INTRODUCTION

The state of Johor Darul Takzim is deemed to be one of the most unique states in Malaysia. The uniqueness of the state is reflected in its historical roots where the state was ruled across two different eras of the Sultanate. In the first era, the state was controlled under the Sultanate of Johor-Riau (1511-1685) which is also known as Johor Lama [1-3] where the administrative centre was located at Tanjung Batu. The second era shows the birth of the Modern Johor Sultanate known as Johor Baru from 1686 until today. This Johor Sultanate which started back in 1511 was one of the successor states of Malacca Empire [4].

Moreover, the state of Johor possessed a decided advantage in its interaction and assimilation with a variety of traditions and customs ever since it opened its door to external trades as a result of the policy being implemented and practiced in Singapore as of 1891. Such interaction and assimilation may be seen by the presence of foreign traders from China, India and Arab lands who arrived to the coast of Singapore and Johor by sea. For example, Arab communities who originated from Hadramaut not only played a significant role in developing the economy, in addition to political and social aspects of the state but also played a rather large role in Johor’s religious matters and issues.

They are claimed to be one of the earliest communities who migrated to Johor and their presence in the state may be traced back to the early days of Johor Sultanate with the emergence of an Arab by the name Sayid Idrus. He originated from Hadramaut and came to Acheh seeking to tie the knot with the Sultan of Acheh. The marriage was gifted with a son who was named Sayid Zainal Abidin. The state’s prominent Ulama, Tun Habib Abdul Majid was furthermore a descendant of Sayid Idrus and was appointed as the Prime Minister of the Sultanate of Johor Lama from 1688-1697 [5]. Other official data regarding the population of Arab communities; especially with regards to the Hadrami Arabs cannot be accurately determined as Johor was under the control of the first era of Sultanate with exception to a few historical chronicles as mentioned above. The reason for this is mainly because during such a time Johor was still passing through a demanding stage requiring it to defend its freedom from threats stemming from the Portuguese and Acheh. This effectively resulted in the formation of Johor Bharu under the administration of Sultan Abu Bakar.

The strategic location of the state was found in that it was situated between the main route of trading activities adjacent to Singapore, in addition to the fact that the late invasion by the British supported the acceptance and spread of Islam in the state especially due to the Hadrami Arab community. The process effectively formed the history of Johor as we know it today, allowing it to be renowned as one of the states that had successfully continued the legacy of Malaccan Empire in terms of acceptance and spreading of Islam. The chronicles and process of migration of Hadrami Arabs to Johor and religious activities practiced by them will be discussed in this paperwork.

History and Composition of Hadrami’s Arab: The term Hadrami Arab distinctly denotes the Arab community that had originated from a location by the name of Hadramaut in Yemen. The Hadramaut district, being the place of origin for this community holds a long and rich civilizational history is located near the Red Sea which connected trading ships between the states in the East and West [6]. The term Hadramaut is pronounced and
spelled differently. According to the Arabic language, it is spelled as Hadramawt or Hadramot, however its Latin form spells it as Hadramaut or Hadramout. In the Bible, it is called Hazarmaveth [7].

In general, the settlers in Hadramaut are divided into five main categories being (1) tribes, (2) Ulama, (3) private sector workers or traders, (4) the poor, as well as (5) ex-slaves and their descendants [9]. However, this illustration is different than that which is effectively categorized by Van den Berg, with his classification which go as follows;

(1) Sayids and Ulama, (2) tribes [10], (3) the Middle-class [10] and (4) children [10]. According to the writer, the difference between the first two categories are because; Sylvaine Camelin puts tribes as a priority following majority population of the race, whereas Van de Berg puts Ulama based first on their influence in the community. Although there are two differing opinions from the writers, the Ulama category will be placed first in this topic of discussion.

Among the four social categories shown, the category of Sayid and Ulama plays an important role mainly because of their importance in the administration of religious activities and matters, to function as leaders and in providing education as well as acting as intermediaries in tribal disputes. They are also known as the ‘Habib’ which effectively indicates ‘the loved one’. There were a large numbers of Sayids in Hadramaut and they gained respect from the community due to their position which is closely associated to religion in addition to the fact that they were very morally influential in the community [10].

They have the most apparent genealogy compared to the other groups and this becomes the main factor that their presence and involvement in the Nusantara which may be seen clearly [10]. Peter G. Riddel states that Hadramaut immigrants who came to the Nusantara were from all the groups mentioned above. However, the biggest group were from the descendants of Alawiyyin who played important role in the introduction and spread of Islam in the Nusantara [11].

Basically, the lives of Hadrami Arabs were coloured with conservative religious activities and structures, which directly became an identity that underlied their religious life and social interactions in any place especially in Johor and Malay Peninsula. Religious education was provided to the children from a very young age; especially the male children. A research done by Stark in 1936 shows that many mosques were built as intellectual and knowledge centres through them, as well as a school with Islamic-based curriculum which was also built with the capacity for 30 educators and 300 male students [11,12].

Among the subjects which were given emphasis were Qur’anic studies and secular subjects such as reading, grammar and composition. The educational system was divided into two; namely basic education of primary and secondary school. The subjects taught were Arabic grammar, theology and law. The famous books of Arabic grammar were Alfiah and Ajrumiah, whilst the students in higher grades were taught the translation of grammar from the books of Al-Mutamimmah, Al-Fawakih Al-Janniah and Syarkh al-Kafrawi. These books were very well-known among Arab linguists. There were a number
of popular books which were usually used as teaching materials to the students in Hadramaut, among them was the book of *Ar-Risalah* whose contents discussed the knowledge of Allah, the sanctity of law, prayers, fasting, khitan, hajj and morality [10].

The emphasis on religious education resulted in a number of consequent developments such as the birth of a prominent historian from the community of Hadramaut, Ibn Khaldun. Moreover, the religious aspects which were instilled in the heart of every Hadramaut person effectively became a diaspora which followed them wherever they went, especially during trade missions. They were never separated from these religious customs, whether in practice or while spreading the customs to locals.

**The Hadrami Arab Diaspora:** From Indonesia to Johor

The Hadrami Arab migration to the Malay Peninsula happened simultaneously with the migration of Arabs from other states in the Arabian Peninsula. The relationship of Hadrami Arabs with the outside world was driven by two main factors which were trading activities and religious purposes. Trading activities were inherited from the ethnic people of Saba who lived in Yemen at one time. They were experts in seafaring and controlled trading activities on the Indian Ocean since the early days prior to the emergence of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. The location of the Port of Aden [13-15] which was situated near the coast became the primary reason for traders’ frequent visits to the Chinese ports through the Straits of Malacca and for the purpose of trading; with this tradition having been maintained ever since.

According to the writings of Fred R. Von der Mehden, generally deriving from different groups, the Arab community came to the Peninsula within three different periods of time; during the arrival of Islam until the early 19th Century, from this time until the end of World War II in 1946 and the period following the war [16]. Among the groups were those originating from Persia, Armenia, Syria and that of the Oriental Jews [17].

Robert McAmis shares the same opinion with S.Q Fatimi who states that the process of migration to the Malay Archipelago was based on the following chronologies:

- The earliest relationship dates back to 674
- Islam made its presence felt along the coast in 878
- Islam’s in political matters as of 1204
- The expansion of Islam 1511 [18]

The migration of Arab communities which later became known as the Hadrami Arab began to gain its momentum when the Dutch became the first Europeans to open a trading agency in Hadramaut in the year 1614. When steam technology appeared, the amount of the Hadrami Arab community who migrated to as far as Jawa, Madura, Batavia (Jakarta) increased significantly [19].

Other than that, the migration issue was also closely related with the interruption of British in the Hadramaut administration in the 19th century which resulted in disturbances from the Wahabi faction in the state. They were one of the cult groups who sought to eliminate the teachings and family of Hadrami Arabs, who were labeled in such a manner due to their practicing of old teachings of their ancestors [19].

There are a number of characteristics that triggered the migration of Hadrami Arabs to the Malay Peninsula;

- The main purpose of most immigrants was to find money in order to support the family. Those who were poor came to the port of Mukalla and Shihr.
- Most Hadramis had intentions to return to their land and contribute. As such, they were collecting their wealth and assets to support their families, gain more assets and provide basic facilities back in their homeland [19].

**Hadrami Arab Population:** Although there are writings referring to the migration of Hadrami Arabs to the Malay Peninsula especially during the glorious days of the Malaccan Malay Sultanate circa 15th century, the numbers of migrators decreased with the emergence of European powers which became dominant in trade activities from the early 16th century onwards [20]. Accurate data and records acquired on their population is not comprehensive, but mixed with the migration of other Arabs until the mid-18th century. The report on the population of the Malay Peninsula in 1824 records that the Arab population shows a number of 2012 people with this figure increasing to 5718 people in 1947 [21]. The diaspora [22,23] of Hadrami Arab population amongst the diverse ethnics of Arab may be identified especially after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 [24].

Journals and census regarding the migration of the Arab community from Hadramaut was recorded along the Dutch colonials through a number of important writings of the Orientalists and local historians. This may be referred to through the writing of L.W.C Van den Berg, William Harold Ingrams and R.B. Serjeant among others.
Before the data on the migration of Arab population was identified to be in Johor, other sources have recorded their existence around the Indonesian archipelago during the 17th century and early 18th century where a large number of them involved the Hadrami population. The wave of Hadrami Arab’s migration may be seen clearly the mid-18th century. This population is said to appear in Acheh and later in Palembang or Pontianak, Kalimantan. Around 1820 onwards, the population of Hadrami Arab appeared strong in trading along the Northern Land of Jawa. The record of their settlements in the Indonesian Archipelago may be seen in 1870 [25]. Among the most concentrated places were Sumatera, Batavia, Bogor, Crebon, Indramayu, Tegal, Semarang, Surabaya, Gresik, Pamekasan, Bangkalan, Malang, Bangil, Probolinggo, Baayuwangi, Palembang, Deli (Medan), Banjarmasin, Martapura, Menado, Gorontalo, Lombok, Ambon, Ternate, Kupang dan Sumba [19]. Based on these lists, Sumatra was the earliest place of migration because of its location in between trade journeys between India and China [19].

Their presence and monopoly in economy in the Indonesian Archipelago were not well accepted by the Dutch. The community was oppressed and the compulsion against them forced them to shift to nearby areas towards the end of 19th century. Among the most compelling reason was the mental pressure exerted on them by the Colonial party. In the early 19th century, the limit on settlement area was tightened although Huub De Jonge explained that prior to the arrival of the Dutch, immigrants; especially from Arabia and China who came to Indonesian had already settled down in certain areas with their own groups.

The Colony imposed a number of restrictions which were legally known as the time system, pass system and immigration laws. Although these policies were known as laws imposed on the whole community of immigrants, practically speaking the Arabs were treated differently in the eyes of the law whether it was concerning administrative law, judicial affairs, tax, education, land acquisition and many others matters. This was closely related to the issue of introduction of ethnic classes which classed them as vreemde oosterlingen or Foreign Orientals, together with other communities such as the Chinese, Moors, Tamil and Bengali.

The Examples of Mistreatments of the Dutch Were;

- Limiting system for certain areas to be resided by the Arab community. An example would be Pekojan, Batavia. The system brought difficulties to the Arab population until Van Den Berg stated that in the quarter mid-19th century, the settlements became too crowded because of the implementation of this social pressure.

- They were forced to apply for traveling passes every time they wished to go outside the district by either sea or land. Every application would take a long time to be approved and this would in turn complicate their trip; especially if it was a business trip.

As a result of this pressure, some of the Hadrami Arab decided to move to a safer place and seek protection for themselves and their families. During their migration to the Peninsula area, most of them were in control of many kinds of businesses around the area such as import and export trades and maritime industry. This situation was admitted by W.R. Roff who states that 'the pilgrimage industry in Singapore and other activities associated with it were very largely in the hands of Arabs community’ [26]. The Straits Settlements report on 1901 claimed that thousands of the Arab population erected their settlements around the Peninsula such as along the coast of Kampong Glam together with other immigrants such as Bugis, Boyanese, Javanese and Jawi Peranakan [26]. The statement from The Strait Settlements placed Kampong Glam under the provincial of the Peninsula, while it was however referring to Singapore.

The large scale activities made by the Arab community in Singapore in 1886 was described by a Dutch historian, L.W.C Van Den Berg as “the most flourishing, though not the largest Arab colony in the Indian Archipelago,” and he also said the numbers kept increasing from day to day, “as the point passed by all Arabs who go to seek their fortunes in the Far East” [26].

One study conducted on Arab people in Singapore states that the people who firstly spread Islam were identified in the 16th century. This people came from southern Arabia and passed away in Singapore in 1584 [27]. The migration was associated with Arab communities who had migrated to Singapore in 1849 as recorded in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jumlah Orang Arab Johor</th>
<th>Jumlah Orang Arab Sumatera</th>
<th>Jumlah Orang Arab Batavia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>1345 [28]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increasing number of the Arab community was based on economic factors and the leadership of Johor during the period of 1880s until 1890s where the British gave encouragement and widened its door to trading activities; especially to the Chinese and Arab traders.
for entering and operating their businesses in the state. The traders were given executive rights such as tax exemptions on the goods brought to the ports in Malay Peninsula [29]. This is also closely related with the policy practiced by the British. It began with a policy introduced by Stamford Raffles in 1819, who hoped to attract attention from Arab community who already had a strong position in the economic sector in the Peninsula. Most of the Arab families had given a big impact in development of trade in Singapore and also contributed their wealth to Hadramaut itself. In Raffle’s statement, he welcomed the migration of the Hadrami Arab community and this can be seen through this excerpt:

“The Arab population will require every consideration and their expected numbers should be estimated at less than 2000. No situation will be more appropriate for them than the vicinity of the Sultan’s residence”[13].

Liberal land policy and the encouragement to welcome the migration of Malays and Arabs from neighbouring states was followed by Johor. By implementing the same policy, it enabled the immigrants and explorers who had moved to other place to come back to Johor [30]. Regardless of the purpose and the real motives behind their migration, the majority of them still brought together their religious culture and economic activities which were considered as the main and early sources of the local Muslim community [11].

Tarikat Alawiyah as a Continuity of Religious Institution among Johor’s Hadrami Arabs: he presence of the Hadrami Arab around the Peninsula especially in Johor not only coloured economic institutions, politics and marriages but also touched on religious aspects. Prominent figures of Hadrami Arabs mostly come together with excellent attitudes and characteristics until they became a point of reference in the community regarding religious matters and affairs. Among their characteristics were piety, humaneness, a dislike for showing off and an avoidance of the rush of worldly matters while at the same time not neglecting their home affairs and also loving their children, wives and neighbours [31].

The attitude which guided their daily lives was believed to be brought by the practice of Tarikat or Tarikat Alawiyah. This Tarikat was named in honour of its founder, Alawi bin Muhammad in 13th century. The opinion coincided with the confirmation made by Muhd B. Abi Bakr al-Silli Ba Alawi (1093/1682) who said that the descendants of the Alawis originated from Ahmad bin Isa bin Muhd bin Ali Al-Qaim who came from Basrah and later moved to Hadramaut in 929 [32]. After his passing away, this Tarikat is continuously practiced by the descendants and followers until today.

The contribution and involvement of the Hadrami Arab community in Johor may be seen through the practice of this tarikat. It has become a staple custom of Hadrami Arabs in their daily lives as it is a simple practice compared to other teachings of the Tarikat. This particular Tarikat does not involve illicit activities and does not put aside worldly affairs but most importantly does not contradict with the teachings of al-Quran and Hadith, while its approach is more similar to the practice of Salaf Ulama [33,34]. The role of the Hadrami Arab society is apparent as there are a number of religious functions anchored by the Tarikat Alawiyah and are held together with the Muslim society in Johor. Among activities held in this Tarikat are:

Maulid-ur-Rasul Ceremony: Maulid-ur-Rasul is considered as one of the practices which is still preserved by the Hadrami Arab community until today. The execution of this ceremony is not limited to only one place but may be celebrated in mosques, houses, institutions and even in other states. In Johor, among the main mosques for this celebration are Masjid al-Ahmadiyyah, Muar and Masjid Wadi Hassan in Johor Baru. Sometimes, the function is held in certain houses based on the invitation of the host who usually wants to preform an Aqiqah, prayers or tahil function. Usually the celebration of the Maulid will start on the month of Rabi’ul Awal and sometimes continue for 4 to 5 days long [35]. The ceremony takes a long time because the duration will sometimes take up to 5 hours as the head of the group will read all the 20 ‘rawi’ in the ritual of ‘berzanji’ [36].

Exhibit 1:Maulud Nabi Celebration in Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque, Johor Bharu on 25 Jun 2010
The attraction of this function is in the early stage it was only joined by the group Hadrami Arab’s Sayid but according to Habib Abd Rahman, today there are many Malays who join the function. As a matter of fact, it has been absorbed to be one of the Islamic traditions and customs among the Muslim society in Johor.

**Haul Ceremony:** Haul Ceremony on the other hand is a celebration to remember the contributions of Muslim Mujaddids who have passed away. It is held by influential members from the Arab and non-Arab communities. Among the Ulama who are being celebrated in this ceremony are Syed Alwi bin Thahir-al-Haddad, Syed Abdullah bin Alawi bin Muhammad al-Haddad, Habib Muhammad bin Salem al-Attas and many more. The ceremony is still being actively held until today and the latest example on Haul Ceremony activities can be seen from the table below;

The uniqueness of this ceremony is that it does not only benefit and give reminder to Hadrami Arab society, but that all the knowledge which has been transmitted in this function will be written down and printed by the individuals to share among the family members of the Ulama or through the institutions administered by the Hadrami Arabs themselves. The examples of books which have been used for reference among academicians, intellectuals and the public are Kitab Allabyarham Syed Hassan bin Ahmad al-Attas; Seorang Mujahid dan Pembangunan Ummah (A Mujahid and Ummah Development) [37], Kitab Haul Al-Imam Al-Habib Abdullah bin Alawi Al-Haddad [38], Kitab Umar bin Abd Rahman Kisah dan Sejarah (Tales and History) al-Qutub al-Anfas al-Habib Umar bin Abd Rahman Founder of Ratib al-Attas [39], Kitab Kembara Seorang Abid (Adventure Journal of an Abid), Sekelumit (A few) Riwayat Habib Muhammad bin Salem al-Attas and Tebaran Anak Hadrami [40] and many others.

**Readings of Ratib Al-haddad, Ratib Al-attas Dan Wirdul Latif:** One of the frequent practices in the Tarikat Alawiyah is to organize readings of Ratib al-Attas and Ratib al-Haddad, sayings of zikr and wirid which occur every Friday. It is practiced in the daily life of a Hadrami Arab family and the readings start after Maghrib prayer until Isya’. Through the organised ceremony, both Ratibs are read 40 times after Maghrib prayer in every ceremony. While Zikr starts after Fajr and Asr prayers. Zikr may be read as much as they are able to and when the Imam is saying prayers, he would include the names of Ulama who founded Ratib (Sohibul Ratib), among them being Qutb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Northern Zone (Group A)</th>
<th>Eastern Zone (Group B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09 October 2010</td>
<td>Musalla Imam Asy-Syafie, Taman Jali, Kangar, Perlis</td>
<td>Masjid Pasir Mas, Pasir Mas, Kelantan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Zahir (Masjid Negeri, Kedah) Alor Setar, Kedah</td>
<td>Masjid Besar Geliga, Cukai, Kemaman, Terengganu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Saiyidina Abu Bakar Assidiq, Bakar Arang, Sg Petani, Kedah</td>
<td>Masjid At-Taqwa Pekan, Pahang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Central Zone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Al-Bukhary, Kuala Lumpur</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Negeri Selangor D.E., Shah Alam, Selangor</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Al-Falah, USJ 9, Selangor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Southern/Eastern Zone (Group C)</td>
<td>Southern/West Zone (Group D)</td>
</tr>
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<td>18 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Asyakirin, Bandar Maran, Pahang</td>
<td>Masjid Sultan Iskandar, Batu Pahat, Johor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Jame’, Bandar Mersing, Johor</td>
<td>Masjid Selat, Bandar Melaka, Melaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Jame’ Kampung Melayu Majidi, Johor Baru, Johor</td>
<td>Yayasan Al-Jenderami, Dengkil, Selangor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 October 2010</td>
<td>Yayasan Assofa, Rembau, Negeri Sembilan</td>
<td>Masjid Tanjung Aru, WP Labuan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>East Malaysia Zone 1 (Group E)</td>
<td>East Malaysia Zone 2 (Group F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid At-Taqwa, Kuching, Sarawak</td>
<td>Masjid At-Taqwa, Miri, Sarawak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Bandaraya, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah</td>
<td>Masjid Baytul Aman, Kuala Lumpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 October 2010</td>
<td>Masjid Habib Abdulrahman, Tawau, Sabah</td>
<td>Madrasah Darul Faqih, Jalan Gelang Cincin, Segamat, Johor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION

This paper on Tarikat Alawiyah as an Islamic ritual of Hadrami Arabs in Johor effectively establishes that the Hadrami Arab society in Johor play a rather significant role in the economic, social, political and religious spheres of the state as of centuries ago. Their very presence has generated the transformation of Johor’s identity in certain aspects as with matters of worship as well as with increasing day efforts to uphold Islam. Although they are small in numbers, their presence has been and continues to be highly fruitful and should be supported more by additional parties in order to continue in its beneficial nature and help to society.

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40. Published in 2010 oleh Masjid Ba'alawi, Singapura
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