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## **The Contribution of Habaib within The Ethno-Religious Society of Pontianak City**

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### **Abstract**

Habaib have significantly contributed to religious life in Southeast Asia. Not only for the Muslim community, but also for people across the region with various religious and ethnic backgrounds, the contribution of the Habaib has impacted interactions. In Indonesia, Habaib have recorded their remarkable contribution to the history of the establishment of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). This has, in fact, shown that the contribution of the Habaib has become one of the most significant aspects of religious life in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia. The people of Pontianak City have an urgent need to address the role of Habaib in the city's religious and social life, since it was founded by Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman, one of the influential Habaib in Borneo. This paper urges exploring the contributions of Habaib from time to time so that they become an integral part of the development of modern Pontianak City society today. The findings of this work indicate that the challenges and opportunities faced by the Habaib have become an important part of the dynamics of religious authority in Pontianak City. In addition, the position of the Habaib in the history of the sultanate and the people who experienced the ups and downs of their interaction prove to be a barometer of their role in society. Moreover, it turns out that the collective memory and characterization of Habaib have become an important part of the religious practices of the people in Pontianak City. Finally, this work emphasizes that the Habaib have played a significant role in the dynamics of religious life and have even promoted social cohesion in the multi-religious and ethnic Pontianak society.

[Tidak dapat dipungkiri bahwa Habaib telah berkontribusi signifikan pada kehidupan keagamaan di Asia Tenggara. Tidak hanya bagi masyarakat muslim, kontribusi Habaib telah berdampak pada interaksi dalam masyarakat daerah yang melibatkan berbagai latar belakang agama dan etnis. Di Indonesia, Habaib telah mencatat kontribusinya yang luar biasa dalam sejarah berdirinya Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (NKRI). Hal ini sebenarnya menunjukkan bahwa kontribusi Habaib telah menjadi salah satu aspek kehidupan keagamaan yang paling signifikan di Asia Tenggara, khususnya Indonesia. Masyarakat Kota Pontianak memiliki kebutuhan mendesak untuk mengatasi peran Habaib dalam kehidupan keagamaan dan sosial sejak Kota Pontianak didirikan oleh Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman, salah satu Habaib berpengaruh di Kalimantan. Makalah ini mendesak untuk menggali kontribusi Habaib dari waktu ke waktu sehingga menjadi bagian integral dari perkembangan masyarakat Kota Pontianak modern saat ini. Temuan dari paper ini menunjukkan bahwa tantangan dan peluang yang dialami oleh para Habaib telah menjadi bagian penting dari dinamika otoritas keagamaan di kalangan masyarakat Kota Pontianak. Selain itu, posisi Habaib dalam sejarah kesultanan dan orang-orang yang mengalami pasang surut interaksi mereka terbukti menjadi

barometer peran mereka dalam masyarakat. Dan ternyata memori kolektif dan karakterisasi Habaib telah menjadi bagian penting dari praktik keagamaan masyarakat di Kota Pontianak. Akhirnya, paper ini menekankan bahwa kontribusi Habaib telah memainkan peran yang sangat penting dalam dinamika kehidupan keagamaan dan bahkan mendorong kohesi sosial masyarakat multiagama dan etnis Pontianak.]

**Keywords:** contribution; Habaib; ethno-religious society; Muslim community

## Introduction

The term Habaib, the plural form of *Habib*, refers to a community of the Ba' Alawi clan from Yemen. They have dispersed across various regions, including Southeast Asia. Historical records confirm their presence dating back to the Islamic kingdom.<sup>1</sup> In different areas, they are known by several names, such as Syarif (or Sharif), Sayid, Syed, or Sidi. Initially, Habaib was not a commonly used term in society, but it gained popularity and wider acceptance beginning in the 2000s. In their dispersal, Habaib often assimilate into local communities,<sup>2</sup> resulting in rich cultural diversity. For example, Habaib in Java or Madura adopt characteristics from the surrounding community, as do those in Aceh, Jakarta, Makasar, Irian, or the Malay region. Only a few physical attributes and habits set them apart, such as dietary preferences or family names. These distinctions are less noticeable among the earlier generations of Habaib who arrived during the era of the Islamic kingdom. The last generation with noticeable Arab characteristics arrived during the Dutch East Indies rule, due to colonial government policies that included a citizenship system, residential zoning, and travel documents for leaving designated areas.<sup>3</sup> At the time, they were often segregated from surrounding communities, particularly in Java and in cities along the North Coast.

One of the significant centers of Habaib is Pontianak, where they established a sultanate. In the early days, their families were commonly referred to as Syarif, but nowadays, they are also known as

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Hasan, *Penyebaran Islam di Asia Tenggara* (Jakarta: Lentera, 1997), 34–37.

<sup>2</sup> Hasan, *Penyebaran Islam di Asia Tenggara*, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Huub De Jonge, *Mencari Identitas, Orang Arab Hadrami di Indonesia (1900-1950)* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2019), 43–48.

Habaib. The culture that evolved during their reign in Pontianak was predominantly Malay. Initially, they served the sultan and later began preaching along the West Coast of Kalimantan.<sup>4</sup> Among Habaib communities, only the Kubu in Kalimantan and Perlis in Malaysia share a similar historical background. While there are numerous Habaib in Java, their history does not parallel that of their counterparts in Pontianak, who founded a kingdom. Pontianak's Habaib community has a unique history that holds significant socio-cultural implications. This distinctiveness gains context in a city known for its diverse population. Although their numbers are relatively small, with only thousands among the city's half a million residents, their presence is considered crucial compared to other social groups.<sup>5</sup> This significance is exemplified by their roles within the community. They are often seen as figures who address societal issues and play active roles in religious activities.<sup>6</sup> Visits by state and government officials to them emphasize their significance, as seen in the visits made by President Abdurrahman Wahid and President SBY [Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono] in Pontianak. Their authority is widely accepted in this plural society.

Literature concerning the Habaib in Pontianak exists, though in limited quantities. Current studies predominantly focus on the historical role of specific Habaib family groups who ascended to royal positions. For instance, the book by Rahman et al. in 2000 delves into the narratives of the Pontianak sultans, tracing their lineage back to Habib Husin, the founding figure of the region.<sup>7</sup> This literature tends to be character-centered. In addition, Bakar conducted a study on the significance of Habib Husin in West Kalimantan, focusing on the theme

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<sup>4</sup> Panji Pustaka, "Nomor Soeltan Pontianak," *No. 15 Tahun IV*, February 1926.

<sup>5</sup> Syarifah Ema Rahmaniah and Nikodemus Niko, "The Polarization of Islamic Identity, Politics: The Role of Habaib Authority in Electoral Dynamics," *Multidisciplinary Science Journal* 8, no. 2 (2025): 2026091, <https://doi.org/10.31893/multiscience.2026091>.

<sup>6</sup> Bibi Suprianto, "Sejarah Kesultanan Pontianak dalam Mengembangkan Pendidikan Islam di Tahun 1771-1808 M: Sejarah Kesultanan Pontianak dalam Mengembangkan Pendidikan Islam di Tahun 1771-1808 M," *Ngaji: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2021): 25–38, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ngaji.v1i1.1>.

<sup>7</sup> A. Rahman et al., *Syarif Abdurrahman Alkadri: Perspektif Sejarah Berdirinya Kota Pontianak* (Pontianak: Romeo Grafika, 2000), 12.

of Islamization.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Bakar & Fatimah examined the preaching activities of Habib Shaleh, a prominent figure in West Kalimantan.<sup>9</sup> However, many of these studies appear to overlook the broader social aspects of Habaib as a collective social group, as their primary focus remains on individual figures. This perspective is relatively rare. Nevertheless, certain academics have made efforts to address this gap in research. For example, Siregar conducted a comprehensive study through his dissertation, concentrating on Habaib endogamous marriage practices in Pontianak.<sup>10</sup> His research delves into the intricate issue of marriage law and argues for a re-interpretation of the *kafaah* argument that underpins polygamy. Similarly, Rahmaniah approached the subject with a different perspective, exploring Habaib endogamous marriages in Pontianak within the context of multiculturalism and the politics of religious hegemony.<sup>11</sup> This perspective considers both the positive and negative societal implications of these marriages. However, it is noteworthy that many other scholars seem less interested in pursuing these research directions, leaving this aspect of the Habaib community understudied. Therefore, further investigation into the Habaib community in Pontianak from different perspectives remains an interesting topic for future research.

A unique role exists among the Habaib in Pontianak. While religious figures often hold distinctive roles, these roles are frequently confined to their specific social groups. The emergence of this particular role was not sudden but evolved through long social dynamics, eventually gaining acceptance. Consequently, understanding this role requires in-depth historical and sociological academic investigations. However, it appears that such research remains largely overlooked. Preliminary observations suggest that there is limited research on this issue, both in Pontianak and its surrounding areas. The

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<sup>8</sup> Abu Bakar, "Habib Husin bin Ahmad al-Kadri: Dai Ternama di Pantai Barat Kalimantan," in *Islam di Sarawak* (Kuching: Sanggar Bitara Karang Mengarang, 2017), 120.

<sup>9</sup> Abu Bakar and Syf Fatimah, *Habib Shaleh Al-Haddad: Jihad dalam dakwah Islamiyah di Kalimantan Barat* (Yogyakarta: Magnum, 2018), 67.

<sup>10</sup> Hamka Siregar, "Pernikahan Endogami pada Komunitas Arab Alawiyyun Kota Pontianak" (PhD Thesis, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2009), 150.

<sup>11</sup> Syarifah Ema Rahmaniah, "Multikulturalisme dan Hegemoni Politik Pernikahan Endogami: Implikasi dalam Dakwah Islam," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 22, no. 2 (2014): 440, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.22.2.273>.

role of the Habaib in this issue presents an intriguing theme for further study, aiming to shed light on their unclear social significance. This article aims to unveil the role of the Habaib and the authority that underpins it in Pontianak, as it manifests within the local society. The urgency of this research stems from the complex reality of a society composed of diverse ethnic and religious groups, often marked by tensions and conflicts in social interactions.

This paper delves into two key elements: explaining the role of the Habaib and their underlying authority within the local community and beyond. The first element examines their crucial role in fostering diversity and addressing the issues within a multi-ethnic society. In this section, we will explore their contributions to various social events that have transpired over the past two decades. We will continue this exploration within the context of religious diversity that often accompanies ethnic plurality. Their attitudes and actions concerning religious matters in Pontianak will serve as the primary criteria for assessment. To explain the underlying aspects of these roles, we will delve into a historical perspective. The second element of our discussion focuses on three fundamental aspects: Islamization, the development of Pontianak, and its adaptation to local culture.<sup>12</sup> Our historical analysis reveals their involvement in the process of Islamization on the West Coast of Kalimantan dating back to the early 18th century AD. They played a crucial role in this transformation, especially during a time when West Kalimantan lacked a dominant religious identity, as Dutch literature often characterizes it as a nominal Muslim community.

Furthermore, we delve into their contributions to the development of the region that eventually became Pontianak. This city was established as a Malay settlement open to immigrants, with security guarantees to ensure social order. Finally, we explore their remarkable ability to adapt, a factor deemed relevant in explaining their role within the broader society. They are considered an integral part of society as a whole, and their adaptability reflects their enduring influence.

This article is significant for presenting knowledge about the Habaib in Pontianak and its surrounding regions. This knowledge helps

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<sup>12</sup> Faisol Faisol et al., "Peran Surau dalam Dinamika Islamisasi dan Pusat Pendidikan Pada Masa Awal Kesultanan Pontianak," *Literasi: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 16, no. 3 (2025): 440, [https://doi.org/10.21927/literasi.2025.16\(3\).440-454](https://doi.org/10.21927/literasi.2025.16(3).440-454).

broaden our understanding of diversity in areas often overlooked. Frequently, the Habaib are examined in the context of issues arising in Java, particularly in Jakarta. However, they constitute a family community that disperses and integrates into society, rendering their existence parallel to the diversity of the Indonesian nation. This discussion undoubtedly contributes to enriching the ongoing academic discourse surrounding them.

Furthermore, the contextualization of Pontianak within the broader Malay cultural sphere makes this study relevant for understanding its development from a regional perspective in Southeast Asia. In this context, they share closer ties with their counterparts in Malaysia. As a result, this exploration of the Habaib in Pontianak is expected to generate knowledge that will foster discussions not only within Indonesia but also across other countries in Southeast Asia.

## **Methods**

This study uses a qualitative method covering a historical-sociological approach. It is because this approach does not seek to explain the Habaib as mere social phenomena, but rather to understand their social role over time and in relation to the historical dynamics in which they are embedded. This study employed a case design focusing on the Habaib community in Pontianak City, West Kalimantan. A case study design was selected to provide an in-depth examination of the distinctive social exchanges, religious legitimacy, and role of the Habaib within a pluralistic and ethno-religious society. The research was conducted in Pontianak City, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. It is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious city founded by a Habib (Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman al-Qadri), making it a strategic location for the study of the contribution of Habaib within its society.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with key informants, including descendants of the Pontianak Sultanate (al-Qadri family), Habaib figures from various clans (e.g., al-Haddad, al-Habsyi, al-Jufri), local religious leaders, community leaders from Malay, Dayak, Chinese, and Madurese ethnic groups, and government officials (e.g., from the Regional Secretariat and the Office of Religious Affairs). Meanwhile, the secondary data was collected from historical documents, colonial archives (e.g., VOC and Dutch East Indies records), royal manuscripts (e.g., *Hikayat al-Habib Husain al-Qadri*),

previous academic dissertations, books, journal articles, and local mass media reports.

To ensure the validity of the findings, this study employed triangulation techniques. Researchers compared interview results from Habaib figures with data from non-Habaib community leaders and historical documents. Researchers also cross-checked data obtained from interviews with participant observation results and documentary studies. Then, researchers used multiple perspectives, including historical, sociological, and political science approaches, to interpret the role of Habaib. Last but not least, researchers returned the results of data interpretation to several key informants (e.g., Sultan Syarif Mahmud al-Qadri and Habib Musthafa al-Haddad) to ensure accuracy and avoid misinterpretation.

## Results

### Da'wah and Establishment of the Pontianak Sultanate

The presence of Habaib in West Kalimantan can be traced through historical and genealogical records held by families of several local kingdoms, including the Sambas kingdom. In their genealogical records, the kingdom documented the names of numerous Habaib within their family tree.<sup>13</sup> Based on the reign periods of local kings, it is estimated that the Habaib arrived in this region during the early 18th century AD. This is evident from the presence of family names such as al-Aydrus. Knowledge of the Habaib was not confined to Sambas alone. Towards the end of the 18th century, the Habaib had established themselves in various cities along the West Coast of Kalimantan, including Kotawaringin, Mempawah, Kubu, Pontianak, Ketapang, and even across the border in Sarawak, Malaysia. Some of them were involved in the administration of local kingdoms, like Husin al-Qadri, who served as the *Kadi* [Islamic Judge] in the Mempawah kingdom.<sup>14</sup> Others gained renown for their preaching within the community, such as Hasyim bin Yahya, known for his guardianship among the residents

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<sup>13</sup> Mas Aldi Bin Bujang, "Salsilah Patjahan Sulthah Jang Keempat di Keradjaan Sambas Jang Ada di Negeri Mempawah," No Publisher, 1934.

<sup>14</sup> Abu Bakar, "Habib Husin bin Ahmad al-Kadri: Dai Ternama di Pantai Barat Kalimantan," in *Islam di Sarawak* (Kuching: Sanggar Bitara Karang Mengarang, 2017).



of Matan Sukadana. In addition, there were Habaib who played important roles in founding Muslim territories, as exemplified by Aydrus al-Aydrus, who established the Kubu kingdom.<sup>15</sup> As the 19th century unfolded, the Habaib ventured further into the interior of Kalimantan, reaching regions such as Sanggau and Sintang. Among the various territories, Pontianak emerged as the most significant for the Habaib community.

Pontianak is a region at the confluence of the Kapuas Kecil and Landak Rivers. This territory was established by the al-Qadri family, originally coming from Matan Sukadana, in 1771 AD. The family was led by a man named Abdurrahman, who was a local by birth, as his mother had Dayak ancestry. The area at the meeting point of these rivers was originally an untamed forest wilderness. It is said that local mythology, particularly tales of female ghosts, contributed to its reputation as a quiet and desolate region. Abdurrahman, along with his extended family and followers, embarked on a five-year endeavor to transform this wilderness into a settled community. Their efforts began with the construction of a mosque, and gradually, they cleared the forest along the riverbanks to make way for residential homes. The strategic location played a crucial role in the rapid development of the area. Soon after, Pontianak attracted a wave of new settlers, further contributing to its growing population.<sup>16</sup>

Abdurrahman established the territory as an open and inclusive settlement, welcoming immigrants from various backgrounds. The land was granted by the king of Mempawah. Abdurrahman, along with several Habaib families and around 200 followers from the Bugis and Malay communities, was among the initial residents. In 1777, Pontianak declared itself an autonomous kingdom, with Abdurrahman al-Qadri assuming the role of sultan.<sup>17</sup> According to Willer, the kingdom was founded on a constitutional framework that outlined key principles, including the sovereignty of the state, land ownership, the rights of royal citizens, defense, public order, and the succession of

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<sup>15</sup> (Tun) Suzana (Tun) Hj Othman and Hj Muzaffar Dato' Hj Mohamad, *Ahlul-Bait (Keluarga) Rasulullah SAW & Kesultanan Melayu* (Batu Caves: Crescent News, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> A. Rahman et al., *Syarif Abdurrahman Alkadri: Perspektif Sejarah Berdirinya Kota Pontianak* (Pontianak: Romeo Grafika, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> Abu Bakar, *Kepingan Sejarah Sosial dan Politik Tentang Pendiri Negeri Pontianak dan Perkampungan Arab* (IAIN Pontianak Press, 2021).

leadership. The constitution explicitly stated that the land in Pontianak belonged to the state, and every citizen had the freedom to use it without charge.<sup>18</sup> The kingdom did not levy a life tax, and there were no mandatory forced labor requirements for its citizens. The use of arms was only mandated for the defense of the country. Moreover, city residents had the privilege of participating in the election of a new king from the offspring of the previous monarch, with ethical considerations playing a crucial role in the decision-making process. Abdurrahman's government policy extended a warm invitation to immigrants from various regions to settle in his kingdom, with the condition that they help maintain public order. Consequently, he was known for not hesitating to expel residents who disrupted the community's peace and harmony.<sup>19</sup> The constitution effectively attracted immigrants from diverse regions, including Siak, Banjar, Tambelan, and Siantan, who quickly integrated into the life of Pontianak. This spirit of inclusivity also extended to individuals of Arab, Bangladeshi, and Chinese origins, who eagerly sought to become part of the Pontianak community.<sup>20</sup>

The presence of Habaib in Pontianak, coupled with their dedicated preaching efforts, opened new paths as the city continued to develop. Over time, the number of Habaib in Pontianak grew, and their influence extended beyond the West Coast of Kalimantan, reaching into the interior regions, including Sanggau and Sintang.<sup>21</sup> Ali al-Habsyi serves as an exemplary figure in this regard. After successfully spreading his teachings within the community, he assumed a prominent position as an Islamic scholar in the kingdom. In the early 20th century, he furthered his mission by establishing the Rumah Lanting Islamic boarding school, which accommodated numerous children from surrounding villages who would later become influential religious figures in society. His preaching activities featured tambourine music, *shalawatan* [salutation to the Prophet Muhammad], martial arts, and

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<sup>18</sup> J. T. Willer, "Eerste Proeve Eener Kronijk van Mampawa En Pontianak [A Preliminary Chronicle of Mempawah and Pontianak].," in *Tijdschrift Voor Indische Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde*, III: 516-562 and VI (New Series III): 69-74 (1857).

<sup>19</sup> Willer, "Eerste Proeve Eener Kronijk van Mampawa En Pontianak [A Preliminary Chronicle of Mempawah and Pontianak].," 9.

<sup>20</sup> Hasanudin, *Pontianak Masa Kolonial* (Yogyakarta: Ombak Dua, 2014), 103–10.

<sup>21</sup> Zaenuddin Hudi Prasajo, "Religious and Cultural Existences Within the Communities of Upper Kapuas Riverside of West Kalimantan," *Al-Albab* 6, no. 2 (2017): 197–214, <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v6i2.931>.

*pantun* [Malay oral poetry].<sup>22</sup> Simultaneously, other Habaib in Pontianak introduced their unique religious traditions, as exemplified by the al-Haddadiyah congregation. This order arrived in Pontianak during the mid-19th century, introduced by Abdullah al-Haddad. They have since become deeply integrated into society, overseeing Qur'anic study assemblies, with figures like Muhammad al-Haddad leading the way.<sup>23</sup> Under the leadership of the al-Qadri family, Pontianak embraced and encouraged the role of Habaib in their preaching, thereby contributing to the region's rich religious diversity.

In addition to their religious roles, the Habaib in Pontianak's governance hold significant positions and responsibilities. They were among the individuals who, alongside Abdurrahman, played a crucial role in the establishment of Pontianak. As a result, they actively participated in the deliberative forums to shape the growing state. This is evident in the historical record of Hamid Ba Abud (*Tuk Tangguk*), who played a crucial role in the deliberations that led to the establishment of the kingdom.<sup>24</sup> Historically, the Habaib were a religious group that wielded influence in the Sultanate's decision-making process. They were known for their ability to persuade Abdurrahman to select his successor as sultan. Moreover, they succeeded in pressuring the Dutch colonial authorities to appoint Usman as the third sultan of Pontianak. This decision was not the Dutch authorities' preferred choice, as they had alternative candidates in mind. However, Usman was regarded as a figure with strong religious principles and was believed capable of advancing the nation. Simultaneously, the Dutch were concerned that rejecting this choice might lead to Pontianak's decline and create internal problems. The Habaib went so far as to threaten to leave Pontianak if the Dutch did not comply with their decision.<sup>25</sup> The role of the Habaib aligns with the constitutional values that allow citizens to participate in the succession process among the sultan's descendants based on ethical considerations.

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<sup>22</sup> Yusuf Haris, "Islam Memasuki Sintang," No Publisher, 1993, 35–44.

<sup>23</sup> Bakar, *Kepingan Sejarah Sosial dan Politik Tentang Pendiri Negeri Pontianak dan Perkampungan Arab*.

<sup>24</sup> Alwi bin Ahmad Bin Ismail, "Hikayat al-Habib Husain al-Qadri," No Publisher, 1935, 18.

<sup>25</sup> P. J. Veth, "Borneo's Wester Afdeeling, Geographisch, Statistisch, Historisch, Voorafgegaan Door Een Algemene Schets Der Gansche Eilands," *Deel I. Zaltbommel*, 1854, 63–65 & 71.

Within this framework, Habaib hold a significant and influential position in Pontianak, with the ultimate goal of contributing to the region's well-being and advancement.

In subsequent years, Habaib in Pontianak underwent a significant shift in its position within the governing structure. They were no longer active participants in the government. The sultan's decision to align with the al-Zawawi family from Mecca led to the Habaib from Hadramaut losing their influence and access to the palace. Furthermore, the sultan's family took steps to establish a dormitory in Mecca, primarily to accommodate Hajj pilgrims and provide educational facilities for the Muslim community in Pontianak.<sup>26</sup> Their interests shifted away from their homeland, Hadramaut. Consequently, the sultan began selecting his mufti from Mecca's ulama or alumni, such as Abdullah al-Zawawi and Ismail al-Kelantani, rather than traditionally choosing ulama from the *Habaib* community, as it was the practice with figures like Muhammad al-Saqaf. The Habaib, once prominent in government, became more dispersed across broader society. This shift also extended to the new generation of arrivals, who no longer had access to the sultan's palace. Most of them, like their predecessors, continued to play important religious roles, not within the palace, but in mosques and *surau* [smaller mosques] throughout Pontianak and the surrounding cities.<sup>27</sup>

In the context of Pontianak society, the Habaib can be categorized into two distinct groups: those within the palace and those outside of it.<sup>28</sup> The Habaib inside the palace primarily consist of the sultan's descendants, predominantly from the al-Qadri clan. This particular group of Habaib played integral roles in governing the Pontianak kingdom, occasionally extending their influence into regional government affairs. Conversely, the other group of Habaib typically leads ordinary lives as ordinary citizens. They are often engaged in various occupations, such as trade, agriculture, plantation,

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<sup>26</sup> Martin Van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqshabandiyah di Indonesia* (Bandung: Mizan, 1992).

<sup>27</sup> Bakar, "Habib Husin Bin Ahmad Al-Kadri: Dai Ternama di Pantai Barat Kalimantan," 25–28.

<sup>28</sup> Zeffry Alkatiri and Nabel A. Karim Hayaze, "Critical Literature Study on *Habaib* Identity in the Constellation of Islamic Studies in Indonesia from the Colonial Period to the Present," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 9, no. 1 (2022): 2096286, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2096286>.

and other businesses.<sup>29</sup> It is worth noting that many notable Habaib scholars have emerged from this group, with their presence dispersed throughout the broader society.

Meanwhile, the Habaib from the royal family and their close relatives often find themselves in bureaucratic and political roles.<sup>30</sup> Some among them have also risen as cultural figures, endeavoring to preserve the historical legacy of the sultanate. Despite these distinctions in roles and backgrounds, the relationship between the two Habaib groups remains harmonious. The Habaib identity seems to transcend and blur these existing differences, and the division between those inside and outside the palace does not lead to any conflict or rift in their relations.

### **Habaib in The Context of Pontianak Plural Community**

The Habaib in Pontianak and the city itself are viewed as two inseparable entities. They are acknowledged as the family that led the establishment and growth of Pontianak. Before their arrival, there were no inhabitants in the area, which is why those who settled there are recognized as the original residents. This status was formally acknowledged in the terms of the contract between the VOC (Dutch East India Company) and the sultan.<sup>31</sup> During the colonial period, they were not registered as foreign Eastern residents but were instead categorized as members of the Malay ethnic group. On the other hand, their relatives who arrived in Pontianak later were classified by the Dutch as foreign eastern residents.<sup>32</sup> However, within society, they integrated into a single social group, and over time, these distinctions became less relevant. This integration occurred through their interactions, with the original inhabitants significantly outnumbering the new arrivals. This social development continued beyond the

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<sup>29</sup> Syamsul Rijal, "Habaib, Markets and Traditional Islamic Authority: The Rise of Arab Preachers in Contemporary Indonesia" (Thesis, Australian National University, 2017), <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/156063>.

<sup>30</sup> Mawardi Mawardi and Agus Permana, "Habaib dalam Peta Politik Indonesia," *Al-Tsaqafa : Jurnal Ilmiah Peradaban Islam* 19, no. 1 (2022): 101–28, <https://doi.org/10.15575/al-tsaqafa.v19i1.18613>.

<sup>31</sup> Veth, "Borneo's Wester Afdeeling, Geographisch, Statistisch, Historisch, Vooraafgegaan Door Een Algemene Schets Der Gansche Eilands," 262.

<sup>32</sup> J. J. K. Enthoven, "Bijdragen Tot de Geographie van Borneo's Wester-Afdeeling," *The Geographical Journal* 23, no. 3 (1904): 372.

colonial era. The Habaib at the border were embraced by the local community as native residents, largely due to their role in clearing the forests and establishing the kingdom. Local oral traditions bear testament to this historical fact, recorded in legendary stories. Consequently, they are deemed to hold a prominent position in Pontianak's history.

In Pontianak, Habaib do not inhabit a specific area; rather, they reside in a dispersed manner, seamlessly blending into the broader society. Even during the Sultanate or the Dutch colonial era, no distinct villages were established exclusively for them. While there is an Arab village in Pontianak, built in the early 20th century, it is not exclusively designated as a Habaib residential area. The majority of its residents are non-Habaib Arabs from Yemen. In Pontianak, the Habaib live alongside the Bugis and Malays along the right and left banks of the Kapuas and Landak Rivers. This demographic arrangement differs from colonial-era Java, where specific Arab villages were designated. In Pontianak's early history, certain Habaib families occupied areas near the palace compound, closely associated with the sultan's family and their immediate relatives.

This settlement came to be known as Kampung Dalam. Meanwhile, other Habaib were integrated into villages with residents from various ethnic backgrounds. They were not confined solely to the city center but also extended into the suburbs.<sup>33</sup> This demographic pattern persisted in subsequent years, reflecting the unique social life of Pontianak.<sup>34</sup> In their socio-cultural life, the Habaib in Pontianak are fully integrated into the local community. This integration begins from a young age, as many Habaib have local mothers. Interestingly, there are no Habaib in Pontianak who are born to native Yemeni women. Instead, the mothers of Pontianak's sultans and some of their families were Malay, Dayak,<sup>35</sup> occasionally Bugis, or of mixed Arab-local heritage, among others. In addition, they are situated at the heart of

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<sup>33</sup> Nur Hamzah et al., "Religion, Lifestyle, and Identity Affirmation within Middle Class Malay Muslims in Pontianak of West Borneo," *Al-Albab* 11, no. 1 (2022): 121–38, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ALALBAB.V11I1.2221>.

<sup>34</sup> Abu Bakar, *Kepingan Sejarah Sosial & Politik Tentang Pendiri Negeri Pontianak dan Perkampungan Arab* (Pontianak: STAIN Pontianak Press, 2001).

<sup>35</sup> Faizal Amin and M. Ikhsan Tanggok, "Dayaknese and Islam: A Confluence from Borneo's Hinterland, Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 29, no. 2 (2022): 271–303, <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v29i2.17450>.

Malay or Bugis culture, which is primarily the culture of their mothers' origins. In the early days, they actively engaged in inter-regional trade before transitioning to plantation and agricultural activities. This shift in economic pursuits led them to settle in peripheral areas alongside other local communities. Over time, they naturally became an integral part of their surrounding environment.<sup>36</sup> The absence of Yemeni women in their lineage resulted in the immediate integration of Habaib's ancestors into the local culture.<sup>37</sup> Within their households, particularly in Pontianak, they ceased using Arabic as a means of communication because their wives did not speak their husbands' language. Instead, they opted for the local language as the medium for family communication, which was subsequently passed down through generations to their children.<sup>38</sup> One significant indicator of this integration is the transformation of family names. For example, Abdullah might evolve into *Dole*, or Aisyah might change to *Icut*. This transformation extends to other aspects of culture as well. Consequently, members of the community speak and write in the local language, adopt local attire, exhibit local behavior, and adhere to local customs.

The historical context described above transitions into subsequent eras. The Habaib in Pontianak do not appear different from other communities; they share similar socio-cultural characteristics. They are present across various sectors, including government and state bureaucracy, political parties, academia, activism, private enterprises, social organizations, customary institutions, religious bodies, markets, factories, and many other domains. Their presence has expanded in line with regional developments, indicating their demographic presence in diverse locations.<sup>39</sup> Their interactions with others are marked by cordial

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<sup>36</sup> Lodewijk Willem Christiaan Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et Les Colonies Arabes Dans l'Archipel Indien* (Impr. du Gouvernement., 1886), 224.

<sup>37</sup> Imam Subchi, "The History of Hadrami Arabic Community Development in Southeast Asia," *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (2019): 229–56, <https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2019.14.2.229-256>.

<sup>38</sup> Abu Bakar, *Kepingan Sejarah Sosial & Politik Tentang Pendiri Negeri Pontianak dan Perkampungan Arab* (Pontianak: STAIN Pontianak Press, 2001), 103.

<sup>39</sup> Zeffry Alkatiri and Nabel A. Karim Hayaze, "Critical Literature Study on *Habaib* Identity in the Constellation of Islamic Studies in Indonesia from the Colonial Period to the Present," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 9, no. 1 (2022): 2096286, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2096286>.

relations, and there have been no significant communal conflicts. Some Habaib have earned the public's trust, enabling them to hold positions as members of the people's representative council, state administrative commissions, leaders of community organizations, and even as village heads. They are an integral part of the community's socio-cultural life, and their political beliefs and perspectives closely align with the broader public's views, promoting unity and harmony within society.

### **Historical Significance of Pontianak: A Source of Habaib Authority**

The history of the Habaib in Pontianak, within the context of local wisdom, has granted them authority in various socio-religious roles within their community. They are recognized as a social group that played a significant role in the transformation of Pontianak from a dense forest into a thriving settlement, notably the al-Qadri family.<sup>40</sup> In the process, they established a way of life founded upon the values of unity amid cultural diversity. These Habaib are regarded as leaders who safeguarded the kingdom from numerous threats and disturbances.<sup>41</sup> During the sultanate, this authority was vested in them. Simultaneously, they were known as devout Muslims who actively propagated Islam and facilitated its spread in West Kalimantan. Together with other Muslims, they shared religious teachings with the local population.<sup>42</sup> This dual role, as founders of the state and as agents of Islamic teachings, undoubtedly strengthened the authority of the Habaib that originally stemmed from their affiliation with the sultanate. As a result, Islam became the predominant religion in the settlements along the Kapuas River. Their historical contributions as state founders and religious preachers, coupled with their willingness to integrate with the local community without maintaining social distance, allowed them to assimilate into the local culture. They effortlessly became a part of the Malay, Bugis, or other ethnic groups in the region.<sup>43</sup> This rich history

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<sup>40</sup> Zakaria Efendi, "Sejarah Dakwah Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman al-Qadri: Islamisasi di Pontianak," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 19, no. 2 (2021): 347–88, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v19i2.914>.

<sup>41</sup> Panji Pustaka, "Nomor Soeltan Pontianak," *No. 15 Tahun IV*, February 1926.

<sup>42</sup> Bakar, "Habib Husin Bin Ahmad Al-Kadri: Dai Ternama di Pantai Barat Kalimantan," 26–27.

<sup>43</sup> Yusriadi Yusriadi et al., "University and the Narrative of Ethno-Religious Relations in West Kalimantan," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 2 (2023): 305–16, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v7i2.373>.



of cultural development, religious propagation, and adaptability to their surroundings has solidified their authority in socio-religious matters. This authority has been steadily growing over time and remains deeply ingrained in society.

The recognition of Habaib in the development of Pontianak and the process of Islamization is exemplified by the establishment of the pilgrimage site in Batu Layang. This site serves as the burial center for the sultans, their families, and religious scholars. It holds socio-religious significance, as it forms the basis for the creation of collective memories surrounding historical figures. Pilgrimage to Batu Layang is not merely a ritual; It also emphasizes the importance of honoring the life stories of the individuals buried there.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, this pilgrimage tradition has been in existence for over a century,<sup>45</sup> serving as a testament to its historical role. Within this pilgrimage site lie the tombs of Sultan Abdurrahman, his successors, and the *muftis* or religious scholars who played vital roles in the governance of Pontianak. These graves symbolize the enduring relationship between the *umara* (rulers) and the *ulama* (religious scholars), who nurtured Pontianak's development. The pilgrimage site at Batu Layang continues to thrive, attracting pilgrims from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Malays, Bugis, Javanese, Madurese, and occasionally Chinese. Historically, even the Dayaks made a pilgrimage to this site.

<sup>46</sup> Through this pilgrimage, the recognition of Habaib as the founders of the kingdom, coupled with their devoutness and religious contributions, has become shared knowledge passed down through generations. This sacred burial place has become an integral part of preserving the community's collective memory and heritage.

This inclusive nature of pilgrimage practice resonates with broader patterns of inter-ethnic religious interaction observed among the Dayak communities in West Kalimantan. A study on the Mentuka Dayak tribe reveals a distinctive customary practice known as *Pinah Laman*, which serves as a cultural space for community members who

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<sup>44</sup> Uswatun Hasanah and Raziki Waldan, "Manajemen Wisata Religi Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman al-Qadri Kalimantan Barat: Analisis Perawatan dan Promosi Wisata Religi," *J-MD Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 4, no. 1 (2023): 57–79, <https://doi.org/10.24260/j-md.v4i1.1630>.

<sup>45</sup> Enthoven, "Bijdragen Tot de Geographie van Borneo's Wester-Afdeeling," 836.

<sup>46</sup> Berg, *Le Hadhramout et Les Colonies Arabes Dans l'Archipel Indien*, 201.

convert from Catholicism to Islam.<sup>47</sup> Through this customary process, converts assume a new identity termed *Sinan*, yet paradoxically, they must forfeit their Dayak ethnic rights, including participation in traditional ceremonies. While this religious conversion custom imposes social sanctions, it simultaneously functions as a bridge for inter-religious and inter-ethnic tolerance, as customary practices maintain social order while respecting individual religious choices. The coexistence of Habaib pilgrimage sites with Dayak participation in these rituals, alongside practices like *Pinah Laman*, demonstrates that cultural traditions in West Kalimantan have long served as mediating institutions. It creates spaces where religious devotion and ethnic identity intersect, negotiate, and ultimately reinforce social cohesion across communal boundaries.

The tradition of the Batu Layang pilgrimage has thrived in the community since the early to mid-nineteenth century AD. This ritual typically occurs twice a year and has evolved into one of the most significant ceremonies in the region. Many residents actively participate in these pilgrimages. The first pilgrimage takes place during Eid al-Fitr, while the second occurs during Eid al-Adha.<sup>48</sup> These pilgrimages draw large congregations, a tradition similar to that of Javanese Muslims who gather before the start of Ramadan. Eid al-Fitr remains the primary pilgrimage season for local Muslims, attracting attendees from Pontianak and its surrounding areas. Notably, the Pontianak sultanate family has preserved this tradition and, in recent years, has sought to expand its scale. The sultan usually participates in these events. In addition, the city government organizes annual pilgrimage activities that often coincide with the city's anniversary. During these events, the mayor formally invites regional leaders to participate in prayers and lay flowers at the gravesite. This initiative commemorates individuals who have made significant contributions to the city.<sup>49</sup> In the context described above, the Pontianak Sultanate Palace serves as a

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<sup>47</sup> Felisitas Yuswanto et al., "Pinah Laman: The Construction of Religious and Ethnic Identity Within the Mentuka Dayak of West Kalimantan," *Al-Albab* 11, no. 2 (2023): 177–98, <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v11i2.2245>.

<sup>48</sup> Veth, "Borneo's Wester Afdeeling, Geographisch, Statistisch, Historisch, Voorafgegaan Door Een Algemene Schets Der Gansche Eilands," 15.

<sup>49</sup> Suhendra, "Susuri Sungai Kapuas Ziarah ke Makam Kesultanan di Batu Layang," in *Suara Kalbar*, October 2022, <https://www.suarakalbar.co.id/2022/10/susuri-sungai-kapuas-ziarah-ke-makam-kesultanan-di-batu-layang/>.

confirmation and a compelling argument for the Habaib's role in the founding of the kingdom. This historic palace still stands proudly in the heart of the old city and has become a prominent destination for diverse visitors, both for academic research and tourism purposes. Its significance is emphasized by its registration as a state-protected cultural heritage site. The royal palace provides invaluable insights into the governance of the sultans<sup>50</sup> and their contributions to the city's development and structural organization.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, in the field of da'wah (Islamic propagation), tangible evidence emphasizes their acceptance and influence within the community. This evidence can be found in religious landmarks that bear witness to their role in their surroundings. These remains serve as enduring reminders of their legacy. Their impact is notably evident in the existence of mosques and *surau* (smaller mosques) that continue to function as places of worship for the local Muslim population.<sup>52</sup>

These places of worship are often situated in historic residential areas. In the Bugis Village, for instance, one can find the Miftahut Taubah Mosque, a testament to the contributions of Abdullah al-Haddad, and the Misbahul Huda Mosque, established by Ahmad al-Habsyi. These mosques are commonly referred to as the al-Haddad and al-Habsyi Mosques, respectively. Likewise, in Melayu Laut village, the Babus Saadah Surau stands as a legacy of Qasim Ba Raqbah. In the Jawa village, the Nurul Hidayah Surau, built by Sagaf al-Qadri, is recognized as the Wan Sagaf Mosque. These religious structures play an important role in fostering religious practices and activities within the community. Historically, during the reign of previous sultans, Pontianak had only one mosque, the Jamik Sultan Mosque, built by the sultan and his family.<sup>53</sup> However, other mosques also bear witness to the Habaib as influential figures in the propagation of Islam. For instance, the al-Falah Mosque in Sei Jawi commemorates the legacy of Muhammad Syahab. At the same time, the Baytun Nur Mosque in

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<sup>50</sup> Wali Kota Pontianak, "Peraturan Daerah Kota Pontianak Nomor 4 Tahun 2022 Tentang Pelestarian dan Pengelolaan Cagar Budaya," 2022.

<sup>51</sup> M. Syaifulloh and B. Wibowo, *Benda Cagar Budaya: Potensi Wisata & Ekonomi Kreatif Masyarakat Kota Pontianak*, ed. Eka J. P. Utama (Klaten: Penerbit Lakeisha, 2020).

<sup>52</sup> Faisol et al., "Peran Surau dalam Dinamika Islamisasi dan Pusat Pendidikan Pada Masa Awal Kesultanan Pontianak."

<sup>53</sup> Efendi, "Sejarah Dakwah Sultan Syarif Abdurrahman al-Qadri."

Banshir Village holds the history of Abu Bakar al-Haddad. These two individuals played roles in the transmission of religious knowledge.

The tradition of pilgrimages to graves outside Batu Layang further reinforces the significance of the aforementioned places of worship. These sites house numerous ancient graves that serve as destinations for pilgrims, who deeply respect these revered ulemas among the local Muslim community. One such revered figure is Muhammad al-Muthahar, whose importance dates back to the 18th century AD. In addition, Hamid Ba Abud is celebrated as a respected cleric in Pontianak. These graves are situated within the historic residential centers of the indigenous population. While their appeal may not match that of Batu Layang, their presence offers valuable insights into the diverse roles of the Habaib beyond government administration, particularly in religious propagation.

In the middle of the previous century, a prominent *Habib* left a lasting impact on Pontianak's Islamic community, "Shaleh al-Haddad". Born in Hadramaut and educated in Tarim, he later relocated to Pontianak. His name continues to be revered in local society, despite his blindness. Shaleh al-Haddad was renowned for his dedication to teaching religious knowledge across various places, often crossing forests and waterways to reach remote villages. He was not related to the sultan's palace; nevertheless, his influence extended to Malay Muslims, Bugis, Madurese, and other ethnic groups. Numerous mosques and Muslim households became centers of learning due to his teachings, both in urban areas and remote regions. The impact of his instruction prompted many parents to send their children to Islamic boarding schools in Java.

Furthermore, his teachings inspired the founding of several Islamic boarding schools that were previously absent in Pontianak. Assalam, a prominent Islamic boarding school, exemplifies his thoughts and work. Subsequently, the modern Islamic boarding school Darun Naim was founded by one of his students. Another student founded the Mambausshafa Islamic Boarding School. Shaleh al-Haddad's legacy endures through the Shaleh al-Haddad Islamic Boarding School, which currently enrolls 1,500 students. He is remembered with deep respect by many Muslims, and his grave has become a pilgrimage site. Each year, thousands of Muslims participate in a death anniversary to pray for him. His name is also invoked during

the *tawasulan* ritual before Friday prayers and Eid al-Fitr at al-Falah, the Grand Mosque of Pontianak City.<sup>54</sup>

## **Discussion**

### **The Role of the Habaib in Ethno-Religious Society Interactions**

Pontianak's development continues to progress on multiple fronts, in line with the city's growth. The presence of markets, offices, companies, schools, universities, and service centers is propelling the city's development, positioning Pontianak as a potential urbanization destination for residents from other cities in West Kalimantan. People from various professions and backgrounds are present in Pontianak, facilitating social interaction across diverse sectors, whether in formal or informal settings. The city's ongoing development is solidifying the existing diversity,<sup>55</sup> as evidenced not only in official population documents but also in public spaces marked by distinct ethnic symbols and cultural celebrations held throughout the city. The regional economy is undoubtedly benefiting from this diversity, particularly through tourism activities, with support from the local government. Additionally, tribal organizations play a role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Pontianak has evolved into a central hub that brings together the diverse interests of the people of West Kalimantan, encompassing a variety of cultural backgrounds. This development should be viewed as a continuation of the city's historical legacy, dating back to the Pontianak Sultanate, which has always been at the heart of West Kalimantan.<sup>56</sup>

In the context of the city's development described above, the Habaib community is characterized by a tolerant outlook and a commitment to maintaining social harmony. This perspective is exemplified by the Pontianak sultanate, which demonstrates its acceptance of various cultural celebrations from different ethnic groups, including both Muslims and non-Muslims. Some notable examples of these celebrations are *Cap Go Meh* [celebration of the fifteenth night of the Chinese lunar new year] and *Gawai Dayak* [Dayak thanksgiving

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<sup>54</sup> Abu Bakar and Syf Fatimah, *Habib Shaleh al-Haddad: Jihad dalam Dakwah Islamiyah di Kalimantan Barat* (Yogyakarta: Magnum, 2018).

<sup>55</sup> Hasanudin, *Pontianak Masa Kolonial*, 28–40.

<sup>56</sup> Tantra Nur Andi and Rifai Rahman, *Pemerintahan Kota Pontianak dari Sultan Sampai Walikota* (Pontianak: Lentera Community, 2010).

celebration], which are celebrated enthusiastically every year.<sup>57</sup> These events are held in the city center and are actively promoted by the Regional Government. In contrast, the Pontianak sultanate itself does not organize similar celebrations in the city center, aside from pilgrimage rituals. While this approach has the potential to create social and cultural tensions, including feelings of jealousy between indigenous and non-indigenous communities, the previous sultan has consistently supported the continuation of these activities.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, Pontianak has seen the emergence of various ethnic-affiliated mass organizations such as *Majelis Adat Budaya Tionghoa* [Traditional Council of Chinese Culture], *Ikatan Keluarga Besar Madura* (IKBM) [Madurese Large Family Association, the Dayak Traditional Council, etc.<sup>59</sup> These organizations are committed to promoting and maintaining harmony among the diverse members of society. This commitment is exemplified by the Coffee Morning activity organized by the sultanate, which invites figures from various cross-ethnic mass organizations, religious leaders, and Forpimda (a regional administrative leadership forum) to participate. This forum serves as a platform to foster communication and closeness among residents, thus reducing the potential for conflicts.<sup>60</sup> The Pontianak sultanate's policy in this regard has garnered support from the Habaib community, and the event is designed as a regular gathering for community stakeholders.

The Habaib, within the context of the cultural diversity mentioned above, have a strong commitment to their integration into society. In general, they are recognized for their Malay identity, which aligns with the majority population in this region. They also uphold local customs and traditions, making them significant contributors to

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<sup>57</sup> Tata Ihsan et al., "The Role of the Kapuas River in Shaping Social Interaction and Cultural Acculturation in Multicultural Communities," *JUPSI: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Indonesia* 3, no. 2 (2025): 58–65, <https://doi.org/10.62238/jupsi.v3i2.179>.

<sup>58</sup> Ridhoino Kristo Sebastianus Melano, "14 Naga Akan Semarakkan Cap Go Meh di Pontianak," in *Tribun Pontianak*, 2016, <https://pontianak.tribunnews.com/2016/01/31/14-naga-akan-semarakkan-cap-go-meh-di-pontianak>.

<sup>59</sup> Kantor Kesatuan Bangsa dan Sosial Politik, "Data Ormas yang Terdaftar," in *Satu Data Pontianak*, 2019, <https://satudata.pontianak.go.id/dataset/daftar-ormas-yang-terdaftar-tahun>.

<sup>60</sup> Heri, "Sultan Pontianak Ajak Nikmati Kopi Khas Keraton Kadirah.," in *Kalbarnews*, 2019, <https://www.kalbarnews.co.id/2019/08/sultan-pontianak-ajak-nikmati-kopi-khas.html>.

the formation of the Majelis Adat Budaya Melayu (MABM) [Traditional Council of Malay Culture] in their city. Abdussalam Alhinduan, for instance, was a prominent Habaib leader in the traditional assembly for two terms.<sup>61</sup> Another notable figure in MABM is Mohdar Baraqbah.<sup>62</sup> In addition, other Habaib play significant roles in various traditional institutions. Toha al-Jufri is recognized within the Madurese society, while Anis Alhinduan was highly respected in the Madurese traditional assembly. In the Bugis community of Pontianak, Alfian Bakbud is a prominent figure. Meanwhile, Abdullah bin Yahya represents the Habaib within the Javanese community. Both Alfian and Abdullah are known as religious figures who run Islamic boarding schools.

These Habaib tend to embody the cultural characteristics of the ethnic groups they are associated with. Consequently, Habaib are often differentiated by their ethnic backgrounds, demonstrating a strong sense of belonging to and a commitment to the local culture. The Habaib mentioned above are believed to have inherited the traditions of their ancestors who founded the kingdom, emphasizing values such as culture, tolerance, and harmony.<sup>63</sup> Ibrahim, for instance, reported that these values were learned from the history of his predecessors during the development of Pontianak. Consequently, he actively engages in peace efforts to apply these values in real life, driven by genuine intentions rather than personal interests. In addition, he also demonstrates concern for the environment in Kalimantan, where he resides.<sup>64</sup> This spirit is also passed down to individuals like Umar, who is dedicated to building a religiously civilized society. To achieve this goal, he initiated the establishment of a settlement in collaboration with residents, independently, amid a 200-hectare forest, located in the village of Tepuai, Kapuas Hulu, at the heart of West Kalimantan's interior.<sup>65</sup> This settlement also encompasses independent economic endeavors and includes a modern Islamic boarding school. The name "Al-Jihad" reflects the founders' commitment and struggle. In the

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<sup>61</sup> Abdussalam Alhinduan, "Personal Communication," 2023.

<sup>62</sup> Baraqbah, "Personal Communication," 2023.

<sup>63</sup> Kazwaini Kazwaini et al., "Nilai Keislaman pada Buku Ajar IPA SMP/MTs untuk Pembentukan Karakter Religius Siswa," *Journal of Natural Science and Integration* 4, no. 2 (2021): 277–95, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jnsi.v4i2.11278>.

<sup>64</sup> Syarif Ibrahim Alqadrie, "Personal Communication," 2023.

<sup>65</sup> Umar, "Personal Communication," 2023.

center of this settlement stands the Peace Monument, serving as a symbol of their vision and mission. Umar's efforts aim to replicate the historical legacy of his ancestors in the central Dayak region of Kapuas Hulu.<sup>66</sup> The integration of the Habaib into Malay identity should be understood within the broader socio-cultural transformations experienced by the Malay Muslim community in Pontianak. Hamzah, Sirait, and Lessy demonstrate that modernization and improved living standards among middle-class Malay Muslims have significantly altered their relationship with Malay culture, making them more selective toward existing customs and traditions while simultaneously increasing their desire to affirm class identity.<sup>67</sup> These modern Malay Muslims tend to adopt a contemporary lifestyle supported by Islamic teachings, as they consider Islam to be the foundation of their customs and traditions. The hegemony of modernity has thus influenced the characteristics of their religiosity and Malay identity, leading to a more modernized expression of both. This dynamic is particularly relevant to understanding the Habaib's position in contemporary Pontianak society. As a community that has historically integrated with the local Malay population, the Habaib are not immune to these broader shifts. Their authority and social role, once rooted in the historical legacy of the sultanate and traditional religious leadership, now coexist with the modern aspirations and identity affirmations of the wider Malay Muslim middle class. The selective engagement with tradition embraces Islamic values while adapting to modern lifestyles. It parallels the Habaib's own negotiation between their historical religious authority and their contemporary roles within a plural, modernizing society.<sup>68</sup>

### **Significant Influences on the Harmonious Society Development**

The dynamics of Pontianak's development over the past two decades, coupled with its diverse population, have sometimes

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<sup>66</sup> Budi, "Pesantren Al-Jihad Kapuas Hulu' Laduni," 2022, <https://www.laduni.id/post/read/74295/pesantren-al-jihad-kapuas-hulu>.

<sup>67</sup> Hamzah et al., "Religion, Lifestyle, and Identity Affirmation within Middle Class Malay Muslims in Pontianak of West Borneo."

<sup>68</sup> Yoga Irama and Ainur Rofiq Al Amin, "Religious Authority Between Lineage and Merit: An Ethnographic Study of Habaib's Identity Negotiation in Pesantren," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Philosophy* 4, no. 1 (2025): 161–79, <https://doi.org/10.15642/jitp.2025.4.1.161-179>.



encountered obstacles, resulting in disharmony. During this period, the city witnessed several disputes between residents of different ethnic groups that initially had personal origins but escalated into issues related to SARA, which stands for *Suku, Agama, Ras, and Antar-golongan* – literally meaning *ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group relations*.<sup>69</sup> One such example was the Bakso Cakil Restaurant incident in 2022, where a personal dispute involving Malay and Dayak individuals almost took on ethnic and racial dimensions.<sup>70</sup>

Similar incidents occurred in the Bangunkan Sahur [waking up for an early morning meal] case in 2020, initially personal but influenced by ethnic factors since the perpetrator was Chinese and the victim Malay.<sup>71</sup> In previous years, similar conflicts had occurred in Pontianak, including fights between Chinese and Malay youths in the city center in 2017. This incident sparked protests by Malay youth groups, demanding accountability and raising concerns about SARA issues in society.<sup>72</sup> Sometimes, disputes from outside the region have spilled into Pontianak, such as the rejection of the arrival of MUI Deputy Secretary General, Ustadz Tengku Zulkarnain, by a group of Dayak in Sintang in 2017, which angered Muslim ethnic groups in Pontianak and its surroundings.<sup>73</sup> This reflects conflicts between groups affiliated with different ethnicities and nearly led to major clashes in Pontianak during Gawai Dayak activities. Another example is the case of the Dragon Statue in Singkawang City in 2008, which faced

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<sup>69</sup> Yusriadi et al., “University and the Narrative of Ethno-Religious Relations in West Kalimantan.”

<sup>70</sup> Bella, “Tidak Ada Sangkut Paut Masalah Antarsuku, Klarifikasi Kami Dayak Kalbar Terkait Kericuhan di Jalan Veteran Pontianak,” in *kalbar.suara.com*, 2022, <https://kalbar.suara.com/read/2022/12/19/171226/tidak-ada-sangkut-paut-masalah-antar-suku-klarifikasi-kami-dayak-kalbar-terkait-kericuhan-di-jalan-veteran-pontianak?page=3>.

<sup>71</sup> Suara Kalbar, “Kasus Bangunkan Sahur di Pontianak Utara, Ini Penjelasan Tokoh Masyarakat,” in *Suara Saggau*, May 2020, <https://www.suarakalbar.co.id/2020/05/kasus-bangunkan-sahur-di-pontianak/>.

<sup>72</sup> Yohanes Kurnia Irawan, “Gara-Gara Hal Sepele, Tukang Parkir Dibacok Senjata Tajam,” in *TribunWow*, 2017, <https://wow.tribunnews.com/2017/07/21/gara-gara-hal-sepele-tukang-parkir-dibacok-senjata-tajam?page=2>.

<sup>73</sup> Herianto Batubara, “Ditolak Dewan Adat Dayak, Ini Penjelasan Ustadz Tengku Zulkarnain,” in *Detiknews*, 2017, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3394677/ditolak-dewan-adat-dayak-ini-penjelasan-ustaz-tengku-zulkarnain>.

opposition from Malay groups.<sup>74</sup> This issue extended to the 2010 election of a Chinese mayor in Singkawang, provoking the anger of Malays in Sambas and the coastal areas of West Kalimantan, including Pontianak. On the other hand, the Singkawang Chinese community received support from the Dayak ethnic group. Several disputes with ethnic and religious dimensions occurred during this period, with one of the largest involving the Malays and the Madurese, who are distributed evenly in the city, and resulted in fatalities and incidents of arson in 2000.<sup>75</sup>

In the context of the SARA issues mentioned above, the Habaib have actively taken on roles in addressing and resolving these issues, and their involvement is generally accepted by the community, facilitating open communication. One prominent figure in this regard is Syarif Mahmud, who represents the Sultanate of Pontianak. He played a crucial role in successfully mediating the Bakso Cakil Restaurant case,<sup>76</sup> leading to peace between the conflicting parties. In addition, he has also been involved in mediating labor disputes, resulting in peaceful resolutions.<sup>77</sup> The al-Qadri family, as the successors of the Pontianak sultanate, is recognized for its ability to resolve SARA-related disputes in Pontianak. An example of their mediation efforts was during the 2019 presidential election, when some individuals contested the election results. This led to riots, with police posts being burned, public facilities damaged, and parts of the city paralyzed, resulting in injuries and fatalities. The settlement of people of Chinese descent was also a point of concern. In this situation, the sultan was instrumental in reducing public anger and contributed to resolving the issues at a Regional Police meeting.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Kompas, "Patung Naga Jangan Dipersoalkan," in *kompas.com*, 2010, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2010/07/31/06355175/~Oase~Cakrawala>.

<sup>75</sup> Baraqbah, "Personal Communication."

<sup>76</sup> Syahrani Siregar, "Sempat Berselisih Tegang di Jalan Veteran, Kedua Pihak Sepakat Berdamai," *Pontianak Post*, December 24, 2022.

<sup>77</sup> Dhita Mutiasari, "Kalbar Populer 24 Jam, Dua Kelompok Buruh Sepakat Damai Hijau 75 Warga Kalbar Berangkat Umrah," in *Tribun Pontianak*, 2022, <https://pontianak.tribunnews.com/2022/02/10/kalbar-populer-24-jam-dua-kelompok-buruh-sepakat-damai-hingga-75-warga-kalbar-berangkat-umrah?page=3>.

<sup>78</sup> Jessica Helena Wuysang, "Sultan Pontianak Jamin Pontianak Kondusif," in *Antaranews*, 2019, <https://pemilu.antaranews.com/foto/884076/sultan-pontianak-jamin-pontianak-kondusif>.

The Habaib from the sultanate have not limited their mediation roles to matters within the palace; they have also played significant roles outside the palace. Alqadrie, for instance, has been instrumental in mediating various SARA conflicts in West Kalimantan. He successfully mediated the 2010 Singkawang Mayor's Academic Paper case, which ended peacefully through a traditional event in the Sambas Sultanate, thus resolving the Dragon Statue controversy.<sup>79</sup> He also played a vital role in reconciling ethnic conflicts in Sambas between the Malays and the Dayaks against the Madurese in 1999-2000, which had claimed thousands of lives. Local government, police, and the military have implemented many of his recommendations in their policies and conflict-resolution efforts, and his role as a peace activist received presidential recognition.<sup>80</sup>

This integrative attitude aligns with broader patterns of legal and cultural synthesis observed in West Kalimantan. A study on the Malay Buyan community in Kapuas Hulu demonstrates that Islamic law and customary law do not function as separate or contradictory systems but rather engage in an ongoing process of negotiation, resulting in an adaptive legal framework that ensures both social harmony and legal continuity.<sup>81</sup> The integration is evident in the incorporation of Islamic legal terminology within customary law, the use of customary fines in divorce settlements, and the active role of Islamic religious leaders in the codification of customary norms. This finding challenges the dichotomous perspective that positions Islamic law and adat as inherently opposing systems, instead highlighting a dynamic interaction that strengthens both religious and cultural identity in a predominantly Muslim society. The Habaib's commitment to local customs and traditions reflects this integrative legal consciousness, where Islamic values and local cultural norms are not seen as conflicting but as

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<sup>79</sup> Syarif Ibrahim Alqadrie, *Kasus Kontroversi Makalah Melayu dan Patung Naga di Singkawang*. Pontianak (ACP, 2010).

<sup>80</sup> Syarif Ibrahim Alqadrie, *Matahari Akan Terbit di Barat : Kumpulan Karangan Terpilih Sejak 1986-2010* (Pontianak: PT Borneo Tribune Press, 2011).

<sup>81</sup> Zaimuariffudin Shukri Nordin et al., "Integrating Islamic Law and Customary Law: Codification and Religious Identity in the Malay Buyan Community of Kapuas Hulu," *Journal of Islamic Law* 6, no. 1 (2025): 89–111, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v6i1.3410>.

mutually reinforcing elements that contribute to social cohesion in Pontianak's plural society.<sup>82</sup>

In religious matters, the Habaib in Pontianak maintains a tolerant view. They embrace religious diversity and accept ethnic and cultural differences, as religion in Pontianak is often closely correlated with ethnic identity.<sup>83</sup> For instance, being Muslim is associated with the Malay community,<sup>84</sup> while the Dayaks are typically Catholic or adhere to indigenous beliefs,<sup>85</sup> the Chinese are often Confucian or Buddhist,<sup>86</sup> and the Madurese are predominantly Muslim,<sup>87</sup> among other affiliations. Since its establishment, Pontianak has been home to a variety of places of worship beyond mosques, and the coexistence of these religious institutions has rarely been disrupted. Communities of different religions have often built their places of worship in proximity to one another, and diverse religious practices are observed. The Habaib, who were historically associated with the government of the Pontianak Sultanate, have not been known to interfere with other religious practices. However, they maintain a firm stance against individuals who attempt to disrupt their religion or practices. This firmness distinguishes their response to religious matters from their approach to ethnic issues, which are sometimes tolerated or addressed with a softer response, particularly when law enforcement is perceived as slow to act. This principle emphasizes their perspective on religious diversity. This perspective was exemplified by Faisol al-Muthahar in

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<sup>82</sup> Egi Tanadi Taufik et al., "One Bloodline, Multiple Religiosities: Malay-Speaking Hadramis on Being 'Moderate-Most' Muslims in Contemporary Indonesia," *JSW (Jurnal Sosiologi Walisongo)* 8, no. 2 (2024): 113–30, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jsw.2024.8.2.20259>.

<sup>83</sup> Raisatul Mufahamah et al., "Migration, Balik-Islam, and Identity Formation of Muslims in Palawan of the Philippines," *Al-Albab* 14, no. 1 (2025): 3–22, <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v14i1.2597>.

<sup>84</sup> Ita Syamtasyah Ahyat, "The Dynamics of Malay Culture in West Kalimantan in the 20th Century," *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)* 8, no. 3 (2014): 273–80, <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v8i3.268>.

<sup>85</sup> Amin and Tanggok, "Dayaknese and Islam."

<sup>86</sup> Xing Guang, "Buddhist Impact on Chinese Culture," *Asian Philosophy* 23, no. 4 (2013): 305–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09552367.2013.831606>.

<sup>87</sup> Akhmad Siddiq et al., "Contesting Religion and Ethnicity in Madurese Society," *Religió: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 8, no. 1 (2018): 57–81, <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.v8i1.733>.

*Bangunkan Sahur* [Wake up for sahur] case,<sup>88</sup> where his response demonstrated that the perpetrator's actions disrupted the harmony of interethnic or interreligious relations. He emphasized the importance of promptly subjecting the perpetrator to legal proceedings to prevent any recurrence of such incidents, as ignoring them could harm the unity of the community. The Sultan of Pontianak also displayed a similar approach in the case of the rejection of the Ahmadiyya in Sintang in 2022, which included the destruction of their place of worship.<sup>89</sup> The Sultan, with the support of other Habaib, condemned these actions while prioritizing the rule of law, advocating for legal consequences for those responsible for the destruction and the cessation of Ahmadiyya religious activities in the community.

### **Supporting Political Stability within the Pontianak Society**

Pontianak's historical background, including the role of Habaib in the Islamization and development of the region, has indeed given them the authority to assume socio-religious roles. This authority is evidenced by the support they receive from the Muslim community, particularly those who originate from the old villages where historical narratives are embedded within oral traditions.<sup>90</sup> In these old villages, the stories of Habaib's contributions are passed down from generation to generation.<sup>91</sup> However, it is worth noting that in urban development, residential areas farther from the Pontianak Sultanate's historical center may lack the same level of legitimacy or recognition as the Habaib.<sup>92</sup> This discrepancy becomes evident when observing the presence of flyers, billboards, or similar promotional materials about Habaib

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<sup>88</sup> Dino Eko, "Kasus Bangunkan Sahur di Pontianak Utara, Donny Charles Go: Masyarakat Jangan Terprovokasi," *News*, Suara Kalbar, 2020.

<sup>89</sup> Ansar Ahmad and Tasya Nur Ramadhani, "Offside: The Misunderstanding in Restricting Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia's Right to Freedom of Religion," *Global Legal Review* 2, no. 2 (2022): 143–58, <https://doi.org/10.19166/qlr.v2i2.5137>.

<sup>90</sup> Agus Permana and Mawardi Mawardi, "Habaib in Batavia in the 17th Century: A Study on the Roles of Habaib in the Process of Islamization and Islamic Preaching," *TAWARIKH* 9, no. 1 (2017): 23–32, <https://doi.org/10.2121/tawarikh.v9i1.891>.

<sup>91</sup> Iskandar Iskandar and Maisyarah Rahmi Hasan, "Jejak Habaib dalam Manuskrip Borneo (Melacak Peran Ulama dalam Penanaman Nilai Pendidikan Multikultural)," *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran* 4, no. 2 (2023): 2597–604, <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v4i2.637>.

<sup>92</sup> Suprianto, "Sejarah Kesultanan Pontianak dalam Mengembangkan Pendidikan Islam di Tahun 1771-1808 M."

figures, which tend to be concentrated in the old city area associated with the sultanate. Similarly, their activities may be primarily centered in these historical areas, rather than in the residential neighborhoods of urban development, where residents come from diverse geographic backgrounds. These urban development areas, situated in the East Pontianak Sub-District and along the banks of the Kapuas and Landak Rivers, are spread across several sub-districts. While there is a relatively even distribution of the Habaib in these areas, the primary base of support and recognition for their authority remains concentrated in the older residential areas. Consequently, when addressing the issues mentioned above, the efforts and movements of the Habaib often originate from the East Pontianak area, where the Pontianak Sultanate Palace stands as a historical landmark.

Muslim support is not limited to a single ethnic group; it encompasses diverse communities, including Malays, Bugis, Banjar, Javanese, and Madurese. This inclusiveness stems from the presence of religious figures representing various Muslim ethnicities in the region. Consequently, when Habaib figures advocate for particular causes or issues, they often find support from various groups. This broad support was particularly evident when Habaib figures publicly criticized the actions of a Dayak community group in Sintang. This group had rejected the presence of Central MUI Deputy Secretary General Tengku Zulkarnain in 2017,<sup>93</sup> who intended to deliver a religious sermon at the An-Nur Grand Mosque. This incident was deemed to have disrupted religious harmony and tolerance in West Kalimantan. It is noteworthy that the lack of information about any legal follow-up to this incident prompted criticism from Pontianak's Habaib community, which, in turn, led to mass mobilization for demonstrations. Abdurrahman al-Muthahar, a prominent Habaib figure, led the organization of a demonstration at the Regional Police Headquarters, drawing thousands of participants from diverse Muslim ethnic backgrounds. The situation escalated further when news circulated that the governor of West Kalimantan, an ethnic Dayak, had expressed support for rejecting Tengku Zulkarnain. This development strained relations between Muslim groups from various ethnic backgrounds and the Dayak

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<sup>93</sup> Ambaranie Nadia Kemala Movanita, *Kedatangan Wasekjen MUI Ke Sintang Ditolak Sekelompok Warga*, News (Kompas.com, 2017).

community, culminating in tensions during the Gawai Dayak festival held in Pontianak.

The Muslim support was further consolidated with the emergence of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) in Pontianak, led by Musthafa al-Haddad. Under his leadership, the FPI expanded its network into neighboring cities such as Singkawang<sup>94</sup> and Ketapang.<sup>95</sup> FPI's Islamism found a receptive audience in the Malay culture, which places great emphasis on customs based on Sharia principles. In this culture, the way of life is expected to be rooted in Islamic principles. The significance of customs in Malay culture parallels that of the Dayak tribe, where customs play a central role in daily life. The key difference lies in their respective religious beliefs, with Malays being predominantly Muslim. This cultural context explains why some Habaib figures in Pontianak were sympathetic to the FPI's mission, particularly in promoting the "*amar makruf nahi munkar*" (enjoining good and forbidding evil) principles.<sup>96</sup> In 2008, Musthafa began leading the FPI and actively preached its values to Muslim communities in areas with Dayak populations, such as Landak. His message resonated with residents whose culture placed great emphasis on religious values, including the Madurese community. As the organization developed, Musthafa strengthened the FPI's focus on Muslim politics and unity. He called for Muslim solidarity to address inter-ethnic issues, particularly tensions between the Malays and the Madurese. This call for unity was echoed by figures like Rizieq Syihab during the *Tablig Akbar* event in Singkawang in 2010. A huge conflict between the Malays and the Madurese occurred in 2000, resulting in casualties and

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<sup>94</sup> Hasan Almuthahar et al., "The Role of Local Institutions To the Embodiment of Reconciliation in Singkawang," *Proceedings of the International Conference on Environmental Awareness for Sustainable Development in Conjunction with International Conference on Challenge and Opportunities Sustainable Environmental Development, ICEASD & ICCOSED 2019, 1-2 April 2019, Kendari, Indonesia*, ahead of print, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.1-4-2019.2287274>.

<sup>95</sup> Chaider S. Bamualim, "Islamic Militancy and Resentment against Hadhramis in Post-Suharto Indonesia: A Case Study of Habib Rizieq Syihab and His Islamic Defenders Front," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 31, no. 2 (2011): 267–81.

<sup>96</sup> Taufik Akbar and Syaiful Ilmi, "Oral Interpretation of Amar Makruf Nahi Mungkar: Study of The Perspective of Ḥabā'ib in Pontianak City, West Kalimantan," *Jurnal AlifLam: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 5, no. 01 (2024): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.51700/aliflam.v5i01.708>.

paralyzing the city. Musthafa's efforts were successful in breaking down the ethnic boundaries and promoting Muslim brotherhood, as he was an influential figure among both the Malays and the Madurese.

The leadership of the FPI was also composed of Muslims from various ethnic backgrounds. The Malays in Pontianak have long identified with Islam, allowing individuals from different ethnic backgrounds who embrace the religion to become part of their community. However, the Madurese community in Kalimantan had retained a strong cultural identity and was often considered immigrants rather than fully integrated into the Malay community. In this context, the FPI played a role in bridging the gap between the two ethnic groups, striving to bring them together as brothers in faith.<sup>97</sup> While not eliminating ethnic rifts, the organization helped unify Muslims who were previously divided along ethnic lines, particularly in response to historical conflicts between the Malays and the Madurese.

The political developments described above have the potential to foster unity among Muslim ethnic groups. However, these religious sentiments have also influenced other non-Muslim ethnic groups.<sup>98</sup> As a result, new conflict fronts have emerged with a religious dimension, shifting from purely inter-ethnic disputes to conflicts based on inter-ethnic competition. Religion has increasingly tinted the political landscape, particularly in the lead-up to the 2019 elections.<sup>99</sup> During this time, leaflets addressing these issues began circulating in the community, and discussions on primordialism, including religious issues, gained momentum amid regional election dynamics. Certain parties sought to exploit these issues and frame religion as a central element in the electoral discourse. In this context, the FPI aimed to unite Muslim ethnic groups against non-Muslim ethnic groups, further

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<sup>97</sup> Saeful Anwar, "Pemikiran dan Gerakan Amr Ma'rûf Nahy Munkar Front Pembela Islam (FPI) Di Indonesia 1989-2012," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 4, no. 1 (2015): 220–50, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2014.4.1.220-250>.

<sup>98</sup> Tomas Lindgren et al., "The Appropriation of Religiousity in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential," *IAS Journal of Localities* 2, no. 2 (2024): 96–108, <https://doi.org/10.62033/iasjol.v2i2.78>.

<sup>99</sup> Gonda Yumitro et al., "The Supports and Challenges of Political Islam during Reformation Indonesia," *Communications in Humanities and Social Sciences* 1, no. 2 (2021): 61–67, <https://doi.org/10.21924/chss.1.2.2021.18>.



triggering tensions. The issue of the FPI's disbandment in Jakarta in 2012 had an impact in West Kalimantan.<sup>100</sup>

Additionally, a fabricated letter allegedly from the FPI expressing support for a candidate in the Landak regent election emerged with a SARA narrative circulating within the community. This letter was later revealed to be fake and intended to provoke tensions. The Dayak community strongly condemned this situation and organized demonstrations involving thousands of people, which heightened tensions and led to confrontations. The anger and frustration escalated, and there were concerns that this case could trigger a major conflict, leading to school closure, business shutdown, and the deployment of police and military forces to maintain order. These developments highlight the challenges of managing ethnic and religious dynamics in a multi-ethnic society, where conflicts often arise due to inter-group competition and the role of religion in politics. The efforts of certain organizations, such as the FPI, do not appear to offer complete solutions to these complex issues, and the risk of further conflicts in cities with diverse populations remains.<sup>101</sup>

In 2012, the FPI began to lose ground following the absence of its central figure. It became evident that the organization lacked structured and systematic strategies to sustain itself. While the FPI had initially called for Muslim brotherhood and unity, these calls appeared to be more rhetorical than resulting in concrete institutional movements. The absence of a clear work program and mission implementation strategies contributed to the failure of the FPI in Pontianak to achieve its goals. The organization's activities were primarily reactive, addressing religious issues in society, such as gambling, prostitution, drinking, and cases of religious blasphemy. As a result of these shortcomings and the loss of momentum, a lot of its members decided to leave the FPI. They opted to return to their religious activities, focusing on their involvement in Islamic boarding schools, *madrasas*, and mosques.

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<sup>100</sup> Elina Novianti Pratiwi and Yuyu Sriwartini, "Pemberitaan Pembubaran Organisasi Front Pembela Islam (Framing MediaIndonesia.com dan Kompas.com)," *Populis : Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora* 6, no. 1 (2021): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.47313/pjsh.v6i1.1109>.

<sup>101</sup> Tempo, "Ribut Spanduk Tolak FPI, Pontianak Tegang," *tempo.co*, 2012, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/390521/ribut-spanduk-tolak-fpi-pontianak-tegang>.

## **Conclusion**

The City of Pontianak, which has assimilated with residents and migrants around it, seems to have become a society with high religious diversity, along with social diversity and dynamics. In response to the rapid expansion of Pontianak City, social rifts among community groups are unavoidable. It has also created several conflicts that affected the people of Pontianak. In response to this friction, the Habaib have been vigorous and pivotal in advocating peace and reconciliation. They are not only interested in religious and practical matters but have also made remarkable contributions to solving important social and political problems. They have become a foundation for integrating the Pontianak community. The Habaib had a tough time in the past due to conditions on the ground, including social and political issues. However, they have also responded and grappled with these challenges by participating in wars that had an ethno-religious flavor. This is an indication of the dynamics that characterize the Habaib as they discharge their obligation in advancing society. In Pontianak, the Habaib were their ethnic group's peacemakers, sometimes with support from the northern and other members of the sultanate family. Furthermore, their roles in religious affairs often come from figures outside the sultan's palace.

In reality, Habaib in Indonesia are so diverse, even historically, dating back to the time of the Islamic kingdom. They are omnipresent and have an influence that reaches beyond the heart of civilization. A sampling of this range is found in Pontianak. In this town, the Habaib are considered important pillars of the local cultural scene, for their vital role in safeguarding traditional diversity among its inhabitants. These distinctive local features are susceptible to outside influences that may modify them. In an urban location such as Jakarta or other megacities, it can be difficult to source samples with specific characteristics. As a result, a more general research study involving participation from different areas is beneficial. Thus, a study of Habaib in Pontianak would greatly expand our knowledge of these groups in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. Over generations, in countries such as Malaysia and Singapore, the Habaib have historical significance and are considered essential personages in their communities.

This study requires considerable time, as it consists primarily of text stories about social events involving the Habaib. Making sense of all this information is no small feat. Further, there are very few citations

to similar works in the literature. This limitation provides limitations for future researchers who are curious about the role of the Habaib in Pontianak. Other researchers can study the Habaib from Kalimantan, beyond the location in this study. In this respect, the role of Pontianak, which traditionally drew Habaib from many places and later transmitted them to the hinterland along the Kapuas River and the North Coast, was significant. Exploring this would be interesting, as it is still an under-researched area in the literature.

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