learn how to swim, ask the duck; if you want to learn how to climb, ask the squirrel’ (KIPM 81: 1492);
Jikalau hendak beranak, ikutlah kata bidan ‘If you want to give birth, do what the midwife says’ (MS 70);

Jauhari juga yang mengenal manikam ‘It takes a jeweller to know a gem’ (TB 59; MS 70);
Ayam itik raja pada tempatnya ‘Chicken and ducks are rulers in their own place’ (MS 11).

From the proverbs above, what we are going to affirm here is that the Malay communities also stress on the importance of skills and expertise in discussing knowledge and know-how. The proverbs express the meaning that any work will become perfect when it is done by those who have the skills or possess the cognitive expertise within their specialisation: if you want to learn swimming, then you have to refer to the duck and if you want to know the technique of climbing, squirrel will be the better teacher. In cynically criticizing those who do not appreciate cognitive authority, they use proverbs such as *beranak tak berbidan* ‘Having a baby without employing a midwife’ (MS 79). The Malays do not go for size when they are discussing knowledge as knowledge never increases by size: *Kecil jangan disangka anak, besar jangan disangka bapa* ‘We should not imagine that a young person is a child nor should we imagine that a grown up is a father’ (MBRAS 107: 122). A person of knowledge, according to the Malay proverbs, should not be arrogant and parochial. Due to their worldview of *semangat padi*, the Malays claim that those who are more knowledgeable or have higher cognitive authority should display greater humility: *Ilmu padi, makin berisi makin runduk* ‘The law of the paddy is such that the more the paddy ripens, the more it bends’ (KIPM 88: 1618). To criticise a person without knowledge or those who think that they are the most knowledgeable, the Malays use the following proverbs:

Berfikirkan dusunnya itulah alam ini, dan belalang disangkakannya helang
 ‘To think that his orchard is the whole universe, and the grasshopper an eagle’ (TB 13: 91);
Seekor katak di bawah tempurung menyangkakan tiada dunia yang lain/ Duduk seperti katak di bawah tempurung ‘A frog that hides in a coconut shell thinks that there is no other world (except its own)/ One who sits like a frog under a coconut shell’ (TB 13: 92/ TB 13: 93);
Bergurindam di tengah rimba ‘Singing the rhythmic expression [*gurindam*] in the middle of the jungle’ (TB 13: 94)

A. Samad Idris (1999a) in one of his articles “*Hadkan kepada Dua Penggal*” (*Utusan Malaysia* 17 June 1999) provide us with a few more examples of how the Malays give authority an important role in their worldview:

Kalau nak tahu tingginya pokok, tanyalah helang
Kalau nak tahu dalamnya belukar, tanyalah puyuh dan denak
Kalau nak tahu luasnya padang, tanyalah belalang
Kalau nak tahu panjangnya pantai, tanyalah bebarau.
 (If you want to know how tall a tree is, ask the eagle
 If you want to know how deep a thicket is, ask the quail [or *Turnix suscitator atrogularis*] and *denak* [one kind of bird]
 If you want to know how wide a field is, ask the grasshopper

If you want to know how long a beach is, ask the *bebarau* bird [a kind of bird, *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*])

One of the criteria for a person to become a cognitive authority that can be found in the repertoire of Malay proverbs is the importance of experience. As I have already mentioned in Chapter 3, practicality is one of the criteria to achieve the status of a *budiman* ^{person of wisdom}, and this can be observed through their proverbs which stress on the importance of experience and skills as the best teacher: *Kemahiran itu sebaik-baik guru* ‘Skill is as good as a teacher’ (TB 89: 739). The Malays believe that the more you practise, the more perfect you will be or practice makes perfect. One of the Malay proverbs which is quite often quoted is *alah bisa buat biasa* ‘Venom is made worse by experience’ (MS 69). This proverb reflects the value of experience given by the Malay. According to Brown (1951, 69): “When you have often been attacked, you know how to take measures to defend yourself and render the attack less dangerous, e.g. an attack of malaria.”⁵³ This proverb now appears more commonly in the present variant as *alah bisa tegal biasa*, which stresses on the importance of experience and practice.⁵⁴ Even though there are a diversity of interpretations, the underlying reality behind this proverb (and its variants) highlights the authoritativeness of experience in the Malay *Weltanschauung*.

Experience is also highly esteemed and should be treated as part of the cognitive authority. In their daily life sayings, the Malays always feel proud of being experiential as they always claim that “*saya sudah dahulu makan garam* (I had tasted salt since long ago)” to justify that. Although they do not justify the possession of knowledge by physical size, they however tend to justify knowledge by age as they believe that wisdom come with age. As such, they believe that we should take the counsel of elders when it is necessary and for relevant matters. This can be supported by the the following proverbs:

Kelapa muda tak berminyak ‘Young coconuts have no oil’ (TB 12: 80);
Orang tua diajar makan pisang ‘Teaching an old man to eat bananas’ (TB 5: 32; MS 206);
Orang tua jangan diparut seperti rotan, dahululah dia merasa garam ‘Old men should not be scarred like rattan for they tasted salt earlier than us’ (TB 33).

The moment someone has been given authority, the Malays are reluctant to challenge his or her authority. The Malays place the authority at a higher and sometimes even “sacred” position as they believe that the authority should know more than the layman. In reference to those who reject authoritative advice, they use the proverb like *air di daun keladi* (= *talas*) (KIPM 5: 77) or *kalis bagai air di daun keladi* (KIPM 102: 1856). These proverbs literally mean that although you pour water on the leaves of *Colocasia esculentum* [*keladi*/ *talas*], they will not be absorbed anyway. There are other

proverbs as well, which contain the message of imperviousness to instruction, counsel or authority, the meanings of which are no different from that of *air di daun keladi*. These proverbs are:

Seperti tulis di atas air '[Admonishing him is] like writing on water' (MS 112);
Menuangkan secawan air tawar ke dalam laut '[You might as well] pour a cup of fresh water into the sea [to freshen it]' (MS 112);
Telinga tempayan 'Ears like a jar' (MS 112);
Batu direbus masakan empok? 'Can a stone become tender by boiling?' (MS 112).

It is true generally that a person with cognitive authority is a person of knowledge but it should not be confused with the idea that we have the right to challenge the view of an authority as long as we have strong counter arguments to challenge their authoritative view. From my point of view, the Malays tend to avoid direct confrontation as it is *tidak berbudi* ^{impolite}. When the ethical dimension of *budi* overflows, then the tendency of avoiding dialectical dispute within the Malay tradition will increase. To the Malays, we should not query, change or try to teach those who are already knowledgeable. A few proverbs can be quoted to show their unwillingness to confront those who have cognitive authority:

Tak usah diajar anak buaya berenang, dia sudah pandai sedia 'You need not teach a young crocodile how to swim; it already knows' (MS 206);
Itik diajar berenang 'Teaching a duck how to swim' (MS 206);
Mengajar buaya berenang 'Teaching a crocodile how to swim' (KIPM 143: 2608; MS 206);
Mengajar limau berduri 'Teaching a lemon to be thorny' (KIPM 143: 2609);
Anak kera pula nak diajar memanjat 'You want to teach a baby monkey how to climb' (MS 206; Cf. TB 5: 34);
Orang tua diajar makan pisang 'Teaching an old man to eat bananas' (TB 5: 32; MS 206);
Memperjual orang Cina penjahit 'To sell to Chinese tailors'

In certain cases, authorities may be impeached for several shortcomings. This seems contradictory but in reality, it is not as what the Malays try to impeach is "pseudo-authority." In the Anglo-American proverbs, we can see for example a rather common proverb "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed are kings," which was quoted by Goodwin and Wenzel (1981, 153) as showing the shortcomings of perceptual difficulty. The proverbs which may be well to quote here from the Malay tradition to show disapproval of pseudo-authority are: *Tempat tiada helang, kata belalang akulah helang* 'Where there are no eagles, the grasshopper says, "I am an eagle."' (TB 9: 65; MS 21); and *Tinggilah pohon keduduk di tengah padang* 'On an open plain the rhododendron is a tall tree' (MS 21). The Malays also believe that we should not be led by pseudo-authority, those who have no authority in knowledge or those who do not possess the character or charisma of a leader better than their audience. As the Malay proverbs say, *Si rabun memimpin si buta* 'The dim-sighted leading the blind' (TB 12: 88; MS 21) or *ketam menyuruh anaknya berjalan betul* 'The crab telling its young to walk straight' (MS 21).

Administrative Authority

Administrative authority refers to people or institutions, who or which are holding administrative power. Therefore, it shouldn't be confused with cognitive authority, someone who possesses knowledge. Administrative authority plays its role in terms of planning, managing and acting as spokesperson in administrative and governmental affairs. Administrative and judicial power can be explained through the proverb: *Harimau ditakuti sebab giginya* 'The tiger is feared because of its fangs' (KIPM 79: 1462), which means that an administrative authority is well-respected due to its power to enforce rules and regulations. This proverb portrays the non-cognitive aspect of authority. If we examine the proverb above, we find that someone in power is respected not because of his/her expertise or knowledge but because of his/her power. The longer version of this proverb is *adapun harimau itu ditakuti orang oleh sebab giginya, maka jikalau tiada lagi giginya, apakah ditakutkan orang akan dia?* 'The tiger is feared because of its fangs, but if they have none left why should men be afraid of them' (MBRAS 3: 15). In order to achieve the authority in the realm of knowledge, cognitive authority and not administrative authority should become the reference.⁵⁵ The existence of not too many proverbs under such a category reflects the unwillingness of the Malays to criticise administrative authority. In this context, the Malays seem to be rather non-dialectical. Now let us proceed to motivational argument in order to see how the values, motives and desires of the audience appear in the Malay proverbs.

Motivational Argument

The third argument type, which is called "motivational proof" under Ehninger and Brockriede's scheme, refers to appeals that are based on the audience's values, motives, and desires. "Such arguments are sound when the underlying values are rationally justified, unsound when they are warranted by no more than blind prejudice or passion," remarked Goodwin and Wenzel (1981, 154).⁵⁶ What are the functions of values, motives and desires in the Malay proverbial rhetorical persuasion and what kind of appeals become the central focus of Malay discourse as shown in *peribahasa*? Do Malay proverbs caution against being carried away by the emotional appeal of others? How do the Malays interpret and caution against the existence of fallacies – error in reasoning? Do they follow the same standard of criteria when dealing with them as compared to a standard textbook on modern logic? Are there certain common fallacies which are seen to be non-fallacies in the Malay ways of arguing and reasoning? These are important and interesting questions if we want to discover more about their logic, reasoning and rationality and similarities and differences as compared to their Anglo-American and African counterparts.

The Malays do actually caution against the dangers of emotional appeal and attitudes. This can be supported by the existence of proverbs like: *Ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa* ‘To give way to one’s desire is death, to give way to one’s passions is destruction’ (MBRAS 84: 17) or *ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa, ikut mata leta* ‘To give way to one’s desire is death, to give way to one’s passions is destruction and to give way to one’s eyes is shameful’ (KIPM 88: 1617)⁵⁷ and *Hati orang bodoh itu di mulutnya, dan lidah orang yang cerdik itu di belakang hatinya* ‘The heart of a stupid person is in his mouth but the tongue of a wise person is behind his heart’ (TB 3: 16). Despite the condemnation of *hati* in certain Malay proverbs, this does not mean that the Malays totally rejected the place of “*hati*” in their worldview. Indeed, they considered “*hati*” as having a very significant role in their proverbs. This significant role of “*hati*” can be perceived in many *simpulan bahasa*.⁵⁸

Motivation can be rationalised in many ways if it is used to rationalise unrationalised situations. In the Anglo-American proverbs, one who tries to find a reason to justify whatever negative acts he did is likened to: “He who wishes to kill his dog can always find symptoms of rabies” or “He who has a mind to beat a dog will easily find a stick.” In order to motivate positive attitude, the most quoted proverb is “where there is a will there is a way (German equivalent: *wo ein Wille ist, da ist ein Weg*).” The Malays too have the same motivational argument and this can be supported by their proverb: *Hendak seribu daya, tak hendak seribu upaya* ‘if you have the will, there is a thousand capacity; if you do not, there is a thousand effort (to find an excuse)’ (KIPM 82: 1516) or the normal variant *Hendak seribu daya, tak hendak seribu dalih* ‘if you have the will, there is a thousand capacity; if you don’t, there is a thousand excuses’ (*Kamus Dewan* 1986, 228), which means that if you really want to do something, there are many ways but if you do not want, you will have many excuses.

General Rational Principles

Besides the three main logical principles which I have already discussed earlier in this chapter, there are also many other rational principles that can be presented to justify how the Malays perceive their idea of reasoning and rationality. There are various rational principles that can be raised for discussion. Firstly, the Malays believe that the attitude of asking is considered to be a rational way of acquiring knowledge. A few proverbs, for example, show the bad effects suffered by those who are reluctant to ask. The Malays say: *Segan bertanya sesat jalan* ‘If you are too shy to ask for directions, you will lose your way’ (MS 174). Other proverbs which can be quoted here that carry the same impact are: *Segan berkayuh perahu hanyut* ‘If you are too lazy to paddle, your boat will float away’ (TB 33: 246), which means that those who are lazy will end up in trouble and *Hilir malam, mudik tak singgah, daun nipah dikatakan daun labu* ‘To travel downstream in the night, to sail upstream without stopping; the leaves of a palm tree are mistaken for the leaves of a pumpkin’ (TB 33: 247), which means that those who seldom ask will get the wrong understanding.

When it comes to the nature of judgement, the Malays dismiss hearsay but promulgate the importance of evidence as a source of reason, where the mind and reason are the sources of knowledge. As they say: *Lubuk akal, tepian ilmu* ‘The mind is the source of knowledge’ (PB 28: 115), which means that knowledgeable people are those who should be consulted by us. The caution against hearsay or rumour, which is always exaggerated, is mentioned in one of the Malay proverbs: *Belum tuarang panjang buah sengkuang besar betis* ‘Before the severe drought has set in, the yam beans have grown to be as big as the calf of one’s leg’ (MS 183). This proverb is also categorised as “wishful thinking” by Brown (1951, 224). The importance of referential evidence is highlighted by the proverb: *Kalau gajah hendak dipandang gadingnya, kalau harimau hendaklah dipandang belangnya* ‘Look at an elephant for its tusks and a tiger for its stripes’ (PB 138: 880). The principles of rationality should be determined according to fact and evidence. This can be further elaborated through the proverb: *Di mana pinggan pecah, di situlah tembikar tinggal* ‘Where the plates have been broken, there you will find the pieces’ (MS 67), which means that the discovery of pieces of porcelain (*tembikar*) is conclusive evidence that plates have been broken. In the realm of argumentation, the Malays claim that we should be able to provide reasons in the support of our cause or argument: *dialas bagai memengat*⁵⁹ ‘to put a pad under like cooking *pengat*’ (PB 30: 128). However, claims without evidence are described as *bau busuk tiada berbangkai* ‘There is a bad smell but no carcass can be found’ (PB 56: 312). The nature of reason and judgement should not be based on emotions and any process of problem solving should be dealt with in a calm and rational manner. Reason and knowledge are just like water current, which appears calm but can push away hearsay. As the Malays say, *Air tenang menghanyutkan* ‘calm water can float something away’ (PB 17: 38). In the Malay proverbs, we can see how the Malays stress on the balance between knowledge, reasoning and skills (or practicality). Consider their proverb *tiga sudah berdiri habis* ‘Three represent all’ (TB 89: 738), for example, which means that it is appropriate in certain actions to have three kinds of comparison: knowledge, reason and skills.

In the process of learning, they are advised to accept mistakes as it is equally rational to be wrong or right. The Malays strongly believe that humans are not perfect and therefore, as humans, we should be humble about what we know. Just like the Anglo-American tradition, which believes that “to err is human,” the Malays use natural phenomena to express the same connotation: *Laut mana tak berombak, bumi mana tak ditimpa hujan* ‘Which sea is always stil, and which spot on earth on which no rain falls?’ (TB 49: 380; MS 65). Other proverbs that can be quoted here are:

Bumi mana yang tiada (atau ditimpa) hujan ‘Which spot on earth on which no rain falls?’ (TB 49: 381; Cf. TB 49: 380);
Rumah (tempat kediaman) mana yang tidak bersampah ‘What house is free from rubbish?’ (TB 49: 382; MS 66);

Salangkan lidah lagi tergigit oleh gigi 'Even the tongue is bitten by the teeth' (TB 49: 383);

Bunga yang harum itu ada juga durinya 'Even a sweet-smelling flower has its thorns' (TB 49: 384; MS 152);

Imam khatib lagi berdosa, bertambah pula kita yang jahil 'If priests and parsons fall, more so we who are ignorant' (MS 65);

Burung pun ada masanya gugur ke bumi 'Even birds fall to the ground sometimes' (MS 65);

Gajah empat kaki lagi tersarok, inikan pula manusia dua kaki 'If the four legged elephant can stumble, what more we who are two-legged?' (MS 66);

Kuat gajah terdorong, cepat harimau terlompat-lompat 'Strong is the elephant but he stumbles; quick is the tiger but sometimes he has to jump' (MS 66).

The secret of knowing our imperfection hints that we should learn from mistakes and make whatever correction that is needed. This can be justified from the proverb *sesat di hujung jalan balik ke pangkal jalan* 'If you lose your way at the end of the road, return to your starting point' (TB 50: 396; MBRAS 198: 96). To the Malays, we should not let mistakes go uncorrected or only realise them only after it is too late, like the proverbs: *sudah terlalu hilir malam apa hendak dikatakan lagi* '[The boat] has gone too far down stream in the night; what more is to be said?' (TB 51: 405; MBRAS 203: 132), *nasi sudah menjadi bubur* 'The rice has become porridge' (TB 51: 406; MS 198), *bagai gondahkan buah dimakan burung* 'Like mourning a fruit that has been eaten by a bird' (MS 199) and *sudah terhantuk baru tergadah* 'To look up only after a collision' (MBRAS 203: 130). It is no use crying over spilled milk! However, the Malays realise that even though to err is human and by right, people should have the courage to admit their mistake and correct it, it is not as easy as we think for someone to admit their wrongdoing. The Malay proverb asks: *Siapa mengaku berak di tengah jalan?* 'Who will confess to having pass motion in the middle of a road?' (KIPM 199: 3705; MBRAS 199: 103). The nature of people not admitting their own mistakes gave birth to various types of rationalisation while the nature of people easily swept away by their emotion and their ethnocentric and egocentric thinking caused the emergence of various fallacious reasoning. The Malay proverbs do warn against all pseudo-reasons through their so-called prohibitive sayings. Syed Hussein Alatas (1977) criticised the *Revolusi Mental*⁶⁰ for utilising a number of Malay sayings expressing negative characteristics which are then regarded as dominant elements in the Malay character. According to Syed Hussein Alatas (1977), broadly speaking, Malay sayings can be classified into three types, i.e. advocative, prohibitive and descriptive, though at times the demarcation line is difficult to draw. To him, the advocative saying is one which suggests something desirable or good, something to be accomplished (e.g. *tangan menetak bahu memikul* [the hand chopping, the shoulders carrying], to portray diligence). The prohibitive contains an element of rejection, disapproval or avoidance (e.g. *jangan nantikan nasi disajikan di lutut* [do not wait for the rice to be served on your knee], which prohibits expecting something without effort) whereas the descriptive merely portrays a situation, belonging to neither one of the other two types (e.g. *retak menanti pecah* [the crack awaiting the break], which illustrates a tenuous friendship

about to break). Let us see how their proverbial wisdom warns against both rationalisation and fallacies.

Caution against Rationalisation

One of the interesting features that can be discovered in the Malay proverbs is their strong criticism of people who tend to cover their weaknesses. There are relatively many proverbs asking for the Malays to be self-searching and not blaming others. Rationalisation means “*substituting acceptable reasons for the real reasons behind the action*” (Moore, McCann and McCann 1985, 401). This word carries the meaning that an agent for a certain action tries to substantiate his/her arguments with certain reasons that he/she thinks to be reasonable and persuasive instead of true reasons on why certain actions have been taken. Rationalising is just like a propaganda machine which attempts to install possible and acceptable excuses in order to make them look suitable to our human rational nature. According to Moore, McCann and McCann (1985), rationalisation comes in several brands: excuse searching, sour grapes, sweet lemon and blaming or accusing others.

Excuse Searching

The “excuse searching” way of rationalisation aims at self-defending the dignity of an arguer. With this strategy, an arguer tends to replace real reasons with acceptable reasons in order to preserve his/her dignity. The Malay proverbs condemn those who are wrong or fail to do something but insist that they are right by citing various reasons as *hendak menegakkan tali basah* ‘To make a wet thread stand on its end’ (MBRAS 144: 111). The Malays also believe that if you want to do something, you will definitely have the determination to do it, or otherwise you will only be giving excuses for not doing it. Their proverbs go like: *Hendak seribu daya, tak hendak seribu dalih* ‘If you want, there will be a thousand ways; if you do not, there will be a thousand excuses’; *Enggan seribu daya, mahu sepatah kata* ‘If you do not wish to, there will be a thousand tricks; if you want, only a single word is required’ (KIPM 71: 1334); and *kambing di parak panjang janggutnya, hati enggan bahaya jawabnya* ‘Goats in the farm have long beard; an answer is dangerous if the heart refuses’ (KIPM 102: 1857).

Sour Grapes

The “sour grapes” way of rationalisation is known to us through the story of “the wolf and the grapes” which is also available in the form of the Malay proverb: *Serigala dengan buah anggur* ‘The wolf and the grapes’⁶¹ (KIPM 197: 3669). It is known to us that when someone cannot get something that he or she wants due to his/her weaknesses, instead of blaming himself/herself, that person shifts the blame to his/her opponents or the qualities of the objects as a way of self-consolation. In the Malay lore,

there is however another opposite example which is not the same as the sour grapes as commonly treated. This one is perhaps the “sweet grapes” syndrome. In “sour grapes,” the arguer condemns what he/she does not get but the “sweet grapes” praises instead. And this is observed through the proverb: *Adat orang mengail, kalau ikan terlepas tentulah besar* ‘According to the custom of fishermen, when a fish escapes, it must be a big one (KIPM 3: 55; MS 77).⁶²

Sweet Lemons

This type of rationalisation is actually used to describe the attitudes of an arguer who tries to cite certain characteristics of certain objects, people or behaviours, which are actually useless to look great so as to cover the weaknesses in them. Caution against people who like to present “sweet lemons” can be obtained from the following proverbs:

Si bodoh mengeji dirinya dengan puji-pujian ‘An idiot insults himself/herself with praise’ (MB 290: 144);

Harimau hendak menghilangkan jejaknya ‘The tiger wishes to lose his pugmarks’ (MS 43);

Alah membeli menang memakai ‘What you lose on the cost, you will gain in the wear’ (MS 92);

Kalau tak ada rotan, akar pun berguna juga ‘If there is no rattan, the root can also be used’ (MS 99);

Hitam-hitam tahi minyak dimakan juga, putih-putih hempas kelapa dibuang ‘Black oil waste is still eaten but white dreg coconut is thrown away’ (KIPM 85: 1570);

Buruk-buruk kayu gaharu, dibakar berbau juga ‘Eagle-wood may not be much good to look at, but light it and it will give out a fragrant smell’ (MS 7);

Biar kalah sabung, asalkan menang sorak ‘It is alright to lose the cockfight as long as you win in the shouting’ (MS 154);

Pecah buyung, tempayan ada ‘If the jug is broken, you still have the storing-jar’ (MS 197);

Asal ada, kecil pun jadilah ‘As long as there is something, never mind even if it is small’ (MS 139);

Dalam menyelam, cetek bertimba ‘Dive when it is deep; draw water with timba [a pail for drawing water from a well] when it is shallow’ (KIPM 59: 1099);

Tak ada gading yang tak retak ‘There is no ivory that does not crack’ (KIPM 206: 3831);

Alangkah baik (= elok) berbini tua, perut kenyang pengajaran (= pamanja) datang ‘How nice to have an old wife; the stomach is full and we can even gain experience’ (KIPM 8: 131).

Blaming Others

The “blaming others” way of rationalisation is quite common and can be found in many of the Malay proverbs. It is used to defend the arguer’s own weaknesses and then actively transfer his own weaknesses into blaming or accusing others. This kind of scapegoat syndrome is directly related to the fallacy of *tu quoque*. The existence of so many proverbs under this category positively justifies the wisdom of the Malay lore which warns against blaming others for our failure. If we look at the negative side, why do the Malay folks need so many proverbs to advise them not to blame others? Does it show that the “blaming others” attitude is becoming too common among them? The following examples of proverbs substantiate the caution against attitudes of blaming others in the Malay community:

Udang hendak mengata ikan ‘The prawn sneers at the fish’ (MS 169);
Seekor kuman di benua China dapat dilihat, tetapi gajah bertangkap di batang hidung tiada sedar ‘One can see a louse as far off as China, but cannot see an elephant on the edge of his nose’ (MBRAS 187: 15);
Mengata dulang paku serpih, mengata orang dia yang lebih ‘The chipped nail sneers at the tray, sneering at others when you are worse than they are’ (MS 169);
Tak tahu menganyam, pandan disalahkan ‘One who has no skill in mat making but puts the blame on the material’ (KIPM 210: 3903);
Tak tahu menari, dikatakan lantai jongkang-jongkit ‘One who cannot dance but blames the floor for not being flat’(MB 312: 85);
Mencari lantai terjunjat ‘To search for an unlevel floor’ (KIPM 140: 2553);
Tak tahu menari, dikatakan tanah lembap ‘One who cannot dance but blames the softness of the ground’ (MS 169);
Tidak tahu menari dikatakan tanah tinggi rendah ‘One who cannot dance but blames the unevenness of the ground’ (MB 312: 86);
Buruk muka cermin dibelah ‘An ugly face breaks a mirror’ (KIPM 55: 1029);
Seekor kuman di negeri China dapat dilihat, tetapi gajah bertenggek di batang hidung tiada sedar ‘A mite in far away China can be seen but an elephant sitting on one’s own nose escapes notice’ (MS 144);
Langit dapat dilukis, sudut kambut diserayakan ‘The sky can be drawn but a mengkuang leaf basket has to be done by someone else’;
Bila ‘dah merah: kunyit salahkan kapur, kapur salahkan kunyit ‘When the quid has turned red, the turmeric blames the lime and the lime blames the turmeric’ (MS 146);
Telur mengatakan lepat tak pandai duduk ‘The egg says the lepat [a kind of cucumber] does not know how to sit properly’ (KIPM 214: 3999)
Bintang di langit dapat dibilang tetapi tak sedar di mukanya arang ‘One can count the stars in the heavens but is not aware of the smut on his own face’ (MS 129);
Bicarakan rumput di halaman orang, di halaman sendiri rumput sampai ke kaki tangga ‘To talk about the grass in the neighbour’s lawn but the grass on your own lawn grows right to your doorstep’ (MBRAS 38: 111);

Awak yang celaka, orang lain diumpat ‘You get the bad luck but others get the blame’ (KIPM 14: 249);

Lemak manis pada dialah, pahit maung pada orang ‘The fat and the sweet are his while others only get the bitter and nasty’ (MS 124);

Tak tahu masak dikatakan tiada api; tak tahu menari, dikatakan tanah lembap ‘The man who cannot dance blames the softness of the ground’ (MS 169);

Jaras katanya raga jarang ‘The creel says the basket is coarsely plaited [but so is the creel]’ (MS 169)

Keladi kata kemahang biang ‘The *keladi* says the *kemahang* causes irritation [but so does the *keladi*]’ (MS 169).

The existence of many proverbs in this category reflects the non-dialectical approach of the Malay ways of reasoning. Dialectical approach demands an arguer to go directly to the problem or to the opponent to resolve an issue. The Malays, however, do not go directly to the problems that confront them but will tend to *marahkan pijat kelambu dibakar, tidur terdedah* ‘one who is angry with bed bugs but burns the mosquito net and ends up sleeping uncovered’ (KIPM 130: 2355), *marahkan telaga yang kering, timba dipecahkan* ‘one who is angry with a dried up well but breaks his own pail’ (KIPM 130: 2356) or *marahkan tikus rengkiang dibakar* ‘one who is angry with the rat but burns his own paddy barn’ (KIPM 130: 2357).

Caution against Fallacies in the Malay Proverbs

There are generally three categories of fallacies based on the categorisations of Govier (1985/1988), Johnson and Blair (1983), and Schlecht (1991): Unacceptable Premises, Irrelevant Premises and Insufficient Premises. Under these three broader categories, we can discover other individual fallacies (e.g. *post hoc*, red herring, straw man, guilt by association) that will be analysed in this section. Since not all fallacies within each category can be located in the Malay proverbial lore, I will therefore not discuss my data under the rubric of the above three categories, but choose to focus only on cautioning against certain selected fallacies that can be detected in the Malay proverbs under the sub-topic for each fallacy. Are certain kinds of fallacies which used to be considered as fallacies in the Western or Aristotelian tradition also known as fallacies in the Malay tradition? Among the fallacies that will be discussed are *tu quoque*, guilt by association, slippery slope and so on.⁶³ The term *tu quoque*, meaning “you are another” is sometimes used to name this circumstantial variety of *ad hominem* or personal attack. Examples of *peribahasa* that convey the message of *tu quoque* are: *udang hendak kata ke ikan* ‘The lobster wants to abuse the fish for being dirty’ (MBRAS 228: 4); *jaras kata raga jarang* ‘The creel says that the basket is coarsely plaited’ (MBRAS 88: 21). Genetic fallacy is a type of argument in which an attempt is made to prove a conclusion false by condemning its source or genesis [e.g. *Bapa borek, anak rintik* ‘If the father is speckled, the child will show some spots’; *Bagaimana acuan, begitulah kuihnya* ‘If that is how the mould is, that is how the cake will be’]. The fallacy of guilt by association is committed when a person or his views are criticised on the basis of a supposed link

between that person and a group or movement that is believed by the arguer and the audience to be un reputable [e.g. *seekor kerbau membawa lumpur, semua kerbau terpalit* ‘if one buffalo is muddied, the whole herd is considered dirty’; *Sebab nila setitik rosak susu sebelanga* ‘one drop of indigo will spoil a whole pot of milk’ (MBRAS 195: 67)]. A hasty generalisation happens when a person makes a generalisation from a single anecdote or experience [e.g. *jangan didengar guruh di langit, air tempayan adinda curahkan* ‘Do not empty the water jars just because you hear the thunder in the sky (MBRAS 87: 11)] and the like.

The word “fallacies” carries different meanings. Fallacy originated from the Latin *fallacia* which means “*deceit*”, “*trick*” or “*fraud*” (Reese 1980, 167). The definitions of fallacy are quite diversified and can be traced back to the time of Aristotle through his work, *De Sophisticis Elenchis*. According to him, “Let us now discuss sophistic refutations, i.e. arguments which appear to be refutations but are really fallacies instead.... That some reasonings are genuine, while others seem to be so but are not, is evident” (164a20). Nonetheless, Hamblin in his epoch-making work, *Fallacies* (1970) defined fallacy within the dimension of formal deductive logic, which uses the word valid: “A fallacy is an argument which appears to be valid but is not” (p. 12). Another classical work on critical thinking, *Critical Thinking* (Max Black 1952, in Johnson 1987), for instance, also used the conception of formal deductive logic: “A fallacy is an argument that seems to be sound without being so in fact” (p. 230). Both definitions still bond with the conception of validity and soundness, which forms the important terminology in formal logic even until today. Nevertheless, informal logic texts later seemed to free themselves from this rigidity (burdened by the concepts of validity and sound) and used more loose words like conclusive versus inconclusive (Joseph 1906, in Johnson 1987), persuasive versus unpersuasive (i.e. Kahane 1990; Cederblom and Paulsen 1991), and correct versus incorrect (i.e. Moore and Parker 1986; Barry 1984: 203; Copi and Cohen 1990. For a more detailed discussion on the definition of fallacy, see Johnson 1987).

Reasoning generally can be divided into two categories: (i) cogent and persuasive reasoning; and (ii) fallacious reasoning and therefore not persuasive (Kahane 1990, 296). This division of Kahane (1990) seems to resemble the definition of Cederblom and Paulsen (1991, 135), “fallacies, then, are arguments that tend to persuade but should not persuade.” In this research, fallacy means “an error in reasoning.” Logicians use the word fallacy not to refer to any kind of false beliefs or inaccurate idea, but the common and typical idea which normally appears in the ordinary discourses and cause the unconvincing arguments. From the analysis obtained from the various collections of Malay proverbs, there are proverbs which caution against certain fallacies from the structure of the proverbs or the meanings of *peribahasa*.⁶⁴

Post hoc, ergo propter hoc

There are certain proverbs which caution against fallacious causal reasoning, which we normally discuss as the fallacy of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* (after this, therefore because of this). A *post hoc* fallacy occurs when a coincidence is to be treated as causal relationship. One of the examples is *enggang lalu, ranting patah* ‘The hornbill passes, a branch is broken’ (MS 38). Did the hornbill break the branch? Not necessarily, but experience tells us that we tend to relate our suspicious circumstances to some kind of coincidence in order to justify the former. Even though we did not do anything wrong, the coincidence may suggest that we did. Another example of caution against *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* is *seekor ayam tak berkokok, hari tak siangkah?* ‘If a cock does not crow, will the sun fail to appear?’ (PB 25: 86; MBRAS 187: 10). This proverb shows that the relation between the crowing of the cock and the appearing of the sun is only a holding “after this, therefore because of this” connection and is coincidental.

Inconsistency

This argument accuses an opponent for being inconsistent; between what he preaches and what he does. For instance, one of the Malay proverbs encourages the leader to lead by example as the Malays believe that “monkey see, monkey do.” For a leader who always says one thing and does another, the Malays use the proverb *ketam menyuruh anaknya berjalan betul* ‘The crab telling its young to walk straight’ (MS 21). By nature, a mother crab never walks straight but insists that her young should follow what she says and not what she does. Another proverb that can be cited under this category is *angguk bukan, geleng ia* ‘His nod is ‘no’ and his shake of the head is ‘yes’ (MS 21).

One of the important fallacies is the inconsistent premise. The arguer argues inconsistently when he/she derives his/her arguments from a contradictory premise or defends a contradictory conclusion. Obviously, if two premises contradict each other, one of the premises must be false. It is clear that inconsistent fallacy is one of the species for the category of a bigger fallacy, viz. Questionable premises. Basically, there are difficulties in finding the Malay proverbs which carry the idea of inconsistent premises. What can only be obtained is the inconsistency between the meaning of the proverbs and the reality. For example, how can we take a bath without getting wet?

Bakar tak berapi ‘Burned but there is no fire’ (KIPM 29: 548);

Mandi tak basah ‘Immersed but not wet’ (MS 32);

Angguk angak, geleng mau, tunjuk tidak diberikan ‘The nod is ‘no’ but the handshake is ‘yes’ (MS 21);

Sudah berjanggut tiada berjubah 'He has the beard but not the robe'
(MBRAS 202: 120).

Red Herring

Red herring is a tactic or strategy that is used to escape from an issue or question. We may use this tactic whenever we are caught in an argumentative discussion with a friend. When we cannot answer a question, then we may attempt to divert our opponent's attention to another issue so that we will not get caught in the pitfall of argument. We tend to change our focus of discussion to another direction in order to defend our dignity. The Malays use the proverb *lain biduk lain digalang* 'The boat laid up [*digalang*] is not the boat that is to be repaired' (MS 142), which is normally used to caution against those who are involved in irrelevant reasons or miss the point of discussion. According to Brown (1951, 142), this proverb applies to "any irrelevant proposal or argument put forward by someone who wittingly or unwittingly ignores the point at issue." The way we resort to red herring and how this is portrayed by the Malay *peribahasa* can be seen from: *Jauhlah pemanggang dari api* 'The fork holding the meat is too far from the fire [and the meat will not be cooked]' (MS 162), which means that the thing we are discussing is unlikely to come off, out of the question or too impractical to be worth discussing. Other relevant proverbs are:

Lain sakit lain diubat, lain luka lain dibebat 'pain in one part but medicine applied in another part; wound on one part but another part is bandaged' (KIPM 117: 2131);

Lain bengkak lain menanah 'The swelling is on one part but the suppuration is on another' (MS 159);

Lain gatal lain digaruk 'The itchiness is on one part but another part is scratched' (KIPM 117: 2123);

Lain galang, lain perahu yang disorong 'The boat that is to be pushed is not the boat that is laid up' (KIPM 117: 2122);

Pukul anak sindir menantu 'Beating the daughter to vex the son-in-law' (MS 55)

Straw man

This fallacy occurs when a claim or standpoint X is said to be successfully refuted because the arguer criticises based on another standpoint X', which is not the claim or the original argument of the opponent. X is the original version of the argument but X' is the distorted, weakened, exaggerated version of X. The relevant examples of *peribahasa* in this category are *Bagai menumbuk padi hampa* 'Like to pound on empty paddy seeds' (KIPM 24: 449). This proverb refers to something which has been exaggerated from the original version. It is rather interesting here where the name of this fallacy

in the English version uses the word “straw” but the Malay proverb uses the word “*padi hampa*” (empty paddy seeds). Indeed, there were many straw men employed in the paddy field in the old days which Malay farmers (and also farmers in other parts of the world, e.g. Europe and China) used to make to scare away the birds when the paddy is ripe.

Tu Quoque

The *ad hominem* argument is sometimes associated with *tu quoque* (pronounced as *tu kwo-kway*, in Latin which means you are another or you are not better). An arguer when asked to defend his/her argument chooses not to provide sufficient evidence but tends to criticise the opponent as having the same weaknesses, problems or even worse than the arguer. The meaning of those Malay proverbs can be supported by the following examples which are either similar with “the pot calling the kettle black”, “the mote and the beam” or being blind to one’s own faults – ready to point out others’ faults but unconscious of or oblivious to one’s own:

Periuk mengumpat belanga ‘The pot calling the kettle black’ (PB 343: 2188; MS 169);

Telur mengatakan lejang tak pandai duduk ‘The egg says that the *lejang* [a kind of cucumber] does not know how to sit properly’ (KIPM 214: 3999);

Memulangkan paku buah keras ‘To return back the hard nail’ (*Kamus Dewan* 1986: 821);

Jaras kata raga jarang ‘The creel says the basket is coarsely plaited [but so is the creel]’ (MS 169);

Keladi kata kemahang gatal ‘The *keladi* says the *kemahang* causes irritation [but so does the *keladi*]’ (MS 169);

Udang hendak mengata ikan ‘The prawn sneers at the fish’ (MS 169);

Mengata ke dulang paku serpih; Mengata orang sendiri yang lebih ‘The chipped nail abuses the tray; you reproach others but you yourself are worse’ (MBRAS 145: 116; Cf. MS 169);

Pacak mencerca biduk orang, biduk sendiri tak terkayuh ‘One who is skilful in criticising other people’s river craft but cannot paddle his own’ (*Kamus Dewan* 1986: 132);

Bintang di langit dapat dibilang, tetapi arang di mukanya tak sedar ‘One who can count the stars in the heavens but is not aware of the smut on his face’ (PB 82: 490; MS 145);

Bicarakan rumput di laman orang, di laman sendiri rumput sampai ke kaki tangga ‘To talk about the grass in the neighbour’s lawn but the grass on your own lawn grows right to your doorstep’ (MS 144);

Seekor kuman di benua China dapat dilihatnya, gajah bertenggek di batang hidungnya tak sedar ‘A mite in far away China can be seen but an elephant sitting on one’s own nose escapes notice’ (MS 144, Cf. MBRAS 187: 15);

Pandai seperti pisau raut, bongkok orang dilepaskan, bongkok sendiri tinggal kekal ‘One who is as clever as a woodcarver’s knife; the faults of others are corrected but his own are left permanent’ (MS 145);

Biasa di sayak dibawa ke dulang, biasa di awak dibawa ke orang ‘Usually at sayak⁶⁵ is brought to the tray, usually at you is brought to others’ (PB 382: 2425);

Parang tak tahukan tumpulnya ‘The chopper does not realise its bluntness’ (MS 22);

Udang tak sedarkan dirinya bongkok ‘The prawn is unaware of its own hump’ (MS 22).

Guilt by Association

This kind of argument is easily accepted by the masses as society always thinks that the attitude or the behaviour within a group of people or peers is the same. This argument contends that the background of the majority from a particular group will influence and define the goodness or badness of the character of the minority. This perception is definitely wrong. The following proverbs are relevant to express the sentiment as “We stand or fall together” and can be used to caution against dangerous company:

Bagai telur dua sebandung, pecah satu pecah keduanya ‘Like two yokes in one egg, break one and you break them both’ (MS 200);

Ibarat telur sesangkar, pecah sebiji, pecah semuanya ‘Like a clutch of eggs, break one egg and you break all’ (MS 200);

Sebab nila setitik, rosak susu sebelanga ‘One drop of indigo may spoil a whole potful of milk’ (MS 23);

Satu ditetak sepuluh rebah ‘One is hacked but ten falls’ (MS 55);

Seekor kerbau membawa lumpur, akhirnya semua terpalit ‘If one buffalo is muddied, the whole herd is [thought to be] dirty’ (MS 48);

Seorang makan cempedak (= nangka), semua kena getahnya ‘One eats the jackfruit but the whole group get the sticky sap’ (KIPM 183: 3378).

Genetic Fallacy

Ad hominem is sometimes also combined with genetic fallacy when the opponent attempts to question an argument by provoking the sentiment of the background of the arguer. Normally, this argument tends to raise an issue such as, e.g. since someone was brought up in a quarrelsome family or in bad surroundings, therefore, he is also weak and bad according to the adage “like father like son.” This tendency is clearly explained by the following proverbs:

Bagaimana rupa begitulah bayangnya ‘If such is the appearance, such will be the shadow’ (KIPM 23: 417);

Bagaimana acuan begitulah kuihnya; bagaimana contoh begitulah gubahannya ‘If such is the mould, such will the cake be’ (MS 132);

Ke mana tumpahnya kuah, kalau tidak ke nasi ‘Where else is gravy poured on if not on the rice’ (MS 132);

Ke mana turun air kalau tidak ke cucuran atap ‘Where else will the water flow if not into the drainage on top of the roof’ (MB 147: 66);

Bapa borek anaknya tentu rintik ‘If the father is spotted, the son will be speckled’ (MS 132);

Anak kambing tak akan menjadi anak harimau ‘A young goat will not become a tiger’s cub’ (KIPM 9: 151);
Kalau keruh di hulu, keruh juga di hilirnya ‘If the water is discoloured in the upper reaches of the river, so will it be in the lower parts’ (MS 132);
Jauhkah rebung dari rumpunnya ‘Will the bamboo shoot be far away from the clump’ (MS 132);
Dari buah kukenal pohonnya/ Sebab buah dikenal pohonnya ‘From the fruit I can identify the tree’ (KIPM 176: 3228).

Appeal to False Authority/ *ad verecundiam*

Fallacy of false authority is a form of argument, which tends to force the opponent to accept or agree with a conclusion by citing the authority of the people in power, traditional custom or beliefs that have been accepted by society for certain reasons (e.g. religion or ethnicity). The concept of false cognitive authority is cited through the image of “*harimau*” (tiger). A few proverbs which carry the image of a tiger that can be noticed here are for example: *Mengepit kepala harimau* ‘To hold the tiger’s head under the armpit’ (KIPM 144: 2634) and *memakai kulit harimau* ‘Wearing the skin of the tiger’ (KIPM 134: 2438).

Hasty Generalisation

Hasty generalisation is said to occur when the premise used fails to provide sufficient support for the conclusion. This is usually called “*jumping to a conclusion*.” In the Malay tradition, there are certain proverbs which caution against making a hasty conclusion. The Malays believe that we should not arrive at a conclusion simply or accept something which we are not certain of. They warn that we should not take risks without knowing for certain because “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.” There is also caution against making a hasty conclusion in the Malay proverb when one says: *Belum tentu lagi, ayam sedang disabung* ‘It is not certain yet as the cocks are still fighting’ (PB 25: 88) which advises us not to jump to a conclusion, without knowing the real situation or results. In addition, the Malays also warn us that we should not *menamai anak dalam kandungan* ‘to name an unborn baby’ (KIPM 139: 2525) or *menerka ayam di dalam telur* ‘to count our chickens before they are hatched’ (KIPM 143: 2595). A few Malay proverbs are quite clear in this type of cautioning:

Harapkan guruh di langit, air tempayan ditumpahkan ‘Expecting rain because of the thunder in the heavens, you throw away the water in the storing-jar’ (PB 159: 1016; MS 19);
Kura-kura di kaki ditinggalkan, penyu di pantai dikejar ‘To leave the tortoise at your feet and hunt for the turtle on the sea shore’ (MS 20);
Harapkan burung terbang tinggi, punai di tangan dilepaskan ‘Expecting the bird to fly high, the *punai* in hand is released’ (PB 100: 629);

Harapkan kuning kuah kambah, cangkuk terubuk ditinggalkan 'Expecting the yellowish gravy of bitter gourd, a preserve of *terubuk* (a kind of fish with highly prized roe) is left behind' (PB 231: 1476);
Harapkan si Untut menggamit, kain di badan didedahkan 'You might just as well rely on a man who has elephantiasis; you must pay him even to put his fingers through a torn garment' (PB 314: 2002; MS 129)

Slippery Slope

In the slippery slope argument, the general idea is that a reason is used as an excuse for the first action. This excuse will later be used also as the excuse for the following action. This kind of argument is similar with the proverb: Give him an inch and he will take an ell. Other Malay proverbs are for example:

Diberi betis hendak paha 'Give him the calf of your leg and he will want the thigh' (MS 88);
Makin murah, makin menawar 'The lower the price is, the more he bargains' (MS 88);
Kalau tepat minta disipikan, kalau sipi minta lepaskan 'If it is right at the centre, he asks for it to be moved to the side; if it is at the side, he asks for it to be removed altogether';
Dibenarkan duduk di serambi⁶⁶, hendak maharajalela di tengah rumah 'Allow him to sit on the *verandah* and he will do whatever he likes in the house' (KIPM 62: 1160).

There are also other proverbs which caution against certain fallacies. For example, the proverb which is against the fallacy of arguing in a circular fashion: *Berbalik-balik bagai kuda tercirit* 'To go and return again and again like horses which are infected with diarrhoea,' means something (statements, arguments, subject matters) which have been mentioned before but is brought up again and again. One of the Malay proverbs that is used to caution against suppressed evidence is *ada lurah di sebalik bukit* 'There is a valley behind the hill.' We are committing the fallacy of suppressed evidence when we fail to use the relevant information that we are supposed to consider or obtain or purposely neglect the evidences that we know.

Conclusion

As we have just seen from the analysis above, Malay proverbs do indeed and significantly show various patterns of logical principles as what Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) have proven for the Anglo-American proverbs culture tradition. There are enough examples to support various examples of substantive, authoritative and motivational arguments. The findings above also indirectly refuted the contention of Senu Abdul Rahman et al. (1971) that the Malays were basically "*kurang fikiran rasional* (lacked rational thinking)" (p. 75). Nonetheless, should we hastily conclude based on

interesting similarities with the Anglo-American proverbs that the ways in which the Malays solve their disagreement went through the rational-dialectical argumentation approach? My answer is “no” and I am more in favour of believing that the logical method is not the dominant and only rational way in Malay thinking. Logical method (*akal budi*) is but one of two important elements in their *budistic* thinking. The other important element is their *hati budi*^{emotion}, which is the realm of their passion and which we will discuss about in Chapter 5.

Notes:

¹ The same title of *Kiliran Budi* was used also by Sabaruddin Ahmad (1954) for his collection of Malay proverbs.

² Other instances or forms of Malay literary criticism, which were mentioned by Syed Othman are *cerita binatang*, *cerita jenaka*, *cerita penglipur lara*, *syair*, *sastera sejarah* and etc.

³ *Memikul* is a verb that refers to an activity of carrying something on the shoulder, whereas *menjunjung* is a verb that refers to an activity of carrying something on the head. Both terms are well-defined and cannot be interchanged.

⁴ Literally “*Jawi*” means “*lembu, sapi*” (*Kamus Dewan* 1986, 443), which can be translated as cow, but I think buffalo will be more appropriate in this context, as buffalos are normally used for ploughing in the paddy field in Malay agrarian society. It should be a water buffalo that pulls the plough and not the other way round.

⁵ There is also an equivalent in one of the Philippines Gaddang’s proverbs: *Mena dam si mappalungu Yo daleday mah so daffug* (The cart does not precede the water buffalo) (*CCP Encyclopedia of Philippine Art*, Vol. IX: 174).

⁶ By socio-logic, Goodwin and Wenzel (1981: 140) referred to a socially developed sense of practical reasoning, which is neither grounded in a purely formal logic nor in mere psycho-logic.

⁷ This proverb, however, might not be original in terms of image as *keldai* (donkey) is not the animal that can be found in this part of the world. Cf. Wan Abdul Kadir (1993a, 28).

⁸ The existence of these variants (may be more) are understandable as proverb is a category of oral transmission, in which the original feature of the proverb can not be totally preserved.

⁹ What I mean by challenging the folklore orthodoxy here refers to running away from the common folklore studies where one category (i.e. proverbs, idioms) is studied at a time.

¹⁰ Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 126-131).

¹¹ Structure of proverbs in the form of causal argument can be constructed in the following logical form: *jika* S (x), *maka* P (x) or in its German equivalent: *wenn* S (x), *so* P (x) (See Gabriel 2000, 193). For a very short note on the logic of proverb, see Cram (1999).

¹² However, in this statement, we cannot infer that the road will not get wet if it is not raining as raining is only playing the role of sufficient condition and not necessary condition.

¹³ The logical indicator of a conditional statement (like *kalau* [if]) in this context is understood. For that reason, I translated the above proverb by putting in the word “if” in order to make the causal relationship clearer.

¹⁴ Basically this proverb is accepted without dispute. Nonetheless, if we were to analyse from the aspect of *sufficient condition* or *necessary condition*, it will be clear that it could not withstand the challenge of criticism because wind can only act as sufficient condition and not necessary condition to make the tree sway. The wind is not a must for the tree to be swayed. The tree can be swayed due to other factors like a squirrel or monkey jumping on the tree or where a group of people were at that particular moment plucking fruits from the tree (if the tree has fruits) and the like. However, wind is enough to cause the tree to sway and therefore it acts as a sufficient condition. The discussion on sufficient and necessary condition is not being considered in the context of the proverb. Sufficient and necessary condition and their differences are very important in our daily life. For example, to be a husband, that person must be a man; therefore to be a man is the necessary condition to be a husband. Nevertheless, to be a man is not sufficient condition to be a husband as a man can be a father, brother or boyfriend to a woman.

¹⁵ This type of causal relationship is not as direct as using the conditional indicator “if.” However, “*sebab*” (because) in the Malay proverb explains the cause of an event which will bring about an effect. This explains well the cause and effect relationship. A conditional statement, logically, contains two parts: if p, then q, where p is the antecedent and q is the consequence for that statement. It will be equally correct, if we are to change it to: q, if p. “If one quarrels with the well, one will die of thirst” and “one will die of thirst if one quarrels with the well” are both logically equivalent.

¹⁶ This proverb is sometimes expressed in a more poetic form as *sebab pulut santan binasa, sebab mulut badan binasa* ‘Because of the glutinous rice the coconut-milk gets spoilt, because of the mouth the body comes to grief.’

¹⁷ Brown’s translation seems rather male-centred. I am more in favour of changing the word “the man” to “one”, which I think, is more neutral. Therefore “It is the one who eats chillies that gets his tongue burned.” The same will apply to other translations as well without further notice.

¹⁸ In the Malay tradition, there is even a proverb which is exactly the same: “*Kalau tak ada api, masakan ada asap*” (PB 43: 218).

¹⁹ Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 131-134).

²⁰ *Lais* is a kind of fish which lives in the river, *Cryptopterus cryptopterus* (*Ceratoglanis scleronema*) (*Kamus Dewan* 1986, 639).

²¹ For the English equivalent, examples are “By the Husk you may guess at the Nut” and “In seeing the stubble one may judge what the grain was.”

²² See Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 134-138).

²³ See Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 139-142).

²⁴ As I mentioned earlier, a single proverb can be put into more than one category. This proverb for example can be considered as a generalisation when we look at a family, where the father is speckled and his child also show some spots to generalise that in any other families, where the father is speckled, then the conclusion is that his child will show some spots. Nevertheless, it will be a parallel case if we were to compare the similarity between a father and his child.

²⁵ For the whole discussion on analogy, see Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 142-144).

²⁶ Analogy and comparison are treated as synonyms in these examples and section of discussion. However, analogy actually can be differentiated as: (a) comparison compares two objects within the same category (for example, to compare cars from various brands); However, analogy tends to compare two objects from different categories (for example, a retired politician can be likened to old newspaper; (b) Comparison is used for the purpose of helping us make decisions whereas the purpose of analogy is to simplify our understanding or make thing easy to understand. See Chaffee (1988, 306ff) for further differences between comparison and analogy.

²⁷ Sometimes there can be no marker (i.e. *seperti*, *macam*) explicitly or the marker is not needed as it is already understood.

²⁸ There are many proverbs which compare the interdependent nature of one thing and another that one is virtually useless without the other. See Brown (1951, 119-120).

²⁹ This comparison is rather universal, interesting and quite surprising. There is even the same proverb (exactly like a translation), with the same image and meaning, by comparing cat and dog with the relationship between brothers and sisters in a family in Germany. The German proverb is "*wie Katze und Hund*."

³⁰ This proverb is more often written as *seperti isi dengan kuku*.

³¹ This tendency rather contrasts with the modern phenomena, especially in the computer era where language is increasingly seen as a tool for pure communication alone (which stresses less on the aspects of esthetics) and therefore directness, practicality and clarity should become the important criterion to convey the message.

³² For more examples on comparison and caution against faulty reasoning, see Mohd. Yusof Mustafa's *Mestika Bahasa* (1965), appendix 2: p. 363 under the category "*Bandingan*" (comparison) & p. 375 under the category "*Ta' Sama*" (not similar).

³³ See Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 145-147).

³⁴ For an English equivalent: "Plant the Crab-Tree where you will, it will never bear Pippins."

³⁵ Cf. "Of an eufl father commeth neuer a good childe" and "What is hatched by a hen, will scrape like a hen."

³⁶ The other marker of *sindiran* is the use of particle "*lah*" in the proverb.

³⁷ The structure of these proverbs is my own construction in order to make the comparison clearer to the Anglo-American proverb.

³⁸ Malay linguistics does not have the concept of copula like *is* and *are*. The sentence "George is a teacher" is grammatically correct to be translated as "*George seorang guru*." However, those who are influenced by English grammar will preserve the word "is" as "*adalah*." Therefore, *George adalah seorang guru*.

³⁹ The definition of higher frequency in my discussion here refers to the use of animal proverbs as metaphor in at least ten or more different ways. Take "*gajah*" for example, where there are 43 ways of different proverbs.

⁴⁰ The number that appears in each category represents the number of entries.

⁴¹ The image of *kancil* can be found in very few proverbs. See e.g. MBRAS (66: 8). There are however a few proverbs with the image of *pelanduk*. The confusion might appear due to the translation, as "mousedeer" is used to refer to both. Even Indirawati's (1995) lexical semantic study which utilises the componential analysis to dissect and bring forth selected connotative meaning groups of lexical nouns, which are divided into two groups, namely plant and animal nouns, did not mention *kancil* as part of her bulky data.

⁴² Dixon (1916) affirmed that the *kancil* tales were present in other parts of South-east Asia which had been in close contact with India and he concluded that it is tied to the spread of Indian culture and does not occur in Melanesia or farther to the East (See McKean 1971).

⁴³ For more explanations on this category of substantive proofs, see Ehninger and Brockriede (1963, 148-154).

⁴⁴ In order to know how statistics can be misleading, read Campbell (1974).

⁴⁵ The concept of division into "numerical statistical terms" and "non-numerical statistical terms" is based on the idea of Walton (1989).

⁴⁶ The idea of "enumerative proverbs" is adapted from Doctor (1993). For better understanding of the concept of numbers (*bilangan*), counting (*menghitung*, *membilang* and *mengira*) and their origin, see Asmah Haji Omar (1988, Chapter 6). For the aspect of culturalisation of mathematics in the Malay world, see Mat Rofa bin Ismail (1994).

⁴⁷ *Penjodoh bilangan* like *ekor*, *helai* etc. is a word used between a numeral – quantity – and a noun. It is known as "*Klassifikator*" in German.

⁴⁸ *Sejengkal*, *sehasta* and *sedepa* are the ancient Malay ways of measurement. *Sejengkal* is the span between thumb and other finger; *sehasta* is the measurement between the elbow and the tip of the fingers, whereas *sedepa* is equal to the length of both outstretched arms. All of these measurements are still relatively vague.

⁴⁹ Their Anglo-American equivalent is “Too many cooks spoil the broth.” Other relevant Malay proverbs to observe: *Gajah seekor gembala dua* ‘One elephant but two mahouts’ (MS 206), *Kabong (nau) sebatang dua sigai* ‘Two ladders to one sugar-palm’ (MS 206) and *Sejinjang dua pelisit* ‘Two familiar spirits to one wizard’ (MS 206).

⁵⁰ The word “*tujuh*” (seven) connotes a very interesting meaning and shares the secret meaning of many, infinity, things without end or eternity. This number can be seen in various traditions and share some commonalities in Christianity (where God created this universe in seven days), Chinese and Islamic-Arabic tradition. “Seven” in the Malay context refers also to many, e.g. *bagai rambut dibelah tujuh* ‘Like hair that is divided into seven strands’ (KIPM 25: 477). According to Huang Pei-jung (2000) in his seminar paper, “*Geheime Zahlen im Alten China*” in Seminar für Sprache und Kultur Chinas, Universität Hamburg, presented on the 4th of July 2000 in Hörsaal G, Philosophenturm (Von-Melle-Park 6), Universität Hamburg, the secret of the number seven can be revealed and proven when we divide one with seven or one out of seven (1/7) which results in a special kind of infinity (0.142857142857142857...), where 142857 is always repeating itself in the chain of infinity. Discussion on mystic numbers in *Sejarah Melayu*, see Hamza Mustafa Njozi (1993). In order to know how Filipino’s view of certain numbers reveals a different philosophy, see Mercado (1994, Chapter VII). For an interesting study on the Malay words for numbers, which was claimed to be based on the position of fingers on the hand and that the Malay number system is a quinary or denary/decimal system from the etymological perspective, see Shahrir Mohamad Zain and Abdul Razak Salleh (2001).

⁵¹ This will be further touched on as well when discussing about the “cautioning against fallacies in the Malay proverbs” at the end of this chapter and in Chapter 6.

⁵² It can also be known as “the language of the ancestors” (Günthner 1991, 413).

⁵³ There are also other interpretations about this proverb due to the ambiguous nature of the word “*bisa*” in the Malay language, which can be translated as “venom” or “ability”. The present Malaysian Malay treats the word “*bisa*” as “venom” but the Indonesian Malay always uses the word “*bisa*” to denote the meaning of “ability.” Wilkinson’s *Malay-English Dictionary* (1901) tended to agree with the Indonesian denotation for this proverb and he had interpreted the meaning of this proverb as “mere knowledge how to do a thing cannot be compete with practice in doing it” or “Practice is better than theory”. He pointed out that “*bisa*” in this context came from the Batavian word which means the ability to do something (= *boleh*). Maxwell interpreted this proverb as “Venom loses the day when met by experience” (See MBRAS 1992: 6-7). Brown (1951, 170) seemed to agree with Maxwell. To him, Wilkinson’s interpretation appeared doubtful whether a peninsular Malay saying as old as *alah bisa buat biasa* would contain a word used in a sense only comparatively recently known in the Peninsula. This proverb however appears to be accepted more widely today as has been interpreted by Wilkinson. Cf. *Alah bisa, oleh* (= *kerana, tegal*) *biasa*, which means that practical experience is more useful than mere theory. See endnote 54 below for the sources which stress more on *bisa* as ability.

⁵⁴ See for example KIPM (p. 7: 118), *Kamus Dewan* (1986, 19) and an example in an article “Mengamuk di kalangan kanak-kanak ada peringkat” (amok among children has a limit), *Utusan Malaysia* 6 November 1998.

⁵⁵ For the caution against fallacy of appeal to false authority, see the section on “Caution against Fallacies in the Malay Proverbs” at the end of this chapter.

⁵⁶ For the analysis on prejudice and stereotype in the Malay proverbs, see chapter 5.

⁵⁷ Sometimes they are also written as “*ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa, ikut nafsu lesu*” ‘To give way to one’s desire is death, to give way to one’s passions is destruction, to give way to one’s lust is listless’ (Uncollected).

⁵⁸ *Simpulan bahasa* is a kind of Malay proverb, which is always constructed in two words. For example, *besar hati* (big liver) means “happy” and *tangan panjang* (long handed) means “like to steal.” I will discuss this important issue of “*hati*” under the extra-logical elements in Chapter 5.

⁵⁹ *Memengat* means to cook *pengat*, derived from the root-word, *pengat*, which means banana or sweet potato cooked in coconut milk, a kind of food/dessert.

⁶⁰ *Revolusi Mental* (Mental Revolution) is a book compiled by Senu Abdul Rahman et al. and published in 1971 by UMNO. For Syed Hussein’s (1977) criticism, see especially p. 147ff.

⁶¹ This proverb is however not original. It was borrowed from one of the famous Aesop fables and animal tales “The Fox and the Grapes,” which has been accepted worldwide. For the discussion on sour grapes in fables and proverbs, see Dolby-Stahl (1988).

⁶² There is an equivalent in English: Every fish that escapes seems greater than it is (See *A Dictionary of American Proverbs* 1992: 212).

⁶³ For the discussion on various individual fallacies, see the works of John Woods and Douglas Walton, especially Woods and Walton’s *Fallacies: Selected Papers 1972-1982* (1989).

⁶⁴ Caution against fallacies depends very much on the cultural context and proverb use. Here I only treat its prohibited function.

⁶⁵ *Sayak* is a coconut-shell (*tempurung*), which is cut into two.

⁶⁶ *Serambi* or verandah is the front part of a Malay house, which you have to go through before you can enter into the house. It is always lower than the main part of the house and is normally used to welcome guests.

CHAPTER 5

**EXTRA-LOGICAL ELEMENTS IN THE MALAY PROVERBS:
HATI AS THE CENTRE OF PASSION AND THE OTHER MINDS**

In Western culture, the idea of an opposition between emotion and reason was emphasized, and it was extended mistakenly to the entire emotion process – the arousal as well as its regulation. In effect, we came to believe that emotions and reason were in opposition, one the enemy of the other. What was forgotten was that the very arousal of emotion depends on reason (Lazarus and Lazarus 1994, 200).

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have seen that there are various logical principles in the Malay proverbs. Do the Malay proverbs contain solely the logical patterns or are there other extra-logical elements¹ as well? This is an interesting question as proverbs have always been claimed as a reasoned-language. Can the proverbs be used or misused for the sake of emotional appeal in a rhetorical situation? Little, Wilson and Moore (1955, 31) claimed that the application of proverbs without knowing its rhetorical situation can be hazardous to sound thinking as they are oversimplified generalisations. They called the misuse of proverbs, maxims and the like as “*cliche* thinking.” Can the Malay proverbs too be misused? If yes, how are they misused? These are a few of the questions that we are going to deal with in our present analysis and discussion. I have already mentioned in the conclusion of Chapter 4 that *akal budi*^{rationality} (*budistic* mind) and *hati budi*^{emotion} (*budistic* liver/ heart²) have always acted like two arms of a human, and since I have discussed the aspect of logical dimension of the Malay mind (*akal budi*) in Chapter 4, it should be logical here therefore to deal with the dimension of emotion of the Malay mind, viz. *hati budi*^{emotion}. The discussion in this chapter will be arranged in four main sections: First, I will look generally at the relationship between language and emotion; second, I will examine how the Malay proverbs encode and decode emotion; third, I will deal with the spectrum of emotions and the role of *hati* in Malay proverbs; and finally, I will consider the elements of prejudices and stereotypes which co-exist in the repertoire of Malay sayings along with the logical principles.

Language of Emotion and Emotion of Language

There are two interesting issues when we discuss the relationship between language and emotion. First, can emotion terms (e.g. anger, fear) be used to determine how different cultures conceptualise emotion in words (or in proverbs) and how are these emotions categorised? Second, can we totally

ignore the existence of emotion in language, which is accused of hindering clear thinking? In other words, the first issue is what I mean by the “language of emotion” whereas the second one is the “emotion of language.”

The language of emotion has attracted many researchers. Research indicates that there are at least six primary emotions – anger, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, and happiness – which are usually considered to be physiologically based and expressed similarly across cultures, whereas secondary emotions such as pride, guilt, and shame arise culturally through participation in the sociocultural environment and tend to vary based on age, gender, and culture (Porter and Samovar 1998, 452). Despite the general recognition of both the physiological and cultural bases of primary and secondary emotions, many scholars, however, have engaged in an ongoing debate about whether the communication of emotional states is universal or culturally relative. Many researchers claim that emotions arise either from human biology (i.e. biological reductionism) or as products of culture (i.e. social constructionism). It can generally be quoted as the dispute between the body and culture.

Not only did Darwin write his preeminent work on evolution that discussed how biological traits had evolved and changed as a result of the process of natural selection but he was also among the first to believe that emotional expressions were biological and had evolutionary adaptive values in his less well-known treatise on the evolution of the emotions – *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). He described the main characteristics of human emotion and proclaimed that they are inherited by all individuals in our species. Scientists who shared Darwin’s ideas were labelled as “universalists.” Their main interests centred on physiology, evolution, and the brain. They believed that all people share common biological properties, which are universal. They also strongly believed that biology shapes the emotional reaction. Others, who were mainly cultural anthropologists, due to their interest in diverse social patterns, contended that emotional expression was culture-specific and took a cultural relative perspective (See Lazarus and Lazarus 1994, 174ff). Both points of view, i.e. biological and cultural, are to some extent correct and the task of reconciling both extreme positions is normally taken up by psychologists. However, Kövecses (2000) argued on a cognitive linguistic approach and cross-linguistic analyses, that language, body and culture are all part of an integrated system. Even though my primary purpose is not to resolve the age-old dispute between the mutually exclusive camps of “universalists” and “relativists” in regard to our views about the conceptualisation of emotion, I will generally attempt to reconcile the two apparently contradictory views between rationality and emotion and argue for a rather integrated system for the Malays. What is universal are certain basic image schemes, as these arise from certain fundamental bodily experiences. And what is culturally relative indeed, are remaining differences in cultural knowledge that work according to divergent culturally defined rules and scenarios, which create different nuances, spectrum of language

and priority. My discussion will basically involve both perspectives, but the relation between language, culture and emotion will be more dominant, especially in the Malay cultural context.

When dealing with emotion terms, some researchers claim that people with more words for emotion have more emotionally varied lives than people with fewer words. However, this strong claim has not held up well under the scrutiny of research, although language may have some power to shape perceptions of emotion (Planalp 1999). Planalp added that in trying to understand emotion terminology from other cultures, the researchers immediately run into translation problems. Heider (1991) tried to categorise three cultures in Indonesia. In his study, Karl G. Heider focused on the cultural constructions of emotions, examining how different cultures shape ideas and talk about emotion. The main subjects of the study were the Minangkabaus, a matrilineal Muslim culture of three million people in West Sumatra, Indonesia. Comparative data came from Central Javanese and reference was made to studies on American emotions. The Minangkabaus have two different “cultures of emotion,” used depending on whether they are speaking their own regional language or the national language. The author offered an intermediate position based on his analysis of Indonesian words, and argued that some emotion words and even clusters of emotion words do correspond across cultures while others do not (p. 88). Lutz (1988) showed that emotions are cultural artefacts whose meanings are elaborate, subtle, and learned. She argued that the Western concepts of emotions – irrational, natural, subjective, and essentially feminine – are not universal, and suggested some of the social conditions that helped the view to emerge. She demonstrated that claims of feeling an emotion are moral, cultural, and political claims, through which the Ifaluk social structure and cultural values were reproduced and contested. Heelas (1996, cited in Planalp 1999, 206) said that the Chewong (Malaysia) report little emotion in interaction, whereas Heider (1991, 4) remarked that in Indonesia “[a]ctual emotion scenes or outburst are relatively rare in daily life, and they are usually kept relatively private.”

Emotion sometimes can explode into certain actions if over-suppressed. Issues on emotional expressions and its suppression that have been relatively widely covered in the Malay society so far are “running *amok*,” “*gila kahwin*” (a desperate need to get married) and “*latah*” (See Wazir Jahan Karim 1990a).³ In Malaysia, according to Planalp (1999, 227), “*amok*, *gila kahwin*, and *latah* are involuntary but nevertheless culturally sanctioned ways of negotiating changing social roles through emotional expression.” Can the expression through *amok*⁴ and *latah*⁵ justify that the Malays are basically emotional in resolving conflict and these characteristics are also cultural-specific? In another research, Heelas (1996, cited in Planalp 1999, 205) claimed that a small indigenous group in Malaysia, the Chewong, have only eight emotion terms, whereas the neighbouring Malays have 230. American English has about 400, and Taiwanese has about 750. Does this mean that the Malays have less emotionally varied lives or much more simple as compared to the American English and Taiwanese?

How the Malays present their language of emotion and how these emotions are contained in their proverbs are pertinent for discussion in this chapter.

The Malays always think and feel at the same time and they do not really separate the two like the Westerners. In daily conversations, if you ask them for their opinion, which is supposed to request their thinking, the Malays will be quick to respond with “*saya rasa* (lit. I feel)” although it is understood that they are actually thinking as well. The idea of thinking and feeling at the same time is not peculiar to the Malays alone. Planalp (1999, 206) said that “several *cultures* do not value the heart over the head or vice versa, rather, they strive to make them work together.” In the Ifaluk (Micronesia) language, *nunuwan* covers both (see Lutz 1988), and according to Wikan (1990, 35), the Balinese (Indonesia) “do not recognize feeling (*perasaan*) to be distinct from thought (*pikiran*), but regard both as aspects of one integral process – *keneh* – which is best translated as feeling-thought. Both are rational, both are subjective, and both are *in* the realm of awareness.” It was noted that the Balinese feel sorry for Westerners who think/feel separately (see Wikan 1990: 267-283)⁶. Tabrani (1987) however, argued that the Malay mind has been dominated by emotion and not rationality. The Malays are said to be basically aesthetic and not rational. Their culture and language are expressive and not progressive. Expressive language is therefore more suitable to express the internal feeling of the Malays and not their rationality. In his own words, Tabrani commented:

Kita melihat dua unsur dalam jiwa manusia Melayu iaitu rasio dan perasaan, otak dan hati. Rasiolah sebagai dasar rasionalisme, akan tetapi unsur ini pulalah yang ditutup oleh perasaan pada manusia Melayu. Unsur perasaan menyebabkan halusnya jiwa manusia Melayu, sehingga manusia Melayu adalah manusia yang estetik. Apabila kebudayaan dianggap sebagai refleksi daripada jiwa manusia Melayu, maka terbentuklah kebudayaan ekspresif Melayu (p. 172).

(We witness two elements in the soul of the Malays, i.e. reason and emotion, brain and liver/heart. Reason is actually the foundation of rationalism, but for the Malays, this element is covered by emotion. The element of emotion makes the Malays so gentle until they have become aesthetic humans. When culture was considered as the reflection of the Malay soul, then the Malay expressive culture was formed.)

He criticised the Malay expressive culture which he thought should be replaced as: “*Dunia moden dewasa ini menghendaki kepala dan bukan hati. Oleh kerana itu letakkanlah fikiran di atas perasaan*” (The modern world at present needs head [intellect] and not liver [heart]. Therefore, we should put the mind above emotion) (Tabrani 1987, 162). Tabrani depicted emotion as occurring without thought or at most with only primitive thought. The liver/heart (*hati*) is generally said to distort the head (*kepala*) although occasionally, as we know, the head (*kepala*) is said to err by ignoring the wiser liver/heart (*hati*). Tabrani’s conception of emotion is our general perception of “being emotional”, which carries negative connotations, and this should be differentiated from “having emotion.”⁷ Tabrani claimed that

the reason behind the expressive nature of the Malays, their language and culture was due to their surrounding, which he claimed to be non-challenging, soft and easy-going. This soft and easy-going environment supports the domination of aesthetics over logic. According to him:

Alam Melayu turut memberikan dukungan pada dominasi estetis terhadap logik, turut mematikan rasio dan turut pula memberikan sumbangan pertumbuhan kerdil dari rasio. Alam yang keras akan membentuk manusia yang keras, akan tetapi alam Melayu yang lembut telah membentuk manusia Melayu yang lembut. Manusia yang paling toleransi, cermin manusia, mereka lebih mementingkan tamu daripada anaknya (Tabrani 1987, 175).

(The Malay world has encouraged the domination of aesthetics over logic, putting reason to death and contributed to the retarded development of reason. A difficult world will form a tougher human character, but the soft and easy-going Malay world has formed the soft and gentle Malay. The Malays are the most tolerant humans, where guests are treated even more importantly than their own children.)

Besides using language to represent our emotion, it has become a general notion as well that we use language to present our thought. In the process of communication however, emotion and reason are sometimes difficult to be separated. Since language itself can be emotive in nature, it is believed that if we wish to think clearly and logically, we should use the correct words to present our thinking (see Ungku Abdul Aziz 2000). Tabrani (1987, 194) put it this way:

Apabila kita kembali meninjau logika, maka logika tidak lebih dari ilmu pengetahuan perkataan, iaitu mengatakan sesuatu dengan ketepatannya, diperlukan pembahasan-pembahasan yang tajam dan pemisahan-pemisahan yang pasti.

(When we go back to the study of logic, then logic is nothing more than the knowledge of words, that is, to say something with accuracy which requires sharp argumentation and certain demarcation.)

Nevertheless, it is always difficult to present clear thinking due to the existence of emotion in most of the words and discourses. In order to solve the confusion of natural language (i.e. ambiguities, vagueness and obscurity), efforts have been made by philosophers through artificial language (i.e. the use of symbols) to demolish the presence of emotion in natural language. Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead are the champions of that cause, which gave birth to logical atomism and symbolic logic in the Western tradition. Through the philosophical imperialism of logic, the role of argument and how it was used throughout human civilisation in solving the disagreement between speakers within different cultural, social and political settings have been neglected. According to Gilbert (1997):

Emotion is as important as logic or rationality to argument, and it is also inextricable from the logic of the argument. There is not some visible

delineation between logic and emotion (or intuition or anything else) that allows the scholar to examine one to the exclusion of the other (p. 40).

Emotions tell us how we really feel about something, even though our rational analysis or our physical behaviour may differ. Thouless (1953) commented on how choice of words exposes our attitude towards our opponent. He argued that the same phenomenon can be designated with different emotive words, which according to him can be either “strong approval” (positive overtones) or “strong disapproval” (negative overtones). His ideas on emotive language are aptly suitable to apply in the context of Malay language. For example, someone who is not easily withdrawn from a certain stand or opinion is said to be “*tegas*” (firm) by another, who is in favour of his or her position; whereas those against him or her will use a *simpulan bahasa*, “*keras kepala*” (stubborn) to describe the same phenomenon.⁸

The Malays have often been accused of being “emotional” from one angle (e.g. *amok* and *latah*) but are praised as being rich in emotions from another angle (e.g. *berlemah-lembut* [gentle]). The Malays have a very colourful spectrum of emotions. Their richness in emotions can be observed from their many varieties of terminology used to express passions and emotions. One of the interesting writings, which touched on the emotion of the Malays, was Muhammad Haji Salleh’s (1993) discussion on the early Malay aesthetics of sorrow. According to him, one of the haunting characteristics that seemed to be constant among the most popular Malay works was *nestapa* or *dukalar*. These popular works point to the recognition of sorrow as one of the essential emotions of human beings, especially the Malays. Many terms were cited by Muhammad Haji Salleh (1993, 5) as follows:

We are in the territory of sorrow and grief, *duka*, *duka lara*, *nestapa*, and which must be endured (*derita*) for its suffering (*siksa*) and misery (*sengsara*). This suffering is endured both physically and emotionally; through physical pain, (*sakit*, *kesakitan*, *perih*, *pedih*,) cuts and bruises (*luka*, *hancur*) through the forest thorns and thickets, or wounds from fights. Emotional pain (*gundah gulana*), a fading of good emotions, or desire to enjoy oneself, solitude and anxiety (*pilu*), sadness (*duka*, *duka lara*, *dukacita*,) and extreme longing (*bercinta*) are endured through the *hati* (liver/ heart).

Does the language of proverbs also encode and decode the richness of sorrow as what Muhammad Haji Salleh (1993) pointed out? Are these emotions endured through the concept of *hati*? How was this spectrum of emotions (e.g. from happiness to sorrow, from happiness to sadness) presented in the proverbs? The following sections will try to explore and dwell into the Malay ocean of emotions from the perspective of their proverbs. The above are a few questions that will be interesting when dealing with the Malay proverbs. My general argument here will focus on the attendance of emotion in the Malay proverbs. In the following sections, by using Norrick’s (1994) analysis on American proverbs as a stepping stone, I will further justify my arguments that emotions do play an important part in the

Malay proverbs and that the use of proverbs in the Malay argumentative discourse will certainly condone this emotion. I believe that the realm of Malay emotion in *peribahasa* is generally encoded through the use of various images: animals, plants and certain parts of the human body (e.g. *hati* [liver], *mata* [eyes] and *kepala* [head]). At the same time, I will also try to show in this chapter how *hati* is determined as the nucleus of the Malay passions, emotions and intuitions as can be perceived from their proverbs.

How Do the Malay Proverbs Encode and Decode the Emotion?

Generally, proverbs have been noted as reason-based language, which urge their users and audience to work hard and follow the authoritative pronouncements and generalised images with the feel of experience and truth (Cf. Taylor 1962, first published in 1931; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1973). But that general perception on proverbs can only be taken as conditionally acceptable due to the characteristics of natural language. Language in itself has its cognitive and emotive aspects, and since *peribahasa* is the product of language, it will automatically be confined to those two aspects as well. It will be rather absurd to take away totally the feeling of the human language as portrayed in their proverbs. Norrick (1994) in one of his studies affirmed the existence of the markers of affect in familiar American proverbs and how these proverbs evaluate proverbial emotions. Alluding to the proverbs collected in Mieder's *A Dictionary of American Proverbs* (1992), he (Norrick) claimed that there were at least five markers of how proverbs encode the affect: first, proverbs convey strong emotion by creating bold images and casting warnings in a very drastic term (e.g. Don't cut off your nose to spite your face); second, a proverbial marker, which is used to convey the affection is through the use of hyperbole; third, proverbs often depict a scene of emotionally charged connotations through the image of animals; fourth, the encoding of affect appears in lexical choices outside the usual domain of polite conversation; and fifth, the proverbial device, which encodes affect can be found in various figures of speech beyond the generalising metaphors and hyperbole. As a stepping stone, let us use Norrick's (1994) division as a guideline for my discussion on the emotion of Malay proverbs.

Creating bold images and casting warnings in a very drastic term

As observed by Norrick (1994) in the American proverbs, Malay proverbs also convey strong emotion by creating bold images and issuing warnings in very drastic terms. For example, the Malays have the proverb: *Potong hidung rosak muka* 'He who cuts off his nose spoils his face' (MBRAS 178: 107). To show how painful and dramatic a situation is, the Malays use the proverb *bagai bunyi orang dikoyak harimau* 'Like the sound of a person who is torn apart by the tiger' (KIPM 18: 329). The ferocious and brutal image of a tiger is employed to describe and provide the speaker with a dramatic touch. Another proverb, however, uses the image of a crocodile to show how desperate a person's state of emotion is to get help as suggested by the proverb: *Asal selamat ke seberang, biar bergantung di ekor buaya* 'As

long as one can cross to the other side of the river, it does not matter even if one has to hang on the tail of a crocodile' (KIPM 13: 234). To show how critical the conditions of one's life, the Malays say *nyawa bergantung di hujung kuku* 'Life hanging from the tip of the finger nail' (MBRAS 157: 25). The state of having no shoulder while the head is tapered is a bold image that is used to describe the inability to do anything as the proverb goes: *Akan memikul tiada berbahu, akan menjunjung kepala luncung* 'To carry with the shoulder but one finds no shoulder, to carry on top of the head but one finds the head is tapered' (KIPM 6: 109). In order to show the spirit of fighting until one has to even sacrifice his own life, the Malay proverb says: *Bersukat darah, bertimbang daging* 'blood is measured, meat is weighed' (KIPM 43: 823). Other proverbs that use the same bold image are: *Anjing terpanggang ekor* 'A dog whose tail has been grilled' (KIPM 10: 188) and *bagai cacing kena air panas* 'Like worms sprinkled with hot water' (KIPM 18: 333).

Convey the affection by using the hyperbole

Hyperbole is generally an overstatement, used to exaggerate a situation, thing or phenomenon, or to make small issues looks bigger. It is not meant to be taken literally. The Malays use proverbs like *air setitik dilautkan, tanah seketul digunungkan* 'a drop of water is claimed as sea, a grasp of soil is claimed as mountain' (KIPM 6: 95) to connote the idea of exaggeration. The use of a hyperbole is also employed in order to convey a sense of impossibility. The feeling of impossibility is encoded accurately through a hyperbole. There are a few of them which relate to the sentiment of impossibility: *Awak tikus, hendak menampar kucing* 'You are a rat, but wish to slap a cat' (KIPM 14: 245); *Arang itu, jika dibasuh dengan air mawar sekalipun, tiada akan putih* 'Charcoal will not become white even if you washes it with rose water' (KIPM 13: 225); *Ara tak bergetah* 'A fig tree with no glue' (KIPM 12: 221). A state of dilemma is described by the proverb: *Akan mengaji, surat 'lah hilang; akan bertanya, guru 'lah mati* 'You are thinking of studying but the letter has been lost; you are thinking of asking but the teacher has passed away' (KIPM 6: 110). The Malays describe a state of danger as *bergantung di rambut sehelai* 'Like hanging on a single hair' (KIPM 37: 712; MBRAS 67: 21) or *jiwa bergantung di hujung rambut* 'My life hangs at the end of a hair' (MBRAS 89: 32).

Depict a scene of emotionally charged connotations through the image of animals

Emotionally charged connotations through the image of animals are rather common in the Malay proverbs. However, these emotionally charged connotations are expressed with a logical comparison in mind – either in the form of parallel case or analogy (See Chapter 4). Malays are good observers and they can understand the behaviour of animals very well. According to Wan Abdul Kadir (1993a, 27):

Orang-orang Melayu dapat memahami perlakuan-perlakuan haiwan di sekeliling mereka. Perlakuan haiwan itu akan menjadi sindiran pula kepada manusia. Seorang yang dinyatakan secara perbandingan dengan jenis-jenis

haiwan tertentu itu dapat memahami akan maksudnya. Pernyataan yang simbolis itu telah menjadi sebahagian daripada budaya Melayu yang diwarisi sejak beberapa lama dahulu.

(The Malays can understand the behaviour of animals around them. That animal behaviour is then used as insinuation towards human. One who is compared to certain kinds of animal can understand its meaning. This symbolic expression has become part and parcel of the Malay culture inherited for quite some time.)

Among the common animals found in the Malay proverbs are *ayam* (fowl), *gajah* (elephant), *kerbau* (water buffalo), *anjing* (dog), *ikan* (fish), *harimau* (tiger) and *ular* (snake).⁹ On the top of the list is fowl with 54 entries, followed by elephant 43, water buffalo and dog both with 37 entries, fish 29, tiger 28 and snake 26 (See Table 5.1).¹⁰ These were common animals in the Malay life in those days. Fowls and water buffalo were the closest friends of the paddy farmers. Cocks acted like an alarm clock in the early morning before the sun rises, whereas hens provided eggs. Fowls were fed with rice taken from the paddy fields. Examples of common Malay proverbs, which use fowl as an analogy are: *hangat-hangat tahi ayam* ‘as hot as fowl’s droppings (a fleeting enthusiasm),’ *rabun ayam* ‘weak eyesight (near-sighted, myopic),’ or *buta ayam* ‘chicken blindness (near-sighted),’ *ayam tambatan* ‘a fowl that is tied up to a pole (an important person),’ *ajak-ajak ayam* ‘half-hearted invitation,’ *ibu ayam* ‘a woman who acts as a go-between for prostitutes,’ *bapa ayam* ‘an unworthy father,’ *cakar ayam* ‘the scratching of chicken (scrawl, poor handwriting),’ *kaki ayam* ‘chicken leg (bare-footed)’ and *tidur ayam* ‘chicken sleep (doze, nap, sleep lightly).’¹¹ Water buffalo are also important as they were “Partner in the Padi Fields” (Groves 1995). Groves (1995) explained this relationship when he remarked: “Water-buffalo are so closely associated with wet rice cultivation that it is difficult to see how an efficient wet rice (*sawah*) economy could function without them” (p. 152). *Mandi kerbau* ‘buffalo’s bath’ for example is the most common proverb used to refer to people who take their bath without considering hygiene or cleanliness. Most of the images of animals in the Malay proverbs are animals that can be found in the region. For example, according to Wan Abdul Kadir (1993a, 27-28), since *keldai* (donkey) could not be found in this area, therefore the application of donkey as a comparison in Malay proverbs explained the foreign influence, from where the donkey can be traced. Badil (1999) shared the same idea pertaining to the origin of donkey in the Malay proverbs with Wan Abdul Kadir (1993a). According to Badil (1999): “*Keledai bukan binatang asli Indonesia [...] Entah bagaimana ceritanya, keledai lalu masuk dalam khazanah petatah-petitih peribahasa Indonesia*” (The donkey is not a purely Indonesia animal [...]. We do not know how the donkey was adopted into the property of Indonesian proverbs). Both of them are right that there is a foreign influence, but they are too tied up with the physical dimension of an object (donkey as a material object). It is true that we cannot find a real donkey in the Malay-Indonesian world (except in the zoo!) as the Malay-Indonesian world is not its natural habitat. But the idea of donkey as an image (donkey as a non-physical idea) can develop, adjust and transform beyond a single culture, and there can be no culture without contact!¹²

Table 5.1: The Common Images of Animals in Malay Proverbs

Numbers	Categories	Number of <i>Peribahasa</i> Entries in Abdullah Hussain (1991)	Number of <i>Simpulan Bahasa</i> Entries in Abdullah Hussain (1966)
1	<i>ayam</i> (fowl)	54	40
2	<i>gajah</i> (elephant)	43	11
3	<i>kerbau</i> (water buffalo), <i>anjing</i> (dog)	37	<i>Kerbau</i> (9), <i>anjing</i> (11)
4	<i>ikan</i> (fish)	29	8
5	<i>harimau</i> (tiger)	28	7
6	<i>ular</i> (snake)	26	3
7	<i>kambing</i> (goat)	18	8
8	<i>kera</i> (monkey)	16	-
9	<i>burung</i> (bird), <i>itik</i> (duck)	15	<i>Burung</i> (8), <i>itik</i> (-)
10	<i>kucing</i> (cat)	14	10
11	<i>katak</i> (frog)	13	2
12	<i>pipit</i> (sparrow)	12	-
13	<i>kuda</i> (horse)	11	14
14	<i>ulat</i> (worm), <i>enggang</i> (hornbill), <i>udang</i> (prawn)	10	<i>Ulat</i> (-), <i>enggang</i> (-), <i>udang</i> (3)

Source: My own analysis

The image of animal is used to encode and decode the various emotional effects. Certain animals (e.g. *anjing* (dog) and *biawak* [monitor lizard]) were always used in the Malay proverbs to connote “negative effect”, whereas the others (e.g. *elephant* [elephant], *harimau* [tiger], *penyu* [turtle]) might be used to express “positive effect.” When someone is compared with *lembu* (cow), he or she is said to be stupid (negative effect) because for the Malays, cows can be pulled here and there by their owner. It is believed that by such comparison, the person who was being compared to the cow has the same mentality as the cow. In order to describe a talkative woman, the Malays use the noisiest bird *murai* (magpie robin) as can be observed in *seperti mulut murai* ‘like the beak of a magpie robin/*copsychus saularis musicus*.’ Someone who has very little knowledge about their surroundings is said to be *seperti katak di bawah tempurung* ‘Like a frog under a coconut shell.’ Malays are encouraged to learn from the good character of certain animals and avoid the bad attitudes of the others. For example, *penyu itu bertelur beribu-ribu seorang pun tiada tahu, ayam bertelur sebiji pecah sebuah negeri* ‘The turtle lays eggs by the thousand and nobody knows of it; the chicken lays a single egg and the whole town is acquainted with the fact’ (MBRAS 171: 61). In this context, *penyu* (turtle) is portrayed as having a positive image whereas the chicken a negative one. The Malays are in favour of being silent and non-confrontational rather than outspoken and critical (even in knowledge). This can also be seen in the proverb *diam-diam ubi berisi* ‘the silent sweet-potato is full of substance.’

Dog is the symbol of dirtiness, immorality and low status according to the Malay worldview, and therefore carries negative effect. Proverbs relating to dogs are relatively many and most of them are negative. For example, those who are hated by the society are compared with *bagai anjing buruk kepala* 'Like a broken-headed dog' (KIPM 16: 287). The person who is very happy (but very arrogant) is like a track-crossing dog, *bagai anjing melintang denai* (KIPM 16: 288). The emotion of someone who is really happy after getting something that he or she likes is compared to the attitude of a dog which has found sand, *seperti anjing berjumpa/dapat pasir* (KIPM 185: 3399). A greedy person is just like dogs fighting for bones, *seperti anjing berebut tulang* (KIPM 185: 3398). To describe a person who bites the hands that feed him, the Malays say: *melepaskan anjing tersepit, sudah lepas dia menggigit* 'to free a trapped dog, which will bite you in return after it has been freed' (KIPM 134: 2423). To condemn a person who habitually commits morally bad deeds and from time to time will think of committing such deeds again, the Malays say: *Bangsa anjing, tak makan tahi pun cium ada juga* 'Like a dog, smelling filth although not eating it' (MS 137, Cf. MBRAS 28: 35).

Besides dog, another image that is religiously taboo to the Malays and quite commonly used to describe negative effect among the Malay folks is pig (*babi*). The general opinion usually equates pigs with stupidity.¹³ To the Malays, who are majority Muslims, pigs are always dirty and this notion is reflected in the form of negative effect in the Malay proverbs. Let us look at a few examples in order to explain the existence of this negative effect. Someone who is hypocrite or double-faced is to be described as *kepala yu, ekor babi* 'shark's head, but pig's tail' (KIPM 110: 1991). The Malays use *muka bagai ditampal dengan kulit babi* 'His face looks as if it is pasted with pig skin' (KIPM 152: 2798) to depict a person who does not have any shameful feeling. If a poor person only takes care of himself and does not help others after becoming wealthy, the Malays portray this attitude as *bertambah gemuk tubuh babi itu, bertambah kecil lagi matanya* 'The fatter the pig has become, the smaller its eyes will be' (KIPM 44: 831). The Malays believe that those who come from the lower class should not be match-made to the higher class or people from the aristocratic family. If this happens, it is as if a pig is trying to taste the curry, and therefore is not to be encouraged: *Jangan bagai babi merasa gulai* 'Don't act like a pig which tries to taste the curry' (KIPM 91: 1658). Generally, if we look at the imagery of the dog and pig as found in the Malay proverbial collections, the two animals are always directly related to humiliation and dirtiness.

Encoding of affection outside the usual domain of polite conversation

Despite the common belief that the Malays are gentle, their affection is sometimes encoded outside the domain of polite conversation through the use of words which are vulgar (e.g. the use of body and human sexual organ metaphors). From the various proverbial collections analysed, such tendency is, however, not that common. The most appropriate proverb that can be translated into this category is *jilat pantat* (lit. to lick one's ass or kiss someone's ass) (KSB 1966: 178), which is rather vulgar. There

is a proverb which borrows the human sexual organ as a metaphor, *pelir itik* (lit. duck's penis) (KSB 1966: 308), which means a kind of screw, and therefore does not denote impolite conversation. There are two *peribahasas* which can be manipulated to suit this category, but if and only if someone tries to interpret the word “*kotek*” (cackle, penis) in a very extreme manner.¹⁴ Since all of these examples are exceptions and not the norm, therefore I do not intend to make it a priority in my discussion.

Various figures of speech beyond the generalising metaphors and hyperbole

Besides the use of generalising metaphors and hyperbole which we have discussed, Malay proverbs also employ certain paradoxes. There are proverbs like *Alah sabung, menang sorak* ‘losing the cock-fight but winning in the cheering’ (KIPM 7: 125); *Aur ditanam betung tumbuh* ‘bamboo is planted but large bamboo [*betung*] has grown’ (KIPM 13: 239); *Awak¹⁵ kurus daging menimbun* ‘Your body is skinny but full of flesh’ (KIPM 14: 244). The use of paradoxes creates a feeling of unbelief among the hearers but the stronger motive behind them is the ability to convey the cynical message: How can someone be skinny but meaty! This paradoxical emotion is indeed success in fulfilling the role of Malay proverbs as the art of allusion.

Malay Proverbs, Emotion Evaluation and Their Spectrum of Emotion

When Norrick (1994) touched on how proverbs evaluate emotions, he traced the use of various emotional entries/terms that can be found in American proverbs. By citing examples of American proverbs, he claimed that proverbs have not altogether damned the emotions and this can be seen from the various selected entries like fear, anger, malice, jealousy, love, hate, pride, sorrow and grief, pity, joy and happiness. In his study, he also revealed that twenty five out of the total eighty nine entries with the heading “heart” referred to the source or expression of emotions, and that there were also pertinent examples that advise us to conceal our emotions. He suggested that the topic clearly invites research on comparing proverbs from different cultures. Norrick's suggestion immediately got my attention on how the Malay proverbs evaluate emotion as compared to the American proverbs and what kind of emotional spectrum can be identified in the Malay proverbs. By looking at the study of Norrick (1994), I have tried to conjure some kind of comparison in my mind when dealing with the Malay proverbs. Two interesting features emerged from the analysis into the Malay proverbial emotions that attracted my attention and suited my discussion on the Malay tradition, which I will discuss under two different sections: (i) Basic emotion terms; and (ii) Metaphors and metonymies.

Basic emotion terms

In this section, before we plunge into deep water, I should explain that the basic emotion terms in this discussion do not use expressions like *wah*, *cis*, *aduh* and *aduhai* which are rather common in the

Malay discourse as an expressive language of emotion, but will only refer to the description of emotional concepts that have received attention like *marah* (fear) and *takut* (fear). While there are so many direct entries expressing passions and emotions in the American proverbs, there are however relatively few such entries in the Malay proverbs, as compiled in *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu* (Abdullah Hussein 1991). I could not find as many Malay proverbs – *peribahasa* – that contain direct emotional words as can be found in the American proverbs through the Malay synonyms of Norrick’s entries: fear (*gentar, takut*), anger (*marah, kemarahan, berang*), malice (*dendam, dengki*), jealousy (*cemburu, iri*), love (*cinta, kasih, sayang*), hate (*benci*), pride (*bangga, megah*), sorrow (*sedih, duka*) and grief (*pilu*), pity (*kasihan*), joy (*sukacita, gembira, girang*) and happiness (*bahagia*).¹⁶ The list of entries that can be found in the index of *Kamus Istimewa Peribahasa Melayu* (Abdullah Hussain 1991) is shown in the Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Number of Entries of Malay Proverbs which Contain Emotional Words

No.	Emotional Words	Numbers of Entries
1.	Fear (<i>gentar, takut</i>)	<i>Gentar</i> – 0 <i>Takut</i> – 9 (1184, 2183, 3911-5, 3919-20)* <i>Takutkan</i> – 2 (3916-7)
2.	Anger (<i>marah, kemarahan, berang</i>)	<i>Marah</i> – 0 <i>Berang</i> – 0
3.	Malice (<i>dendam, dengki</i>)	<i>Dendam</i> – 0 <i>Dengki</i> – 0
4.	jealousy (<i>cemburu, iri</i>)	<i>Cemburu</i> – 0 <i>Iri</i> – 0
5.	love (<i>cinta, kasih, sayang</i>)	<i>Cinta</i> – 0 <i>Kasih</i> – 6 (722, 1879-83) <i>Kasihkan</i> – 4 (1885-8)
6.	hate (<i>benci</i>)	<i>Benci</i> – 0
7.	pride (<i>bangga, megah</i>)	<i>Bangga</i> – 0 <i>Megah</i> – 0
8.	sorrow (<i>sedih, duka</i>), grief (<i>pilu</i>)	<i>Sedih</i> – 0 <i>Duka</i> – 0 <i>Pilu</i> – 0
9.	pity (<i>kasihan</i>)	<i>Kasihkan</i> – 1 (1884)
10.	joy (<i>sukacita, gembira, girang</i>)	<i>Sukacita</i> – 0 <i>Gembira</i> – 0 <i>Girang</i> – 0
11.	happiness (<i>bahagia</i>)	<i>Bahagia</i> – 0

Source: Abdullah Hussain (1991), * all numbers in the parenthesis show where the proverbs appear in the text cited.

As we can observe from Table 5.2, there are only two terms which are obvious – “*takut, takutkan*” and “*kasih, kasihan, kasihkan*” – which find their place in the Malay proverbs. Even then, the total number of these emotions is limited: 11 entries for proverbs with the word “*takut*” (9) or “*takutkan*” (2), and

another 11 entries for “*kasih*” (6), “*kasihan*” (1) and “*kasihkan*” (4). These limited numbers perhaps indirectly manifest the nature and character of the Malays, who are seen to be not as direct as the Americans when dealing with passions. Passions and emotions are basically private to them (see Heider 1991). The lack of direct emotional words should not be used as an inference to contend that the Malays are lacking in their emotional spectrum in their daily life. As emotion is something private, hence the expression of feeling within the Malay community is normally seen through the use of *peribahasa*. Let us examine various *peribahasas* to see how the Malays convey their emotions (See Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: How Malay Proverbs Encode the Emotion

Types of Emotion	Selected Proverbs	Meaning/ Interpretation/ Comments
Happy/Joyful (<i>gembira/riang</i>)	<i>Bagai emak mandul baru beranak</i> ‘Like an infertile mother who just gave birth’ (KIPM 19: 345); <i>Bagai perempuan bunting bertemu idamannya</i> ‘Like a pregnant woman who got her wish’ (KIPM 25: 468).	The nature of pregnancy is used to describe the state of joyfulness and happiness.
Restless (<i>Gelisah</i>)	<i>Bagai tidur di atas miang</i> ‘Like sleeping on top of itchy hairs [<i>miang</i>]’ (KIPM 27: 505); <i>Anak ayam kebasahan bulu</i> ‘The chick’s fur gets wet’ (KIPM 8: 141); <i>Bagai ayam dimakan (= kena) tungau</i> ‘Like fowls that are eaten by <i>tungau</i> /bug’ (KIPM 17: 295).	To portray the restless state of one’s emotion.
Happiness (<i>bahagia</i>)	<i>Anak baik, menantu molek</i> ‘good siblings, beautiful in-laws’ (KIPM 9: 143).	The Malays stress on the importance of family. If there is good relationship between siblings and beautiful in-laws, then the whole family will be filled with happiness.
Envious (<i>iri hati</i>); Jealous (<i>cemburu</i>)	1. <i>Bangau! Bangau! Minta aku leher! Badak! Badak! Minta aku daging.</i> ‘Stork! I beg from thee thy neck! Rhinoceros! I beg from thee thy flesh’ (MBRAS 28: 31); 2. <i>Bagai bersumur di tepi rawa</i> ‘Like having a well beside the marsh’ (KIPM 17: 314).	1. One feels envious because someone is better than him/her. 2. To describe a person who is always jealous.
Longing; long for (<i>rindu; kerinduan</i>)	<i>Berjarak serasa hilang, bercerai serasa mati</i> ‘one feels loss when distanced and feels like dying when separated’ (KIPM 39: 736).	Very strong emotions of longing for someone you love.
Disappointed (<i>kecewa</i>)	<i>Biar, biar naik ke mata</i> ‘small worm, small worm [in the stomach] has gone to the eyes’ (KIPM 47: 905).	To show one’s frustration.
Uneasy (<i>tidak menyenangkan</i>)	<i>Bagai duri dalam daging</i> ‘Like thorn in the flesh’ (KIPM 19: 344).	Something which is really disturbing.

Confusion (<i>bingung</i>)	<i>Bagai ayam kena kepala</i> 'Like a fowl which is being thrown on its head' (KIPM 17: 297).	<i>Kena kepala</i> (lit. is knocked on one's head) = being thrown. To show the emotion of confusion.
Angry (<i>marah</i>)	<i>Bagai diurap dengan daun katang-katang</i> 'Like one who is rubbed with the leaves of <i>katang-katang</i> ' (KIPM 19: 342).	<i>Katang-katang</i> = plants which grow at the seaside and have very itchy sap. To show the anger of someone.
Fear (<i>takut</i>)	<i>Bagai ayam yang terkecundang</i> 'Like a defeated cock' (KIPM 17: 304); <i>Bagai kambing dalam biduk</i> 'Like a goat in a small ship' (KIPM 20: 374); <i>Bagai kucing dibawakan lidi</i> 'Like a cat that is chased with palm leaf ribs' (KIPM 21: 395).	Really afraid of something. <i>Lidi</i> = palm leaf rib.
Hate (<i>benci</i>)	<i>Bagai melihat ulat</i> 'Like one looking at a larva' (KIPM 23: 423).	To show that someone is really fed-up with something.

Source: My analysis.

In addition to the selected lists of proverbs that we have discussed, a lot of positive and negative emotion states are also presented in the form of *simpulan bahasa*, with *hati* (liver/heart) as the centre of their passions. This tendency also represents the Malay character of not being directly expressive and sometimes can be perceived as suppressive in handling their emotions. One of the consequences of emotional suppression is perhaps some form of psychological anomaly like *amok* and *latah*, which is said to typically represent the unstable state of Malay emotions.¹⁷ The tendency to conceal emotions is not typical of the Malays alone. It is much obvious in the case of the Javanese. Mantle Hood (cited in Heider 1991, 7) is reported to have said that: "Among the many refinements of Javanese society is the ideal of concealing the emotions – it is sometimes said that there is a Javanese smile for every emotion." Among Westerners, this "Javanese smile" perhaps seems to apply stereotypically to all Asians (especially Thai, Chinese and Japanese) as well.

Metaphors and Metonymies

We cannot stop at only examining the uses of basic emotion terms or the uses of a single emotion term. The Malays always express their emotions in the form of proverbs, either as metaphors or metonymies of the liver. The role of 'heart' in the American mind (as we have seen earlier) as compared with the role of 'liver' (*hati*) in the Malays portray the cultural relativity between these two traditions. If the Western tradition concentrate the feelings in the heart (as can be perceived through American proverbs with 89 entries stated by Norrick [1994]), the Malays however, focus the passions and emotions in their liver (*hati*). The Malays sometimes choose a shorter and faster form of proverbial expressions in *simpulan bahasa* (and not other forms of Malay proverbs like *perumpamaan*

and *pepatah* which are normally longer) in expressing their feelings. Various emotional states have been recorded in *simpulan bahasa* with *hati* as the keyword. For the purpose of comparison, we can only see relatively few *peribahasas* with the word *hati* as compared to *simpulan bahasa*. There are roughly 12 *peribahasas* (from Abdullah Hussain [1991])¹⁸ but 252 *simpulan bahasas* (See Abdullah Hussain [1966] and also Table 5.6). The concept of *hati* in Malay proverbs will be discussed in detail in next section: The Conception of *Hati* in Malay Proverbs.

How do the same metaphors roughly emerge in the Malay language in the case of anger as compared with its counterparts: English, Hungarian, Japanese and Chinese? Do the Malays appear to have very similar ideas about their bodies and see themselves as undergoing the same physiological process when in the state of anger, *düh*, *ikari* and *nu* respectively as proposed by Kövecses (2000), that people produce remarkably similar shared pressurized container metaphor? My answer is “yes” when we look into their linguistic usage. As we know, some metaphors reflect universal notions, such as the idea that anger is conceptualised as pressure in a container. Metonymies may also denote universal aspects of emotions, such as the idea that anger is internal pressure, loss of muscular control, redness, a rise in body temperature, and loss of rationality. Universality in the conceptualisation of emotions can be found through some of the metaphors and metonymies in the Malay language as compared to the other languages discussed in Kövecses (1995, 2000) as well. There is in this sense of universality that the Malay emotion is confined to. And these aspects of emotion language and concepts are universal and clearly related to the physiological functioning of the body. Let me use the general division of “body heat”, “internal pressure” and “redness” to see how this universality in the conceptualisation of emotion in the Malay language and their *simpulan bahasa* emerge. If we look at the Malay conception of emotion, we will see that anger, for example, is described in the following manner:

Body heat:

The Malays perceive anger as a rise in the liver’s temperature, from cold to hot. Therefore when someone is angry, he or she is referred to by using these various sayings like *panas hati* ‘hot liver’ (very angry, angry within the liver), *hangat hati* ‘hot liver’ (feel angry), *panas bala* ‘hot misfortune,’ *panas baran* ‘hot angry,’ *panas darah* ‘hot blood’ (to get angry very fast). If one is too angry, the temperature can rise up to a state that one’s liver is burnt: *Hangus hati* ‘totally burnt liver,’ *terbakar hati* ‘the liver is getting burned,’ *membakar hati* ‘to burn one’s liver.’ In contrast, when someone is not getting angry anymore, he or she is *sejuk hati* ‘cold liver.’

Internal pressure:

Anger is metaphorically described as heat within a pressurised container. When one is angry, the Malays say *naik darah* ‘blood is rising’ and therefore, if he or she makes me angry, the Malays will

say *dia membuat saya naik darah* 'he/she causes my blood to rise.' If the anger cannot be controlled any longer, it will erupt and explode as shown by the following phrases: *meletup marahnya* 'his anger is exploding,' *rasa marahnya meluap-luap* 'his anger is steaming,' and *darahnya mendidih* 'his/ her blood is boiling.'

Redness in character:

Redness is used among the Malays to describe shyness and anger. When someone is shy, he or she is said to be *merah muka* 'red face' (KSB 271). Redness can also be used to describe anger. In order to describe one's face while angry, the Malays use *merah telinga*¹⁹ 'red ear' (KSB 271) or *merah padam* 'red died out' (KSB 271), or *memerahkan muka* 'make the face red' (KSB 272), which refers to causing anger.

If we refer to the examples above and compare them with some of the examples taken from Kövecses (1995), then we are sure to be able to identify their similarities. As an example, *Dia membuat saya naik darah* 'He/she causes my blood to rise' can be compared to the Hungarian proverb *Felment a vernyoma sa* [up went the blood – his], which means his blood pressure went up and the Japanese proverb *kare no okage de ketsuatsu ga agarippanashi da* [he due to blood pressure keeps going up], which means my blood pressure keeps going up because of him.

Despite the similarities discussed above, there are, however, still differences in cultural knowledge that work according to culturally defined rules and scenarios that are divergent. Due to their different worldviews, the Chinese and Malays, for instance, refer to different human organs as their own source of emotions. For example, the Chinese generally use *pi qi* (the *qi* of the spleen) as the source of anger, whereas Malays use the heat of *hati* (liver) as their source of anger. Yu (1995) observed that Chinese abounds in anger- and happiness-related expressions that employ a variety of internal organs like the heart, liver, spleen and gall. According to Yu, this is so because of the influence of Chinese medicine on the conceptualisation and hence verbalisation of emotions (cited by Kövecses 2000). The concept of Malay emotion in *hati* is also related to Malay medicine as well (see A. Samad Ahmad 1988). Besides the use of different human organs as the source of emotions, cultural diversity does give different motives and functions to a certain emotion. Generally, as human beings, we would try to avoid the emotion of sadness unless we have no choice, but if we were to examine the spectrum of Malay emotions, we would find that culturally, the Malay concept of *sedih* might not be equal to the English concept of *sad* or at least, this emotion was not given the same priority or importance in their literature. Ironically, *sedih* and its other spectrum of emotions (e.g. *lara*, *nestapa*) might not mean something sad in the Malay discourses or literatures but elements that are used to entertain as shown from Muhammad Haji Salleh's (1993) discussion on the Malay aesthetics of sorrow.

The Conception of *Hati* in Malay Proverbs

Culture has its share in body symbolism. The use of body as metaphor of society is quite common too among the Malays as seen in their *simpulan bahasa*, e.g. *kakitangan* (staff; literally means hand and leg); *mata telinga* (spy, informant; literally means eyes and ears); *kepala kampung* (village chief; literally means the head of a village). In order to express their feelings, the Malays use liver (*hati*) instead of stomach, bowels or heart. *Hati* as the source of emotion had been discussed by many researchers (i.e. Wazir Jahan Karim 1990a-c, Wan Abdul Kadir 1993b, Sibarani 1999, Saidatul Nornis Haji Mahali 1999 and Mulyadi 2001). The study of Wazir Jahan Karim (1990c) related *hati* (liver) as the source of passions. The term *hati* is used to describe the state of positive and negative emotions. Wazir cited a few Malay proverbs – *simpulan bahasa* – and their English equivalent to explain her point. There are certain terms which, according to her, described the emotive states through the use of *hati*. Positive emotive states can be represented, for example, by *baik hati* (lit. Good-livered, which means kind, good or nice), *murah hati* (lit. Cheap-livered, which means generous), *senang hati* (lit. Happy-livered, which means relaxed or cheerful); whereas the negative emotive states can be seen through *iri hati*, which means envious, *sakit hati* (pain-livered, hard feeling, or as Wazir put it, angry, with a tendency for revenge) and *main hati* (lit. Play-livered, casual flirtation, which is not to be taken seriously). According to Wazir Jahan Karim (1990c, 26-27), the Malays pinpointed the source of ‘the passions’ to the liver as the mysterious organ which is believed to control the moods and emotions of humans and to command more permanently their psyche and personality in both psychological (*zahir*) and spiritual (*batin*) sense. Wazir also claimed that to the Malays, the liver determines a person’s state of mental health, in contrast to the heart which determines a person’s physical health or well-being. If we were to look at their *simpulan bahasa*, we will notice the extensive usage of the term *hati* to indicate different emotive states, be it positive or negative, which are linked to specific personality traits.²⁰ *Hati* as the source of emotions and passions was also brought up by Wan Abdul Kadir (1993b). According to him:

Kepada orang Melayu, perasaan atau emosi itu terletak di hati. Hati merupakan pusat pembinaan perasaan atau emosi seseorang. Perasaan marah dinyatakan dengan “sakit hati” dan sebaliknya perasaan suka dikatakan “suka hati” atau rasa senang atau tenang dikatakan “senang hati.” Perasaan benci dan tidak ikhlas pula dikatakan “busuk hati” dan sebaliknya untuk menyatakan perasaan baik dikatakan “baik hati.” Perasaan kasih sayang juga dinyatakan di hati, seperti “buah hati,” “jantung hati” (Wan Abdul Kadir 1993b, 78).

(For the Malays, feeling or emotion resides in the liver. Liver is the centre of the creation of feeling or emotion. The feeling of anger is expressed as “*sakit hati*” [lit. painful liver] whereas the feeling of happiness is articulated as “*suka hati*” or “*senang hati*” [lit. happy liver]. The feeling of hatred and insincerity are expressed as “*busuk hati*” [lit. smelly liver] whereas “*baik*

hati” [lit. good liver] is used to convey kindness. The feeling of love is also stated in *hati* [liver], like “*buah hati*” [lit. fruit of liver], “*jantung hati*” [lit. the heart of liver]).

Even though “*hati*” is dominant in *simpulan bahasa* in terms of conveying emotion, this does not mean the Malays neglect totally the importance of thinking. In their everyday communication, the Malays do think²¹ before they speak. This is reflected from their proverbs like *pikir itu pelita hati* ‘Thought is the lamp of the mind’ (MBRAS 174: 85), *sesal dulu pendapatan, sesal kemudian tidak berguna* ‘to be sorry beforehand is gain, to be sorry afterwards is useless’ (KIPM 198: 3676; MS 174), *padang perahu di lautan padang hati di fikiran* ‘The field for a ship is the ocean; the field for the heart is the mind’ (MBRAS 163: 5) and the very obvious *ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa*, ‘Pursue your lust and you will die: go the way of your passions and you will be doomed’ (MS 218. See also KIPM 88: 1617). The role of thinking is to avoid the opponent(s) from feeling anger, sadness and shame.

Why is *hati* so important to accommodate the Malay passion and emotion? The answer is strongly related to the Malay worldview of how a person is created (see Chapter 2 under the sub-topic of “Malays and Their Worldview”). The Malays believe that the emotions of a person have to do with his or her blood (e.g. a person who is angry is said to be *naik darah*, literally means his/her blood is rising or *naik angin*, his/her wind is rising). Blood is said to originate from the attitudes of *angin* (wind) and the place where the wind resides is *hati* (liver). Although it is generally believed that the word *hati* plays an important role in recording the Malay passions, emotions and intuitions, it is sometimes rather ambiguous as it was once understood as belonging to the realm of emotions and one another occasion interpreted as being part of the realm of the mind. For example, when someone says, “*Hatinya tak ada di sini* (lit. His liver is not here; in reality, it refers to his mind not being here). According to *Kamus Dewan* (1986, 379), “*hati*” means “*batin (tempat perasaan, pengertian dll.)* (spirit [the place where feeling, meaning etc. reside]).” “*Berhati-hati*” means “*memberi perhatian (pertimbangan dsb) yang teliti (sewaktu melakukan sesuatu)* (paying careful attention [judgement etc.] [when doing something])” (*Kamus Dewan* 1986, 380) When writing about the notion of *ati* in Balinese (= Malay *hati*), Mershon (1971, 329; cited in Rappe 1995, 359) simply translated it as “the soul”: “The Balinese use the term *ati* in a curious manner: *ati* actually means ‘liver’, where the soul resides. There are such phrases as *sakit-ati*, ‘sick-livered’; *iri hati*, ‘envious, jealous’. As in China and Japan, the solar plexus is the center of the soul.” Wolfgang Weck (1976, 88; Cited in Rappe 1995, 359), an expert in the Balinese medicine, however, defined *hati* to include both heart and liver as he said that “*Hati bedeutet sowohl Herz als Leber (Hati means both heart and liver).*” Until today, the word *hati* possesses several meanings, viz., “a) *Leber*;... (liver) b) *Herz, Gemüt, Inneres*; (heart, disposition/nature/mentality, inner part) c) *Aufmerksamkeit und Interesse*;.. (attention and interest).” (Karow/Hilgers-Hesse 1978, 123; Cited in Rappe 1995, 360)²². Besides its role as the source of emotion, if we check the Malay dictionaries, *hati* is also either directly or indirectly related to other

metaphysical terminology like *atma*, *batin*, *budi*, *jiwa*, *kalbu*, *roh*, *semangat* and *sukma* (See Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: *Hati* as the Centre of the Other Minds

The Other Minds	Meaning as Suggested in <i>Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia</i> (1991)
<i>Atma</i> (life; soul)	1. <i>jiwa</i> ; <i>nyawa</i> ; (life); 2. <i>roh</i> (soul) (p.64).
<i>Batin</i> (of the soul; spiritual)	<i>Sesuatu yang terdapat di dl hati; sesuatu yang mengenai jiwa (perasaan hati dsb)</i> (something which can be found in the liver; something related with life [feeling etc.]) (p. 98).
<i>Budi</i>	1. <i>Alat batin yang merupakan paduan akal dan perasaan untuk menimbang baik dan buruk</i> ; (spiritual tool which is used as a combination of mind and emotion to judge between good and bad); 2. <i>Tabiat; akhlak; watak</i> ; (behaviour); 3. <i>Perbuatan baik; kebaikan</i> ; (good deed; kindness); 4. <i>Daya upaya; ikhtiar</i> ; (effort); 5. <i>Akal (dl arti kecerdikan menipu atau tipu daya)</i> (Mind [in the sense of deceiving intelligence or trick]) (p. 150). See also Chapter 3, under the sub-section of Concepts.
<i>Hati</i> (liver)	<i>Sesuatu yang ada di dl tubuh manusia yang dianggap sbg tempat segala perasaan batin dan tempat menyimpan pengertian/ perasaan</i> (Something within the human body, which is assumed as the centre of spirit and feeling (p. 344).
<i>Jiwa</i> (life)	1. <i>roh manusia (yg ada di dl tubuh dan menyebabkan hidup)</i> ; <i>nyawa</i> ; (soul of a human (within the body and gives life); life; 2. <i>Seluruh kehidupan batin manusia (yg terjadi dr perasaan, pikiran, angan-angan, dsb)</i> (The whole spiritual of human [which is formed from feeling, thinking, day-dreaming etc.]) (p. 416).
<i>Kalbu</i> (soul)	<i>Hati; pangkal perasaan batin; hati yang suci (murni)</i> (Liver; the origin of spiritual feeling; purified liver) (p. 434).
<i>Roh</i> (soul; spirit)	1. <i>sesuatu yang hidup tidak berbadan jasmani, yg berakal budi dan berperasaan (spt. Malaikat, setan)</i> ; (something which lives without physical body, with thinking and feeling [like angels, satan]); 2. <i>Jiwa, badan halus</i> ; (life, unseen body) 3. <i>Semangat</i> (spirit) (p. 845).
<i>Semangat</i> (spirit; enthusiasm)	1. <i>roh kehidupan yang menjiwai segala makhluk, baik hidup maupun mati (menurut kepercayaan orang dulu dapat memberi kekuatan)</i> (the soul of living which gives life to all creatures, either alive or dead [which provides strength, according to the belief of old folk]) (p. 902). 2. <i>Seluruh kehidupan batin manusia</i> (the whole spiritual life of human). 3. <i>Kekuatan batin</i> (spiritual strength). 4. <i>Perasaan hati</i> (feeling of liver). 5. <i>Nafsu</i> (lust) (p. 903).
<i>Sukma</i> (life)	<i>Jiwa; nyawa</i> (life) (p. 970).

If we look into the various terminologies and their meaning cited above, we will find out an interesting part of the Malay *hati*. *Hati* is not only the source and centre of emotion; *hati* is also the centre of *atma*, *jiwa*, *nyawa*, *roh*, *batin*, *sukma* and *intuisi* (*gerak hati/ bisikan kalbu*) in the Malay worldview. *Hati* is the centre of life, spirit, lust, intuition and soul.

The language of Malay proverbs and their emotion are basically centred in the realm of “*hati*”²³ (Cf. Sibarani 1999). *Kamus Simpulan Bahasa* (Abdullah Hussain 1966), for example, listed 252 *simpulan bahasa*²⁴ that carry the word “*hati*” and “*berhati*”. “*Hati*” in these *simpulan bahasas* can be divided into two categories: (1) *Hati sebagai inti* (*Hati* as head) (i.e. *hati kecil*, *hati sanubari* and *berhati batu*) and (2) *Hati sebagai Pewatas* (*Hati* as modifier) (i.e. *baik hati*, *iri hati* and *isi hati*) (Sibarani 1999). The Malays are actually very romantic if we look at how they refer to the person that they love in the form of *simpulan bahasa*. There are examples like: *Buah hati* (fruit of liver/ heart), *Jantung hati* (heart of liver), *Mahkota hati* (crown of liver/heart), *Mestika hati* (a precious stone of liver/heart), *Rangkai hati* (string of liver/heart), *Tangkai hati* (stem of liver/heart), *Tempat hati* (place of liver/heart) etc. Even though *hati* as liver does play an important role in the Malay passions, it should not be seen as the sole possession of the Malays. Mercado (1994, 27) cited that for instance, a young man in Papua New Guinea refers to his girl friend as his “*lewa*” (liver), not his sweetheart.

The concept of emotion can be generally grouped into two categories: emotion relates with “good events” and emotion conveys “bad events.”²⁵ According to Frijda (1986), emotions arise because events are appraised by people as favorable or harmful to their own interests. This common classification is generally applicable as well to the Malay source of emotions. According to Mulyadi (2001, 28), emotion in the first category, which is called “positive emotion” consists of emotions like *gembira* (glad, joyful), *senang* (happy), *lega* (relax, clear of mind/ feeling) and *bangga* (proud). Emotion in the second category is known as “negative emotion” and includes emotions like *sedih* (sad), *marah* (angry), *malu* (shy), *takut* (afraid) and *kecewa* (disappointed). These positive and negative emotions are subordinate categories from the basic human emotion. Despite its use to express positive feelings (e.g. *hati jernih*, *baik hati*, *suka hati*) and negative feelings (e.g. *patah hati*, *sakit hati*), *hati* can also be used to connote nouns (e.g. *hati tangan*, *lubuk hati*, *buah hati*). There are a few hundreds *simpulan bahasa* which use the word “*hati*” and a selection of examples are listed in the Table 5.5.²⁶ below:

Table 5.5: Examples of Various Emotion States in Malay Proverbs

Positive Emotion States	Negative Emotion States	Non-Emotion States
<i>Hati jernih</i> (clear liver) <i>Hati nurani</i> – a liver that has been enlightened by God <i>Hati terbuka</i> – an open liver/heart <i>Berhati berlian</i> (a heart of diamond) – very kind <i>Baik hati</i> (good liver) – kind <i>Geli hati</i> (ticklish liver) – humorous <i>Murah hati</i> (cheap liver) – charitable and affectionate (p. 280) <i>Puas hati</i> – happy because what is expected has been achieved <i>Rendah hati</i> (low liver) – not arrogant <i>Sejuk hati</i> (cold liver) – no more anger <i>Senang hati</i> (happy liver) – glad <i>Suka hati</i> – joyful <i>Terang hati</i> (bright liver) – fast to understand/easily become smart	<i>Berhati batu</i> (a liver of stone) – without pity <i>Buta hati</i> (blind liver) – cruel <i>Kering hati</i> (dry liver) – without pity <i>Keruh hati</i> (muddy liver) – without sincere feeling <i>Naik hati</i> (rising liver) – become arrogant <i>Patah hati</i> (broken liver) – really frustrated <i>Tawar hati</i> (tasteless liver) – no more will	<i>Hati tangan</i> (hand's liver) – centre of the curve of palm (p. 396) <i>Hati-hati</i> (liver-liver) – being careful <i>Bisikan hati</i> (whisper of the liver) – the voice of liver <i>Detak hati</i> (ticking of liver) – the voice of liver which comes unexpectedly. <i>Gerak hati</i> (moving of liver) – intuition, feeling which emerges from liver <i>Isi hati</i> (content of liver) <i>Kunci hati</i> (key of liver) – secret <i>Mata hati</i> (eye of liver) – feeling in the liver (p. 264) <i>Pelita hati</i> (lamp of liver) – guidance of life (p. 148) <i>Sagu hati</i> – compensation <i>Sunting hati</i> – pampered children (p. 379)

Source: My own analysis based on Abdullah Hussain. 1966. *Kamus Simpulan Bahasa*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

As compared with “*hati*”, “*akal*” is less important with only 46 entries in the same collection of *simpulan bahasa*. And even then, out of the 46 entries of *akal*-related *simpulan bahasa*, most of them are used to carry the negative denotation, for instance, *akal-akal*, *akal belut*, *akal pendek*, *sesat akal* and *putus akal*. The other *hati*-related word, i.e. *rasa* has 26 entries whereas the *akal*-related word, i.e. *fikir* has 48 entries (See Table 5.6). There is an interesting insight into the question of why there are so many *hati*-related words occurring in the *simpulan bahasa*. The similarity between the concept of *hati* in the Malay tradition and other traditions can be traced etymologically or by way of comparison. Despite its role as the centre of emotion in the Malay tradition, *hati* can be understood occasionally as “heart-mind” – a place to think and feel simultaneously.

Table 5.6: A Comparison between the *Hati* and *Akal*-Related Words in terms of the Numbers of Entries

	Words	Numbers of Entries
<i>Hati</i> -related Words (Total: 278 words)	<i>Hati</i>	252
	<i>Rasa</i>	26
<i>Akal</i> -related Words (Total: 94 words)	<i>Akal</i>	46
	<i>Fikir</i>	48
Judgmental Word (Total: 23 words)	<i>Budi</i>	23

Source: My own analysis based on Abdullah Hussain. 1966. *Kamus Simpulan Bahasa*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Etymologically, there is also another word, *nala* which denotes the meaning of *hati* (liver) and also thinking. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991, 681), for example, cited the phrase “*bernala-nala*” as having Minangkabau origin and carried the meaning “*Berpikir-pikir; menimbang-nimbang* (to think; to weight [between right and wrong])”. However, since this word is not common or could not be found in the Malay proverbs, so I left it out.²⁷ The role of *hati* as the centre of judgement is crucial to the Malay mind and it was not replaced even with the arrival of Islam, but became entrenched as seen through the word *kalbu*, from Arabic *qalb*, which is an important element in Muslim mystical thought. The terms *hati* and *kalbu* are also strongly related to intuition in the Malay worldview now as suggested from the terms *gerak hati* (the movement of liver) and *bisikan kalbu* (the whisper of heart). Saidatul Nornis Haji Mahadi (1999) explained her understanding of the role and origin of *hati* in the following terms:

Hati dalam pandangan dunia orang-orang Melayu menduduki tempat penting, sebagai lambang keutuhan struktur tubuh. Hati dilihat sebagai pusat mentadbir tubuh. Kalau pusat pentadbiran tidak baik, bererti tubuh juga tidak baik dan begitulah hal yang sebaliknya. Contohnya, buruk hati, kering hati, tusuk hati, dan sempit hati. World view orang-orang Melayu pada hati ada hubungannya dengan agama Islam yang menganggap hati sebagai nadi keseluruhan hidup manusia. Penerimaan dan penolakan sebarang maklumat atau fenomena dilakukan oleh hati.

(*Hati* occupies an important position in the Malay worldview, as a symbol of completeness of the human body structure. *Hati* is seen as the centre of body administration. If the centre of administration is not good, the body will also not be good and vice-versa; for example, *buruk hati*, *kering hati*, *tusuk hati*, and *sempit hati*. The Malay worldview on *hati* is related with Islam, which treats *hati* as the pulse of the whole human life. The acceptance and the rejection of any information or phenomenon is done by *hati*.)

However, Saidatul’s idea appears to be too simplistic. The first part of her assertion that Malays use *hati* as one of their determining tool for decision making is sound, but the second part of her assertion is rather problematic. Saidatul’s ideological arrangement to trace the concept of *hati* to Islam is

irrelevant and clearly a religious rationalisation. To rationalise everything good as originating from Islam is absurd. We know that *hati* is a Malay-Indonesian or Austronesian construct and therefore should have existed before the arrival of Islam. Etymologically, Gonda (1973) does not stress on its origin from Sanskrit, except the idea of *suci hati*²⁸. Dempwolff's (1938) list of Austronesian words, so far, seems to substantiate the originality of the word *hati*. According to Dempwolff (1938), the word *hati* originates from *hataj* (p. 62) or *ataj* (p. 16) and can be found in most of the Austronesian languages (e.g. Malay-Indonesian '*ati*', Tagalog '*atai*', Toba-Batak '*ate*', Java '*ati*'), which means "*Leber*" (liver) or "*Gemüt*" (mind, soul, heart) in German.

The importance of *hati* in the Malay worldview can also be observed through the inner eyes of "*mata-hati*" (literally, the eyes of liver/heart) and not the outer physical eyes. *Mata-hati*-related words like "*berhati-hati*" and "*memperhatikan*" can support their perception of argument, which according to their understanding should not only be purely reason (logical principles) but must also be able to touch their inner eyes (humane emotion). Therefore, a successful and effective argument or reasoning as a way of resolving conflict should not be expressed directly as it might cause hurt. As we have seen through the bundle of proverbs that focuses on "*hati*", it is rather interesting as well to look at the similarity between the concept of Malay *hati* as "liver-mind" and the Chinese heart-mind.²⁹ Even though these two traditions do not share the same part of the human anatomy as the centre of emotion (the Malay uses the word *hati* or liver and the Chinese uses heart, *xin* << 心 >>), the similarity in the form of biwordly (two words) constructs in the Malay *simpulan bahasa* and the Chinese idioms which centre on the word *xin* is interesting.³⁰ In Chinese, there are also many common phrases that are strung to the word *xin* (heart) as we can see from various examples as compared to the Malay *hati* (See Table 5.7).

Table 5.7: The Comparison between Chinese Conception of *Xin* and the Malay *Hati*

No.	Chinese Phrases (Key-word: <i>Xin</i>) 心	Meaning (<i>Xin</i> : the heart; mind; feeling; intention; centre; core)	Malay <i>Simpulan</i> <i>Bahasa</i> (Key word: <i>Hati</i>)	Meaning (<i>Hati</i> : liver)
1.	<i>Xiaoxin</i> 小心	Lit. Small-hearted (take care; be careful; be cautious)	<i>Kecil hati</i>	Lit. Small liver (quite angry)
2.	<i>Rexin</i> 热心	Lit. Hot-hearted (serious; having a strong interest)	<i>Panas hati</i>	Lit. Hot liver (angry in one's heart)
3.	<i>Cuxin</i> 粗心	Lit. Rough-hearted (careless)	<i>Berhati rampus</i>	Rough liver
4.	<i>Kaixin</i> 开心	Lit. Open-hearted (feel happy; rejoice)	<i>Hati terbuka</i> <i>Suka hati</i> <i>Sedap hati</i> <i>Besar hati</i>	Lit. Open liver (happy and sincere)
5.	<i>Youxin</i> 有心	Lit. Have heart (Have a mind to; set one's mind on; intentionally; purposely)	<i>Ada hati</i>	Lit. Have liver (One has interest which is more than his/her ability)
6.	<i>Zhuanxin</i> 专心	Lit. Focused heart (concentrate)	<i>Sepenuh hati</i>	Lit. Full liver (whole-hearted)
7.	<i>Renxin</i> 忍心	Lit. enduring heart (having the heart to do something "cruel")	<i>Sampai hati</i> <i>Buta hati</i>	Lit. Reach liver, blind liver (having the heart to do something "cruel")
8.	<i>Ganxin</i> 甘心	Reconciled to; resigned to	<i>Puas hati</i>	Happy or satisfied after getting something that one wishes
9.	<i>Haixin</i> 好心	Lit. Good-hearted (kind)	<i>Baik hati</i>	Lit. Good liver (kind)
10.	<i>Shangxin</i> 伤心	Lit. Hurt heart (Sad)	<i>Pedih hati</i> <i>Susah hati</i> <i>Pilu hati</i> <i>Sedu hati</i>	Sad
11.	<i>Liangxin</i> 良心	Lit. Kind-hearted (Conscience)	<i>Hati perut</i>	Lit. Liver stomach (Conscience)

Emotion is variously viewed in both positive and negative ways in the Malay culture, folk beliefs and philosophical traditions. There is however no single exact Malay term for “emotion,” which is now often being translated as “*emosi*.” The term most frequently used as a closer equivalent is *rasa*. The term *rasa*, which was borrowed by the Malay from Sanskrit originally means “sap, juice, liquid essence, and taste, and is often translated as flavor, relish, mood, and sentiment” (McDaniel 1995, 47). Due to earlier influence from the Sanskrit, the Malays generally regard sensation, taste and feeling as falling into the same category. According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991, 820), *rasa* can be used to refer to:

1. *tanggapan indria, thd rangsangan saraf (spt manis, pahit, asam thd indria pengecap, atau panas, dingin, nyeri, thd indria perasa);*
 2. *apa yang dialami oleh badan;*
 3. *sifat rasa sesuatu benda;*
 4. *tanggapan hati melalui indria;*
 5. *pendapat (pertimbangan) mengenai baik atau buruk, salah atau benar.*
1. sense perception, towards nervous stimulus (like sweet, bitter, sour to the senses of the taster/user, or hot, cold, sense of irritating because of pain to the senses of people who feel);
 2. what is experienced by the body;
 3. the nature and taste of something;
 4. the perception of liver/heart through senses;
 5. opinion (judgement) on good or bad, wrong or right.

In their everyday conversation, we can easily hear phrases like: *rasa panas* (feel hot), *rasa sejuk/dingin* (feel cold) (sense 1, sensation related with skin and the ability to feel); *rasa pahit* (taste bitter), *rasa manis* (taste sweet) (Sense 1 & 3, sensation related with tongue) and *rasa sedih* (to feel sad), *rasa gembira* (to feel happy) (Sense 4, feeling or emotion). When discussing about the emotion in the Bengali religious thought, McDaniel (1995) proclaimed that “emotional *rasa* can be tasted and appreciated. While emotions become *rasas*, they may be viewed as art objects, and combined in aesthetic fashion” (p. 47). If Western tradition tends to treat reason and emotion as mutually opposing, Asian tradition however sees emotion and reason as mutually complimenting. For the Malays, the issue of reason-emotion should not be seen from a purely true or false, black or white dichotomy but should be addressed in spectrum. For McDaniel (1995):

In the Bengali and Sanskrit languages, terms for emotion and thought, mind and heart, are not opposed. Indeed, most frequently the same terms are used for both. A term often heard, *mana*, means both mind and heart, as well as mood, feeling, mental state, memory, desire, attachment, interest, attention, devotion, and decision. These terms do not have a single referent in English, and must be understood through clusters of explicit and implicit meanings. Verbs based on *mana* include *mana kara* (to make up one’s mind, to resolve or agree); *mana kāra* (to captivate the mind or win one’s heart); and *mana kholā* (to speak one’s mind or open one’s heart). (p. 43).

McDaniel further claimed the non-opposing status of Indian emotion and cognition:

We see in these terms and definitions that emotion is a powerful force which is at the same time subtle and delicate, invisible to the senses yet capable of generating physical expressions, associated with perception, intuition, and realization. There is no sharp distinction between emotion and cognition. Thought is associated with knowledge and discrimination, and the mind grasps and holds memories and ideas. Yet thought is associated with feelings, especially anxiety, as well as imagination (McDaniel 1995, 44).

The similarities between Hinduism and Buddhism and its Indian influence can be seen also in the Thai culture from the linguistic perspective. Peansiri Vongvipanond (1994) claimed that if frequency of occurrence can be taken as an indicator of the degree of attention and interest, Thai people seem to put more emphasis on their heart (*jai* ใจ) than their head (*hua* หัว). Moore's (1992) *Heart Talk* for example explored the Thai language use of *jai* or heart and recorded over 330 *Heart Talk* root phrases. The early Malay civilisation was also very much influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism and if the same logic goes, then the Malay people can be said to have put more emphasis on their liver (*hati*) (160 entries as shown in the indexes of Abdullah Hussein 1966, 252 entries in the text, Cf. Table 5.6) than their head (*kepala*).³¹

The Malays seem to be in favour of taking their eyes (*mata*) more seriously than their ears (*telinga*), with 105 and 15 entries respectively. This "eyes culture" can be further justified through the use of several vision-related words: *pandang* (to see, 17 entries) is more than *dengar* (to hear, 4 entries); *buta* (blind, 29 entries) is more than *pekak* (deaf, 7 entries). The relationship between liver and eyes can be found through the *simpulan bahasa*, *mata hati* (the eye of the liver). The Malays believe in "*dari mata turun ke hati*" (literally, from the eyes down to the liver), which means that love comes first from the eyes before going down to the heart. This idea of "from the eyes down to the heart" can be seen, for example, from one of their *pantuns* about love's commencement.³² Table 5.8 below shows the frequency of various body parts as appeared in *simpulan bahasa*:

Table 5.8: Body Parts and Their Frequency in *Simpulan Bahasa*

No.	Body Parts	Frequency
1.	<i>Hati</i> (Liver)	160
2.	<i>Mata</i> (Eye)	105
3.	<i>Tangan</i> (Hand)	65
4.	<i>Lidah</i> (Tongue)	50
5.	<i>Muka</i> (Face)	49
6.	<i>Mulut</i> (Mouth)	44
7.	<i>Kepala</i> (Head)	39
8.	<i>Perut</i> (Stomach)	37
9.	<i>Kaki</i> (Leg)	36
10.	<i>Telinga</i> (Ear)	15
11.	<i>Otak</i> (Brain)	15

Source: Analysis based on Indexes of *Kamus Simpuln Bahasa* (Abdullah Hussain 1966, 441-464)

The priority given to the eyes was not something by chance, but should be looked at from a bigger area of Indo-germanic culture. Taking one of the specific words for “*Einsicht* (insight)” or “*Wissen*” and comparing it from culture to culture within the indo-germanic tradition, Gaarder (1993) cited various examples to justify his claims: Sanskrit (*vidya*), Greek (*ide*), Latin (*video*, from *videre* which for people of Rome, simply means seeing), English (wise, wisdom), German (*weise* and *wissen*) and Norwegian (*Viten*) and again in the modern/recent word that we use (vision). “*Ganz allgemein können wir feststellen, daß das Sehen der wichtigste Sinn für die Indogermanen war,*” said the author of *Sofies Welt*, Jostein Gaarder (1993). Forget about the eyes for a moment as some might say: seeing is illusion, and let us go into the concrete data again on how the Malays converted their prejudice and stereotypic thinking into proverbs.

Prejudice and Stereotypic Content in Malay Proverbs

Besides the element of emotions that is manifested through the image of *hati*, which can be either positive or negative, depending on how someone benefited from these *hati*-related concepts in *simpulan bahasa*; there are also emotions that are pretty harmful and trapped in the pitfall of provincialism. This fallacy emerges due to the sentiment of prejudice and stereotype.³³ According to Duijker and Frijda (1960), a stereotype is to be defined as “a relatively stable opinion of a generalizing and evaluative nature” (p. 115). It refers to “a category of people (a national population, a race, a professional group, etc.) and suggests that they are all alike in a certain respect” (*Ibid.*). What is

prejudice then? Allport (1954, 6) defined prejudice as “thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant.” According to Harding *et al.* (1969, 6), “it is useful to us to define prejudice as a failure of rationality or a failure of justice or a failure of human-heartedness in an individual’s attitude toward members of another ethnic group” (cited in Duckitt 1994, 10). This provincialist attitude did not appear in Malay proverbs alone but could be obtained in the proverbs of most (if not all) nations and was quite a universal phenomenon (see e.g. Mieder 1997b, Dundes 1994, Zenner 1970, Opata 2000 and Ronesi 2000). The interest in the study of prejudice and stereotypes as expressed in proverbs and proverbial expression has a considerable scholarly tradition. There are a few major standard collections which have always been cited, viz. Otto von Reinsberg’s *Internationale Titulaturen* (1863), Henry Gaidoz and Paul Sebillot’s *Blasons populaires de la France* (1884), and Abraham A. Roback’s *A Dictionary International Slurs* (1944). Numerous researchers have investigated the stereotypical worldview in proverbial speech. There are, for example, Mieder’s “Proverbs in Nazi Germany: The Promulgation of Anti-Semitism and Stereotypes through Folklore” (1994) and “‘The Only Good Indian is a Dead Indian’: History and Meaning of a Proverbial Stereotype” (1995a), Dundes’s “Slurs International: Folk Comparisons of Ethnicity and National Character” (1994) and Arora’s “Proverbs and Prejudice: El Indio in Hispanic Proverbial Speech” (1995b).

The meaning of prejudice generally refers to declared sentence before judgement. Etymologically, the word “*prejudice*” originally came from the Latin *prae*, which means “*before*” and *judicium*, which means “*judgement*.” Therefore, prejudice in its weakest form means an idea or a belief which is accepted without prior factual examination. Prejudice becomes more serious when it involves the negative and irrational opinion about certain groups or objects. The easiest way to detect a prejudicial attitude is to see how an individual responds to criticism, which challenges his important beliefs. The person who claims that he does not have prejudice will emotionally (maybe resort to violence) retaliate, when one or some of his personal opinions are criticised. Prejudices which are to be conceived as stereotype will occur if an arguer comes up with a false generalisation for a group of people. A stereotype is a generalisation about a group of individuals which is over-simplified, with the assumption that every member of that group possesses a set of characteristics, which is equated with the characteristics of the group or representing the characteristics of that group. For instance, in the eyes of the majority of Malaysians, there are perceptions like Malays are lazy, Chinese are materialistic or are liars and Indians are alcoholics. Such perceptions give a prejudicial generalisation in describing all members of the Malay, Chinese and Indian races. There are various ways how prejudices or stereotypes occur in the Malay proverbs, especially in the *simpulan bahasa*. Social psychological studies in Malaysia, for example, have usually relied upon association of certain nationalities with qualities indicated by a list of adjectives: Malays are lazy, Chinese are hard working etc. There is no serious interest in identifying how prejudicial emotion shapes inter-ethnic images among the different folks from their traditional sources. Information about the traditional forms of

inter-ethnic images can actually also be derived from other sources, which include folktales, jokes, proverbs as well as new data which can still be collected in rural areas (Zenner 1970). On how folklore generally and proverb particularly can be indirectly used to detect inter-group relations, Opata (2000: 315) claimed that:

Folklore, may not be directly concerned with inter-group relations, but since, like philosophy, it is a general reflection on life in terms of documenting the thought patterns and world view of a cultural group, it is possible to investigate the several ways in which it has in various times and cultures attempted to encapsulate experience of intergroup relations among different peoples.

In the context of the Malay world, since it is a multicultural and multiethnic society, therefore it is viable as well to look at how the Malay proverbs portray inter-ethnic images and inter-religious sentiments. In this section, the images of different groups with various stereotypic contents will be summarised in the following order: (a) Ethnic Stereotyping; (b) Geographical Stereotyping; (c) Gender Stereotyping, and (d) Religious Stereotyping.³⁴

Ethnic Stereotyping

Ethnic stereotyping is the most common feature that can be found in the Malay proverbs. This kind of proverbs uses words or phrases with colour overtones, which can be considered as an insult against the opponents, who come from different cultural and educational backgrounds. The proverbs recorded in my sources of data do convey images of various ethnic groups. Various ethnic groups, i.e. Indian, Chinese, Dutch, Batak and Minang become the target of this prejudicial thinking, but the most targeted group is *Keling*, considered a derogatory term now, as derogatory as nigger is to the Africans.³⁵ The second targeted group is Chinese (*Cina*).³⁶ The prejudice and stereotyping of Chinese and Indian minorities are evident as these two ethnic groups are seen to pose a challenge to the Malay majority, especially in the context of Peninsular Malaysia.

Indians are among the ethnic groups, which have always been the target of stereotyping. This reminded me of a rather common but uncompiled proverbial expression and joke that was circulated among some of the Malay speakers, which goes, “if you find an Indian and a snake, you should first kill the Indian before killing the snake.” How this proverb came into being is unknown. It can either be a proverbial expression taken from other lores, in reference to Native Americans, whom we normally know as Red Indians or Indians for short or an expression that was coined due to the inter-group relations under local setting between Indians and Malays. Such an example of ethnic stereotyping is one out of many and rather common in other traditions as well. This is very interesting as according to Opata (2000), one of the most widely spread proverbs dealing with inter-group relations is that which

the Oweri of Imo State Nigeria have about their neighbouring town of Mbaise and the saying goes: If you find a Mbaise man and a snake in your house, first kill the Mbaise man before killing the snake (See Opata 2000, 318ff).

In the Malay proverb collections which I have analysed, I could not find the word “Indian” as an image but *Keling* can be noticed here and there. There are various proverbs that tend to humiliate the *Keling* origin. In the Malay proverbs, *Kelings* are known as people with various typical characteristics. First, they are described as people whom we cannot trust with several proverbs like *pusing (putar) keling* ‘Kling’s turn’ (KSB 326), *lidah Keling* ‘Kling’s tongue’ (KSB 242) and *bagai tabut Keling: di luar berkilat di dalam berongga* ‘Like a Kling idol, shining without but empty inside’ (MBRAS 206: 8) and they are good at deceiving [e.g., *akal keling* ‘Kling’s mind’ (KSB 8)]. Second, they are generally alcoholic as is clearly shown by the proverb *keling mabuk todi* ‘Kling who is drunk of toddy’ (Kamus Dewan 1986, 523)]. Third, Kling likes to make a lot of noise. To describe a very noisy and chaotic state, the Malays use *Keling karam* ‘sinking Kling’ (Kamus Dewan 1986, 523). This proverb is indeed a prejudicial imagination of *Titanic* to show how noisy and chaotic it is at the moment when a vessel full of Kling is going to sink. Fourth, the image of Kling is borrowed to allude to those who are lazy at work but big eaters: *Hendak kerja golok keling*³⁷, *hendak makan parang puntung* ‘A blunt chopper at work, but a razor-edged cleaver at eating’ (KIPM 81: 1501; MBRAS 74: 17). Fifth, from the eyes of the Malays, *Kelings* are not only lazy and ignorant of their duties, but also attempts to conceal their ignorance by bluster. This prejudicial perception is recorded in the proverb as *membuat Kapitan Keling* ‘To play the Kling skipper’ (MBRAS 142: 91).

The sentiment against Chinese origin too is quite common in the Malay proverbs. The proverb, *Cina totok* originally means, ‘A China-born Chinese, in contradistinction to a Baba’ (MBRAS 55: 32). In everyday conversation, this proverb has become tainted with racial overtones today and constitutes an insult as it was used to vex a Malaysian of Chinese origin who speaks very little Malay and knows only his/her own culture and language. There is also an expression without any special meaning in a proverbial rhyme descriptive of a passionately jealous man: *Cina totok lawang lawi, Cabut golok tikam bini* ‘a typical Chinaman, who took out his cleaver to stab his wife’ (MBRAS 55: 32). One of the common proverbs that is used to show racial prejudice against Chinese is *Cina buta* (lit. blind Chinese) (KSB 86) to refer to the intermediate husband, whom a thrice-divorced Muslim woman must have before remarriage to her original husband. The Malays use *kenal-kenal Cina* ‘Get to know the Chinese way’ (Kamus Dewan 1986, 538) to illustrate a not-so-intimate relationship. Like the *Kelings*, the Chinese are branded as noise makers as well. This can be observed through the use of proverbs like *riuh seperti Cina karam* ‘Noisy as sinking Chinese’ (KIPM 171: 3140) and *riuh gigil seperti Cina kayuh* ‘Noisy and quivering like how the Chinese paddle’ (KIPM 171: 3139). The Chinese are also observed and compared through the imagery of gambling and liquor [e.g. *Seperti Cina kalah judi*

‘Like a Chinese who lost in gambling’ (Uncollected), *Muka seperti Cina minum arak*³⁸ ‘One’s complexion is like a Chinese after drinking liquor’ (MB 72: 31)].

There are also proverbs accusing people from other ethnic groups besides Indians (i.e. *Keling*) and Chinese. For that purpose, the Dutch, one of the previous colonial masters of Malacca, Malaysia and Indonesia is also on the lists of Malay proverbs. A person who is said to be greedy as when one gives him/her an inch and he/she will take an ell is to be labelled as *seperti Belanda minta tanah* ‘Like a Dutch who is asking for a piece of land’ (KIPM 186: 3426). A person who acts like a Westerner, especially Dutch, is to be compared as *umpama Belanda kesiangan* ‘Like a Dutch who gets up late’ (KIPM 228: 4269). Surprisingly, however, prejudices against the English cannot be obtained in the Malay corpus of proverbs despite centuries of colonialism in Malaysia. The Malays do not only display prejudicial sentiments against Indians, Chinese and the Dutch in their proverbs; prejudices against other ethnic groups (e.g. Javanese, Batak) can also be detected. We can find proverbs like *bersesalan bagi Batak*³⁹ *lari* ‘Regretting like a running Batak’ (KIPM 43: 815) and *orang Jawa seperti berberekan makan tuma* ‘The Javanese are like flycatchers, they eat insects’ (MBRAS 160: 17). The first of these two proverbs is used to justify the attitude of accusing each other, whereas the second one is to show the uncleanness of the opponent.

There are also other proverbs like *janji Melayu* and *akal Yahudi* (Jew’s mind) which I could not find in the proverbial collections that I selected, but which I have heard of.⁴⁰ These two proverbs are perhaps the latest or contemporary Malay proverbs. The Jews have been the target of criticism among the Malays due to the crisis between Jews and Muslims, especially in Palestine. It was generally understood stereotypically that Jews are smart and sneaky. Perhaps that is how the proverb *akal Yahudi* came about. The Malays not only stereotype others, insult and look down on them; they also come out with proverbs which are self-denigrating. A person who does not fulfil his or her promise is said to be making a *janji Melayu* (a Malay agreement) whereas a person who does not keep to time is described as *jam Melayu* (a Malay clock) in Malaysia or *jam karet* (a rubber clock) in Indonesia.

Geographical Stereotyping

Stereotypes sometimes can be pointed at the natives of other states or countries. The inhabitants of certain villages, cities, and countries were targeted in the Malay proverbs for some failings or shortcomings. Maxwell (1879) had provided us with a few examples (pp. 45ff). According to him, the Perak Malay who feels pride for himself due to his skill in the use of weapons sneers at Kedah men as *ayam pupuh, sabung tak bertaji* ‘Sham game-cocks that fight without spears’ (MBRAS 132: 21). This proverb, however, does not clearly use the geographical origin to insinuate against the opponent and this can only be detected by looking at the context. Nonetheless, there are various other examples

which directly pointed at people in Malacca, Minangkabau, Rembau, Terengganu, Pahang, Java, Padang and Betawi.

In one of their proverbs, the Malays clearly show their stereotyped attitude against various ethnic groups by geographical origin in the Malay world. The proverb reads: *Kecek anak Melaka; bual anak Minangkabau; tipu anak Rembau; bidaah anak Terengganu; sombong anak Pahang* 'Wheedlers are the men of Malacca; exaggerators those of Minangkabau (*sic*); cheaters those of Rembau; liars those of Terengganu; arrogant those of Pahang' (MBRAS 106: 119).⁴¹ To insinuate the unhygienic character among the Javanese, the Malays use the proverb: *Orang Jawa seperti berberek makan tuma* 'The Javanese are like flycatchers, they eat insects' (MBRAS 160: 17). The Malays accuse the Minangkabaus for their stupidity at sea with *bodoh orang Minangkabau yang tiada menumpu laut* 'Stupid are the men of Minangkabau, who have no footing on the sea' (MBRAS 40: 121). The Malays stress on results and practicality. Speech which is purely empty without substance is not encouraged. To show their dislike for empty oratory, the Malays resort to stereotyping the peoples of Malacca, Padang and Betawi. There are two proverbs which are used to describe a person who is only good at talking but have no content: *Kecek anak Melaka* 'Wheedlers are the men of Malacca' (KIPM 106: 1919) or *Lagak Padang, omong Betawi* (Padang's style, Betawi's talk) (KIPM 116: 2103).⁴² The geographical stereotyping is not only focused on the native people of the Malay world but due to the historical reason of being colonised, the Malays also recorded their sentiments against the Dutch. In one of their proverbs, which was perhaps due to certain historical experiences when dealing with the Dutch people, the Malays exclaim *Ai! Kalagi-lagi, bagi Belanda minta tanah* 'O more, more! Like the Dutchman asking for land' (MBRAS 5: 25) to show their greediness in general.

Gender Stereotyping

Besides the ethnic and geographical stereotyping, gender bias can also be detected, especially towards female. But this stereotyping is rather more in the form of a general perception of the society on how women should behave. Let us begin with a pair of emotive words in Malay as my introduction to show the gender stereotyping: *jantan* (masculine) and *betina* (feminine). Both words actually refer to sexual category of animals, but when used properly, can suitably describe the sexual desire and status of both sexes of human as well, but of course with different emotive meanings. *Jantan* means manly, heroic and gentleman, which is complimentary to men. *Betina* however, is morally rather insulting as it refers to a woman who likes to go beyond the boundaries of a normal sexual lifestyle that is allowed by society. The emotional differences of these two words seem to allude to the view that men who have strong sexual drive should be commended, whereas women with strong sexual desire should be condemned. This moral attitude towards sex seems to represent and symbolise the Malay male's stereotyping and taboo towards their female counterparts. From the Malay proverbs, there are certain

sentiments in which the emotions of “male-chauvinism” prevailed and this sentiment discriminates stereotypically against women within certain aspects, where the men or guys are worshipped.⁴³ Those sentiments can be seen when they tend to generalise or portray the bad character or morality of women. In the Malay proverbs, various issues on the morality of women are also mentioned. The Malay proverbs give a rather wide coverage on the importance of morality among women, especially in preserving their virginity and condemnation against those who are not. Many examples can be cited:

Hendak memakan kecundang orang ‘one who likes to eat other people’s leftovers’ (MB 112: 70);
Meriba puan kosong ‘to put the empty madam on the lap’ (KIPM 151: 2767);
Berputik dulu baru berbunga, buahnya jarang dimakan beruk (= monyet) ‘Bud first before blossom; its fruits are seldom eaten by monkeys’ (KIPM 42: 802);
Bersalai tidak berapi ‘Smoked but no fire’ (KIPM 42: 805);
Buah macang dimakan kelarah, di luar baik busuk di dalam (Horse-mangoes are eaten by worms, good without bad within) (KIPM 51: 961);
Ditebuk (= dikerbuk) tikus (= tupai) ‘To be perforated by a mouse/squirrel’ (KIPM 68: 1270);
Juadah sudah dijilat cicak ‘The food has been licked by the lizard’ (KIPM 97: 1767).

There are various stereotypic characters that are condemned [*andartu*, abbreviation of *anak dara tua* ‘a woman who is supposed to get married after reaching the marital age, but remains single,’ talkative, women who do the courting etc.] in the Malay proverbial lore. In the Malay proverbs, women, for example, are generally described as talkative and longwinded. These can be observed through the following examples: *Bagai bunyi perempuan di air* ‘Like women’s voice in the water’ (KIPM 18: 330) and *bagai murai dicabut ekor* ‘Like a magpie robin, whose tail is pulled’ (KIPM 25: 457). Women are also condemned if they engage in wooing the opposite sex or for making the first move of courting, e.g., *perigi mencari timba* ‘a well that goes in search for the pail’ (KIPM 81: 1501); *enau mencari (= memanjat) sigai* ‘Enau (*arenga saccharifera*) has searched (= climbed) the ladder’ (KIPM 71: 1332); *Lesung mencari antan* ‘The mortar has gone to look for the pestle’ (MS 81) and *Merendah terbang biawak* ‘The monitor lizard is flying lower’ (KIPM 151: 2766).

The Malays believe that women should not remain single as this will create rumours and gossips [e.g. *Bunga yang layu tidak diseri oleh kumbang* ‘A withered flower will not have the attraction of the beetle’ (KIPM 54: 1014) and *Hendak bersunting bunga mala* ‘One who wants to pluck a withered flower’ (KIPM 81: 1493)]. The Malays, however, portray a rather mixed disposition towards widows. The negative image of a widow can be observed in their proverbs like *bagai bertandang ke rumah janda* ‘like one who visits the house of a widow’ (KIPM 18: 316) in order to describe a person who does not provide anything for his/her guests. However, there is also a positive image for widows as well especially in order to explain their beauty [e.g. *laksana janda baru bangun tidur* ‘like a widow

who has just awaken from her sleep' (KIPM 118: 2150) and *Batik Semarang, makin dicuci makin terang* 'Batik of Semarang, the more it is washed the shinier it becomes' (KIPM 31: 587)].

As compared to women, stereotyping against men is hardly seen. One example perhaps can be cited: *Laksana kumbang menyeri bunga, kumbang pun terbang bunga pun layu* 'Like beetles brightening up the flowers; when the beetles fly away, the flowers wither' (KIPM 119: 2160) But then, if we go deep into the meaning of this proverb, we will find out that even though it criticises indirectly the attitude of a man, who likes to flirt around, it is the woman at last who is going to suffer when she gets dumped. The existence of stereotyping towards women raises an interesting philosophical question as to whether feminists will claim that *peribahasas* are generally one of the male-dominated discourses,⁴⁴ where values and morality are being fixed by males.

Gender stereotyping of women is happening everywhere, not just in the case of Malay women. Take German women for example. We see that they are now working, joining politics and financially independent, but their previous generations were generally confined to *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* 'Children, kitchen, and church' (Roskin 1998, 188). In the Malay context, the same stereotyped "maxim" applied. After glimpsing through their proverbial lore, it is not without reasons that this same stereotyping rhetoric did play its part, but I should coin them as *dodoi, dapur, dara* (lullaby, kitchen and virginity). A typical Malay woman should take care of her children, able *mendodoikan* (to lull) her babies to sleep or sing to her children when they cry. She should take charge of the kitchen and also the most important thing is that she must remain a virgin until she gets married. In this context, virginity is the symbol of her morality just like church is the symbol of morality in the West. These might not be totally correct either in the West or in the East now, but the general stereotypic image remains.

Religious Stereotyping

Despite the existence of ethnic stereotyping, stereotyping of local groups and gender stereotyping in Malay proverbs that we have just discussed, there is perhaps a positive side to Malay proverbial tradition when it comes to religious stereotyping. I cannot really see the existence of religious stereotyping in Malay proverbs.⁴⁵ Even though it is normally claimed that the Malays were very much influenced by Arabic culture through the spread of the Islamic faith, the stereotypic content in the Malay proverbs that were recorded, however, do not convey so many images of confessional groups (e.g. Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Buddhists) as compared to Arabic proverbs for example (see Zenner 1970). There are a number of proverbs which uses Islam as imagery although the stereotyping elements are not strong and hence not harmful; for instance *Kalau kucing pakai tanduk, Belanda*

masuk Islam, baru boleh jadi ‘When cats wear horns and Dutchmen turn into Muhammadans it will only come to pass’ (MBRAS 96: 49), which stresses on the impossibility.

Criticism within the Malays’ own religious circle (i.e. Islam) can be found even though they are very limited. But sentiments against Hinduism and Buddhism do not exist. The criticism against a pseudo-religious person was composed in a quatrain-formed proverb: *Lagi lebai lagi berjanggut/ Naik ke balai berhingut-hingut/ Sahaja Pak Lebai buta perut/ Haram halal bubuh di mulut* ‘He is not only a lebai, he wears the very beard of one and walks into the mosque with a consequential swagger. But our father Lebai suffers from shortsightedness of stomach and swallows indiscriminately both clean and unclean things’ (MBRAS 120: 8). This finding is really interesting indeed as it seems that the Malays in those days had never thought of Islam and Muslim identity in dialectical terms as compared to their Islamic past that divides between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Indeed, this accords with Farish’s analysis of *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* that the Malays in their early period of Islamisation showed respect and sensitivity towards the pre-Islamic and un-Islamic Other, which may be absent in Malaysian society today as Farish contended (2001a, 2001b). Using *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, a Malay epic as an example, Farish (2001a, 2001b) made the claim that:

More than any other period of Malay-Muslim history, it was the early period of Islamisation that witnessed an ethics of inter-civilisational dialogue at work, and for that reason we owe more to the Dewas and Rajas of the *Hikayat* than we may care to acknowledge.

Farish (2001c) later suggested that we (the Malays) should not forget about the past: the early Malay history and should probably try to reabsorb this connection with the past, the pre-Islamic past and the Indian connection with the Hindu-Buddhist era. The non-existence of religious stereotyping in proverbs and hikayat (Cf. Farish 2001a & 2001b) was perhaps one of the factors why there was previously no serious religious war or conflict throughout the whole archipelago as compared with other parts of the world (e.g. Middle East). There was generally no strong sentiment against believers of other faiths.

The existence of racial and gender prejudice in the Malay proverbs together with the logical thought that we have discussed earlier in Chapter 4 proves that human nature is basically logical and rational from one angle. However, it is irrational and illogical as well if we look at the same issue from another angle. This paradox perhaps brings us back to Aristotle’s idea that “human is a rational animal” and Francis Bacon’s idea that “human is also irrational.”⁴⁶ Muhammad Haji Salleh (2001) summed up well the mixture between wisdom and prejudice in the Malay proverbs: “*Inilah kebijaksanaan pertama yang disimpan dalam kesedaran dan ingatan sesuatu bangsa. Oleh yang demikian, tercantum cebisan falsafah bangsa di dalamnya, tetapi tercantum juga prasangkanya. Pada pihak yang lain, aspek keterbukaannya*” (This is the first wisdom that is kept within the consciousness and memory of

a nation. Hence, therein contains pieces of philosophy of that nation and also its prejudice. From another aspect, their open-mindedness) (Muhammad Haji Salleh 2001, 76).

Conclusion

In Chapter 4, by using the Malay proverbs, *peribahasa* as my data, I had claimed that logical principles indeed exist in the Malay tradition and that there were also elements of caution against fallacies and rationalisation. These elements are suitable to be employed in all kinds of rhetorical situation either to be used as substantive proof, authoritative proof or motivational proof to convince or to persuade the audience in the argumentative arena. What is lacking in the Malay rhetorical culture, from my point of view, is the dialectical mode of reasoning, where the desire to challenge the authority is always softened by various socio-political and cultural reasons (e.g. feudalism, respect for the elders and a sense of *rendah diri*). In this chapter (Chapter 5), I have proven that there are an equally rich wealth of affection, passions and prejudices in the Malay proverbs. The importance of *hati* in the Malay worldview, which determines that they (the arguers) should act accordingly, was also touched on. According to Saidatul Nornis Haji Mahali (1999), “*manusia Melayu dididik menjaga hati dan perasaan orang lain lebih daripada kepentingan perasaan sendiri*” (The Malays were taught to be more concerned about the feelings of other people than their own feelings). From this standpoint, I will proceed to justify my arguments that even though we can easily detect the existence of logical principles and the use of *hati* as the Malay source of emotion and intuition, there is neither rationality nor emotion-intuition that plays a pivotal role in resolving the conflict. The pivotal role had been actually taken over by a synthesised concept, which is known as *budi*. I will proceed with my arguments in my last chapter (Chapter 6) on why I am making this claim, which will at last withdraw the Malays from the so-called dialectical argumentation.

Notes:

¹ For what is meant by “extra-logical” factors in argumentation, see Danes (1999). As emotion is something that can be negative or positive, therefore, in this chapter, I use this term (extra-logical) just to reduce the negative impact of the phrases like the emotional aspect of argumentation or the illogical aspect of argumentation. The term “non-logical” is also possible but this term is usually dichotomous. When it is extra-logical, it is neither illogical nor logical but connotes something beyond, which should not be explained through the rigidity of logical notion.

² *Hati*, literally can be translated as “liver.” The common translation, however, tends to use “heart” as its equivalent, which if retranslated can also mean “*jantung*” in Malay. To a Western reader especially, the translation of “*hati*” as “liver” might sound very strange. Therefore, in order to serve the understanding of the general readers, I therefore use “liver/ heart” in certain contexts to address this problem in this chapter.

³ For other writings on the relationship between culture and emotion, especially in Malaysia, see Zaidah Mustapha (2000).

⁴ It is normally known as the Malay form of madness. The word itself is one of the few Malay words that had found its way into the English language. The new spelling for the word amok in Malay after 1972 is *amuk*. To trace the historical, psychological and cultural perspectives of amok, refer to Winzeler (1990). One of the early articles published in 1849 on “Malay amoks” was written by T. Oxley in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, Vol. 3: 532-533.

⁵ “*Latah*” as the Malayan hyperstartle pattern, has fascinated Western observers since the late nineteenth century. This can be seen from the writing of O’ Brien in *JSBRAS* (1883, Vol. 11: pp. 143-153) and *JSBRAS* (1884, Vol. 12: 283-284). For a reprinted version, see O’ Brien (1977). This topic is still relevant even until the end of 20th century and remains interesting among current researchers; see e.g. Kenny (1990) and Winzeler (1995).

⁶ The tendency not to separate the heart from the mind can also be seen from the Chinese culture. Those who have comparative interest can try to compare it with the Chinese conception of heart-mind. Cf. Hansen (1991) for the concept of heart-mind in Chinese culture.

⁷ In order to know the differences between “being emotional” and “having emotion”, see Parrott (1995, 77ff).

⁸ For a discussion on various types of words and their spectrum of emotions in the Malay language, either from the perspective of emotive meaning or positive and negative overtones as seen in the categories of noun, verb and adjective, see Lim Kim Hui (1997b). For a very brief discussion on cognitive and emotive meaning in the Malaysian context, see Lim Kim Hui (1993, 1995). For a real example of how an emotive word like “*haram*” (sinful, unislamic) can be harmful to a communicator, see ‘Ein Azmi (2000).

⁹ Turkish proverbs, however, tend to use horse, camel, oxen and donkey as their common comparison (Basgöz 1993, 138ff) as these animals are more commonly found in their cultural context. In this article, Basgöz’s (1993) main contention is to prove how we can identify social change of a community through the use and choice of certain proverb images.

¹⁰ The numbers of entries, which can be found here and there in this research, especially in this chapter, do not intend to answer questions like how many entries out of the total number of proverbs analysed or how many percentage of total population should be taken into consideration so that the data will be representative and significant. This is irrelevant because my intention is only to highlight the tendency and to explore further the reason why such an occurrence happened (i.e. why there are relatively many words like *hati*, *air*, *ayam*, *padi* that occurred in the Malay proverbial tradition). Analogically, if we go to a city and suddenly find out that there are so many people in a particular spot in that city, the question that concerns me will be why there are so many people there (as compared to other spots in the same city). Has there been an accident or is there a festival, a show or the like? The numbers which I cited are only important to show the relative concept of “many.” The question of how many people out of the total population of that city (representative percentage) have attended that event or occurrence is beyond my interest and purpose.

¹¹ For more discussion on the uses of animal in Malay proverbs, see Nik Safiah Karim 1999b and 2000.

¹² *Keldai* (donkey) is a Tamil origin, which is written as *kaldai* in Za’ba (1965: 271).

¹³ There are exceptions of course. Germans for example tend to relate pig or swine to luck, as can be observed from their common phrases like *noch mal Schwein gehabt*.

¹⁴ (i) *Seperti kotek ayam mandul* (KIPM 191: 3541, Like the cackle of a sterile cock, or in extreme cases, like sterile cock’s penis) and (ii) *Siapa berkotek, siapa bertelur* (KIPM 199: 3695, normally to be translated as one who cackles, one also has to lay eggs; or in an extreme interpretation, one who has the penis, he should also have testicles). The first one is normally used to describe a person who does a lot of talking but not even a single one succeeded, whereas the second one refers to someone who has proposed something should also take up the responsibility to do what he/she has voiced. The moral behind these two “impolite conversations” criticise the attitudes of talking without any practical outcomes. These two examples are extraordinary, sophisticated, or unusual interpretation, which are derived from the ambiguity of the word *kotek*, which can either mean “cackle of a hen” or “a child’s penis.” It is also possible as the Malays always equate *keberanian* (bravery, courage, boldness) as

jantan (male, masculine of animals). Those who are cowardly are described as *orang yang tak ada kotek atau telur* ‘people without penis or testicles.’ Without such an extreme and artificial interpretation, these proverbs can actually be deleted under this category.

¹⁵ The word “*awak*” is ambiguous in the Malay and Indonesian languages. *Awak*, meaning you, is used in Johor, Malaysia and Singapore when referring to people of the same age or younger. *Awak* in Indonesia has a different meaning, i.e. body (see Suryadinata 1991: 22). In this context, the Indonesian “*awak*” seems to be more appropriate.

¹⁶ Norrick’s entries are quite relevant also to the Malay-Indonesian context as the basic emotion words included are among the most frequently mentioned emotion words for Indonesia. Twelve most frequently mentioned emotion words are: *sedih* (sadness), *marah* (anger), *senang* (happy), *benci* (hate), *cinta* (love), *gembira* (joy), *takut* (fear), *sebal* (annoyed), *kesal* (annoyed), *kecewa* (disappointment), *bingung* (confused) and *rindu* (longing) (see Frijda, Markam, Sato and Wiers 1995, 122). It is actually inappropriate to equal one word with one emotion. Brandt and Boucher (1986) in their work with Indonesian lexical clusters had also stressed on the importance of cluster, rather than single-word consideration (cited in Heider 1991, 5). For that reason, I use the maximum possibilities of translation words to trace the use of emotional words in the Malay proverbs. Heider (1991, 70), for example, cited that in English, “love”, and its nearest Indonesian equivalent, *cinta*, are similar but not identical in denotation, for “love” is closer to “happiness,” *cinta* closer to “sadness.” Planalp (1999, 204) argued that:

In trying to understand emotion terminology from other cultures, we immediately run into translation problems. Start with the term *emotion*. To study the emotion words in a culture, you have to have a working definition of what emotion is so that you know what counts and what doesn’t. Unfortunately, there is often no clear distinction between emotions and nonemotions (*italics original*).

¹⁷ I, however, take the words “*amok*” and “*latah*” as terms representing the emotion of being too angry and too scared respectively without going into a controversial issue that “*amok*” and “*latah*” are ethnic-based or something which represent typical Malay unstable states of emotion.

¹⁸ Those proverbs can be found in proverbs cited as nos. 163, 1478-86, 2313 and 4243 in Abdullah Hussain (1991).

¹⁹ *Merah telinga* ‘red ear’ is ambiguous, which can refer to either shy or angry.

²⁰ For various emotions of culture from the Malay perspective such as *amok*, *latah* etc. see Wazir Jahan Karim (1990a).

²¹ I use the word “think” in this context with full consciousness, which refers only to constructive thinking, as opposed to nonsensical thinking. No doubt, not only the Malays, but all of us must think before we speak. Psychologically, how can you speak without thinking as when you speak, you must speak about something (even though you are bullshitting!) and that something must be the product of your thinking. This line of argument reminded me of an ancient Greek philosopher, Parmenides (ca 540 – 470 B.C.E), who might have been the first to take this line on the subject of thinking and being. But linguistically (especially metaphorically), we could say that those who speak nonsense are those who speak without using their brain, hence without thinking.

²² For a more detailed discussion on the Balinese *ati* and Indonesian *hati*, see Rappe (1995, 359ff).

²³ See Chapter 3 for a more detailed explanation of the word “*hati*.”

²⁴ Gonda (1973, 145) made such a statement: A curious form is *hati* (translated by ‘castle’) which is identified by Lafeber, o.c., p. 86 with Skt. *Kuti*, *kuti* कुटि, कुटी (hut, hall). In another situation, he wrote: “*suci hati* (Mal. ‘heart’) stands for ‘purity of heart or of motive, freedom from all malice’ (p. 169).

²⁵ This too easy dichotomy sometimes cannot really explain the complex comparative taxonomies of emotions and emotion language in Sanskrit and Bengali (see Bilimoria 1995 and McDaniel 1995). Commenting on the inadequacy of “positive” and “negative” dichotomy, Solomon (1995) commented that:

I recognize the distinction between the rather grand and merely commonplace emotions, but I find much more exotic the three-part distinction in the Mahabharata between *sattva* (lightness), *rajas* (movement), and *tamas* (heaviness) as the key attributes of various mental modes. (“Positive” and “negative” are obviously inadequate to represent *sattva* and *tamas*, and our excessive sense of emotions as “inner” tends to block our understanding of *rajas*, which, again, destroys that too-easy dichotomy)(p. 279).

²⁶ The classification here is rather general. Certain proverbs can go from one category to another category depending on how we look at those proverbs, the nature of emotion that we perceive and the time and context in which we use them. One proverb, *besar hati*, for example, can be ambiguous, with two meanings which are opposing to each other. Sense one means “*sombong*” (arrogant), which is negative, whereas sense two “*gembira*”

(happy) is a positive state of emotion (See Abdullah Hussain 1966, 64). For some of the states of emotion, it is difficult to locate which column they should belong to.

²⁷ According to Gonda (1973), *Nala* is a Sanskrit origin for 'heart' (p. 266). Another word, *nalar*, which is now being used as referring to reason (and *penalaran* [with affixes *pe-* and *-an*] for reasoning) or "*pemikiran untuk menilai buruk baiknya, fikiran yang sihat, akal budi, intelek*" (Kamus Dewan 1989, 854) (thinking to judge between good and bad, healthy thinking, common sense, intellect) is of Arabic origin. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1991) however keeps silent on its origin. I do not intend to argue the role and originality of this term further as I could not trace its existence in the Malay proverbs as my research focus. But the existence of this word in the Malay glossary is interesting and might be interesting to future researchers. I put down this idea to serve that purpose. Gonda (1973, 257) when citing the word *nala*, gave a long explanation on its relation with *hati* (liver) and it is important for us to look in detail the origin of this word as well. According to him, the term *nala* ('heart, mind'), is the Sanskrit *nala* for "consisting or made of reed(s), a hollow stalk, a tubular vessel or vein of the body etc." This is derived from *nada-* or *nala* 'a species of reed, etc.' This 'arteries' of the subtle body, which are rooted in the root centre, plays an important part in Yoga speculations. It is said that in the *Upanisads* and other works, these 'ducts' are brought into connection with the heart from which they were said to proceed. The centre of the subtle body is also called 'lotus'. Gonda (1973) further elaborated that "these ideas found their way also to ancient Java, where *nala* was used for 'vein' as well as for 'heart', and such expressions as *nala ni hati nira* (OJav. *Hati* 'heart') '*nala* of his heart; *nala nin twas* (OJav. 'heart') '*nala* of the heart'; *twas nala* are rather frequent" (p. 257). Does the philosophy of the Malay mind, which centres on the realm of *hati budi*, share some form of affinity with Indian philosophy, where the lotus is to be considered, for example, as a symbol of purification in Buddhism? Where then, does the metaphysical source of "*suci hati*" (purity of heart or of motive, freedom from all malice) come from? In India, the heart was often called 'lotus-like' (Skt. *hṛdambhoja-* हृदम्भोज etc) and *nala* नाल also denoted 'the hollow stalk of the lotus'. Could the word *nala*, therefore, easily develop into 'heart'? This parallelity and inter-relation between Indian metaphysical view and Malay mystical thinking is very interesting indeed, and should be taken up by those who are interested in analysing the teleological, metaphysical or even ontological dimensions of the Malay worldview.

²⁸ Cf. supra, end-note no. 24.

²⁹ Despite the similarity, the heart and mind should not be separated in both Chinese and Malay thinking. Both traditions also tend to explore their realm of flora beautifully. For the comparison of similarity between the use of flora as analogy in Chinese and Malay proverbs, see Tan Lai Chan (2000).

³⁰ For a discussion on Chinese proverbs and their lessons, see Lister (1981). There is an interesting collection which tends to compare between Malay and Chinese proverbs. This rather detailed collection is Xu Younian's *Kamus Peribahasa Melayu-Mandarin* (2001). The dictionary consists of 7745 Malay proverbs which can be found in Malaysia and Indonesia and each proverb is followed by comparison and explanation with Chinese proverbs. This work however gives more attention to *peribahasa* and not *simpulan bahasa*, and therefore does not give me a clearer comparative picture on the Malay *hati* and the Chinese *xin*. For other comparative studies between Malay-Chinese proverbs, see e.g. Gan Hiong Huat (1991) and Tang Lai Chan (1994).

³¹ The similarities between the concept of *xin* in Chinese, *mana* in Indian, *jai* in Thai and *hati* in Malay as we have seen above give us an interesting picture of whether all these cultures share the same origin of Asian-stock as contrasted to Western rationality. Since Buddhism used to play or is still playing an important role within these four traditions (Chinese, Indian, Thai and Malay), can we therefore conclude that these similarities were generally rooted in Buddhism, which became the common denominator among them? This could be a possibility, but further research is necessary.

³² The full *pantun* is: *Dari mana punai melayang?/ Dari paya turun ke padi/ Dari mana datang sayang?/ Dari mata turun ke hati* [Whence the dove on outstretched pinion? From the swamp to fields apart/ Whence the dawn of love's dominion? From the eye it fires the heart] (Translation taken from Hamilton's *Malay Pantuns* [1959]). There are many *pantuns* of this kind that can be quoted from Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (1990). See *pantun* nos. 2560 & 2561 (p. 330); 4568, 4570, 4572, 4573 & 4574 (p. 587) and 5282 & 5283 (p. 678). *Pantuns* of this kind alluded to how close the relationship between "*padi*" and "*hati*" in the Malay worldview is. If we were to take Mohamad Agar's (1999) arguments that there are relationships between *sampiran* or *pembayang* (forshadower) and *maksud* (meaning) in *pantuns*, then *padi* and *hati* will become even closer.

³³ Several closely related concepts to prejudice and stereotype are ethnocentrism, social distance, racism and discrimination.

³⁴ This categorisation acts only as a guideline for discussion and does not mean to be mutually excluded. There are problems indeed as some proverbs can fall into more than one category. For example, Java can refer to ethnic group and also geographical origin (local groups).

³⁵ The term Keling is originally neutral, refers to people from Southern India or Indian Muslims. However, there is a meaning shift now. According to *Kamus Dewan* (1986: 523), the word Keling is "*kata yang kurang halus*" (a derogatory term). The word India is more appropriate. The reasons for that meaning shift are perhaps due to the political, economical and religious confrontation between the Kelings and the Malays. One of the typical

negative images of the Kelings in the Malay worldview can be found in *Sejarah Melayu* (Malay Annals) through the character of Raja Mandeljar, who was accused as the person behind the fall of Malacca Sultanate. Another example of a derogatory word is Ossi. Ossi is a colloquial and derogatory word used to describe a German from the former DDR (Deutsche Demokratische Republik).

³⁶ The same pattern of meaning shift also happened to the word, *Cina* among the Indonesians. The word was also neutral originally but became offensive due to the effect of certain stereotypings *inter alia*, Chinese was historically claimed as the mediator between the Dutch colonials and the *pribumi*, the sentiment against Indonesian communists party (PKI), which was claimed to be strongly supported by the Chinese and the sentiment against certain Chinese conglomerates, who used their relationship with Suharto's regime to secure business projects. As such, the word *Tionghoa* is introduced to replace the derogatory term, *Cina*.

³⁷ *Golok Keling* here might be a technical tool, a kind of knife or chopper like *golok Rembau* (see note 41), but the underlying prejudice remains as to why *golok Rembau* is claimed as capable whereas *golok Keling* is said to be blunt. Another example of emotive word that can be cited in the Malaysian context is *Selipar Jepun* (Japanese slippers), which refers to the cheap slippers. There was a time when most of the low quality products were labelled as *barangan Jepun* (Japanese products). For more elaboration of various categories of emotive words and prejudices, see Lim Kim Hui (1995).

³⁸ In terms of meaning, this proverb, however, is not that negative. It is used to describe a person who has fair skin but a red face. However, it can also be used to tease those who cannot drink much liquor.

³⁹ The word Batak might be ambiguous, but the general prejudice against the Batak can still be obvious, especially when it is expressed by a non-Batak with certain intentions. Since *peribahasa* is part of the oral tradition, it is impossible to trace the difference between Batak (refer to indigenous people or as a name of an ethnic group in Sumatra, Indonesia – to be written with a capital letter B) and *batak* (explorer or nomad, with a small capital b) (See *Kamus Dewan* 1986: 92). Generally, among the Malay interlocutors, there is a negative overtone in the word *batak*, which refers also to robbers or uncivilised people. If we borrow the semantic triangle of I. A. Richards, then we will know why it is so difficult to justify what “*Batak/ batak*” (as symbol) symbolizes orally, either as “robbers” or “an ethnic group” (as thought or reference) in the mind of a rhetor when he or she is approached by a real Batak/batak (as reference). See I. A. Richards's monumental work, *The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1923 (with C. K. Ogden), pp. 10-11. But if we take Abdullah Hussain (1991) and *Kamus Dewan* (1986) as two authoritative sources, then the proverb that I have quoted here clearly refers to Batak as the name of an ethnic group. So, there is no dispute either as nomad or as an ethnic group, except either to indigenous people generally or Batak specifically.

⁴⁰ According to Senu Abdul Rahman, Ali Ahmad, Rais Sariman et al. (1971, 75), “*janji Melayu*” refers to the attitude of a person, who is always late for a function despite having made an appointment. *Akal Yahudi* was brought to my attention from my Malay students while I was teaching in National University of Malaysia (UKM).

⁴¹ The name Rembau (a place in Negeri Sembilan) was not always down-played in Malay proverbial expression. This proverb *golok Rembau* ‘a Rembau knife’ (MBRAS 71: 49) refers to a capable and intelligent supporter, especially in games such as chess. It is believed that Rembau knives are noted for their keenness and the knife is the supporter of the *keris*, a Malay traditional dagger. However, as compared to the *keris*, the status of *golok Rembau* is still lower.

⁴² These proverbs, besides being able to be classified under ethnic groups, can also be categorised under stereotypes of local groups, which discriminate against the inhabitants of certain villages, cities, and countries. For other examples of proverbs of this kind, see Maxwell (1879, 45ff).

⁴³ In order to find out to some extent how women are perceived in Japanese proverbs, see Storm (1992).

⁴⁴ As compared to *peribahasas*, lyrics that can be obtained in one of the popular contemporary Indonesian music, *Dangdut*, for example, are totally opposite, in which stereotyping against men are generally more obvious, and they are normally described as not faithful in their relationship (e.g. “*Dasar buaya cinta*,” voc. Ani Maiyuni, Super Mega Hit's Bank Dangdut, “*Nomor Satu*,” voc. Ikke Nurjanah, 20 Gebyar Dangdut Vol. 2 and “*Ranjang jadi sampan*”, voc. Yulli Sutarna, Tertuduh – just to name a few). The stereotyped content against men in *Dangdut* and stereotyped content against women in *peribahasas* portray and demand a further discussion on the characteristics, roles and motives of various discourses, past and present. (I am grateful to Bettina David for drawing my attention to this.) Stereotyping against women in English and American proverbs can also be justified by the analysis of Christa Rittersbacher's (2002) “*Frau und Mann in Sprichwort*”. *Einblicke in die sprichwörtliche Weltanschauung Großbritanniens und Amerikas*, Heidelberger Frauenstudien Band 9. Verlag Das Wunderhorn, Heidelberg (see Krieg der Geschlechter, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6th of May, 2002).

⁴⁵ The proverb “*akal Yahudi*” is an exception of ethnic and religious stereotyping, which is rather current, perhaps due to the spirit of solidarity among Muslims against Israel but does not appear in Abdullah Hussain (1966) that I have studied.

⁴⁶ This conclusion is derived from my understanding of Bacon's philosophical idea on Four Idols, one of the most important of Bacon's beliefs, and the one for which he was most widely known. These Idols (Idols of the

Tribe, Idols of the Cave, Idols of the Marketplace and Idols of the Theatre) are what he believed to be the primary hindrance to our efforts in studying nature.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: MEDIATION OF *BUDI*

It is important to recognize the binary nature of this relationship and to focus upon intuition and upon reason separately and together, observing how they work, first in particular individuals and then in all individuals (Salk 1983, 79).

Introduction

Having ventured into the realm of Malay proverbs, be it *peribahasa* (and its cognates) or *simpulan bahasa* and surfing deep into the ocean of their thinking, we have discovered the logical principles and their emotions in those proverb collections cited. The question arises then as to what we can conclude, explain and argue about the nature of the Malay mind – their reasoning and arguments. Through the Malay proverbs, I have already unraveled that there are so-called universal logical principles amongst the Malay folk, just like modern educated people, who resort to the logic texts as their source of rules of reasoning. Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) had successfully proved it right for the Anglo-American tradition; and through my analysis, I see there are more similarities than differences in terms of their logical patterns of reasoning. The pertinent question here is why has there been so much lack of so-called argument as rational persuasion tradition and no scientific discovery in the Malay-Indonesian world, especially Peninsular Malaysia, or used to be known as *Tanah Melayu* (lit. the land of the Malays) despite having so much similarities in their proverbial tradition as can be found in the Western tradition? Did they define argument as is the normal practice of modern Western logicians? I think one of the most important reasons is the role of *hati* in their argumentative discourse and the priority given to *budi* as the dominant element of their *budaya* (lit. culture). To me, the traditional Malays had enough sources of logical contemplation which can be found in their proverbs, just like their Anglo-American counterpart. Their culture was not purely embedded with unproductive imagination, mystical thought or something to be considered as arational like mantras, *jampi-serapah* etc. There are logical and rhetorical dimensions as well. But what was and is lacking in their tradition are the attitudes toward dialectical argumentation. I will try to argue for this point as my concluding remarks in order to understand the Malay mind.

A Brief Account of Research Findings

There are three important findings that can be concluded in this attempt: first, there is existence of logical thought in the Malay tradition as can be seen through their proverbs; second, emotion and

intuition are equally important at the other end of the Malay thinking in Malay proverbs; and third, there is a lack of dialectical exchange or tradition of doubt despite the existence of their logical principles. Here the detailed explanations will follow.

The Existence of Logical Thought in Malay Proverbs

From Chapter 4, I had already shown that there are certain logical principles that can be located in the repertoire of Malay proverbs, rules that are used to guide right reasoning and caution against fallacies. There are also a handful of proverbs that are used to caution against rationalisation. The Malays do not conform to the attitudes of rationalisation, which allow them to substitute real reasons with acceptable reasons just for the sake of covering up the weaknesses of the arguers. In their everyday communication, the Malays do think before they speak. This is reflected from their proverbs *pikir (fikir) itu pelita hati* ‘thinking is the torchlight of liver/ heart’ (KIPM 166: 3046) which shows how important the element of thinking is for the Malay society. The role of thinking in this context is to make sure that we do not let our opponent(s) feel angry, sad or ashamed. Various argument patterns, either substantive, authoritative or motivational which elaborate on various ways of thinking are pretty common. Under the seven categories of the substantive argument (analogy, parallel case, generalisation etc.) which I have discussed earlier, there are two obvious features generally. Firstly, the logical analogy (especially simile) is a rather obvious dominant pattern of argument in Malay proverbs. Secondly, I simply cannot detect the concept of statistical argument. What can be detected are a number of proverbs which could be classified as “numerical proverbs”¹ besides a few enumerative one.

The absence of statistical argument in Malay proverbs appears to me as reflecting the simplicity and non-technical sense of early Malay tradition. In order to represent abstract terminology like knowledge, truth and moral, the Malays resorted to the more concrete patterns of comparison. The concepts of numbers and counting had emerged but their degree of accuracy as what we know today was still lacking. The presence of vagueness in representing time showed this tendency. In the earlier Malay tradition, phrases like *sepenanak nasi* (as long as the rice gets cooked), *sepelaung* (a loud call) and *sepuhnama* (a full moon) were used to show length of time. The Malays also used *selelah burung terbang* ‘as far as a bird can fly without weariness’ (MBRAS 190: 30) to describe an indefinite measure of length signifying a considerable distance. Basically, the Malays do possess the concepts of time and calculation but they are of course not up to the standard of our present scientific and technology era. In their proverbs, certain logical thought, rational elements and doctrine of science as discussed can be seen as well (See Tham Seong Chee 1977, 82-84).

The Malay conception of arguments, as I have studied, shows the following patterns and tendencies when dealing with authority. The status of authority plays a central role in the Malay rhetoric, especially the authority of the wise and those who are knowledgeable. The concept of according authority to those with knowledge represents the affirmation of the race of the importance of knowledge and sources of references. The Malays also give due respect to their elders when it concerns the nature of experience. They share the same notion of wisdom as the Africans (see Wenzel 1988) that wisdom comes with age. One thing which remains interesting to me is the perception that the authority of the King (*rajas* or *sultans*) and other administrative authorities (e.g. *penghulu*, *bendahara*, *temenggung*, *laksamana*) are not the most important features of authority in their logical discourses, even though the proverbs were created within the system of feudalism and authoritarianism.

There are also various common cautions against fallacies, viz. *post hoc*, *ergo propter hoc*, *tu quoque*, and slippery slope. Despite such cautions, there are quite a number of proverbs that are trapped in ethnocentrism (i.e. ethnic stereotyping), gender bias and the like. Hence, the user of Malay proverbs should not treat the entire literature and collection of Malay proverbs as having sole wisdom, but they should be able to deal with the proverbs with an open mind as the proverbs should be read critically. This is a common thinking that apart from being born as rational animals, humans are at the same time irrational and emotional. The proverbs should not be treated as truth but as a rhetorical strategy in arguing and pursuing the truth.

In Chapter 4, we have also discovered that there is a great deal of Malay proverbs that caution against rationalisation, which give us two contradicting perspectives on the trend of the Malay thinking. What we can infer from this trend is that the existence of so many proverbs condemning improper rationalisation (sour grapes, sweet lemons etc.) proves that such an excuse-searching attitude is strongly condemned by the Malays. Turning over to the other side of the same coin, the question may be asked: why then do the Malays need so many proverbs to condemn such attitude? Does this trend reflect the bad attitude of the Malays themselves – who tend to blame others instead of themselves when things go wrong in order to be polite – which prompted the creation of so many proverbs that caution against rationalisation? Instead of saying “no”, the Malays will provide excuses in order to be polite. Perhaps because of that, they were accused of hypocritical, as Jamilah (cited in Salbiah Ani 1995) commented:

Sikap tidak mahu menjatuhkan air muka dan tidak mahu menyusahkan orang sememangnya sikap khas orang Melayu. Kerana itu ada pendapat mengatakan orang Melayu tidak suka berterus-terang dan hipokrit.

(The attitude of not wanting to embarrass and create difficulties for others is actually the unique attitude of Malays. Because of that, there is the opinion that Malays are not forthright and are hypocrites.)

The Malays do not dare to say “no” as they are afraid that this will hurt their opponent(s). In order not to go against their opponent, excuses are created as a way of expressing indirect rejection. Tabrani (1987, 193) stated:

Apabila kita meninjau manusia Melayu, maka kita melihat unsur perasaan memegang peranan penting. Manusia Melayu sulit untuk menyatakan ‘tidak’ sebagai reaksi penolakan bahkan berganti dengan ‘alasan’, demikian pula dengan ‘buruk’ dinyatakan ‘kurang baik’, sedangkan untuk ‘buruk’ dan ‘kurang baik’ terdapat jarak yang tidak dapat ditentukan.

(When we look at the Malays, then we see how the element of emotion plays an important role. The Malays find it difficult to say ‘no’ as a reaction of rejection. Instead, they will substitute it with an ‘excuse’. ‘Bad’ will be stated as ‘not so good’ although the distance between ‘bad’ and ‘not so good’ cannot be determined.)

Tabrani’s accusation pertains to only a single aspect of the Malay mind but to generalise the whole Malay mind as emotional is half-truth and a misplaced general concern on rationality. According to Syed Hussein Alatas (1977, 170), the Malays actually valued rational action even though rationality existed side by side with magic and superstition. Two examples of Malay proverbs *ikut hati mati, ikut rasa binasa* (follow the heart you die, follow your feelings you will be ruined) and *turutkan gatal sampai ke tulang* (to scratch an itch till it reaches the bone) were quoted to prove that it was not true that in the past, Malay society did not value rationality. He further argued that:

If rationality meant justifying the ends by the means then the Malays did possess such a quality. Their handicraft, farming, fishing, trade and commerce during the 17th century, all indicated the presence of a rational outlook. If however the term rationality implied modern business practices, industrial ventures and commerce, this, it is true was lacking. But one can hardly blame the Malay society of the past for lacking an institution created only in the 19th and 20th century in Southeast Asia by the colonial powers. It is like blaming the Malay society of the past for not knowing how to use electricity at a time when electricity had not yet been invented (p. 171).

Emotion and Intuition at the Other End of Thinking in Malay Proverbs

Besides the logical principles, there are equally strong emotional and intuitional elements that can be found in the Malay proverbs, especially in their *simpulan bahasa*, which we have just discussed in Chapter 5. In this context, *hati* has been portrayed very strongly as their source of emotions, passions and intuition. The Malays believe that intuition was, and is, among one of the ways where knowledge

can be obtained and problems can be solved. The Malays use the word *gerak hati*² (movement of the liver/heart) to represent intuition and *bisikan kalbu* (the whisper of the heart) to denote the same activity. The way how intuition is presented can be seen from one of their proverbs: *Terkilat ikan dalam air, [aku] sudah tahu jantan betina* 'By seeing the flash of the fish in the water, [I] already know whether it is a male or a female' (KIPM 217: 4065).

The existence of emotional elements from one angle *vis a vis* logical principles from another angle created a mental seesaw for the Malay mind. Do the Malays resort to rationality as their way of resolving conflicts? Or do they react and confront issues emotionally? How do they handle both sides of the seesaw? I believe neither rationality nor emotion-intuition alone is their priority. What is more important is the existence of a fulcrum that tends to adjust the status of rationality and emotion-intuition. They believe that both eyes (i.e. rationality and emotion) should be consulted in decision making, and as a result, "the third eye" is chosen. This third eye is *budi*. In order to understand the Malay mind, I strongly believe that future researchers should not deny the pivotal role of *budi*. The Malays believe that the hard core of logical principles should be synthesised harmoniously with the softer dimensions of human emotion and their passion. The best tool for judgement should not come from the realm of reason and emotion alone, but should be a balance combination between reason and passion through the filter and test of *budi*.

Lack of Dialectical Exchange despite the Existence of Logical Principles

Even though there are various logical patterns, as I have shown at length in Chapter 4, the development and the uses of logical principles in a dialectical mode were not the priority of the Malays in their everyday life. What was more important for them in response to the demand of their historical, geographical and social needs was something else (e.g. social harmony, mysticism, liberation of self) and not scientific investigation. This "something else" was obviously shared among two earliest Asian civilisations, viz. Chinese and Indian (See Hongladarom n.d.). Rationality, which is placed at the centre of intellectual activity in the West, is not the priority in the East; and therefore, dialectical argumentation had a lesser impact on the Malay culture, as part of the Eastern civilisation. Garrett's (1991) analysis on Chinese rhetoric accords well with the Malay culture in this context.³ According to Garrett (1991), two reasons for the lack of dialectical argumentation in the Chinese rhetoric were "strong pragmatic bent of Chinese culture"⁴ and "cross-cultural differences in the paradigm of persuasion between the two cultures (read: Chinese and Western cultures)." She said that Greek and Roman rhetors had a large audience under a democratic system whether in legislative bodies, courts of law or market places as compared to the Chinese imperial bureaucracy where power tended to be centred on one person. Under such a system, she explained:

When a rhetor attempted to persuade this sort of one-person audience, the situational, psychological, and interpersonal factors often had much more bearing on success than the logical validity of the inferences. Consequently, rhetoric became much more the counterpart of psychology than of dialectic (Garett 1991, 299).

As a result of “one person audience” syndrome, the Chinese developed various indirect rhetorical strategies like *yin* (hidden) and *feng* (veil criticism through riddles and allusions). As such, the Malay culture was so much closer to their Chinese counterpart. They were engaged in an omnipotent and powerful “one person audience” – Sultan – where no direct criticism was allowed. This feudalistic tradition was inherited for centuries and is still being practised even until today. If the Chinese have developed *yin* and *feng*, the Malays in turn, developed various types of proverbs and proverbial sayings like *bahasa berkias*, *peribahasa*, *perumpamaan*, *pepatah-petitih* and *bahasa sindiran*. These proverbial sayings are a polite way of showing disagreement and veiled criticism. There are many proverbs which explain the idea of *bahasa berlapik*, *kata-kata beralas* (veiled criticism). In the old days, Malays used analogy to critic the Sultan or people from higher hierarchy. In one incident, the act of a Sultan killing his own sons was referred to as “*badak makan anaknya*” (rhinoceros eating its own babies) (p. 96) in *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai*. In another case, using a rather reversed psychology, the arguer compared himself to a *keras* (a kind of long-tailed monkey) to criticise the Sultan of Malacca by saying *kita diperbuat oleh Raja Malaka seperti keras, mulut disuap pisang pantat-nya dikait dengan onak* ‘we were made by the King of Malacca like monkey; the mouth is filled with bananas, while the back is hooked with a thorn’ (*The Malay Annals*, Winstedt 1938, p. 175). On both occasions, the arguer did not choose to engage in a direct confrontation as it was not part of the Malay *budi pekerti* ^{morality} and *budi bahasa* ^{courtesy}. In my analysis of the Malay proverbs, I was not able to locate a strong tendency and attitude of direct confrontation. This is obvious as the Malays never choose to be confrontational as it is not their way. Direct confrontation is seen as *tidak manis* (lit. not sweet, not nice) and *tidak berbudi bahasa* (uncultured, uncivilised). According to Sardar (2000, 148):

Direct confrontation is never the Malay way; convolution is the essence, coming at things indirectly, preserving face and the illusion of general agreement, even undiluted support among consenting parties, no matter how bitter the actual difference and depth of the divide.

This unconflictual way of argumentation is used even until today in the Internet media. In criticising Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad as a liability to the Malay political party, UMNO and the whole country, Malaysia, Hishammuddin Rais (2001, MalaysiaKini, 15th January 2001) used the proverb *memikul biawak hidup* ‘To carry a live monitor lizard’, to describe members of UMNO and the 22 million Malaysians who are doing something harmful to themselves. His article received the response of a reader, Jalil Becker (2001, Malaysia Kini, 16th January 2001), who remarked that calling Mahathir Mohamad as *biawak* (monitor lizard) was something insulting.⁵ Jalil, in turn, was criticised

by Syahrin Aziz (2001, Malaysia Kini, 17th January 2001), who explained that in the context of proverbs, the criticism did not mean that Mahathir Mohamad is a monitor lizard. Jalil was also criticised by Rahman (2001, Malaysia Kini, 18th January 2001) as *seperti gagak pulang ke Benua*⁶ and was cynically asked to look up the meaning of that proverb in a reference book and whether he should be equated with *gagak* (crow). The whole development of the argumentation of these writers show that proverbs were used as a strongly veiled criticism since the use of proverbs or tradition expressions can imply that it is not the speaker's own point of view that is being expressed but that of common ancestors of both the speaker and the listener (Cram 1994). The use of proverbs is a sign of showing *budi bahasa*^{courtesy} with the purpose of avoiding direct confrontation.⁷ Direct confrontation with people of authority can be treated as *tidak mengenang budi* (ungrateful). According to Charteris-Black (1995):

Indirectness is achieved through the use of a proverb which enables the speaker to conceal his intended meaning; the motive behind this use of a proverb is that it is a form of speech in which criticism can be made, or advice given, without offence being taken (p. 264).

This happens not only between the leader (i.e. Sultan, minister) and the *rakyat*, but also to their *tamu* (guest). The same concept of authority applies within the family, where fathers and elders have the last say. The young will be accused of being impolite if they challenge the opinion of their senior, father or elder relatives directly. Culturally, when a discussion is going on among the elders, the young one will be asked to leave as they are ignorant with common phrases like *jangan mencampuri urusan orang tua* 'don't interfere in the business of elders' and *budak-budak apa tahu* 'what do kids know?' For that reason, the junior or younger person will have to be careful when they wish to challenge the opinion of their elders. There is no candid, critical or even confrontational way of argumentation involved. Citing proverbial expression to lend support to an assertion is something Eastern with the purpose of avoiding conflict and showing a strong impersonal cultural authoritative character, or as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1981, 111) called it, "the weight of impersonal community consensus." Günthner (1991) when discussing the uses of Chinese proverbs in intercultural communication between Germans and Chinese seemed to echo the same tendency. She noticed that all of her data on Chinese proverbial sayings were used to back a statement. According to her:

... the interactive function of quoting a proverbial saying is to demonstrate the culturally based support for one's position. The quoted 'wisdom of the cultural community' frees the speaker from being alone in his or her commitment to the position taken (Günthner 1991, 405).

In contrast, she stated that German speakers will sometimes use sayings too. However, in the German context, the function of a saying is usually to comment on an event that has already pass and thus to conclude a matter (Günthner 1991, 407). Generally, Germans tend to articulate their individual views whereas Chinese tend to support their arguments with cultural wisdom. These German-Chinese

differences can be suitably described as individual ego versus cultural ego. The Malays, being Asians, I think, are in favour of cultural ego. They will quote more than reason. Observation shows that the application of dialectical attitudes and critical thinking skills are rather limited and not part of their tradition, especially when we make a comparison with Western civilisation. Mochtar Lubis (1969) appeared rather envious of Western culture after his visit to America when he said:

Jang amat menondjol saja rasakan dalam pertjakapan2 ini ialah kebebasan berpikir diantara mereka. Segala rupa nilai2, sikap2, dan pikiran2 tradisionil dan konvensional, kini diperiksa dan ditantang kembali. Dari teori Einstein, pikiran2 Freud dan Jung, sampai pada doktrin2 agama Katolik, nilai2 sosial dan manusia, nilai2 seni, moral dan susila, sampai pada agama dan Tuhanpun, dalam pikiran, mereka djungkir-balikkan, tjanjai, periksa, telaah, bedah, dan mereka teliti dibawah katja pembesar mikroskop akal dan pengetahuan mereka. Kebenaran2 jang dianggap mutlak selama ratusan tahun terachir mereka udji kembali.

(What I felt was most obvious in their conversation is the freedom of thought among them. All kinds of values, attitudes, traditional and conventional thinking are now being examined and challenged again. From the theory of Einstein, the thinking of Freud and Jung to the religious doctrines of Catholic, social and human values, artistic values, moral and ethics to religion and God even, they flip and turn, ask, examine, read, dissect and observe under the microscope of their mind and knowledge. Truths which are considered as absolute for hundreds of years are examined once again.)

Sukadi (1969) agreed with Mochtar Lubis (1969) that the freedom of thinking was lacking among the Indonesians and the reason behind it was “*disamping rasa takut, bangsa kita kurang terdidik untuk memberi kebebasan sepenuhnya pada fikirannja* (apart from fear, our people are less trained to grant full freedom to their thinking)” (Sukadi 1969, 305). He cited the ideas of H. Th. A. Verbeek to justify the complexity and weaknesses of the thinking method among Indonesian graduates. Those weaknesses were: i. Their expressions were always vague and without structure; ii. Too much emphasis was placed on concrete thinking to the extent that abstract thinking was neglected; iii. They tended to look at relationships or events in a rather associated manner without observing their logical reasoning; iv. Passive and absence of critical thinking; and v. Not meticulous (*tidak teliti*) in interpreting content and expression (Cited in Sukadi 1969, 306).

The concept of dialectical argumentation is not that encouraging within the Malay culture due to certain perceptions and worship of status (seniority) and religion. Education is sometimes even turned into the process of indoctrination. Historically, according to M. Bakri Musa (1999, 129):

learning in Malay society involved memorization and recitation of the holy Koran, and perfecting the prayers and rituals of Islam. Instruction often took place in the homes of Imams or small suraus (prayer houses). Everything was laid out and there was no room for discussion or questioning. It was not so much education as indoctrination. The quality of teaching and the

pedagogical skills of the teachers were marginal, at best. These schools were no place for inquisitive minds. Any challenge to the orthodoxy or expanding of the thought processes were actively discouraged. Worse, they were regarded as machinations of the devil. Even in today's more modern and formal religious schools, the same ambience and attitude persist.

The current research done by Hitchcock seems to support the tendency of Asian civilisations to favour a non-confrontational way of resolving disagreements. The rationality practised by the West through dialectical argumentation and critical thinking is seen to be too aggressive (See criticism by feminists on the Western conception of rationality and argumentation in Gilbert 1997, 25 & Chapter 4; Kessler 1992). So far, no serious study has been conducted on the so-called Malay values as compared to the Western Anglo-American values from the perspective of attitudes towards dialectical argumentation. But generally Hitchcock's survey (1994, see also 1997) might be able to substantiate our discussion with some quantitative evidence. Even though he was not comparing between Malay and American values but deriving from the fact that the Malays are part of the larger Asian community and also included as part of the research respondents which comprised mainly Malaysians and Indonesians, the survey results were in favour of confirming that dialectical argumentation basically is not to be viewed as "critically important" societal values. In this survey, all respondents were required to check no more than 5 of the 12 personal values and no more than 6 of the 14 societal values listed. For the list of societal values, the top six Asian choices in descending order were orderly society, harmony, accountability of public officials, openness to new ideas, freedom of expression and respect of authority whereas the top six American choices in descending order were freedom of expression, personal freedom, individual rights, resolution of conflicting political views through open debate, thinking of oneself and official accountability. The survey results revealed the clear differences between Asians and Americans in those aspects that deal with argumentation.⁸ Asians (read: the Malays) are basically a societal-based community (orderly society and harmony) whereas Americans are more individualistic as reflected from their priority of choices (freedom of expression, personal freedom and individual rights). What is the most important of choices here for the Americans is their commitment towards dialectical argumentation through open debate.

Let us look at the statistical part of the findings (See the table in the annex for societal values: Asians and Americans in Hitchcock 1994, 40) and compare their differences, especially the items which are related to: (1) Society versus individuality; and (2) Consensus versus argumentation through open debate. Asians basically believe more in orderly society (71%) and harmony (58%) as compared to the Americans (11% and 7% respectively). Conversely, Americans value individual rights more (78%) as compared to Asians (29%) as well as free expression (85% against 47% for Asians) and personal freedom (82% against 32% for Asians). 59% of Americans think of themselves whereas in the case of Asians, only 10% indicate the same. As for consensus, Asians believe in it in resolving problems that occur (39%) whereas it is of very little importance to the Americans (4% only). The art of

argumentation and open debate are more valued by the Americans (74%) as compared to Asians, who only recorded 29%. Although this study is not so specific in understanding the Malay attitude towards argumentation, it nevertheless provides a preliminary outlook before other studies are to be conducted. Asians are also inclined to submit to authorities as a mark of respect whereas Americans prefer to challenge them, be it cognitive or administrative authority. We can thus understand why 42% of Asians chose “respect authority” as one of their six choices of “critically important” items whereas only 11% of Americans did the same. The comparison between the West and the East was also conducted by Hofstede (1980, 1983; cited in Kim 1995, 3) in a study involving over 117,000 IBM employees in 66 countries. Hofstede's study (as cited in Kim 1995, 3) yielded a rather bipolar dimension with individualism on one end of the pole among countries like the United States, Canada and Western European nations and collectivism on the other end among Asian, Latin American and African countries.

As proof of the existence of dialectical argumentation within certain cultures, there must be an atmosphere where difference of opinion, especially on so-called sensitive issues like religion, the status of Sultans and Malay rights, can be openly discussed. Those who hold different viewpoints should not be condemned, threatened, or worse still prosecuted in the name of ensuring stability and for the sake of security. This, however, is not the case in the Malay-Indonesian world (i.e. Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Singapore). Take the scenario of modern Malaysia for example: a person who holds a different point of view or try to challenge the religious orthodoxy will be seen as a threat and may be charged as *murtad* (betrayal of the Muslim faith). Dialectical argumentation on issues related to Islam has become taboo and confined only to Muslims.⁹ Even those who are Muslims and dare to voice their differences will either be ignored or cursed. They will be excluded from the arena of debate and discussion. Many examples can be cited which prove that there is a lack of dialectical attitude in the Malay Archipelago. According to Farish A. Noor (2002), as far back as the 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century, successive waves of Malay-Muslim and Peranakan Muslim reformers and modernists were at the forefront of the verbal disputes between the reformists and the traditional Ulama. He added that Syed Sheikh al-Hadi (1867-1934), the author of the highly acclaimed *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* and the Kaum Muda¹⁰ reformers of the 1920s and 1930s were the examples of those who share the same fate because of their dialectical and critical attitude towards authority. One of the Malaysia's original thinkers, Kassim Ahmad, had his book *Hadis: Suatu Penilaian Semula*, which has been translated as *Hadith: A Re-evaluation*¹¹ vehemently condemned and banned for daring to challenge religious orthodoxy. “Presumably, the authorities fear that Kassim Ahmad's refreshingly enlightened views might pollute pristine Muslim minds,” said M. Bakri Musa (1999, 79). Worse still, Kassim Ahmad was earlier strongly criticised when he was trying to craft one of his poems “*Sidang Ruh*”, which was published in one of his anthologies, *Kemarau di Lembah* (1967), especially the third stanza of the poem: “*nanti akan padamlah dengan sendirinya/ lampu dari menara tinggi/ karena*

dibawahnya (sic) orang kian mabuk/ dan Tuhan sudah mati.” The controversy behind that stanza laid in his offensive idea of “*Tuhan sudah mati* (God has died), which I suppose was taken from Nietzsche’s famous phrase: *Gott ist tot* (God is dead). Various examples and arguments which I have cited (just to name a few) justify the belief that despite the existence of basic logical principles which can be found in their proverbs, the Malays’ attitude towards rationality is not encouraging and dialectical argumentation is even condemned as impolite and *kurang ajar*. Even the present Malay political leaders do not show interest in encouraging polemics and dialectic. The attitude against the spirit of rational argumentation and polemics can be seen from Mahathir’s¹² own idea. In the very first page of his book *The Challenge* (1976/ 1986, translated into Malay as *Cabaran!*), we can find his disapproval of the need for argumentation for the Malays.¹³ Let me quote him in detail:

Polemics is so much part of the Malay tradition that there is almost no idea which has not been the subject of a lengthy and thorough debate. In the debate that takes place, not only is the idea found unacceptable after its shortcomings are exposed by those who oppose it, but the opinions of all the critics are also debated and their weaknesses laid bare. The outcome of every series of polemics is that neither the original idea nor the opinions put forward in the debate is acceptable.

Since no idea can be accepted, none can be followed. Thus the status quo is perpetuated, although it is clearly imperfect and ought to be changed. Worse, the conflicting opinions expressed during the debate only add to the confusion of society. When the criticism and polemics are studied they are found not only to be unproductive but also to add to the difficulty of overcoming challenges faced by Malay society in particular (Mahathir 1986, 1).¹⁴

Rendra’s *Rakyat Belum Merdeka* (2000) informs us of the same tendency of how the dialectical argumentation was suppressed throughout the entire history of Indonesia from the empire of Mataram until the present day. Let us look at Wenzel’s writing on Anglo-American proverbs (1979/ 1981) and African proverbs (1988) now in order to see the similarities and differences of the Malay ways of reasoning as reflected in my own analysis.

Perspective of Practical Reasoning:

A General Comparison between Anglo-American, African and Malay Proverbs

As shown through the analysis in Chapter 4 and 5 (for the Malay proverbs), the works of Goodwin and Wenzel (1979/1981 for the Anglo-American proverbs) and Wenzel himself (1988, for African proverbs); a general comparison can be made on the commonalities and the differences between these three traditions. Four elements of comparison can be drawn, viz. substantive contents, the locus of authority, speech acts and the criteria of a speaker (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: A General Comparison between Anglo-American, African and Malay Proverbs from the Perspective of Practical Reasoning

No.	Elements of Comparison	Anglo-American Proverbs (Goodwin and Wenzel 1979/ 1981)	African Proverbs (Wenzel 1988)	Malay Proverbs (Lim 2002)
1.	Substantive Contents	Argument Types	No conception of argument	Argument Types
2.	Locus of Authority	Progressive: Appropriate knowledge; Technical know-how	Conservative: Useful knowledge is knowledge of the past; With age comes wisdom	Pragmatic: Appropriate knowledge; Experience and age
3.	Speech Acts	Direct Speech: Candidness and explicitness	Indirect Speech	Indirect Speech: Candidness is to be seen as impoliteness – <i>rendah diri</i> (humility) as part of the <i>budi</i> .
4.	Criteria of Speakers	Rational	In search of harmony	In search of consensus: Speaker's <i>budi</i> is the central focus of their argumentative rhetoric

Sources: An abstraction and interpretation from Goodwin and Wenzel (1979/1981), Wenzel (1988) and this research, Lim (2002).

As can be seen from the comparison above, the use of African proverbs for argument seems to be more concerned with maintaining harmony within a group (see Wenzel 1988) in contrast with Western concerns for decision-making and/or victory. Wenzel's finding (1988) seems in accord with Asante's idea on African worldview. According to Asante (see Foss, Foss and Trapp 1991, 288):

In the African worldview, the speaker strikes for harmony; important to African cultures is a belief in a harmonious interrelationship and compatibility among peoples, spirits, plants, and animals. Discourse, then, serves to restore stability when conflict exists; it allows for a collective search for harmony in which both speaker and audience participate.

Besides the search for harmony, it was also generally claimed, e.g. by Senghor's theory of negritude, that Europeans have inherited reason and logic while Negro Africans have inherited soul and emotion (cited in Imbo 1998, 11-15). This, however, was challenged by Wiredu that: "the principle of rational evidence is not entirely absent from the thinking of the traditional African.... The truth, then, is that rational knowledge is not the preserve of the modern West, nor is superstition a peculiarity of the African" (*Philosophy and an African Culture*, p. 42-3; cited in Imbo 1998, 19). Generally, as can be seen above, Anglo-American proverbial tradition is more rational-centred whereas the Africans are more emotion-centred. The Malays, however, are neither rational-centred nor emotion-centred but

budi-centred where *budi* is what I define as a fulcrum for balancing between rationality and emotion. As we have observed in Chapters 4 and 5, both elements of logic and emotion are strongly present in the Malay proverbial sayings. As such, no claims should be made that the Malay ways of reasoning are either logical or emotional. I should, however, argue for a “both-and” approach for the Malays as contrasted with the Western tendency to think in terms of “either/or.” What is quite certain in the Malay worldview is that they are in favour of a synthesis between reason and emotion as they believe that it is the best solution in time and space within their community. This existence of syncretism is perhaps due to the flexible nature of the Malay language and culture in accepting other cultures into their social discourses. Contrasting the thinking of the West with the Malay thinking, Hassan Ahmad (2001d) argued that Western thinking is basically categorical, which tends to divide nature into mutually contradicting or excluded categories (e.g. reason vs. emotion). Unlike Westerners, the Malays do not think categorically. The Malays take this universe as a unity, which is also the general characteristic of Asian thinking (cf. Lin Yutang 1946).

Nonetheless, it should be noted that the principle of rational evidence is not entirely absent from the thinking of the traditional Malay (as is normally alleged) as we can see from their proverbial sayings (see Chapter 4). Indeed, no society will survive without some rational-based knowledge of their environment: soil, sea and climate. The question is why did dialectical thinking not become a priority like in the West? The answer is that the Malays had been practising the culture of *budi*, where discourses were aimed at social harmony. Logical patterns were generally embedded in their internal structure of thinking, but rhetorically these were covered by the element of *hati* in order not to be confrontational and dialectical.

Theory of the Malay Mind Reconstructed:

***Budi* as the Fulcrum of Rationality and Emotion-Intuition**

There are equally strong perspectives of logical and intuitional elements that can be obtained through Malay proverbs but none can be justified other than *budi* as their highest ideal of achievement or tool for resolving conflict. Due to geographical and historical reasons, *akal budi* and *hati budi* appear to be the appropriate state for adjusting the rigidity of rationality and the fluidity of emotion. In the following part, I will argue as to why *budi* to me is the fulcrum of the Malay mind. In order to justify that notion, I will be presenting my evidence through the historical approach and drawing from various sources, viz. etymology, culture, socio-economy, geography, history and literature, which are indirectly derived from what Hu Shih (1968) briefly defined as “historical approach to the comparative study of philosophy” (p. 106). According to Hu Shih (1968), the historical approach means that:

All past differences in the intellectual, philosophical, and religious activities of man, East and West, have been *historical* differences, produced,

conditioned, shaped, grooved, and often seemingly perpetuated by geographical, climatic, economic, social and political, and even individual or biographical factors, all of which are capable of being studied and understood historically, rationally, and intelligently (p. 106; emphasis original).

Let us begin to seek these historical forces or whatever combinations of such forces that have been largely responsible for disseminating and promulgating the notion of *budi* and later to suggest the causes as to why *budi* had indirectly retarded the dialectical attitude among the Malays. The very first basic question is a question of etymology: From where did the word *budi* originate? Why is *budi* so important and how has it become the core element of Malay worldview and culture?

The Relationship between *Budaya* (Culture) and *Budi*

The relationship between culture and *budi* is very intimate in the Malay worldview. The word *budi* is not only etymologically related to *budaya* (culture) but also appears in the cultural memories of the Malays.

The Conceptual Aspect: The Etymological Relationship

In order to understand the Malay mind, I believe that we should begin from their concept of “*budaya* (culture)” and see its relationship with “*budi*.” What does the Malay word “*budaya*” stand for? Etymologically, the concept of *budaya* was derived from the word *budi* and *daya*. According to Gonda (1973, 366), *budaya*, which means “reason, intellect, gifted” must be explained as having arisen from *budi-daya* ‘contriving plans, endeavouring’ which contains the Skt. *Buddhi* – बुद्धि ‘intellect’. Gonda in his authoritative work *Sanskrit in Indonesia* (1973) explained in detail the origin and the influences of Sanskrit in the Malay and Javanese culture. Allow me to quote him at length on the origin of “*budaya*”:

Modern Javanese distinguishes between *kabudayan* ‘culture, civilization’ (Dutch *cultuur*) and *kabudidayan* ‘plantations’ (Dutch *cultures*), both words containing the affixes *ka-* and *-an*, with together help to form nouns. The second word is doubtless a derivative of *budi daya* ‘devise plans, take pains to [...]’; the first has been derived from *budaya*, a now obsolete and literary word for ‘talented, intelligent; intellect; culture, civilization’. *Kabudayan* (which distinctly emphasizes the abstract character of the idea expressed) has taken the place of its base, *budaya*; such changes repeatedly happen. But *budaya* and *budidaya* are, in my opinion, doublets, the first being a product of haplology: *bu(di)*, *daya*: *Budi* is, of course, Skt. *Buddhi* – बुद्धि which is still in common use: ‘ingenuity, intelligence (to solve a problem, or to contrive something)’; the second member is IN. *Daya*, which in Jav. still means: ‘energy, inherent power, influence’ but in Sundanese and Malay ‘artifice, dodge, way, usually a tricky way of doing something; cunning prudence’. In Sundanese *budi-daya* means ‘prudence’ (Gonda 1973, 484).

What about “*budi*” then, which is an important component of “*budaya*”? The word *budi* in the Malay discourse is usually “in the combination *budi-pekerti* or *budi-penerti* ‘correct bearing’ (Ach. *Budi* or *budiman* ‘to behave well; wise’) < Mal. *Budi* (*pekerti*) ‘character, natural ability, disposition’, *budi* ‘qualities of mind and heart’ <Skt. *Buddhi* बुद्धि ‘mind etc.’” (Gonda 1973, 120). There is also another common Malay phrase in the combination of *budi bicara*, which means “discretion” (Gonda 1973, 153). Various conceptions of *budi* can be found too throughout the Malay-Indonesian world, either coined in Javanese, Balinese, Sundanese or Malay. Nevertheless, the main concern of *budi* is generally to imply a synthesis between “the qualities of mind, heart and character”, and this might be juxtaposed with what can be understood as “the problem of mind, body and soul”, if we want to analyse *budi* from the philosophical perspective. Gonda (1973, 253) recorded the meanings of the word *budi* in detail:

The word *budi* [...] is discussed in another section of this book; in Javanese it can, apart from other ideas, express such notions as ‘(a person’s) way of thinking or mentality, intelligence’, in Balinese also ‘will, desire’; in Malay and Sundanese it often applies to ‘character, disposition, temper, mood’; in Malay to ‘character, graciousness and charm, qualities of mind and heart in general, often implying prudence, discretion and kindness.’

The Pragmatic Aspect: The Existence of *Budi* in Malay Cultural Memories

The relationship between culture and *budi* is not only confined to the conceptual etymological level but can also be seen in practice. Besides the evidences that can be found etymologically from the word “*budaya*” and its relation with “*budi*”, the priority given to *budi* can be easily obtained and supported from their cultural memories, their language and literature, either in the form of folklore, classical literature or modern discourse. In the process of rhetorical argumentation, the Malays believe in the effective use of language. In fact, the effective use of language is part of their *budi*. A good Malay orator or author should have a good command of language. The word “language” is actually “*bahasa*” in Malay, which originated from a Sanskrit word, *bhasha*. I will provide several examples from their language and literature to support my reasons for the importance of *budi* to them. Let us look at their proverbs first before I proceed to their *hikayat* and then modern poetry. A few proverbs or phrases obtained show how the Malays depict their language in the society and what these represent. A few ordinary ones are “*Bahasa Jiwa Bangsa* (language is the soul of a race), *bahasa menunjukkan bangsa*¹⁵ (language shows race, MBRAS 25: 12), *bahasa tidak dapat dijual atau dibeli*¹⁶ (literally, language can not be sold or bought, MBRAS 25: 11). Even though these proverbs do not use *budi*, what is implicit behind this “*bahasa*” is actually *budi*. The intimate relationship between *bahasa* (language) and *budi* can be seen also from proverbial sayings like *budi bahasa, orang berbudi kita berbahasa, orang memberi kita merasa*.¹⁷ Language and *budi* are two things of the same value in daily conversations as they say that when someone is *berbudi*, then the other party has to be *berbahasa*.

According to Jamilah (cited in Salbiah Ani 1995), the first norm in the Malay society is the value of *berbudi bahasa*^{having courtesy}. *Budi* is an important characteristic of the Malays. When the term *budi bahasa* is used, the meaning of *budi* is not only limited to giving or receiving things, but includes the whole concept of social relationship of that particular society. Ismail Hamid (1991, 79) gave a rather high priority to *budi* as one of the main components of Malay ethical values. According to him:

Dalam masyarakat Melayu nilai berbudi dan berbahasa dianggap suatu nilai yang disanjung tinggi. Sifat berbudi dan berbahasa dianggap ukuran ketinggian peribadi. Berbudi dan berbahasa adalah sifat yang dimiliki oleh seseorang yang pandai mengguna tutur katanya dengan sempurna dan melayan tetamu dengan baik (Ismail Hamid 1991, 79).

(In the Malay society, the values of *berbudi* and *berbahasa* are considered as highly acclaimed values. The character of *berbudi* and *berbahasa* are considered as the measurement of personal esteem. *Berbudi* and *berbahasa* are characteristics possessed by someone who knows how to use his/her words cleverly and entertain his/her guest nicely.)

The Malay *pantun*, *peribahasa* and folktales as well as various types of Malay classical works always express the value of *budi*. “*Orang Melayu begitu menjunjung budi dan ia dinyatakan di dalam pantun (Malays really worship budi and this is expressed in the pantun),*” said Rahman Shaari (1999).¹⁸ One of the famous and oft-quoted quatrain is *Yang kurik ialah kundi/ Yang merah ialah saga/ Yang baik ialah budi/ Yang indah ialah bahasa* ‘What is *kurik* (speckled) is *kundi*¹⁹/ What is red is Indian pea/ What is good is *budi*/ What is beautiful is language.’ Ismail Hamid (1991, 79) defined *budi* as generous and kind to others. A person who gets kind treatment from others feels a sense of obligation to that person and therefore he/she must be kind in return. The reciprocity of *budi* in society gives birth to the spirit of *gotong-royong* (cooperation). The importance of *budi* is also stated clearly in various proverbs that condemn those who are “*tak berbudi*” or “*tak tahu mengenang budi*” (ungrateful). There are many common proverbs which carry the message of ungratefulness or to do good at the wrong place:

Air di daun keladi ‘Water on the leaves of yam’ (KIPM 5: 77);
Membuang garam ke laut ‘Pouring salt into the sea’ (KIPM 137: 2477);
Hujan jatuh ke pasir ‘Rain falls on the sand’ (KIPM 85: 1575);
Melepaskan anjing tersepit ‘To free a dog caught in a hedge’ (MBRAS 140: 76);
Menabur (= menanam) biji di atas batu ‘Sowing seeds on the stone’ (KIPM 139: 2518);
Lempar bunga dibalas lempar tahi ‘Give flowers but thrown with shit in return’ (KIPM 123: 2235);
Membuang bunga ke jirat ‘Throwing flowers onto the tomb’ (KIPM 137: 2476);
Menabur bunga di atas kubur ‘Sowing flowers on the tomb’ (KIPM 139: 2520)

To the Malays, language is more than a reference; more than an intermediary or a tool of communication. Muhammad Haji Salleh (1991, 36) put it well: “Words are more than an intermediary. They are beautiful representatives that bring along with them values, *bahasa*, verbal and body language and decorum. He who is *halus* achieves this and will always have a high place in society.” The person who is *halus* is a person who is *berbudi bahasa* or *berbudi pekerti*. The role of *budi* is very important in the Malay worldview. The late Usman Awang, a national laureate, wrote in the third stanza of his poem, “*Budi (Kepada Penderma Tak Bernama)* (Budi^{Grateful} [To Anonymous Donor])” to show his longing for this value:

*Budi, seluruhnya kesucian kehidupan
yang memberi merasa maha bahagia
yang menerima memikul beban rasa
hiduplah ia, hiduplah senantiasa
dalam dunia yang semakin miskin dengannya*
(Usman Awang 1987, 121)

*Budi, all the purity of life
Those who gave feel the great happiness
Those who accepted shoulder the burden of feeling
Live with it, live with it always
In a world getting poorer of it*

After appreciating more about *budi*, the question arises as to how important *budi* is and what role it really plays in the everyday life of the Malays, be it in negotiation, conversation or other forms of communication. To go further, *budi* and its networks and the criteria of a *budiman*^{person of wisdom} should be helpful to explain the importance of *budi* in the Malay culture. Let us begin from here. The Malays believe that one of the most important aspects of a knowledgeable person (*budiman*) is the ability to display the quality of *rendah diri*. The feeling of *rendah diri* is one of the characteristics of *budi bahasa*^{courteousness}. This criterion was the most worshipped as compared to other values (e.g. honesty, kindness) and can be strongly supported if we were to refer to their work of literature (*hikayats* etc.). Take two quotations from the introduction of *Hikayat Abdullah* (1916), for example, and we can see the humility of the author:

... yang mendatangkan duka-chita dalam hati-ku, sebab bahwa sa-sunggohnya aku ini sa-orang bodoh lagi dengan kurang budi-ku dan paham-ku dalam ilmu bahasa, maka ber-tambah-tambah pula pichek pengetahuan-ku dalam ilmu mengarang ada-nya (p. 1).

(... which causes sadness in my heart (*hati*), because I am an idiot and lack intelligence (*budi*) and understanding of linguistics, including the deficiency of my knowledge in the skill of writing.)

... pertama-tama hina keadaan diri-ku, dan kedua miskin hal kehidupan-ku, dan ketiga kurang ilmu dan paham-ku, dan keempat bukan-nya aku ini ahli bagi pekerjaan karang-mengarang itu; maka bahwa sanya tiada-lah bagi-ku kuasa dan daya upaya melainkan dari-pada Allah ada-nya. Dan lagi sakali-

kali tiada sunyi diri-ku dari-hal bersifat kekurangan dan kelemahan pada tiap-tiap masa dan ketika ada-nya (p. 2).

(... first the humiliation of myself, second the poverty of my life, and third my lack of knowledge and understanding, and fourth, I am no expert in writing; therefore I have no power and ability except that which comes from Allah. And I am not free from deficiency and weakness at every single moment.²⁰)

Prior to modern times, the Malays were framed by their nature and religion. As the *rakyat* of feudal states, according to Muhammad Haji Salleh (1993, 8), they had to “struggle further to live as well as they could at the mercy and fancy of their feudal lords, who often enough act merely through their emotions and self-interest.” He further added that the Malay individual is “a *hamba* or *sahaya*, a servant or slave to the raja who claims divinity, and this does little to create a sense of individual worth in the former. He is not merely small before nature but is as small before man himself” (p. 8). Due to their previous history, the Malays had been trained to be non-confrontational and *sopan santun* or display social grace and were basically demonstrated self-effacement and humility or a sense of *rendah diri*. The Malays treated their humble-self as belonging to the opponent(s) during conversations or various forms of discourse. They even had to ask for permission to be excused or *minta diri* from the opponent(s) if they would like to leave. They described themselves as *hamba* (servants), *fakir yang hina* (fakirs), *yatim* (orphans), *yatim piatu* (orphans/strangers) and *dagang* (wanderer-travellers) to show their humility and therefore, inspiring people to show pity and sympathy. They also sought to reduce the possibility of open and direct criticism by self confession of their weaknesses.

The dialectical conception of argumentation is treated as confrontational and thus, only a rather connotative (indirect) and co-operative way of discussion in arriving at a “rational” and amicable solution to disagreement would be encouraged. The Malays are more in favour of the spirit of *gotong-royong* to solve things in the spirit of cooperation, which was later further enhanced by the Islamic conception of *musyawarah* and *muzakarah*. The Malays normally do not accept direct criticism, and for that reason, arguers should resort to proverbs or proverbial sayings/expression in conveying their message. In the words of Muhammad Haji Salleh (1993, 9):

The Malay concept *sopan santun* or social grace helps further to enhance this general worldview. Even before he was a Muslim the Malay was taught by his social decorum, to profess and compete to show humility. Humility is an art well-cultivated soon became a measurement of an individual’s quality and grace. In too many cases, it seems that a man is only as good as his social decorum. He is demanded upon to practice, what I would call, one-downmanship, where one competes to demonstrate self-effacement and humility. Thus for the general man in the village, not much of the individual may surface, not even his or her achievements.

The importance of *budi*, the concept of *sopan santun*, the feeling of humility (*rendah diri*) and non-confrontational attitude are among the characteristics of the Malays specifically and Asians generally in resolving disagreement and conflict. They are culturally different as compared to the Western tradition. According to Ramizet (1972, 206):

Keterarahan orang Asia kepada keluarga tidak hanya telah menghasilkan kesopanan tatatjara mereka; tetapi djuga telah menimbulkan ide untuk menjatakan rasa terima kasih dari pihak anak kepada orang tua mereka jang telah memberi mereka hidup dan penghidupan. Rasa terima kasih ini di Indonesia dan Malaysia disebut << Budi Bahasa >> dan di Philipina disebut << utang naloob >>.

Rasa ini merupakan aspek positif untuk perkembangan, seperti terdapat di Djepang; di sana rasa berhutang budi itu ditudjukan kepada orang-orang sebaja (istilahnja << giri >>) dan kepada orang tua, guru dan negeri (istilahnya << on >>). Nilai lain yang erat terkait dengan kedua hal itu dan timbul dari konteks jang familistis ialah << rasa malu >> (dalam bahasa Philipina, << hiya >>). Orang Asia bila saling berhadapan muka akan kelihatan malu-malu, dan rasa malu ini adalah projeksi kemampuannja untuk menghindarkan pertentangan.

(The emphasis given by Asians towards their family had not only given birth to their attitude of *kesopanan*; but had also given rise to the idea of children expressing thankfulness to their parents, who had given them life. This sense of thankfulness is called *Budi Bahasa* in Indonesia and Malaysia and *utang naloob* in Philippines²¹).

This feeling is a positive aspect for development, as found in Japan; there the sense of gratitude is directed to peers (*giri*) and elders, teachers and the state (*on*). Another value related to these two values above and appeared from the family context is the feeling of shame (*hiya* in Philippines language). When Asians have a face to face encounter, they will look shy and this shyness projects their ability to avoid conflict.)

Avoiding direct confrontation is one of the many Asian characteristics and can be substantiated through various researches on the differences between Asian ways of conflict resolution as compared to Western methods. By citing the contrast between liberalism and Confucianism to represent Western and Eastern traditions respectively, Kim (1995) said that Chinese subjects preferred negotiated settlement through a third party without direct confrontation, whereas American subjects preferred direct confrontation to resolve a conflict. There are also differences when it comes to communication patterns between these two cultures. Nagashima (1973, cited in Kim 1995, 52) noted that in Western cultures, it is the sender's responsibility to produce a coherent, clear, and intelligible message. This practice, however, might not be seen in Japan as it is the receiver's responsibility to decipher the often subtle, indirect and contradictory messages. He further noted that the vital goal of communication is the avoidance of conflict. In the relational mode, communication is based on empathy in Asian tradition rather than rationality is the West tradition.

The sense of *rendah diri* among the Malays, for me, was inherited from the culture of paddy. The concept of *rasa rendah diri* was originally promoted in the name of good faith against the feeling of arrogance. However, due to ignorance of the idea of *rendah diri*, some researchers tend to equate between *rasa rendah diri* which should be promoted and *rasa hina diri* (self-denigration) which should be avoided. There is nothing wrong with the idea of *rasa rendah diri*. Whether someone is promulgating *rendah diri* or *hina diri* very much depends on the state of consciousness of the particular rhetor/speaker. The positive idea of *rendah diri* is well elaborated in the Malay proverbs like “*Baik membawa resmi padi, daripada membawa resmi lalang* (It is better to follow the nature of paddy than the nature of *lalang* [tall grass])” (KIPM 28: 527); “*Bawa resmi padi, makin berisi makin tunduk* (Follow the nature of paddy, the more full it is, the more it will bow)” (KIPM 31: 600) and “*Ilmu padi, makin berisi makin rendah* ‘Like an ear of corn which the fuller it is of grain, the lower it bends’ (KIPM 88: 1618; MBRAS 41: 131). The Malays are totally against those who are arrogant. To them, we should not act like “*seperti ilmu padi hampa, makin lama makin mencongak* ‘Like an ear of corn which grows tall in proportion to its emptiness’ (KIPM 189: 3504; Cf. MBRAS 41: 131)²².

We would be totally distorting Malay cultural history if we were to completely deny the positive value of *rendah diri* and if we tend to define this concept along the lines of inferiority complex. *Rasa rendah diri* is not an inferiority complex but rather a philosophical search for knowledge. Let us look at the development of Western civilisation as our starting point. The whole Western civilisation today began from Socrates even though he never wrote a single word. Socrates was exemplary in rejecting the idea that oral tradition has no philosophy as it does not possess philosophical treatises.²³ Socrates himself was a philosopher but without any written text. Most of his ideas were reproduced in the form of Plato’s Dialogues. Socrates (ca 470 – 399 B.C.E) – who was regarded by Oracle from Delphi as the wisest person in Athens – remarked in one of his most important statements: “I know only one thing, that I do not know anything.” How could one who is as wise as him claim that he knows nothing if not because he is very humble (*rendah diri*)? Commenting on Socrates’s statement, Jostein Gaarder (1993) in his widely read book on the history of philosophy, which was written in the form of a novel *Sofies Welt: Ein Roman über die Geschichte der Philosophie*,²⁴ claimed that “*Ein Philosoph weiß genau, daß er im Grunde sehr wenig weiß. Ebendeshalb versucht er immer wieder, zu wirklicher Erkenntnis zu gelangen*” (p. 81). It would be rather absurd to praise Socrates for his sense of *rendah diri* but to condemn the *ilmu padi* of the Malays. Thus, to accuse the under-developed state of the Malays as being due to the attitude of *rendah diri* is rather misleading. This Socratic humility is indeed a way the Malays convey their *budi* of not being arrogant. The same humility can be perhaps seen from the answer of Pythagoras (ca 570-500 B.C.E), a thinker who has actually called himself a “philosopher,” that is, a “lover of wisdom.” When asked if he was a wise man, Pythagoras humbly replied, “No, I am only a lover of wisdom” (Solomon and Higgins 1997, 29). To me, therefore, *rendah*

diri should be seen as a rhetorical strategy and its virtues can only be determined from the motive of the rhetor. The right motive of *rendah diri* represents the *budi pekerti* of the orator.

The Malay ways of argumentation should be centralised within the realm of *budi* and *hati*. The orator should not be aggressive. Rationality should be achieved through synthesis between reason (*akal*), emotion (*hati*) and moral (*budi pekerti*). This is the pivotal role of *budi* in the Malay argumentation. The Malays would not criticise, attack or directly oppose their opponents but choose to argue on the platform of achieving and resolving their differences. “*Hati*” has always played its part as an important denominator in the thinking of the Malays and not pure brain “*otak*” or pure reason (*akal*). This does not mean that they have no brain whatsoever although it is to be believed that the concept of reason, which is the outcome of the activities of the brain, is not enough to resolve the argumentation process in settling disagreement within the Malay social milieu. The Malays treat “*budi*” as something that can be equated to “reason with ethics” (*budi pekerti*) which people should display if they wish to be a man of wisdom and a person who can judge not by reason alone but also know when one should use his pure reason and when one should give way to intuition and emotion in providing warrant or support for conclusion or claims.

Historical-Geographical Forces and Economic Conditions

Historical-geographical forces and economic conditions do play their roles in highlighting *budi* and explaining the reasons why the Malays opted for a synthesis and middle path instead of a purely rational or emotional-intuitive domain. Fung Yu-lan, a Chinese philosopher, in his book *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (1976, first published 1948) saw the differences of philosophical methods between Greek philosophy and Chinese philosophy, which were due to historical and geographical reasons, that brought into emergence “concept by postulation” on one hand and “concept by intuition” on the other as suggested by Northrop.²⁵ He argued that China is a continental country as compared to Greece, a maritime country. As such, they developed different priority and ways of resolving conflict. As a continental country, land is the most important entity for China, whereas for a maritime country like Greece, sea plays a much more important role. Comparing to Greece and China, the Malay-Indonesian World, being part of Southeast Asia²⁶ today, was geographically similar to the former and not the later. As a maritime region and centre of trading and businesses, the Malay world attracted and wooed merchants from all over the world – Indian, Chinese, Arabic, Persian and European. A quotation from Lombard (1996) shows the existence of foreign elements and the emergence of the trading class:

Di antara faktor khas Asia itu yang pertama-tama harus diperhitungkan adalah kondisi politik-ekonomi yang sangat baik di samudera Hindia dan Lautan Cina mulai abad ke-13. Marco Polo pada abad ke-13, Ibn Battuta, Odoric da Pordenone, Giovanni de Margnolli pada abad berikutnya, semua

memberi kesaksian tentang keramaian jalan laut dari India ke Cina dan dari Cina ke India, yang berkembang justru pada saat hegemoni Mongol mengakar di Asia Tengah. Di bawah dinasti Ming, di Cina pemakaian rute daratan lewat Asia Tengah menjadi lebih sulit, dan keadaan itu dimanfaatkan oleh pelabuhan-pelabuhan Asia Tenggara yang berkembang pada waktu itu. Kerajaan-kerajaan agraris tua yang terdiri dari wilayah agraris yang luas, lambat laun mundur, dan muncullah negara-negara jenis baru, yang ibukotanya terletak di pelabuhan dan yang kegiatannya diarahkan ke perniagaan besar. Tak dapat diingkari bahwa orang Eropa telah memanfaatkan keadaan itu, tetapi dengan “mencangkokkan diri” pada jaringan-jaringan yang sudah ada sebelum kedatangan mereka (p. 5).

(Among the special factors of Asia that should be considered first is the excellent political and economical condition in the Indian Ocean and China Sea beginning in the 13th century. Marco-Polo in the 13th century, Ibn Battuta, Odoric da Pordenone, Giovanni de Margnolli in the following century, all testified about the busy seaway from India to China and China to India, which developed during the period when the Mongol hegemony expanded its roots in Middle Asia. Under the Ming Dynasty, the use of land route in China through Middle Asia became difficult, and such condition was benefited by South-east Asian ports, which was growing at that time. Old agrarian governments which were made up of vast agrarian territories, gradually regressed, and new types of countries emerged, whose capitals were situated at ports and whose activities focussed on big businesses. It cannot be denied that the Europeans had made use of this situation, but by “affixing themselves” at various networks that were in existence before their arrival.)

Lombard's observation justifies the syncretism between the agrarian culture and the maritime culture. The attendance of various foreign elements can even be seen in the present South-east Asia. The willingness to accept differences in values and cultures was very much due to the Malay higher wisdom of *budi*, which is able to adapt to and synchronise between the Western culture of rationality and the Eastern culture of intuition. The existence of the Malay trading class is further supported by the idea of Syed Hussein Alatas (1977, 184), who claimed that historically-speaking, Malay societies did possess a trading class. However, this trading class, according to him further, was destroyed by European colonialism and the process of destruction which started at the beginning of the 16th century with the arrival of the Portuguese.

If we were to take Fung's, Lombard's and Syed Hussein's argument, then the Malays should have developed a kind of thinking closer to the Greeks as the Malay-Indonesian world was also geographically a maritime world and they did possess a trading culture. The Malay Archipelago as a maritime world is also clearly reflected from their proverbs. The Malays refer to their motherland, in the form of *simpulan bahasa*, as *tanah air* (See Abdullah Hussain 1966, 391; literally means land and water, or the land of water). Kathirithamby-Wells (1992) wrote: “Perception of the Southeast Asian ruler as lord of ‘land and water’ effectively included control over people, as evident in the Malay term *tanah air* (‘land and water’), embodying concept of ‘country’ or ‘nation’” (p. 21). There are many

more proverbs which show that the Malay perception of a country is really close to water. A few examples can be seen in Table 6.2 below:

Table 6.2: Proverbs Show the Close Relationship Between “Air (water)” and Country

No.	Proverbs	Meaning (as given by Abdullah Hussain 1991, with my own explanation)
1.	<i>Ada air, adalah ikan</i> ‘If there is water, there is fish’ (KIPM 1: 1).	Meaning: If there is a country, people are sure to be there. Explanation: It is common knowledge that people will fight for the survival and the establishment of their home country and fish will not survive without water.
2.	<i>Air jernih, ikannya jinak</i> ‘If the water is clear, the fishes are tame’ (KIPM 5: 85).	Meaning: The people are courteous (<i>berbudi bahasa</i>) in a peaceful country. Explanation: Clear water represents the state of peacefulness in a country, and fishes represent people. It is rather common for the Malays to use the contrast between clear water (<i>air jernih</i>) and murky water (<i>air keruh</i>) to describe two types of situations: peace and chaos.
3.	<i>Air keruh, limbat keluar</i> ‘When the water is murky, the limbat fish will come out’ (KIPM 5: 86). Limbati fish: <i>clarias nieuhofi</i>	Meaning: Bandits will take the opportunity to steal or make profit in a chaotic country. Explanation: To describe a chaotic situation, the Malays use <i>air keruh</i> (murky water). An opportunist is a person who likes to <i>menangguk di air keruh</i> (to scoop in murky water).
4.	<i>Air orang disauk, ranting orang dipatah, adat orang diturut</i> ‘We should scoop other’s water, break other’s twig and follow other’s custom like the natives of that country’ (KIPM 5: 92).	Meaning: We should obey the law of the country in which we choose to live. Explanation: There is another proverb with the same message in the <i>peribahasa</i> : <i>masuk kandang lembu menguak, masuk kandang kambing mengembek</i> (If you are in a buffalo-byre, bellow; if you are in a sheep-fold, bleat). This proverb is equivalent to the English proverb: When in Rome, do as the Romans do.
5.	<i>Seperti air dalam talam</i> ‘Like water in a tray’ (KIPM 185: 3395).	Meaning: A peaceful country. Explanation: This proverb refers to a peaceful country, as water in a tray is not going to be as stormy as water in the sea.

Air (water) does not only symbolise a country, but also symbolises a source of income and knowledge. The search for knowledge unceasingly and tirelessly is said to be *bagai air mencari jenisnya* ‘Like water is searching for its own race’ (KIPM 16: 280). The Malays respect those who are knowledgeable but do less talking when they say *air beriak tanda tak dalam* ‘Water which has ripple shows that it is not deep’ (KIPM 4: 69). They use the metaphor of “sea/ocean” to represent knowledge as well. This can be seen from their proverbs like *laut budi tepian akal* (= *ilmu*) ‘The sea of intelligence is the edge of mind/knowledge’ (KIPM 121: 2200), which means “a wise person or an intellectual.” As usual, the Malay conception of intellect or knowledge is not separated from *budi*. In another proverb *laut datang memungkah mutiara* ‘Sea comes with pearls’ (KIPM 121: 2201), *laut* (sea), the source of water, is

again used as a symbol for a knowledgeable person, who will bring along with him/her knowledge (in this case *mutiara* is used as a symbol). The difference between *laut* and *mutiara* is one between source and product: *laut* is used as the source of knowledge, which is important at the epistemological level; whereas *mutiara* represents the product of knowledge, which touches on the level of pragmatism.

Malays like to play with the waves. It was noted that Malay sailors were highly skilled navigators, sailing over the oceans for thousands of miles without a compass or written charts. They navigated by the winds and the stars, by the shape and colour of the clouds, by the colour of the water, and by swell and wave patterns on the ocean's surface (Shaffer 1996, 12). The advancement of Malay shipping technology and the strength of the Malay world in maritime historically were also well observed by Shaffer (1996) and Muchtar Ahmad (See *Kompas* 2000b). The Chinese, in fact, according to Shaffer (1996), appeared to have learned much from the Malay sailors. The Malays independently invented sail, made from woven mats reinforced with bamboo, at least several hundred years B.C.E., while the Chinese used sails only at the time of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E. to 221 C.E.) (Johnstone 1980, 191-92; mentioned by Shaffer 1996, 12-13). The English word *junk*, which is often used to refer to Chinese vessels, is a derivative of the Malay *jong* (Shaffer 1996, 13). To prove the ability of the Malays in trade and their advancement in maritime culture, Muchtar Ahmad (see *Kompas* 2000b) argued that:

*Sebelum Melaka jatuh ke tangan Portugis tahun 1511, kerajaan tersebut memiliki pelabuhan terbesar di dunia. Bangsa Melayu saat itu sudah mampu membuat kapal berbobot 300 ton, disusul bongkar muat barang yang dilakukan dalam waktu 24 jam. Ini hanya bisa dicapai karena baiknya pengaturan pelabuhan dan kemampuan mengelola kelautan secara efisien dan efektif.*²⁷

(Before the fall of Malacca into the hands of the Portugese in 1511, the government owned the biggest harbour in the world. The Malays at that time had been able to build 300-tonne vessels, followed by a loading speed of 24 hours. This can only be done because of good port arrangement and the ability to supervise maritime affairs efficiently and effectively.)

If the above claims are true and can be used to represent the knowledge advancement in the Malay-Indonesian world, then a question raised by Rendra (2000) is relevant. Rendra (2000, 34) asked: How could they (the people of Malay-Indonesian world) have been so easily defeated by the seamen and trader elite from Europe even though they had the ability of building vessels and other achievements (e.g. higher food technology than the Europeans; constructed temples and achieved excellence in arts)? According to Rendra (2000), the root cause was their education, which did not encourage science²⁸ and rhetoric²⁹. Rendra (2000) is right in claiming that “*apresiasi terhadap fakta obyektif belum membudaya di Indonesia* (appreciation of objective facts has not yet become a culture in Indonesia)” (p. 37). The reason as to why rationality had not yet become a culture, according to Rendra (2000), was due to the priority given to *hati* (liver) and feeling:

Leluhur kita tahu fakta objektif, tetapi menganggap fakta yang sudah diendapkan di kalbu, jadi subjektif, itu lebih penting. Maka laku verifikasi bukan kritik atau tinjauan objektif, melainkan verifikasi kepada kemantapan hati (Rendra 2000, 35).

(Our ancestors knew about objective facts, but considered the facts that were embedded in the heart, which are subjective, as more important. Therefore the act of verification was not criticism or objective survey, but verification according to the stability of liver [*hati*].)

Leluhur kita dalam menganalisa teks lebih menjurus kepada merasakan di dalam batin, sehingga pada puncaknya menjadi ilmu kebatinan (Rendra 2000, 36).

(Our ancestors were inclined to feelings in their *batin* [inner self] in analysing text, until it became the knowledge of mysticism (read: speculation) at the highest point.)

Rendra's observation is generally acceptable but not sufficient. As we have seen in Chapter 4, the Malays do possess the logical patterns of reasoning just like the Anglo-American tradition. They are as rational as their Western counterparts. However, the possession of logical skills alone will not help if there is no dialectical culture or attitude. This brings me to the idea of Siegel (1993), i.e. that we should differentiate between the knowledge of good argument (skills) and the critical attitudes (character). The knowledge of logic will not be useful without the right critical attitudes. But why did the dialectical argumentation and the critical attitude not become their priority? Again my answer is the culture of *budi*. *Budi* has a high convincing power as it contains moral and values, which are rooted in culture. Using Filipino proverbs as his data, Mercado (1994, 45ff) revealed to us the nature of Filipino reasoning, which tends to give more priority to moral and values. Appeal to values, according to Mercado (1994), is more convincing than appeal to reason as it is rooted in culture. Mercado's opinion harmonises well with the Malay proverbs and their reasoning, because the highest value of *budi* is highly adored among the Malay folks. According to Bogart (1998, 158):

The Malay people have a strong sense of community spirit. They adhere to a moral system of behaviour called *budi*, which is concerned with both outward social relations and internal personal ethics. Some of the basic values under *Budi* include: respect; courtesy; filial piety and respect for elders; harmonious relations within the family, the village and society as a whole.

The culture of *budi* is not confrontational but a succumbed culture. What are the priorities of the Malays can be observed through their reasoned-language, *peribahasa*. In their proverbs, we can see two important and interesting categories, which have often been used. The two categories with the highest frequency of occurrence in the Malay proverbs are *air* (water) and *padi* (paddy/rice)³⁰ and their related terms (e.g. *beras*, *nasi*) (See Table 6.3 and also Table 4.3). These two categories imply the

Malay conception of *budi*, which to me is water in form (flexible and adjustable) and paddy in spirit. Both these elements are non-confrontational entities.

Table 6.3: Water and Paddy-Related Words in Malay Proverbs

Numbers	Categories	Number of Entries in Abdullah Hussain (1991)	Number of Entries in Abdullah Hussain (1966)
1	<i>Air</i> (water)	77 (+2)* = 79 * proverbs no. 3393 and 3395 are not listed in the index.	130
2	<i>Padi</i> (paddy, rice in the field)	26 Total numbers of paddy-related words = 26 + 23 + 8 + 7 + 2 + 2 = 68 [there are also other word related to paddy, viz. <i>Emping</i> (a stage before the ripe paddy or young paddy) but was not being included in Abdullah Hussain (1991). <i>Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia</i> (1991: 262) listed three of them: i. <i>emping berantah</i> , ii. <i>emping terserak hari hujan</i> and iii. <i>sudah biasa makan emping</i> . I also do not include instruments used to separate paddy husks (<i>sekam</i>) from husked paddy grain (<i>beras</i>) like <i>antan</i> (6), <i>alu</i> (4) and <i>lesung</i> (5).	13
3	<i>Nasi</i> (rice which has been cooked)	23	13
4	<i>Antah</i> (paddy that can be found in cooked rice)	8	-
5	<i>Beras</i> (husked rice)	7	11
6	<i>Melukut</i>	2	-
7	<i>Pulut</i> (glutinous rice)	2	-

Sources: Analysis was first based on indexes in Abdullah Hussain (1991, 234-275) and was later compared to Abdullah Hussain (1966).

The Malay philosophy, from my viewpoint, emerged through the adaptation of “*falsafah air*” (philosophy of water) and “*semangat padi*” (spirits of paddy)³¹. The Malay culture is moulded by the culture of paddy and water. This tendency is understandable as there can be no wet-rice without water. According to Kathirithamby-Wells (1992): “In Southeast Asia, as in monsoon Asia, wet-rice or *sawah* cultivation in the river valleys and deltas provided the economic foundations for state formation” (p. 20). Besides acting as a main food³² for the Malays, rice is used symbolically to represent *semangat baik* (good spirit/ soul). Malays use rice in its various forms (i.e. *bertih*, *beras kunyit* and *pulut semangat*) in various ceremonies (i.e. folk belief) as a “mediating” agent of recovering spirit. The importance of paddy can also be perceived from proverbs like *ada padi semua kerja jadi*, *ada beras*

semua kerja deras ‘If there is paddy all works will be ready, if there is rice all works will be speedy’ (KIPM 2: 21) and *ada padi, segala menjadi* ‘If there is paddy, everything will be ready’ (KIPM 2: 20). According to Wan Abdul Kadir (1993b, 156):

Kehidupan orang Melayu yang bergantung kepada padi itu pada umumnya mempengaruhi keseluruhan kehidupan mereka. Dengan itu penghidupan yang berkisar kepada padi itu melahirkan corak budayanya yang tersendiri yang boleh diteliti sebagai “budaya padi.”

(The Malay way of life, which is dependent on paddy, generally influences their whole living. Therefore, the paddy-centred life gives birth to its own cultural pattern that can be analysed as “the culture of paddy.”)

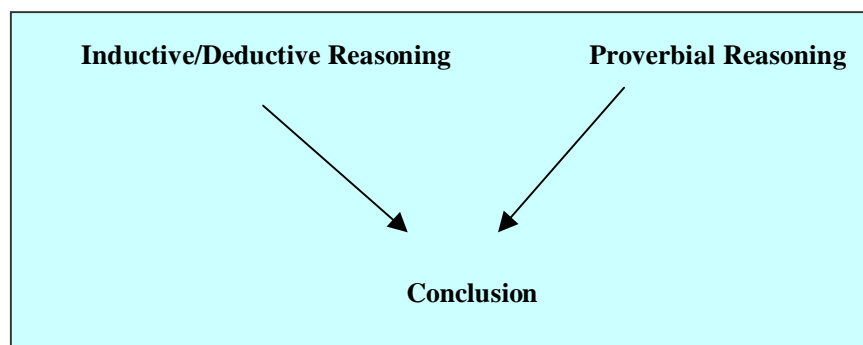
The nature of water and paddy may perhaps also explain why and how the Malay-Indonesian world could accept differences of religious belief and civilisations. Perhaps one of the quotations from *Dao-de-jing* written by the Chinese philosopher Laozi is appropriate to explain the tolerance of the Malays in accepting the external forces as water “dwells in places which people detest” but “it benefits all things and does not compete with them” (*Dao-te-jing*, Chapter 8). Water also possesses a general character of being *lemah-lembut* (gentle) and *rendah diri* (humble) as it never creates direct confrontation with their opponent(s). The water logic is neither competing nor confronting, but hidden and absorbing; whereas Western logic is rock logic, which is confrontational, competitive and direct in approach.³³ As *Dao-te-jing* (Chapter 78) said: “There is nothing softer and weaker than water, and yet there is nothing better for attacking hard and strong things.” As for paddy, it is always humble as compared to *lalang* (tall grass) which I have cited from the Malay proverbial sayings earlier.

Non-dialectical Political Setting of the Region

Politically, the Malay-Indonesian world did not have a political system that would allow the emergence of dialectical argumentation as in ancient Greece, and therefore logical disputation was not so dominant. Pure reason without giving place to “*budi* and its network” was considered too limited in the eyes of the Malays. Throughout history, the Malay-Indonesian world was ruled by an imperialist system like China, or to be specific, a *dewaraja*-typed of governance. As far as we know, there has never existed any democratic tradition in this region as compared to Greece, where the democratic political system was well established.³⁴ As such, authority was more important than rationality. There is no obvious tradition of dialectic, to encourage them to doubt and to raise objections as can be observed in “Socratic Questioning.” In analysing Greek tragedy’s part on the Indonesian stage, Carle (1994) juxtaposed Greek culture and Javanese³⁵ (read: Malay-Indonesian) culture as philosophy versus mysticism or rational versus natural culture phenomena. According to him, the independent and sovereign individual, the primacy *ratio* and personal conscience “cannot be achieved in Indonesian society, because of the preponderant tendency to strengthen the <<sovereignty of nature>>: the

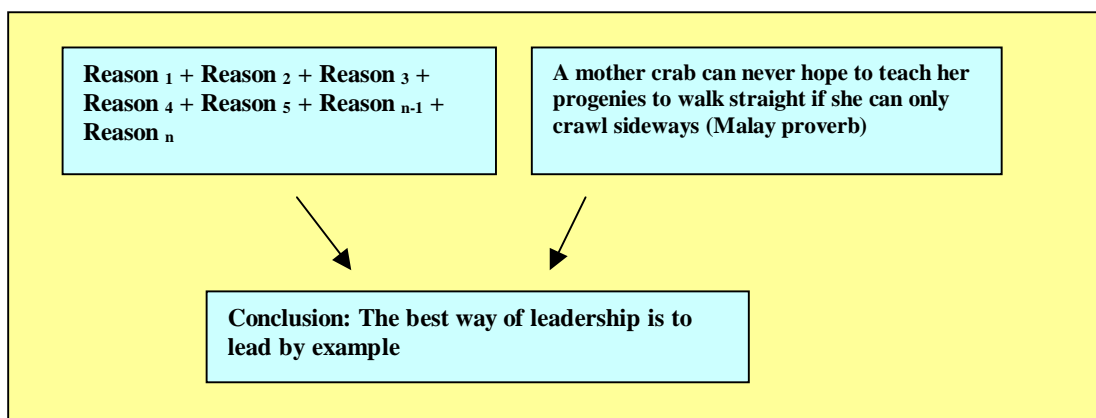
manifestation of the rulers, the status of the authorities, of parents and officials” (Carle 1994: 401). The young Indonesian should perhaps learn the analytical and logical values from the Greek tragedians through a Javanese Antigone, who dared to reprimand Creon, the ruler as contrasted to Ismene, who was afraid. Furthermore, the Malays believe that direct criticism is something impolite. They choose to swipe away elements of rationality under the carpet of veiled criticism through *bahasa kiasan* and proverbs. In order to judge their own argument, they tend to criticise in accordance to folk wisdom and the authority of their ancestors. This tendency and strategy of criticism continue to exist even among contemporary Malay writers or social critics, especially in Malaysia and to a lesser extent in Indonesia.

My observation of the latest writings published in the local media, be it printed media (i.e. newspapers) or the Internet media show the same trend. The observation was mainly based on *Utusan Malaysia* (Malaysia), *Berita Harian* (Malaysia), *Kompas* (Indonesia) and Malaysia Kini (www.malaysiakini.com), besides certain articles which were obtained from miscellaneous sources in the past two years (1999-2001).³⁶ A closer look at these articles and letters from readers revealed an interesting trend among most of the writers, especially when they argue about certain political issues. The Malay proverbial reasoning remains integral in their arguments. In this context of observation, *peribahasa* was used mostly as the “topic sentence” of their lines of argument, either at the beginning of the articles (e.g. see Hishamuddin Rais 2001, Raja Petra Kamarudin 2000a, Aman Rais 2001a and Maarop Md Noh 2001)³⁷ or at the end (i.e. See Aman Rais 2001b, M. Bakri Musa 2000, Nur Muhammad Arif 2000 and Raja Petra Kamarudin 2000b)³⁸. There are also usage of proverbs in other non-argumentative writings (i.e. news, exposition, narration) (See e.g. Kompas 2000a) but I will not further elaborate them as they are not relevant to the concept of argumentation that I am discussing now. Whether they are used at the beginning or at the end of an article, the motive of *peribahasa* is to criticise the opponent in an indirect and cynical way and looks rather *berbudi bahasa* and civilised. This tendency of using proverbs is to convey part of their *akal budi*. The arguer tries to hide his own self (*atma, diri*) and his/ her own argument using the authority of his society or ancestors. In this perspective, he is applying a collective approach rather than individualistic one.³⁹ To the Malays, the wisdom of the ancestral society or collective mind is always higher than the argument from a single individual. The use of proverbs together with the normal logical reasoning represents their loyalty to the ancestral society and the effort to downplay the existence of the arguer as an individual. This is a kind of “*serampang dua mata*”, double-support, double-effect or double-strata argument, which is used to attack the opponent with two bullets from a single shot. Both parts (logical premises and proverbs) finally meet at the conclusion (see Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Argument of “*Serampang Dua Mata*”

In order to see the application of this argument of “*serampang dua mata*” as a rhetorical strategy of the Malay logic and *budi*, let us look at one of the many examples in order to elaborate how they function. In one of his articles, M. Bakri Musa (2000) used the inductive pattern of reasoning and proverbial reasoning at the same time to justify his conclusion that “the best way of leadership is to lead by example.” His lines of arguments⁴⁰ can be drawn in the following form of an argument tree, as shown below:

Figure 6.2: Double-Effect Argument (Example 1)



The use of proverbial reasoning or argument can be interpreted in two different ways: (i) the attitude of being *rendah diri*; and (ii) as a type of veiled criticism. In the first sense, the arguer puts his or her point parallel or lower than *peribahasa*. The use of normal logical argumentation is arranged in support of the wisdom of the past. They use proverbs in the same way we use academic quotations from certain experts in a relevant and related field. Alisjahbana (1948) compared the role of *peribahasa* in those days and in our modern context when he said:

Sebagai buah pikiran, sebagai bukti, sebagai nasihat, pepatah itu diganti oleh sitat (kutipan) dari orang ahli, jang sudah menjelidiki dan mempertimbangkan utjapannja itu sedalam-dalamnja, atau sekurang-kurangnja jang dapat didjamin keahliannja (p. 49).

(As a fruit of thought, as evidence, as advice, the proverb is replaced by citation (quotation) from an expert, who has already done his research and has considered in depth his speech, or at least his expertise can be ensured.)

The second interpretation is closer to analogy. Proverbs are used to criticise opponents in the manner of “*pukul anak sindir menantu*”. This kind of criticism is stronger and is rhetorically planned in order to let the opponent know and feel for himself without resorting to direct confrontation. The use of *akal fikiran* (mind) in the form of inductive reasoning or deductive reasoning alone is not enough; *budi* in a broader sense should be added to make it more authoritative and fruitful. Wan Abdul Kadir (1993b, 86) said, “*Menggunakan akal fikiran untuk membawa sesuatu yang baik dikatakan menggunakan akal budi. Cara menggunakan akal budi sebaik mungkin sangat dipandang tinggi dan dihormati orang Melayu* (Using the mind to bring about something good can be said as using *akal budi*. How *akal budi* is used as best possible is higher admired and respected by the Malays).” According to Rejab (1993), “*peribahasa sering digunakan sebagai seni bahasa yang menunjukkan ketinggian peribadi dan kemuliaan budi* (Peribahasa has always been used as a linguistic art to show an esteemed personality and an honourable character (*budi*)).” The reason the Malays resort to *peribahasa* as part of their artistic criticism is due to the importance of *budi* as a synthesis between reason and emotion that exists in it. Abdullah Jusoh (1993) provided two reasons on the importance of *peribahasa*:

Pertama, peribahasa adalah penting dalam mengekalkan cara-gaya berkomunikasi dan berfikir manusia yang – mempunyai otak dan perasaan – berbeza dengan makhluk lain atau pun mesin robot yang statik. Kedua, terdapatnya tanda-tanda pada mutakhir zaman ini di mana peribahasa atau kata-kata hikmat masih diperlukan sebagai ‘akar’ meneguhkan wawasan, semangat, keyakinan, hujah dan pendapat.

(First, *peribahasa* is important in maintaining the method and style of communication and thinking of humans, who have brain and feelings – different from other creatures or the static robot.

Second, there are signs in this contemporary era where *peribahasa* or words of wisdom are still needed as a root to strengthen vision, spirit, confidence, argument and opinion.)

Abdullah Jusoh’s idea reveals two relevant issues. First, he treats the use of *peribahasa* as more humane in the process of communication and thinking and second, the role of *peribahasa* in strengthening argument and opinion. Abdullah Jusoh’s idea is supported by Hassan Ahmad (2001b) that the existence of *akal budi* and *hati budi* is very important to the Malays as these two elements are part of their core identity. According to Hassan Ahmad (2001b):

Jati diri Melayu tidak hanya terletak pada budaya luaran tetapi lebih penting lagi pada minda atau akal budi bangsa Melayu sebagaimana yang dapat kita kaji dan hayati dalam karya-karya persuratan tradisional Melayu, misalnya dalam karya-karya agung Melayu, seperti Sulalat al-Salatin (Sejarah Melayu) dan Hikayat Hang Tuah, dalam puisi tradisional Melayu, seperti pantun dan syair dan dalam peribahasa Melayu. Sementara bahasa Melayu menjadi alat perakamnya, agama Islam menjadi sumber dan acuan pemikir dan ilmunya, kepercayaan dan pandangan sejabatnya.

(The Malay identity does not only depend on external culture but what is more important the Malay mind or *akal budi*, as we can scrutinise and appreciate in the Malay traditional literature, for instance in the great Malay literature like *Sulalat al Salatin* (Malay Annals) and *Hikayat Hang Tuah*,⁴¹ in traditional Malay poetry like *pantun* and *syair* and Malay proverbs. While the Malay language becomes the recording instrument, Islam becomes its source and mould of the thinker and his knowledge, his beliefs and his universal view.)

Hassan Ahmad is right in saying that the Malays not only depend on external culture but also what has been embedded in their literature. But to conclude that Islam is the source is an effort to deny the beliefs of the early Malay folks. This internal culture of *budi* had actually emerged long before Islam and should be treated as part of the culture of paddy. It would be more acceptable to say that the arrival of Islam later further strengthened the Malay conception of *budi*. In his other writing, Hassan Ahmad (2001c) claimed that the Malay mind or culture does not separate the left brain (left hemisphere of the brain) and right brain (right hemisphere of the brain), but consciously or unconsciously uses the brain, as a tool to bring about thinking and wisdom.⁴² This cognitive process is reflected from the term *akal budi* which had formed what we call *budaya berfikir* (thinking culture) or the Malay mind. This characteristic can be studied based on the Malay “traditional” literature, either in the form of *sastera tulisan* (writing literature) or *sastera lisan* (oral literature), like *hikayat*, traditional poetry (e.g., *pantun* and *syair*) and *peribahasa* (Malay proverbs), or the knowledge-based literature or in the form of *sastera kitab* (religious literature). This civilisation was further strengthened by the values of knowledge and thinking based on the concept of Islamic *tauhid* – the worldly knowledge and the other worldly knowledge cannot be separated (See Hassan Ahmad 2001c, 42). As conclusion, a quotation by Hassan Ahmad (2001c) will perhaps elaborate well the effort of the Malays to balance and strengthen the roles of reason and emotion in the Malay mind:

... budaya akal budi Melayu bukan hanya merupakan hasil proses kognitif yang berlaku di bahagian otak sebelah kiri semata-mata, proses yang biasanya dikatakan bersifat “rasional” atau “logikal”, tetapi juga proses yang datangnya dari lubuk hati dan perasaan manusia (Hassan Ahmad 2001c, 43)

(... the Malay cultural *akal budi* is not only the outcome of our cognitive process which takes place in the left brain, a process which is usually to be said as “rational” or “logical”, but also a process that comes from *hati* and human feelings).

What Can We Learn from *Budi*? Synthesis between the Role of Reason and Emotion

After a lengthy discussion above on the theory of *budi*, let us now consider the actual advantages and disadvantages of *budi* as a way of achieving conflict resolution? Is the avoidance of direct confrontation as seen in rational argumentation a better solution for the conflict in the personal and also public sphere? In order to answer this question, there should be a proper understanding of argument as a way of resolving disagreement as well as in the particular sphere of life. Rationality should not be worshipped in all dimensions of life. There should be time for rationality, expression of emotion and the combination of both or more (*budi*). It is the demand of history that these elements (reason, emotion, *budi*) become obvious in certain community and hidden in the others. To conclude that there is only one “rational” way of resolving disagreement is to totally deny the need for space and time throughout history. Let us examine its advantages first (*Budi* 1) before scrutinising its weaknesses (*Budi* 2).

Budi 1: The Goodness of the Good

The results that I have obtained prove that the strength of the Malay mind lies in the application of *budi*, and as such, the man of culture should be based on *budi* as well. The highest stage of a man of culture is for him or her to achieve the stage of *budiman* or the man of *budi*, where the word *budi* should be treated as a synthetic connotation between the acuity of reason and the gentleness of feeling or what we feel through *hati*. However, when we really look through the development of the Malay civilisation, we find that the role of *budi* has been gradually slipping or descending into a semantic jargon which takes the rather limited form of “kindness” (*terhutang budi* and *rasa berterima kasih*) or gratefulness. The Malays should go back to the real *budi*, which is supposed to be the core of the Malay mind, their reasoning and their culture. They should reidentify, reconstruct and repromote the fineness of *budi*, which is actually not only ethical in nature but also epistemologically-covered. The Western civilisation, which is rooted in the Greek tradition, gives priority to rationality and reason. Aristotelian logic has dominated Western philosophy for more than 2000 years. I am not making the claim that rationality as shown through the use of the mind is not important; rather I am stressing that it should not be the only method by which humans solve their disagreement and problems. Johnson (2000) when arguing for the importance of thinking in our culture (read: Western culture) also stressed on the importance of both reason and emotion. Citing Star Trek and Spock as an example, Johnson (2000) remarked:

Spock is clearly intelligent, but his is an intelligence in which emotion has no place. That is worrisome because although Spock is intelligent and has well-developed analytic skills, his head and his heart seem to dwell in different universes. This creates the idea that being logical means being unemotional, aseptic, or clinical. This is a lamentable mythology: Logic and emotion can, do, and should work together. A human without emotion and affect is quite as deranged as one without mind and reason. (Johnson 2000, 17-18).

The importance of *budi* as the combination of reason, emotion and ethical values in the Malay culture might have its own basis. Perhaps the idea of David Hume (1711-1776 C.E.) will impress on us as to how and why emotion and ethical values have always been a part of the Malay mind. Hume concluded that the most basic beliefs, upon which all of our knowledge is founded, cannot be established by reason. Reason cannot motivate us to be moral. Nevertheless, our emotions can do so (Solomon and Higgins 1997, 82).

The Malay thinking of *budi* is generally closer to other Eastern thinking. The ideas of To Thi Anh (1984) and Lin Yutang (1946) seem to fit well with the Malay mind. To Thi Anh (1984, 66) claimed that Eastern thinkers are more in favour of the use of intuition⁴³ as compared to rationality. To her:

Para pemikir Timur sebaliknya lebih menyukai intuisi daripada akal budi. Untuk mereka, pusat kepribadian seseorang bukanlah inteletnya tetapi "hati"-nya, yang mempersatukan akal budi dan intuisi, inteligensia dan perasaan. Mereka menghayati hidup dalam keseluruhan adanya, bukan hanya dengan otak (p. 66).

(Those Eastern thinkers on the contrary prefer intuition than reason. For them, the centre of one's personality is not their intellect but their heart, which combines reason and intuition, intelligence and feeling. They experience life as a whole, not only through the brain.)

Furthermore, "in contrast to logic, there is common sense, or still better, the Spirit of Reasonableness," according to Lin Yutang (1946, 7, first published in 1937). The place and importance of "*hati*" is strongly supported by him. He asserted that "A cultured man is one who understands thoroughly the human heart and the law of things." (*Ibid.*) Logic alone is not enough to solve problems as it is inhuman. Lin Yutang (1946) described the contrast nicely:

Humanized thinking is just reasonable thinking. The logical man is always self-righteous and therefore inhuman and therefore wrong, while the reasonable man suspects that perhaps he is wrong and is therefore always right [...]. The genial thinker is one who, after proceeding doggedly to *prove* a proposition by long-winded arguments, suddenly arrives at intuition, and by a flash of common sense annihilates his preceding arguments and admits that he is wrong. That is what I call humanized thinking (*Ibid.*, pp. 7-8, italic in original).⁴⁴

Despite the importance of emotion and intuition in the Malay mind, the Malays still believe that emotion should be governed by reason, and this was well observed by Peletz (1996). According to him:

Malays commonly underscore that it is humans' possession of "reason" that separates them from other animals, but they also point out that "reason" and *hati* (liver, the seat of emotions) "work together" within all humans. Some Malays refer to the liver as the "ruler" (*raja*) of the human body and note that it "governs" or "regulates" (*merintah*) (sic) the rest of the body, much like a ruler or commander governs his army. In other contexts it is said that *iman* (faith, strong belief or trust in God, sincerity, resoluteness) is the "ruler" or "magistrate" (*hakim*) within us, and that one's *iman* "co-operates" with "reason" to "kill" "passion" or at least "keep it in check" (p. 206).

Such views and expressions as shown by Peletz are very interesting in light of their emphasis both on cooperation, struggle and killing and on the roles of ruler, commander, and magistrate. The analogy of ruler, commander and magistrate suggests that the Malays believe in the relationship between society and body politic. It also shows that there is a parallel between human body, human nature and the socio-political order of a society. In addition, the Malays suggest that the human body is regarded much like a ruler's realm, kingdom or territory, and that the health and illness of the body are conceptualised in much the same terms as socio-political order or disorder. Thus the individual experiences well-being when co-operation and balance prevail among the elements making up his or her body, a sign that the "ruler" of the body is in control of its realm. Conversely, the individual experiences illness when cooperation and balance no longer prevail among the constituent elements of his or her body, an indication that the ruler has lost control of its realm. These and related points concerning control and sovereignty should be kept in mind throughout the ensuing discussion (see Peletz 1996, p. 206). Peletz's analysis of the relationship between society and body politic of the Malays is interesting indeed if we try to compare it with the idea of Plato (427 – 347 B.C.E.). Plato treated the hierarchy of a society by comparing it with the human body and human nature as well. In Plato's idea, human psychological elements or three parts of the soul (i.e. rational soul, spirited soul and appetitive soul) are well enough to explain who should hold the key position in a society. He considered the Philosopher-king as representing the rational element; warriors as representing the spirit; and the people in general as the element of desire in a human body. Unlike Plato, a rationalist himself, who stressed on the importance of rationality, which is now becoming the focal point of the Western civilisation, the Malays however choose a synthesis bridge of combining elements of reason and emotion (*budi*) in order to arrive at their problem-solving harbour, where they resolve their conflict. The Malay ways of reasoning are rather synthesistic and pluralistic. As such, they cannot really engage in an open and dialectical mode of reasoning. Perhaps the purpose of dialectical reasoning for the sake of truth and knowledge is lacking among the Malays as compared to Westerners. The Malays sacrifice their personal, open and dialectical attitudes to uphold societal

harmony. All confronting ideas will be absorbed in their *hati budi* and *akal budi*, even though they might not agree.

The idea of *budi* as we have proven plays a tremendous importance in the Malay thinking and worldview. The status of *budi* is much higher than reason, emotion and intuition in the eyes of the Malays. The Malays, who live in an environment and centre of Eastern and Western wisdom, combine both the reason and intuition nicely into their concept of *budi*. The idea of *budi* is now actually in line with Salk's (1983) understanding about the anatomy of reality. Salk (1983), who tries to reconcile biological knowledge with philosophical and moral problems, affirmed the importance of a convergence approach in thinking:

A new way of thinking is now needed to deal with our present reality, which is sensed more sensitively through intuition than by our capacity to observe and to reason objectively. Our subjective responses (intuitional) are more sensitive and more rapid than our objective responses (reasoned). This is in the nature of the way the mind works. We first sense and then we reason why. Intuition is an innate quality, but it can be developed and cultivated (Salk 1983, 79).⁴⁵

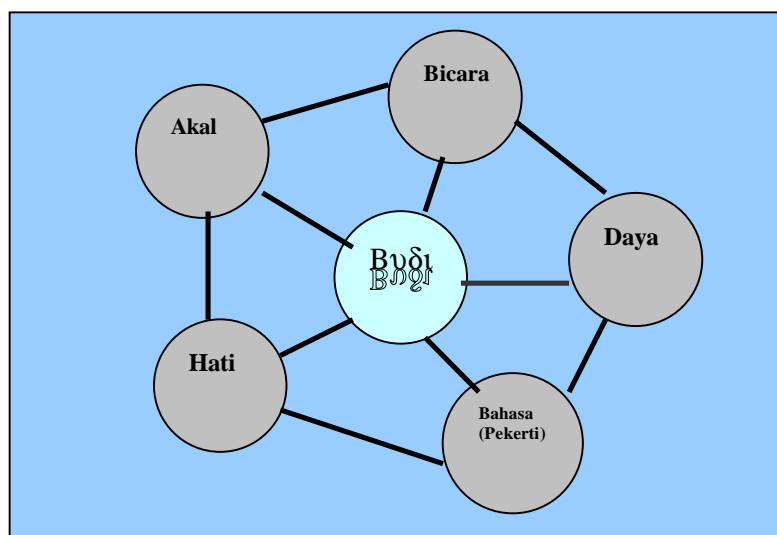
For Salk (1983), "intuition and reason play a powerful role in our lives and it is necessary, therefore, to understand each separately and together" (p. 79).

Budi is very important in resolving the conflict of the Malays, besides helping them to cope with the bombardment of various diverse foreign civilisations and cultures. It is also useful for the sake of social harmony within a multiracial, multireligious and multicultural social and political formation. The existence of *peribahasa* parallel to logical thought as taught in a modern logical textbook justifies the universality of logical thinking of the human race like how our language generally operates along the subject-predicate-object construction. But why have logical thinking and rationality always been treated as a Western insight? The logical mind is not a Western construct but something universal. It is rhetoric and dialectic that are culture-dependent as I have classified the conception of argument as a way people resolve their conflicts. It is not Aristotle who taught us how to think logically. Aristotle's contribution was his ability to systematise the logical methods, which have actually existed long before him, although perhaps in a rather scattered fashion.

The development of logical thought in the West is much more encouraging as its priority was different from the priority of the Eastern world then. Furthermore, its cultural tradition and political setting have provided it with such a tendency. As a meeting point of different epistemological worldviews, cultural values and civilisations, what the Malay world really needed then was how to avoid conflict, and history has shown us that this part of the world, if not the best, was one the most successful and effective regions in handling conflict at that time. In order to resolve conflicts between various

civilisations and tolerate the differences that arose in this cultural and political setting, the Malay-Indonesian world has indeed tried to synthesise various positive values (*akal budi*, *hati budi*, *budi pekerti* etc.), and these values were later being crystalised into a greater molecular ideal of *budi* (see Figure 6.3 Below). At this stage, we can perhaps call the Malay philosophy eclecticism. *Budi* to the Malay mind is not an atomistic component but rather a molecule. It can be observed but cannot be fully broken down, as these components are always interconnected and intertwined, even if we were to present them in a scientific laboratory under the study of logical or emotional chemistry. This molecule of *budi* and the concept of *budiman*^{wise person/ sage} reminded me of what we can see in the *Confucian Analects* as interpreted by Fung Yu-lan (1976, 42-43), in which Confucius sometimes used the word *jen* (*ren* in Pinyin, normally translated as human-heartedness) not only to denote a special kind of virtue, but also to denote all the virtues in combination, so that the term “man with *jen*” becomes synonymous with the man with all-round virtues. It is in this sense we can see that *budiman*^{wise person/ sage} is the man with all-round *budi*^{virtue} or what I have coined earlier “*budi* and its networks.” If *jen* can be translated as “perfect virtue” in such contexts, then the Malay *budi* can be constructed in the same manner as “perfect virtue” of the Malays.

Figure 6.3: Molecularisation of the *Budi*



Dialectical thinking, which stresses on who will be the champion in the battle of the mind, is not important in the Malay world and as such is not fully developed. What was more important then was to accommodate the various dimensions of the human mind (i.e. reason, emotion) to suit and adjust to the diversification of cultural values and religions. The fact that the dialectical mind is not developed in this part of the world is understandable. Biologically, if certain parts of our human body are not

being used, it will be weakened in much the same way our muscles will get smaller and weaker if we do not exercise them. Musa Hitam (2001b) said:

Kedudukan Malaysia yang strategik dari segi geografi, iaitu pada laluan Timur-Barat, menyebabkan negara kita menjadi pusat pertembungan peradaban dunia, seperti Hindu, China, Islam, dan Barat.

Kedudukan strategik Asia Tenggara di persimpangan jalan antara Timur-Barat membolehkan rantau ini menjadi pusat pertembungan dan peleburan tradisi budaya besar.

(The strategic geographical location of Malaysia, which is in the East-West pathway, has caused our country to become the centre of collision between various world civilisations, e.g. Hindu, Chinese, Islam and the West.

The strategic location of South-east Asia in the East-West junction allows this region to become the meeting and melting point of great cultural traditions.⁴⁶⁾

Looking back at history, we should be able to note that the culture of *budi* and its networks has actually managed to help the Malays to steer away from the path of racial, religious and civil conflicts. Tan (2001) praised the high tolerant attitude and open-mindedness that the Malays had shown throughout the course of their civilisation. Based on the latest anthropological report, Tan pronounced that the Malays were, intermittently, Hindus or Buddhists for at least 1,200 years (1-13 century A.C.E.).⁴⁷ The Malays developed a great civilisation and established many independent and interdependent kingdoms under the influence of Hinduism and Buddhism. The Malay Archipelago had even become the centre of learning and propagation of religious teachings for Asia. The Malay culture has never stopped the development of intellectual exchange, debate or even heated argumentation on sensitive issues in those days (i.e. equal rights). According to Tan (2001):

The debate between the Malay Buddhists and the Malay Hindus on the idea of equal rights for all races even started as early as 1,000 years ago. But unlike in other parts of the world, no major violence or bloodshed had ever occurred as a consequence of the heated arguments allowed by the freedom of expression at its age. Although in the archipelago as in India, Buddhism failed to persuade the people to demolish the caste system, which bestowed the Brahmins (the highest class) some special rights, the Malays continued to live harmoniously (Cf. Tee 2000).

Tan (2001) is right that there was a culture of debate, but there was no critical reasoning under the dialectical framework as authority still remained superior.⁴⁸ What was more impressive to Tan was the state of no religious conflict despite the mass conversion of the Malays into the Islamic faith. The caste system of Hinduism, according to Tan (2001), which Buddhism failed to get rid off in the Malay-Indonesian world had been successfully eradicated, with the help of the teachings of Islam.⁴⁹

All these events took place peacefully until the downfall of the Melaka Islamic Sultanate in 1511 at the hands of Western colonialists.

Budi 2: Deceiving Nature, Lack of Competitiveness and Non-dialectical Aspect of Argument

Despite the usefulness of positive *budi* that we had already discussed so far, we must not forget that *budi* also has its negative dimension. In Malay, *bermain budi* (literally, to play with *budi*) means to cheat or to deceive (*menipu* or *tipudaya*) and *memperbudikan* also means the same thing (See *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* 1991, 150). This negative connotation reminds us that we should not be too extreme in whatever stand we take as anything that is pushed to extremity will engender the opposite result: *rendah diri* will become *hina diri*; *berbudi* too will become what the Malays say *mengada-ngada* (over-acting). As early as 1891, Clifford in his article “A New Collection of Malay Proverbs” observed an interesting trend about the Malay rhetoric. According to him: “In discussions among Malays, too, it is the man who can quote, and not he who can reasons, that bears away the palm” (p. 88). Clifford had a point in terms of dialectical argumentation. The Malays must have their reasons as to why they choose not to reason. As usual, reasons demand argumentation in return and it will perhaps bring the two parties (rhetor and opponent) into a state of confrontation. As compared to reasons, quotations bring the arguer and arguee into a state of agreement, into their cultural memory and into the *budi* of their ancestors and cultural wisdom.

Budi is an entity which is non-dialectical and therefore hinders the true spirit of dialectical argumentation. It is due to the lack of dialectical argumentation that distinguishes the Malays from the Greeks. No doubt, the application of *budi* in human affairs and human relationships is more humane as we have seen earlier, but *budi* is something situational. As compared to rationality, which is more confrontational, competitive, forceful, aggressive and hostile, where “truth” and “winner” are its purposes; *budi* encourages the opposite, which is non-confrontational, non-competitive, gentle, friendly and succumbing (give in/give way) because its final goal is consensus and compromise. Hence, I believe that it should be our responsibility to have a real understanding of rationality, *budi* or even emotion and their employment in our everyday affairs.

The culture of *budi*, as I see it, should be adjustable to two different spheres, viz. rational-public sphere versus emotional-personal sphere. Since the concept of *budi* was taking root as the middle path of argumentation, it is rather hard to fit it into the rational-public sphere where the purpose of argumentation is the achievement of truth through rational persuasion. The search for knowledge should be based on the concept of truth or falsehood, white or black. It cannot accommodate a synthesistic nature of both truth and falsehood, both black and white at the same time or a positioning between these two polarities, or something which we can call spectrum of truth. *Budi*, however, is

something synthesistic and arational, which tends to compromise between both polarities as long as consensus and compromise can be achieved. Nonetheless, there are many realms of human communication which is arational.⁵⁰ In order to handle this arational sphere, we should not be carried away by pure emotions. The champion of truth through rationality might accuse the Malay *budi* as two-faced, hypocritical, deceitful or insincere in telling the truth. This claim is valid in one sense, but in another sense, we perhaps need more philosophical scrutiny and argumentation. For example, in the heat of the moment of a conflict, dialectical forcefulness will bring harm (i.e. claims a life), and therefore one should “lie” in order to preserve harmony. But this “lie” should be untangled when the heat is over. At the time, we should be able to neutralise these sentiments by balancing the passions of *hati* and the wisdom of rationality. Now we can at last arrive at a level of mutual understanding to settle the disagreement and this is where Gilbert’s definition of argument may be relevant. As Parrott (1995) remarked:

The heart appears the wisser when the primary issue is knowing oneself; the head appears superior to the extent that the issues are less subjective or that one’s current explicit knowledge of oneself is accurate (p. 81).

Suggestion for Future Direction of the Malay Paremiology: New Horizons Needed

What should be the future direction of the Malay paremiology and what should we study? I am not in a position to predict like *nujum Pak Belalang* (*Pak Belalang* the Astrologer) as to what will be the Malay paremiologists’ interest in future, but I propose that the Malay paremiologists should start talking and thinking about the revival of the studies of Malay literature generally and Malay paremiology particularly. Although there were quite a number of Malay proverb collections (e.g. Abdullah Hassan and Ainon Mohd 1993, Ensimal 1994) that could be found in the market from time to time, the ways in which proverbs had been classified were, however, still far from satisfactory. Only two main categories of Malay proverbs: *peribahasa* and *simpulan bahasa* are less disputable. Work should be done on the new method of classifying Malay proverbs and a more satisfying criterion is needed as to how *pepatah*, *perbilangan*, *perumpamaan* and the like can be differentiated (cf. Sweeney 1987, 290; Cf. Indirawati 1998). Future researches should give priority to the possibilities of different roles of various Malay proverbial genres which perhaps will give us some tips that *peribahasas* are more appropriately used within the rational persuasion whereas *simpulan bahasas*, especially *hati-bound* proverbs are more common within the emotional (either positive or negative) persuasion, as the shortness of *simpulan bahasas* makes them easier to convey our emotions. May be a better classification of various proverbial genres can give us a clearer picture on this idea in future (at this stage, the classification of the Malay proverbs is still uncertain and problematic. For discussion, see Indirawati 1998). There have been such attempts but most of them are quite confusing and intertwined

between one category and another (see Za'ba 1965, Sabaruddin Ahmad 1954). The studies on how Malay proverbs can be classified into “universal, regional and local proverbs” can also be carried out. The work of Paczolay (1996) can be used as a starting point to see what are the basic ideas that make certain Malay proverbs universal in nature; what kind of classics of a certain region dominated the regional proverbs of the Malay world, for example Sanskrit, Chinese, Arab or Western classics. The idea of “one cannot clap with one hand” can also be found in the Malay proverbs. According to Paczolay (1993, 271), this idea is already found in Sanskrit in the *Panchatantra* (II.137): “As no clapping results from one hand, fate will also not bring fruits for men without working.”⁵¹

Scholars throughout the world have also paid attention to the importance of proverbs in education and cultural literacy. They have attempted to find out what the paremiological minimum for their respective language might be [e.g. Russia, see Permyakov (1989), German, see Grzybek (1984) as cited in Mieder (1995h) and United States, see Mieder (1994, 1995h)]. Scholars of Malay proverbs, especially those from Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei,⁵² should be encouraged to begin establishing a paremiological minimum for their national language. This would be highly relevant for lexicographers involved in writing foreign language dictionaries or for teachers who teach Malay as a second language.

In order to survive the challenges of emerging new approaches in knowledge, the study of Malay proverbs should get the support from other disciplines of social sciences and humanities. Although there have been various brief discussions on Malay proverbs from differing perspectives, more research should be encouraged. Examples of such discussion are: “Malay Proverbs on Malay Character” by Wilkinson (1925), who attempted to know the Malay character from their proverbs; the aspect of logic, rationality and the precepts of science were briefly touched by Tham Seong Chee (1977, 80-84); proverbs from the context of psychology were chosen by Wan Rafaei Abdul Rahman (1993, 27), where the native psychology approach can also be seen through the *peribahasa* in order to obtain the Malay character on entrepreneurship; and Lim Kim Hui's (1998) efforts to locate the existence of logical principles, rationalisation, fallacies and prejudices, which can be found in the Malay proverbs. But all of these discussions are too superficial. The Malay paremiology thus remains in the periphery in the international proverb scholarship circle. The interest and involvement of scholars from other disciplines are really vital, especially in encouraging interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. Future research on Malay paremiology can also look at the possibility of tracing the political thinking and social history of the Malays as can be obtained from their proverbs, which touch on the relationship between kings or sultans and commoners, feudal lords and ladies, survival in serfdom (landlords and their servants) etc., that arose from experiences in such relations. These are only a few possibilities and the the ambit of research can go on, which I will leave to other researchers to tackle.

Limitation and Delimitation of the Study

This research may have various limitations and delimitations:

First, this analysis is generally targeted at the Malays as an ethnic group of Peninsular Malaysia but it might perhaps be inductively correct as well to cover other parts of the Malay-Indonesian world (Borneo, Sumatra, Java etc.) due to their common sharing of linguistic root. I do not intend to claim that this research will be absolutely representative of all sub-ethnic groups as more in-depth studies on the entire Malay-Indonesian world and their social milieu are bound to explore the differences of certain values and priority between different sub-ethnic groups like the Batak, Sundanese, Dayak, Javanese and Minang as compared to Malay as a single sub-ethnic group of its own. But generally, their styles of thinking would more or less fall into the same framework of the Malays through their language with the influence of amalgamationism and eclecticism. It is also purely a myth or fiction to claim that their identity is something pure and uncontaminated. According to Farish (in Daneels 2001), “Historically it’s impossible to show that there ever was a pure Malay Muslim culture, it never existed.” Furthermore, it will be impossible to really look at this issue from a purist perspective. Farish doubted that we can go for a pure and uncontaminated identity as:

in a society which is so creolised, where everyone is mixed. I can’t point to any Malay and say, I know where you’re from. You have a Bugis married to a Javanese, a Minang to an Acehnese, you have so many sub-groups (Daneels 2001).

Second, this research does not attempt to trace the origin of the Malay proverbs but has to accept the idea of the Malay paremiographers on Malay proverbs (what have been collected and defined as the Malay proverbs) which might have influenced very slightly its outcome. But then, this is not my purpose either. Thus, I will have to leave this question in the hands of philologists and etymologists. Furthermore, it will be impossible to trace the origin of every single Malay proverb before making a generalisation on the Malay mind. Blagden (1900) stated that it had been almost impossible to disentangle the foreign elements from the Malay folklore due to its considerable contact with Hindu, Buddhist, Islam and European civilisation. By comparing it with the Malay language, he said:

... Just as in the language of the Malays it is possible by analysis to pick out words of Sanskrit and Arabic origin from amongst the main body of genuinely native words, so in their folklore one finds Hindu, Buddhist, and Muhammadan ideas overlying a mass of apparently original Malay notions (p. xii).

These various elements of their folklore are, however, now so thoroughly mixed up together that it is often almost impossible to disentangle them (p. xiii).

To analyse the original values of the traditional Malays is indeed a very difficult task, said Ismail Hamid (1991, 78-79):

masyarakat Melayu sejak zaman silam menghadapi berbagai-bagai proses difusi dan akulturasi, bermula dengan kebudayaan Hindu, Islam dan Barat [...]. Oleh yang demikian sukar sekali untuk menentukan yang manakah nilai-nilai Melayu tradisi.

(The Malay society since the ancient era has to go through various processes of diffusion and acculturation, starting with the Hindu, Islamic and Western culture [...]. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to identify which are the traditional Malay values.)

However, according to him, among the sources which will help retrace the values of the traditional Malay society is their classical Malay literature. Winstedt (1961, 10) in his oft-referred book, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* described the influence of foreign elements in a rather cynical fashion:

Of proverbs the Malay has hundreds, applicable to every circumstance and to the most inconsistent conduct. Where we talk of ploughing the sand, he talks of throwing salt into the sea; where we speak of being in clover, he speaks of rats in the rice-bin; where we say, "Out of the frying pan into the fire," he says "Out of the jaws of the crocodile into the jaws of the tiger;" when we count our chickens before they are hatched, he grinds pepper to curry a bird on the wing. So fond was the Malay of this inchoate form of literature, that he has borrowed proverbs from many sources, until among his everyday sayings one meets not only Indian proverbs such as "the fence devours the crop," a criticism on breath of trust by an employee, but also Arabic proverbs such as, "A dog's tail can never be straight," "A rose fell to the lot of a monkey," "Who can plaster over the rays of the sun."

If we read *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (1940) by R. O. Winstedt, explained Hassan Ahmad (2001a, 8), we will get the impression that the classical Malay literature was adapted from Hindu and Arab-Persian tradition and literature. He further lamented that the impression one gets is that there is no original Malay literature; only "*sastera lisan* (oral literature)"⁵³ which is considered to be pre-classic, a term based on the influence of the Darwinian evolutionary perspective, which means more or less 'primitive.' What I found to be ironical in the course of this research is that what is known as oral tradition (read: *peribahasa*), which is something 'primitive', is indeed full of logical thread, virtue and high culture.

For me, I agree with Winstedt from one angle but disagree with him from another. I agree that there should be some elements of influence⁵⁴ (which happens to most, if not all, languages in the world) but to equate the whole history of Malay proverbs with the history of foreign elements is a bit exaggerated

and biased. Furthermore, it is not the element of pure originality that determines the greatness of a particular culture. Take the example of the Greek culture as the root of Western civilisation and assume that one wishes to include Greece in what we now call “the West”. “It is evident that much of the definitive influence on the great Greeks came from Asia Minor and the Orient, from northern Africa and the migrations of many tribes north and south, east and west,” said Solomon and Higgins (1993, xiii). The Greeks (Hellenes) were not great innovators at first, but a group of nomadic Indo-Europeans who came down from the north and replaced a people already settled by the Aegean Sea. Once they started trading around the Mediterranean, according to Solomon and Higgins (1997, 8), the Greeks borrowed freely from other cultures. From the Phoenicians, they borrowed the alphabet system, some technology, and bold new religious ideas. From Egypt, they borrowed the models that came to define Greek architecture, the basics of geometry and some of the more exotic ideas of early Greek “mystery” religions. From Babylon (now Iraq), they borrowed astronomy, mathematics, geometry and still more religious ideas. The gradual demise of Sanskrit and the acceptance of Malay as the national language of Indonesia, despite the Javanese majority, are proof that adaptability is one of the keys to great civilisation. The present success of Japan is perhaps another example in the modern world.

Winstedt’s doubtfulness of the originality of Malay proverbs by citing the similarity between the Malay proverbs and proverbs from other traditions is perhaps influenced by his biasness or lack of knowledge on paremiology.⁵⁵ Mieder (1986) justifiably neutralised Winstedt’s biasness when he said that “the fact that there are similar kinds of proverbs in different languages suggests that some conceptions of intelligence and reasonable behavior are to some degree universal” (Cited in Gibbs and Beitel 1995, 135). The Russian folklorist, Permyakov in *From Proverb to Folk-Tale* (1979, 9) proposed that proverbs can be analysed at three levels: (1) linguistic level (linguistic, grammatical, or ordinary phraseological unit); (2) logical level (logico-semiotic unit, or situational frame); and (3) artistic level (creative folkloric unit). There are many cross-culturally equivalent Malay and English proverbs (see e.g. Charteris-Black 1995, 262: Table 1 and p. 264: Table 2) as human beings basically share the same logical framework in conveying a message but with different *realia*. Look at the example “Lightning never strikes twice in the same place” (Dundes 1972, 94), “A fish never nibbles at the same hook twice” (*A Dictionary of American Proverbs* 1992: 211) and one of the common Malay proverbs *tak kan pisang berbuah dua kali* ‘A banana tree does not bear fruit twice.’ These three proverbs convey one message that history is non-repetitive and that an individual who has suffered a misfortune is unlikely to suffer an identical one, despite the difference in terms of image and object or *realia* (i.e. lightning, fish and *pisang* [bananas]) that the proverbs include within the logical framework. The term *realia*, as Permyakov has called it, “gives proverbs their building materials, their specific ethnic, historical, and linguistic features. Thus the logical frame is cross-cultural and general; the *realia* is local, regional, or national” (1979, 17). I am more in agreement with the so-called

universal similarity in terms of values and wisdom that can be found in the history of humankind when it comes to proverbs. The work of Paczolay (1997) is a good example where similarities exist in at least 106 proverbs and many languages (up to 55 languages) (see also Paczolay 1993, 1996). In these similarities lies the reason why communication of values and wisdom is still possible despite their differences. If there is no similarity at all, how can we communicate in the first place? Different philosophies and cultures do belong to a “family resemblance”, to borrow the term used by Wittgenstein and while each member of a family is distinct from another, they nonetheless also have many points of similarities. Hence, in spite of the similarities (which might be due to borrowing) with the conception of *rasa*, the beautifully coined *budi* and its networks appear to make the Malay mind distinct from other traditions.⁵⁶

Conclusion

Through observation and analysis, this research has successfully proven that certain logical features are quite obvious in the Malay *peribahasa*. However, there are also several emotional elements and thought that can be traced to the old classical Malay *peribahasa*. By understanding Malay logical thought and its relationship with religion, political history and culture with the guidance of *hati-budi*, I hope we can at least start from the right platform and head towards the direction of a “full hearing”, borrowing the title of one of Sweeney’s books, in order to understand the mind of the Malays and their emotions. I also hope that this work will lead to the “rediscovery” (*penemuan semula*) and “redevelopment” (*pembangunan semula*) of the Malay-Indonesian world, in line with Hassan Ahmad’s recent call:

Dunia Melayu di rantau ini perlu 'ditemui semula', kalau perlu 'dibangunkan semula' supaya warisan yang telah ditinggalkan itu dapat diberikan imej sebagai bangsa yang besar, yang mempunyai pemikir, budaya, akal budi, nilai, dan prinsip hidup yang tinggi. Ini bukan kerja mencipta dongeng tetapi kerja membentuk jati diri yang benar (Hassan Ahmad 2001a, 10).

(The Malay world in this region needs to be 'rediscovered', if need be, to be 'redeveloped' so that the heritage left behind can be given an image as a great race, which has thinkers, culture, *akal budi*, values and a high principle of living. This is not a myth creation work but a work to construct a true self identity).

With this understanding, it is hoped that this study will pave the way for a cross-cultural understanding and intercultural communication between the Malays and other groups. I believe this attempt must be made and hopefully it will generate further discussion on this subject. Let me end by citing Hitchcock (1994, xii):

The search for a synthesis --- the best of the East and of the West --- is under way. A classic --- and universally experienced --- struggle is taking place: between how best to satisfy the needs of the individual to be creative and personally fulfilled, while achieving the larger goals of society; and between tradition and modernization --- how best to preserve at least some of the old, while life changes at a dizzying --- and naturally disturbing --- pace.

Notes:

¹ There are quite a number of numerical proverbs, in which the following numbers appear: *satu* (one), *dua* (two), *tiga* (three), *empat* (four), *lima* (five), *tujuh* (seven) and *sepuluh* (ten). The most frequent numbers are one, two and three. However, I could not detect the use of *enam* (six), *lapan* (eight) and *sembilan* (nine). For the differences between numerical proverbs and ennumerical proverbs, see Doctor (1993).

² *Simpulan bahasa “Gerak hati”* means feeling that emerges in the liver/heart. It is also equal to *simpulan bahasa “Gerak batin.”* These *simpulan bahasa* are contrasted with “*Gerak badan*,” which means physical exercises (see Abdullah Hussain 1966, 128).

³ For a more detailed study on Chinese rhetoric specifically, see Oliver (1971, chapters. 6-13) and Asian rhetoric generally, see the same work, chapter 14. A literature report on Malay-Indonesian rhetoric can be obtained from Graf (2002).

⁴ For the importance of practicality and pragmatism of Malay rhetoric, see Muhammad Haji Salleh (1993, 4) and Kloster (1997).

⁵ As an editor’s note in that article, the editor explained that proverbs like *memikul biawak hidup* ‘to fondle a live monitor-lizard’, *melepaskan anjing tersepit* ‘To extricate a dog caught in a hedge’ or *seperti anjing menyalak bukit* ‘Like a dog shouting at a hill’ are Malay proverbs used in the context of Malay language and culture. Literally, those animals do not have any relationship with anyone, and, therefore, do not mean to insult anyone.

⁶ This proverb means “someone who remains unchanged, even though he or she had gone overseas” (see KIPM 187: 3456).

⁷ Direct confrontation is not the Malay way of resolving conflicts. According to S. Othman Kelantan (1992a), there are two *peribahasas*, which clearly justify this non-confrontational approach: (1) *Ular dipukul biar mati, kayu pemukul jangan patah, tanah (tempat terpukul) jangan lebam* ‘Let the snake be struck to death, but let not the stick be broken or the ground (the place where you hit) be marked’; and (2) *Seperti menarik rambut dalam tepung: Rambut jangan putus, tepung jangan berserak* ‘Like pulling hair in flour; make sure the hair is not broken and the flour not scattered.’

⁸ Hitchcock (1994) did not mention the values as argumentation or the attitudes toward argumentation but I have reinterpreted his results on various societal values that can either directly or indirectly be related to dialectical argumentation, for example respect authority, harmony, orderly society, rights of society, personal freedom, individual rights, think for oneself, consensus, free expression and open debate.

⁹ The case of Dr. Patricia Martinez of University Malaya is a typical example that non-Muslims should not comment on the Islamic faith in Malaysia even though she is an academician with background in Islamic studies and comparative religion (see Martinez 2002 and Yap Mun Ching 2002). Concerning this issue, Farish A. Noor (2002) defended the right of non-Muslims to speak on Islam because “she has helped to make Islam a subject of common concern for all and by doing so, she has shown that the great religion of Islam is too important to be left to Muslims alone.”

¹⁰ Kaum Muda is a group of young reformist ulama who tried to challenge the religious orthodoxy of Kaum Tua (conformist ulama). Kaum Tua defended the *taklid*, that is, to follow all opinions of Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Imam Shafie or Imam Ahmad Hambal and believed that the door of *ijtihad* had since been closed. According to Khalid Jaafar (2001), such polemics should be encouraged as it had given more positive contribution to the Malays. Through such debates, Malays were being exposed to new thinking and he believed that there would be no advancement in knowledge without debate.

¹¹ See *Hadis: Suatu Penilaian Semula* (Petaling Jaya: Media Intelek, 1986) and its translation, *Hadith: A Re-evaluation* (Arizona: Mass Market Paperback, 1997, 166 pages). And for his rejoinder to his critics, see *Hadis: Jawaban pada Pengkritik* (Kuala Lumpur: Media Indah, 1992). For a general background of Kassim Ahmad, see Yuswan Yunus (1998).

¹² Mahathir is the Prime Minister of Malaysia since 16th of July 1981.

¹³ Mahathir agrees that polemics and argumentation “will help sharpen the mind and is an intellectual exercise” (p. 1). However, Mahathir asks: “Must the Malays spend their time on intellectual exercises?”

¹⁴ Mahathir seems to equate the concept of “mere disagreement” with “critical reasoning.” He seems to think that polemics and argumentation are purely “mere disagreement.” For the difference between these two concepts, see Cederblom and Paulsen: chapter 1. The same idea of the above quotation appears in Malay as:

Dari perbahasan yang berlaku bukan sahaja pendapat itu tidak dapat diterima kerana beberapa keburukan yang didedahkan oleh pihak-pihak yang mengkritik tetapi pendapat-pendapat semua pengkritik juga dibahas dan kelemahan masing-masing didedahkan. Keputusan atau hasil dari tiap-tiap siri polemik ialah bukan sahaja pendapat yang asal tidak dapat diterima atau diamalkan, tetapi semua pendapat lain yang dikemukakan dalam perbahasan yang berlaku juga tidak boleh diterima.

Oleh kerana tidak ada satu pun yang boleh diterima maka tidak satu pun yang akan diturut. Dengan ini keadaan asal dikekalkan walaupun jelas keadaan asal itu tidak sempurna dan perlu ditukar. Apabila dikaji teguran dan polemik itu tidak memberi apa-apa faedah dan membazir waktu sahaja (Mahathir Mohamad 1976, 1).

¹⁵ *Bahasa menunjukkan bangsa* means that: *budi bahasa atau perangai serta tutur kata menunjukkan sifat dan tabiat seseorang (baik buruk kelakuan menunjukkan tinggi rendah asal atau keturunan* ‘courtesy or attitude and the way we talk represent one’s nature and character (good or bad attitudes represents the high or low of our origin or descent)’ (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* 1991, 77).

¹⁶ The total idea of this *peribahasa* can be found in the form of the pantun: *Anak Cina bertimbang madat, Dari Mengkasar langsung ke Deli; Hidup di dunia kita beradat, Bahasa tidak berjual beli* ‘The Chinaman traffics in opium, all the way from Macassar to Deli; as long as we live let us be courteous, manners are not for purchase or for sale’ (translation quoted from MBRAS 10:53).

¹⁷ The Malays believe that a person’s well being can be judged through his/her use of language. “*Budi bahasa*” refers to kindness or courtesy. A full *peribahasa* also appears in the form of the pantun: *Perigi dikata telaga, Tempat budak berulang mandi; Mas perak ada berharga, Budi bahasa sukar dicari* ‘A well is called a tank, a place where children go and bathe; Gold and silver have their price, but kindness and courtesy are hard to find’ (MBRAS 173: 74).

¹⁸ For another work which touches on the values of *budi* in the Malay *pantun*, see S. Othman Kelantan (1992b).

¹⁹ A kind of pinnate tree and its red seeds

²⁰ The idea of *rendah diri* seems rather typical and can be found in the classical Malay literature (for this idea, see Muhammad Haji Salleh 1993, p. 9 and p. 14). For other examples showing Malay humility, see e.g. Sabaruddin Ahmad (1954) in his “*sekapur sirih*” (introduction): “... *timbul hasrat penjunus mempersembahkan buku ketjil tak bermutu ini keatas ribaan para pembatja...* (there appears the desire of the compiler to present a small book without quality to the readers)” (p.1); and Mudakir (1953, 232), despite his ability to provide evidence to support his claim, humbly declared that “*Sekali lagi saya bukan seorang ahli bahasa, tetapi hanya warga negara biasa...* (Once again I am not a linguist, but only an ordinary citizen...)”

²¹ Endnote added. According to Mercado (1994, 19-20), “*utang na loob*” is *utang bodi* (literally, utang ng budhi in Tagalog) or a debt of the mind.

²² For more proverbs related to paddy, see PB (2030-2046b).

²³ It is also generally believed that more sophisticated logical thinking (e.g. syllogism) developed only after the introduction of written discourse and not within the oral tradition. According to Oesterdiekhoff (2000: 107): “*In vorindustriellen analphabetischen Gesellschaften findet sich nach einer Vielzahl von Untersuchungen kein hypothetisch-deduktives und syllogistisches Schlußfolgern.*” Oesterdiekhoff is right that logic is to be confined to only so-called formal-deductive logic, but if we take logic in an informal sense, which is based on everyday reasoning of cause and effect, analogy etc., then as Goodwin and Wenzel (1981) and Chapter 4 of this research had suggested, there are enough logical principles or categories that can be found also in the oral tradition of proverbial literature.

²⁴ This title was first published in 1991 as *Sofies Verden* by H. Aschehoug & Co. (W. Nygaard) in Oslo, Norway.

²⁵ See Northrop (1951). See also Filmer S. C. Northrop, “The Complementary Emphases of Eastern Intuition Philosophy and Western Scientific Philosophy,” in Moore, C. A. (ed.). *Philosophy, East and West*: p. 187, Princeton University Press, 1946. Although Fung Yu-lan did not agree *in toto* with Northrop’s idea on “concept by postulation” and “concept by intuition,” he thought that Northrop did understand the difference between the methodologies of Western philosophy and Chinese Philosophy. For other discussion on Northrop’s idea, see Hughes (1968, 94ff). For other discussion on the main contrasts between Eastern and Western philosophy, see Sheldon (1951).

²⁶ According to Shaffer (1996, 3), Southeast Asia’s maritime realm, the sea-ward-looking realm, includes “the southern part of the Malay Peninsula and the south-eastern coast of Vietnam, as well as the islands.”

²⁷ Even though this idea is taken from a newspaper, it is taken based on the authority of Mukhtar Ahmad, who is a professor and marine science expert from Indonesia. Mukhtar’s idea was presented in a conference, “*Pertemuan Alam dan Pemikiran Melayu Sedunia*,” on 29th of October, 2000 and was reported in *Kompas* the following day. The above conference was held from 27-30 October 2000 in Batam, Indonesia.

²⁸ Science in this context equals logic, rationality and objective knowledge.

²⁹ Rhetoric in this context refers to the skill of language use or expression.

³⁰ For the reader who would like to know the element of paddy in *pantun*, read Nik Safiah Karim and Siti Aishah Mat Ali (1991).

³¹ More discussions on the so-called “culture of paddy” from various aspects (e.g. *pantun*, technology) can be obtained from Nik Safiah Karim (1991). The concept of Semangat Padi as known in Malaysia, according to Yen Ho (1995, 40), can also be identified in various South-East Asian countries by different names. In Indonesia, rice is said to be the offspring of Dewi Sri, the Goddess of Prosperity and Fertility. In Thailand, it is known as Mae

Posop. In Burma, it is called Chaba Yendai. In the case of Laos and Vietnam, it is the rice guardian of Phi. All of the names mentioned are that of the same rice spirit who is accorded respect.

³² For a discussion on rice as the main food of the people in South-east Asia, especially Malays, see Yen Ho (1995), chapter 5: Rice, the Tasty Grain. For the language of food expressed in the form of common Malay sayings, see the same work, chapter 10, especially pp. 73-75 for the rice-related proverbs.

³³ The general conceptions and analogies between water and rock are based on deBono's (1990) idea. He used water logic and rock logic to represent lateral thinking and logical thinking respectively. This water logic also has the indirect agreement of Mercado (1994) when he claimed that Filipino reasoning is closer to lateral thinking. Umar Junus (in Jaafar Haji Abdul Rahim 1989) shared the same notion of water logic (lateral thinking) for the Malay-Indonesian world through a story called "*Minang jual sikat*" which I had already mentioned earlier in Chapter 3.

³⁴ It is appropriate to make such a comparison between the Greek political culture and other older cultures of the East (i.e. Chinese and Malay-Indonesian). According to Meier in his preface to *The Greek Discovery of Politics* (1990: viii), this is because the issue will "become clear only from extending one's attention to other cultures, especially the older cultures of the East, and from viewing the object of one's study against a wider horizon."

³⁵ Even though Carle's idea is based on his understanding and interpretation of Rendra's adaptation of classical Greek dramas within a Javanese setting, the idea that he ascribed to should go down well with the Malay-Indonesian world as a whole.

³⁶ The observation is based on the articles that appeared on-line. In order to locate articles from this source, the word "*peribahasa*" was keyed on the search-engines of the relevant websites (i.e. *Utusan Malaysia* [www.utusan.com.my], *Berita Harian* [www.bharian.com.my] and *Kompas* [www.kompas.com]).

³⁷ *Peribahasa* cited by the authors are *memikul biawak hidup* 'To fondle a live monitor-lizard' (Hishamuddin Rais 2001), once spat, one cannot lick it back (Raja Petra Kamarudin 2000a), *melepaskan anjing tersepit* 'to extricate a dog caught in a hedge' (Aman Rais 2001a) and *jangan biarkan tapik dan simpai bersengketa, nanti parang makan diri* 'Do not let the *tapik* and *simpai* quarrel with each other, otherwise the *parang* will eat its owner' (Maarop Md Noh 2001).

³⁸ *Peribahasa* cited by the writers are *Senjata makan tuan* 'a weapon that eats the owner' (Aman Rais 2001b), "A mother crab can never hope to teach her progenies to walk straight if she herself crawls sideways" (M. Bakri Musa 2000), *Seperti anjing menyalak bukit* 'Like a dog barking at the hill' (Nur Muhammad Arif 2000) and "The enemy in the blanket is more dangerous" (Raja Petra Kamarudin 2000b).

³⁹ The application of proverbs among the Malay writers reflects the Eastern way of reasoning, which is non-individualistic. Günthner (1991), for example, observed that Eastern speakers (e.g. Chinese) tend to use proverbial expressions first in order to support an assertion, whereas Western speakers (e.g. German) tend to argue using their own opinion first. Perhaps this also shows how important personal opinion is for the egoistic Western societies as compared to Eastern speakers, who are close to their community.

⁴⁰ M. Bakri's line of argument on the best way of leadership, i.e. leading by example can be visualised in Figure 6.2: Reason₁ refers to how leaders "they exhort us to be thrifty and frugal, but they themselves indulge in ostentatious lifestyles and reason₂ refers to "they lecture our children to opt for the sciences, but they cannot even convince their own children to do so", etc.

⁴¹ Endnote added. To me, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* will only become relevant if the readers can go deep into the hidden dimension of the text, into the philosophical disputes between the two dominant characters: Hang Tuah vs. Hang Jebat. If one cannot read between the lines, the text will end up as having no philosophical significance, but merely propaganda. This is a brilliant text indeed where a few philosophical questions can be explored, e.g. What is virtue? Is loyalty a virtue or *budi*? Can someone choose to disobey the laws of the state when one thinks that they are unfair?

⁴² One of the most meaningful wisdoms of the 20th century is the discovery that the human brain is not a single organ, but two in one. The above fact was discovered when a neuro surgeon first treated an epilepsy patient with a new method. He operated on a seriously injured neuro-optic, which connected two hemispheres of the cerebrum cortex in order to reduce the symptoms of the disease. The surgery made possible the discovery of how each hemisphere of our brain actually functions. The findings showed that our right hemisphere processes our non-verbal, symbolic and intuitive responses; whereas our left hemisphere is in charge of the role of language use, logical reasoning, analysis and sequential representation.

⁴³ Even though intuition is not the same as emotion, both are always in direct contrast with rationality. In the Malay context, these two are also believed to be related to *hati*. Due to that relationship, I therefore discuss them together in several places in my writing.

⁴⁴ Moore (1968) also argued for the humanistic approach of the Chinese Mind when he remarked: "People come first in China" (p. 5).

⁴⁵ Both Salk's conception of subjective responses and objective responses seem rather close to the concepts of "primary process" and "secondary process" in psychoanalytic thinking. In his analysis of Indian culture, Kakar (1981), for example, tended to agree that Western culture emphasises on secondary process (i.e. rationality) whereas other cultures (e.g. Indian) are less rigid in their insistence on secondary process. It seems to imply that

the Malays, like the Indians, have elaborated culturally their inner knowledge of primary process, which can be said to be more directly related to feeling, their *rasa* and *hati*. These two processes, however, should not be treated totally as dichotomic, i.e. reason and emotion, but should be seen as inter-related.

⁴⁶ At this juncture, we are reminded of Samuel Huntington's idea of the clash of civilisations. And the important question perhaps is: why was there no major conflict before the arrival of Western capitalism and colonialism despite the collision of various civilisations? To look at the confrontation of ideas between useless nationalism and globalisation, see Musa Hitam (2001a).

⁴⁷ For the alternative view that Hindu-Buddhism was actually only the faith of the aristocrats and not the common people, see Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (1972).

⁴⁸ See Tee (2000) for how Dharmakirti was saved from being defeated due to his authority in Chapter 3 of this research.

⁴⁹ It is an irony indeed that in the present modern Malaysia, the "caste system" seems to reemerge again in the form of *bumiputera* (the son of the soil) vs *non-bumiputera*, or using a political gimmick, *Umnoputera* (the son of UMNO) vs non-Umnoputera syndrome, as claimed by some of the opposition politicians.

⁵⁰ I use the word *arational* to differentiate it from *irrational*. Something which is non-rational may be irrational or something that cannot be explained from the perspective of rationality.

⁵¹ According to Paczolay (1993), in Europe, this proverb appeared only in Wander's collection in German in the form "One cannot clap with one hand only" (*Mit einer Hand allein kann man nicht klatschen*).

⁵² These three countries use the Malay language (*bahasa Melayu*) as their national language although it is known as *bahasa Malaysia* or *bahasa Melayu* in Malaysia and *bahasa Indonesia* in Indonesia. In Brunei, the national language is still called *bahasa Melayu*. For the difference between *bahasa Malaysia* and *bahasa Indonesia*, see Suryadinata (1991).

⁵³ I am in favour of Ong's argument that the proper term should be "oral tradition" and not "oral literature" as literature is written. To say that something is oral and written at the same time is logically absurd (see Ong 1982).

⁵⁴ For examples of Malay proverbs of foreign origin (e.g. Western, Hindustani, Siamese, Persian, Arabic or even Buddhist), see for instance Maxwell (1879, 48ff). One of the examples might be *barang siapa menggali lubang, ia juga terperosok ke dalamnya* 'Whosoever digs a pit, he shall fall into it himself' which according to Maxwell is a translation of 'Who so diggeth a pit shall fall therein' (MBRAS 30: 47). A German equivalent is *wer anderen eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein*. See also e.g., *ekor anjing beberapa pun diurut akan dia, tiada juga betul* 'You may rub a dog's tail as much as you like, but you will not make it straight' (MBRAS 63: 1) and the Arabic proverb "even though you put a dog's tail in a mould one hundred thousand times it will always come out curled" (in Barakat 1980, 39). But there is also the possibility that proverbs from other parts of the world might have been influenced by the Malays through their continuous contact with the Malay world. I do not plan to discuss further on this theme as this is a question of philology, which is beyond the scope of my study. The existence of foreign borrowing is unavoidable, as this part of the world (read: Malaysia and Singapore), according to Baker (1999), is:

an area that contains cultural elements of many countries – the indigeneous influences of archipelago southeast Asia; the impact of Asia's cultural giants China and India on the area; the coming of Islam from western Asia by way of India; the contributions made by the West through European colonialism and economic exploitation; and finally, the impact of the process of globalization on the two countries in the late twentieth century (p. 9).

There are also purposeful influences (influences which are purposely created), which according to Shamsul (1999, 19-20): "The sheer amount of 'facts' amassed by the British be it on traditional Malay literature or modern history of Malaya, establishes without doubt the hegemony of colonial knowledge in Malaysia's intellectual realm."

⁵⁵ I find Winstedt's idea on Malay paremiology a bit incongruous. Winstedt seems to be inconsistent in his claims. From one angle, he admitted the similarities of proverbs between different cultural traditions as possibly due to the universality of human character, environment, historical relation like international trade and dissemination of religion but from another angle, he indirectly cast doubt on the originality of Malay proverbs. Cf. *passim*, Winstedt's idea as cited in Senu Abdul Rahman *et al.* (1971, p. 66) & *supra*, Winstedt (1961, 10).

⁵⁶ People might argue that *budi* is a foreign borrowing. Za'ba (1965: 269) is right when he considered *budi* and *budiman* as terms borrowed from Sanskrit, under the category of feeling and situation. But the meaning of *budi* has undergone change and development. *Budi* does not only reflect the emotional dimension (*hati budi*) but also the rational dimension (*akal budi*). It is actually through the conception of molecularisation that makes *budi* totally different from the rest of the traditions (East and West) and from what the word originally meant.

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A Brief Biography

LIM KIM HUI was born in *Ayer Hitam, Kedah* on 21st July 1962. He obtained his early education in *SRJK(C)Yuh Min, Ayer Hitam, Kedah*. He furthered his studies until Form Three in *Sekolah Menengah Ayer Hitam* (Ayer Hitam Secondary School, Kedah) before enrolling and continuing his studies until Form Six in *Sekolah Menengah Teknik Alor Setar* (Alor Setar Technical Institution). He obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree with distinction in Descriptive and Creative Writing (now known as Media Studies) from University of Malaya in 1988. He then continued his studies in the same university until he possessed a Master of Arts with specialization in the Informal Logic/ Critical Thinking field in 1994. He has had working experiences as a journalist and a tutor.

He started writing in 1987 and his literary works have been published in various media. Among them include *Mingguan Malaysia*, *Berita Minggu*, *Utusan Zaman*, *Mingguan Watan*, *Jurnal Dewan Bahasa*, *Dewan Sastera* and *Pelita Bahasa*. He has produced a translated book entitled *Teori Kesusasteraan Cina* (*Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka*, 1995) from James Liu's *Chinese Theories of Literature* (University of Chicago Press). His selected creative work, especially poems have also been published in books such as *Kasih Sayang* (1988), *Menara 2* (1989), *Surat dari Kuala Lumpur* (1990), *Notelun Hidup* (1991), *Suara Anak Merdeka* (1992), *Di Dunia Permata* (1993), *Tanpa Mengira Warna* (1993), *Sungai Kasih* (1994), *Gema Membelah Gema II* (1994), *Suara Kemanusiaan* (1994) dan *Puyan Jelepek* (1995).

He participated in the Second ASEAN Writers Conference/Workshop for the poetry category which was held in Manila from 27 January 1995 to 3 February 1995. The prizes that he had won include the 1987, 1989, 1993 and 1994 Utusan Melayu-Public Bank special poem prize under the non-Malay category, Malayan Banking-DBP II Short Story Appreciation Prize, Second Prize in the Selected Translation Work of Confucius Philosophy Competition, 1991 Peace Poetry Competition Prize, 1992 *Shapadu-Gapena* National Poetry Competition Prize and Second Prize in the 1994 Writing Bosnia Poetry Contest.

He is a lecturer in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and was awarded the best lecturer of the year 1998 under the category of Arts and Humanities.