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Adam & Hawa

Popular TV Fiction: Cultural Identities and Unconscious Malay Psyche in *Adam & Hawa*

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Abstract

Since the turn of the 21st century, popular Malay TV fiction has been thriving, popular, and critically-acclaimed due to their extensive local, national reach. Drawing more than 11 million viewers, including staggering online reruns, this sheer popularity of Malay TV fiction has led to the questioning of issues viewers can relate to. In this paper, we contextualize popular Malay TV fiction within a space of cultural identities, focusing on the analysis of the 2012-2013 TV fiction hits, *Adam & Hawa*. We highlight the potential sites of unconscious Malay psyche in TV fiction, a psyche formed through preservation of and contestation to Malay cultural identities, intersecting modernity, *adat* (customs), and religion. Specifically, we theorize that although Malay subjects deviate from the designated *adat*, for instance, through internalizing alcohol dependence and cohabitation, this theory posits that they eventually stream themselves, seemingly coordinating with the notions of *adat*-Islamic values such as forgiveness and repentance. By reading TV fiction's narrative exchanges, unconscious Malay psyche implies the existence of how some Malay subjects participate in and become involved with the social and modern spheres, eventually gesturing or indexing conformation to tradition and religious labels. Using the triple lenses of hybridity, alternative modernities, and social imaginary, we also wish to highlight that unconscious Malay psyche may continue to reshape and perhaps de-familiarize ourselves about Malay cultural identities. Findings are discussed within the convergence fields of Malay cultural identities, unconscious Malay psyche, and ASEAN studies.

Keywords: *postcolonial literature; media; sociology; popular culture; Malay cultural identities*

Introduction

Malay cultural identity

“has collected around it a cluster of motifs and styles- many associated with the golden age of the sultanates. Reference points for ‘Malayness’ rather than permanent content, they may be influential in one situation, rejected in another. We cannot speak of a coherent, stable ‘Malay essence.’ These reference points, however, are elements in a heritage of which modern ‘Malays’ are in dialogue...work underway on literature in Malay has raised conceptual issues about the implications of aural-oral style and the role of ‘words’ in so-called political and social life.” (Milner 241 and 242).

An understanding on Milner’s contention above presents a case for identifying, accepting, and rejecting certain parameters of Malay cultural identities, signaling a departure from merely recognizing ‘like us’ and ‘not like us’. Through the work of devices deployed in literature, media, and sociology, we are opened to realms that not only show contradictions, but also a space expansive for imagining other possibilities of discussing Malay cultural identities. In this view, issues of Malay cultural identities, at both individual and collective levels, are often captured in literature. Malay cultural identities, as shown in previous studies, have demonstrated preservation, contestations, and adaptations of becoming or not becoming Malay (see for instance Hosking, Hosking, Noritah, and Washima 12; Mohamad Rashidi and Graft 20; Nagata 25; Nah 115; Shamsul 207; Ruzy, *Literary Studies* 22). While they are not necessarily in conflict at all times, the issue of Malay cultural identities often gain public and media patronage. We have seen drastic changes, for instance, expressions of Malayness in new forms of media that includes, but are not limited to blogs (Bakri 15; Noraini and Ruzy 2; Ruzy and Imran 5; Ruzy, Zillasafarina, Imran, and Noraini 145) reality shows (Rosya and Morris 144), films (Dahlia 410; Norman 211; Zawawi 520) and non-Western TV (Sabariah 185; Syed and Runnel 315) altering the perception of Malayness in the creative negotiation of

becoming or not becoming Malays. One particularly feasible way of approaching these changes is through studying television fiction (TV fiction, hereafter).

This paper explores critically-acclaimed TV fiction, *Adam & Hawa* (2012), which has been positioned at the forefront of contemporary TV fiction scene in Malaysia. In addition to earning accolades and praise across 600,000 novel readers, novel-TV adaptation fiction, *Adam & Hawa* draws over 11 million viewers in 2013 (ASTRO), including 120 million viewers of online reruns (Tonton). The TV fiction, *Adam & Hawa*, examined in this study sometimes revisits their protagonists' experiences through daily, unconscious experiences through narrative exchanges. The TV fiction work is produced within Malaysia territory, published by Malaysian production industries, for mostly Malay audiences, and deal with a lot of Malay-oriented issues. While the issues in these TV fiction texts all strive for a degree of negotiated inclusion in their (alternative) Malay lives, the balance between negotiation of their subjectivities depends on the extent to which they are positioned in a wider socio-cultural experiences. By framing this study within the spaces of cultural identities, we highlight potential sites for unconscious Malay psyche to 'circulate,' a psyche formed through preservation of and contestation to Malay cultural identities, intersecting modernity, *adat* (customs), and religion. Unconscious Malay psyche implies that not only can this theory be applied to magnify deeper issues of Malayness, it implicates the existence of how some Malay subjects participate in and become involve with social and modern spheres (modernity), eventually gesturing or indexing conformation to religious and traditional labels. Thus, by examining TV fiction's narrative exchanges, this study highlights the many ways how these narrative exchanges demonstrate the movements of unconscious Malay psyche, that perhaps continue to reshape and transform our understanding about Malay cultural identities. Although the use of the terms, Malayness and Malay cultural identities do not suggest easy interchangeability, they are frequently used together in this paper to reflect a more focused discussion.

That being said, we firstly elaborate unconscious Malay psyche, pushing the discussions of Malay cultural identities that intersect Malay subjects and *adat* (customs), modernity, and globalization. Secondly, it takes attention to contextualize the study by presenting the local landscape of media, seemingly important to describe the ways and

nuances of how mediascape in Malaysia has helped transpire unconscious Malay psyche surrounding the proliferation of TV fiction. Thirdly, we present our summary on *Adam & Hawa* to familiarize ourselves with the corpus of the study before we elaborate how hybridity, social imaginary, and alternative modernities are played out in our analysis. Finally, a recapitulation of main points is presented as the outcome of the article, discussed within the convergence fields of ASEAN studies and Malay cultural identities, and pushing the boundaries of media globalization and TV fiction studies.

Unconscious Malay psyche and Malay cultural identities

Unconscious Malay psyche comprises two major circumstances, deviance from and convergence of Malay *adat* (customs). Specifically, it theorizes that as much as a Malay subject deviates from cultural and religious notions, irrespective of the kinds of mistakes or sins a Malay subject makes, unconscious Malay psyche holds that s/he will unconsciously return to familiar, receptacle of recognizable, local Malay-Muslim precepts. Figure 1 describes the ‘movement’ of this psyche:



Figure 1 Unconscious Malay Psyche

One must note, however, that the process of deviating from and converging with *adat*-Islamic values does not occur in a linear fashion. Instead, it recognizes that there exists a dynamic process in which Malay subjects go back and forth between deviating from and converging with *adat*-Islamic values. For instance, a Malay subject may transgress by using black magic, but eventually the thought of returning to the familiar cultural fragments of *adat*-Islamic values such as compassion and repentance exists. In the same vein, anyone using vulgarity and surrounds him / herself with violence may ultimately invoke the discourses of politeness and compassion. That this model consists the concepts of alcoholism, cohabitation, infidelity, black magic, violence, vulgarity, politeness, mercifulness, compassion, forgiveness, and repentance does not mean that the list of aspects forming unconscious Malay psyche is exhaustive. There are many fundamental issues that can be considered as deviant and preserving *adat*-Islamic values, but due to limitation of space, the model drawn here is based on these concepts. These different concepts imbue the two different phases seemingly important to explain unconscious Malay psyche.

So, what does unconscious Malay psyche say about Malay cultural identities? Although it can be complex, one thing is certain; in speaking of Malayness, modernity, *adat*, and religion are intertwined, forming unconscious Malay psyche. Even at the beginning of this homeland called the then Malaya, later called Malaysia, it is not fairly simple to pull off a "Malay" and although some readings exist, they are seldom agreed to. Earlier on, the basic idea is that if one is born to Malay parents, he/she is assumed to be Malay, speaking the Malay language, and practicing Islam and Malay culture. The Malay culture, usually referenced through Malay *adat* (customs), herein suggests an interaction which can be viewed from the perspectives of cognitive, religion, and cultural tradition. It has been suggested that Malay *adat* beliefs and values situate between Islamic tradition and traditional beliefs and scientific inquiry (Taib 20). Although he cautions that the readings of these three nexus do not suggest easy understanding, a number of pointers can be accentuated concerning Malayness; Malays want to live in harmony (Provencher). This harmonious conduct which is connected to the notion of Malay's *akal/budi* (emotion-reason relationships) is grounded in the ideas of compromise, respect, cooperation, tolerance, modesty, patience, forgiveness, and

repentance (Bakri 190; Mohd Muzhafar, Ruzy, and Raihanah, “Followership: Boosting” 209). This politeness translates into a Malay maxim, *biar mati anak jangan mati adat* (let the child die but not the custom) (AB Sulaiman 337; Bakri, 191) which has been used throughout, suggesting the longevity of Malay *adat* through normalization.

Over the years, however, this ‘yardstick’ of Malay cultural identities has gone to be researched, preserved, contested, blurred, diffused, integrated, and reversed. After the independence of Malaysia, the cultural landscape becomes more urbanized, modernized, and to a certain extent, westernized, calling attention to, as this study suggests, different ways for Malay subjects going about living their everyday experiences. It is also considered, as changing, as this paper will illustrate, for some other Malay subjects to distance themselves from God, in response to the forces of ‘Satanism’ vis-à-vis modernity (for instance alcoholism and cohabitation) as a shift in social and economic spheres usually comes with a shift in one’s cultural identities. Shifting socio-cultural views follow that the Malay world flees from the constraints of ethnicities, religion, and parents. At his professorial lecture, Abdul Rahman Embong, for instance, has argued that due to the blurry lines of cultural identity and tradition in the advent of globalization, other realities of Malayness have emerged, opening up a new field of enquiry. Thus, although research has reiterated that alcohol is not consumed by Malays (Andrew, Steven and Rodolfo 372), other fields of scholarship have reified that some Malays enjoy alcohol (Haneef, Selamah, Ruzita and Hazizan 72; World Health Organization; Jernigan and Indran 68; Mohd Muzhafar, Ruzy, and Raihanah “Power, *Adat*” 187; Kortteinen 395). Another case in point is the issue of cohabitation among Malay subjects which is seen as growing and gaining acceptance. Haneef, Selamah, Ruzita and Hazizan (73), for instance, has revealed that more than 39 Malays have admitted to being in close proximity out of 1951 Malay subjects studying at local higher education colleges and institutions. In *Adam & Hawa*, which we shall see, some Malays live by without the constraints of Islam and *adat* (customs), by engaging specifically with the demands modernism makes on mainstream perceptions of Malay cultural identities.

As they push the boundaries of ‘Satanism’ in their encountering and embracing modernity, however, Malay subjects demonstrate increased awareness on and submission to *fitrah* or Malay-Islamic form of spirituality. Specifically, although concepts such as

forgiveness and repentance shown in this study represent some of the many themes that can be told concerning the re-discovery, re-localization, or regress to Malayness from the 'evil' consequences of modernity, one must be cognizant that religion and God constitute, for the most part, the final point of a Malay subject's life, unavoidably present at the back of the Malay 'minds.' Whether such non-linear process may or may not change one views on Malayness is unknown, but it is this unconscious Malay psyche, based on our intuition, that not only pushes the boundaries of becoming or not becoming Malay, but converges the cultural heritage of the Malay sphere, that to a certain extent, can be quite usefully utilized to inform us how the encasement of the Malays have constructed their routes to re-connect themselves with *adat* and religion to relinquish their local and cultural fragments.

“Strategizing” unconscious Malay psyche: TV fiction and Malaysia’s mediascape

As unconscious Malay psyche straddles between the burgeoning interests of Malay subjects' experience with modernity, religion, and Malay *adat* values, these issues are meshed and embedded within Malaysia's mediascape. In Malaysia, *IMalaysia*, one of the “sociopolitical arrangement” vehicles (Kraidy 317) upon which cultural globalization is premised, renders it possible to delineate why TV fiction in Malaysia encompasses modernity. Modernity as displayed in TV fiction can be defined in many ways, but the most consistent thread commonly found linking modernity to TV fiction is that it expands TV fiction viewers' “imagination beyond the constraints of personal lives, physical locales and cultural boundaries” (Syed 83), orchestrating sense of freedom of choice, “upward mobility, and unhindered interaction” (Syed 85). The basic tenet foregrounding modernity is consumer culture, encouraging TV fiction viewers to change their lives, which most often progressed through TV's direct advertising in addition to “showing urban lifestyles, setting, and modern cityscape” (Mattelart 47). Most importantly, luxurious lifestyles serve as a backdrop against which TV is made available to enable TV fiction viewers to “indulge in the consumer culture freely available in the market” (Syed 85), perpetrating “spectacular images of foreign and glamorous settings” (Geraghty 127). By virtue of modernity, issues manifested in TV fiction are topical issues

that figure as “repertoires of images and social discourses that influence popular perception of larger issues,” consumed to “be current and contemporary” (Syed 95), probably leading TV fiction viewers to feel connected with the larger, global society in which they live. From scenes that show infidelity to poor professional morality, directness, exorcism, wars, violence, alcoholism, cohabitation, binge drinking, fornication and lewdness, to name a few, these have led to diverse manifestations of issues, in one sense a global dramatization of modernity.

However, also existing side-by side with the many TV programs that have encountered and embraced globalization as a result of liberalization of mediascape is the increased observance by a number of elites. This mandate, which encompasses regulation, promotion, and legalization (Mohd Muzhafar, Ruzy and Raihanah, “Followership: Boosting” 210, 211) likens to TV series that focus more on the agency of Malayness that, according to these scholars, politicians, and directors, give purpose and direction to TV fiction viewers’ local, cultural identity. Specifically, they call attention to the ways in which content in Malay TV fiction are to re-focus to reflect more issues that engage “Malay (ethnic) agenda” (Barr and Govindasamy 294), that simultaneously signify “Islamic Arabian glorious past” (Hoffstaedter 106). The mandate, under the microscopic guidance and patronage of some local leaders and media senior officials accompanied by the hands of lawmakers, set up a number of ‘gatekeepers’ to meet the requirements of this mission of re-calling TV fiction viewers’ attention to their cultural routes. Siti Zanariah (10) references the gatekeepers to five layers of forces at work: the King, ministers, mass media laws, governmental agencies, and council for media-screening. The tasks, among others, are to enable local TV industries to orient themselves to “30 percent participation” of Malays in the proliferation “of world, commercial, and industrial practices” (Foo 29) while at the same time adhering to the framework of *Rukunegara* (National Ideology), which is oriented towards fostering national and racial unity and harmony, deeply rooted in the beliefs of a united and democratic nation (Foo 29; Malaysia *Merdeka*). It has also been noted that as this re-call to local cultural roots among TV fiction’s viewers grows strong, many TV industries are also compelled to realign TV fiction viewers with their familiar, local values and identity so that their integration of local aspects are balanced, rather than focusing only on elements of the

foreign, Western culture. The re-enactment of cultural and religious TV stations and proliferation of Asian popular programs, including Korean, Taiwanese, and Japanese TV series have interwoven TV fiction viewers into the receptacle of some recognizable, local discourses.

Adam & Hawa, On Dhia, and Julia

Adam & Hawa introduces us to the main protagonists- Ain and Adam. After completing her secondary school examination, Ain works part-time for a kindergarten. While working at the kindergarten, Ain becomes acquainted with Adam Mukhriz but after seeing Adam's wild encounters with women in local bars, Ain does not take part in seeking Adam's attention. Instead, Ain continues to work. In one of the nights, Ain is unfortunate; Ain is caught in bed with Adam by the authorities and local towners. Shortly after, Ain is arrested for charges on close proximity and later forced to marry Adam. Ain further develops a sense of revenge for Adam, questioning Adam's silence the night she is taken to police. Years later, Ain still despises Adam and has difficult time accepting Adam as her husband and in the months that follow, Ain decides to pursue higher education, a dream she has kept for a long time. Separated by thousands of miles from Adam, Ain, however, starts to lose her affection towards Adam and distances herself afterwards. When Ain leaves to pursue college education, Adam repeatedly finds ways to look for Ain in Australia, but he is unsuccessful. Eventually, when Ain later goes for pilgrimage in Mecca, she accidentally meets Adam. After series of repentance, apologies, confrontations, and unpleasant verbal exchanges, Ain relents to Adam's wish of having his wife back.

Hybridity, social imaginary, and alternative modernities

Having sketched the above trajectories, we now turn to the lenses used for this study. As a multi-disciplinary project, this study employs hybridity, social imaginaries, and alternative modernities as lenses through which intricacies of issues on Malay cultural identities are analyzed. Firstly, hybridity is useful to studying TV fiction works

as it focuses on deterritorialization. Such deterritorialization involves the divorce between culture and place. Tomlinson (141), on the intersection between TV fiction and deterritorialization, explains:

[T]he idea that globalised culture is hybrid culture has strong intuitive appeal which follows directly from the notion of deterritorialization. This is because the increasing traffic between cultures that the globalization process brings suggests that the dissolution of the link between culture and place is accompanied by an intermingling of these disembedded cultural practice, producing new complex hybrid forms of culture (Tomlinson 141).

What this means is that the contention behind using hybridity is to show issues that distance locales. In this view, Tomlinson (22) claims that “the development of new technical media may also have a profound impact on the ways in which individuals experience the spatial and temporal dimensions of social life.” That being said, TV fiction is useful as it provides an example of deterritorialization where nuances surrounding cultural commodity can be analyzed and therefore be understood. Putting it differently, TV fiction does not only serve as a space for the construction of local culture or singly as a site to differentiate one’s culture and history from another. In fact, such possibilities of deterritorialization are also seen as benefiting from the shifts in technology that re-imagine cultural identities, helping to blur, diffuse, or integrate various issues that surround protagonists’ experiences in TV fiction as we shall see.

While hybridity is concerned with identity formation, social imaginary expands the notion of hybridity by taking into account Malay cultural relations. According to Castoriadis, social imaginary is the establishment of human life. In his words, imaginary is “the creation of total forms of human life” which is “massively embedded” (84) and that instituting society is what creates society as opposed to instituted society (Castoriadis 85). By analyzing the socio-historical aspects of a nation-state, Castoriadis argues that society is made up of two entities- the instituted and instituting. In this view, Castoriadis argues that “the social-historical is not created by nature or historical laws, as society is itself created” (84). Castoriadis refers ‘instituting’ as creating the society itself.

Language, values, procedures, ways of doing things, and instituting gender are all inherent in Castoriadis's interpretations of institutions. In TV fiction, which we will traverse, social imaginary is useful for expanding two notions- modernity and Malay culture. Once again, the complex fabric of and the diverse threads binding subjects forming instituting society who exist in two spectrums- those who are becoming, those who are not becoming, and those 'in-between' Malay and un-Malay are the focus of the study.

Thirdly, alternative modernities can relate to the current study due to its capacity to associate issues with a sense of newness, breaking from the old (Syed 110). Specifically, Ashcroft argues, it is "the principle that complements local transformation and adaptation" that paves ways for "the circulation and re-circulation of locally adapted modernities" (98). Four elements are said to be important. Ashcroft adds, these are the "redeployment of modern Western cultural forms- material, discursive, social, cultural and even ethical" (85). A careful reading of Ashcroft's take on alternative modernities and postcolonial readings bridges the gap of engaging the global with the local, in particular to local cultures, bringing forth a wholesome view of globalization, formed by the complexities of (imperial) relationships. In the present research, alternative modernities provides a lens through which issues of Malay cultural identities are analyzed to help understand the present global spur of modernity-related issues for instance, alcoholism and cohabitation, to name a few.

However, the above are merely a fraction of how multi-disciplinary tools can work hand-in-hand with TV fiction studies. One would certainly find other ways to use these lenses to make links to other cultural and ASEAN studies. However, how are these lenses played out in our analyses? What issues are dominant? The ensuing discussion will attend to these issues by focusing on Malay TV fiction.

Methodology

This section provides information pertaining to methods used in our study concerning how we frame TV fiction within spaces of unconscious Malay psyche by using conversation analysis (CA) of TV fiction's narrative exchanges. We begin by

describing general characteristics of TV fiction selected for our study. By addressing the methods used for analyzing narrative exchanges, we reveal how discourse, TV fiction, and cultural identities overlap.

The choice of TV fiction selected for this study is due to its popularity and recency. Specifically, the periods of 2009 through 2013 see an increasing number of viewers of TV fiction. *Adam & Hawa*, a TV adaptation of the novel of similar title has more than 600,000 readers (Wahba), bringing *Adam & Hawa*'s popularity to a whole new level. Such recency and popularity ultimately lead to online reruns, drawing over staggering 120 million online TV viewers (Tonton). Considering these awards and accolades, we now draw our attention to how potential sites of unconscious Malay psyche are signified using conversation analysis to which I have alluded earlier.

Firstly, narrative exchanges in *Julia*, *On Dhia*, and *Adam & Hawa* were transcribed following CA framework (Hutchby and Wooffitt 69). At this point, complete focus on the power of these narratives was firstly practiced. This means that in the process of transcribing, no analysis of any aspects was conducted. Such ways of capturing textual corpus rendered it possible to exhibit Malay cultural identity issues. Another reason for keeping analysis separate from transcription was to allow detailed scrutiny on the kinds of intonation, registers, and the whole convention of talk in everyday narrative exchanges. But the question remains- why CA?

This study may be characteristic to applied CA, given its focus on specific talk, conversation units, and turn-takings. The conversation episodes were transcribed in its entirety after which they were reviewed, with dominant themes identified and isolated. Consistent with the CA methodology, we sought to let the corpus 'speak' for the findings and interpretation. Putting it differently, we retained the contents or general conversational structure, departing from any reworking of the content or units for semantic purposes. CA was chosen for this analysis of narrative exchange because one can see the sequences as the interaction unfolds immediately. Specifically, in this study, we wanted to show that sequences, turn-takings, overlaps, and interruptions display ways of how potential sites of unconscious Malay psyche is realized through reading TV fiction's narrative exchanges. Appendix A lists CA's transcription symbols.

Findings

Having sketched the above trajectory, our analysis revealed that participants in our study indirectly identified plethora of issues and in particular highlighted the integration of modernity and re-donning the robe of Malay cultural identities. For the purposes of reporting this paper, we focus on issues of alcoholism and forgiveness that together make up some of the foundation of unconscious Malay psyche. To revisit this psyche, unconscious Malay psyche views that as much as a Malay subject deviates from cultural and religious notions, irrespective of the kinds of mistakes or sins a Malay subject makes, unconscious Malay psyche holds that s/he will unconsciously return to familiar, receptacle of recognizable, local Malay-Muslim ways of living that, to a certain extent, form a construct of *ibadah* (worship). Thus, regardless of the kinds of sins in which a Malay subject involves, he or she will return to *adat*-Islamic values.

We firstly begin by showing an illustration (Table 1) in which alcoholism surrounds Malay subjects in *Adam & Hawa*. The narrative exchange in *Adam & Hawa* presents before us a celebration of comradeship (loosely used) between two friends, Adam and Zul. To see whether alcohol is celebrated, we need to revisit Adam's background. Adam whose job is a pilot and a co-owner of the kindergarten where Ain works is born to a wealthy family. Having traveled overseas and abroad, his socio-cultural worldviews may be different, taking into account his worldly experiences. In what follows, Adam meets Zul at a nightclub where they frequent. Adam has just returned from an assignment overseas and arrived at a bar to meet Zul for regular night out. Table 1 describes this narrative exchange:

Table 1 *Adam & Hawa*

1		((at a night club in a scene in <i>Adam & Hawa</i> , sipping beer/alcoholic
2		alcoholic beverages))
3		
4	Adam:	(2.4) <i>Apa?</i>
5		{What?}
6		
7	Zul:	.hhh ((puts down glass)) <i>Aku tak pernah tengok kau macam ni, BRO</i>
8		{I haven't seen you like this, bro.}

9

10 Adam: *Macam apa?*
 11 {What do you mean?}
 12

13 Zul: *Angau, tau...tau, angau?*
 14 {Lovesick, you know?}
 15

16 Adam: *Mana ada angau-angau. Takde angau-angau lah. °Petik jari je:: macam*
 17 *tu ((points at the girls dancing)) jadi.°*
 18 {No lovesick, never. I have never been lovesick. I snap my finger
 19 like this.}
 20

21 Zul: *Ini orang kata hati dan bibir tak sekata, Bro. Kau boleh tipu orang luar,*
 22 *Tapi dalam diri kau sendiri, kau tak boleh tipu, bro. Cakaplah. Siapa*
 23 *yang dah sentap hati dan perasaan kau tu? Ha? WHO?*
 24 {This is what people say lips and heart are not aligned, bro. You can lie
 25 to others, but what is in you, you cannot lie, bro. Tell me, who has
 26 gotten your love, bro?}
 27

28 Adam: *adalah*
 29 {Not telling you.}
 30

31 Zul: ((laughs))°*aku boleh tau la bro:: apa yang kau rasa sekarang ni.*
 32 *Kat dalam kau tu, hati kau tu rasa maca::m (0.2) HEAVEN. Syo::k*
 33 *MY SINCERE ADVISE la::AS YOUR BUDDY:: YOU DON'T EVER*
 34 *LET GO OF THAT FEELING. APPRECIATE IT. FEEL IT. K?*
 35 ((picks up glass and toasts with Adam)) *CHEERS.°*
 36 {My sincere advise, as your buddy- don't you ever let go of that feeling;
 37 appreciate it, feel it, ok?}
 38

40 I can already tell, bro, on what's going on with you. There, deep inside
 41 you is that kind of feeling of heaven; so good.
 42 NEVER LET GO, NEVER LET GO.
 43

44 Both: ((laughs)) CHEERS

Inasmuch as the exchange above suggests that one should pay attention to the celebration of alcohol as sinful from the *adat*-Islamic perspectives, the exchange above could also signal an aspect of modernity in TV fiction that works in tandem with Syed's insights- "orchestrating freedom of choice and unhindered interaction" (85). By approaching and participating in the business of alcohol, both Zul and Adam are seen as members free of any cultural references, reflecting urban "lifestyles" and "settings" (Mattelart 47). Secondly, while the TV scene above deflects and de-emphasizes

Malayness to a certain extent, the conduct of both Adam and Zul can be likened to a modernist who proliferate contemporary Malay morality. Putting it differently, although Adam's gesture towards Islamic morality is evident, Adam is also seen as practicing liberal ideas to ironize modernity.

When analyzed from the perspectives of hybridity and alternative modernities (breaking the old; sense of newness), the situation and appropriation of global issues in local domains are made possible through the here-and-now experience of Malay protagonists. These TV fiction are placed in the spatial and cultural tension of the colonizer and colonized, capturing the cultural aspects by focusing on issues not normally addressed in Malay TV series. Through the above-mentioned illustration of alcoholism surrounding Malay subjects, we may see a representation of Malays who by many ways establish their ways to subvert their Malay subjectivity, taking into account the construction of identity which in fact is constructed by the Malays themselves, fleeing from the constraints of the elite constructions of Malayness, moving away from the notion of Malay-Muslim values. But does this illustration hold transformation without returning to *adat*-Islamic values? The ensuing discussion will focus on this question by exploring one of the many ways TV fiction narrative exchange demonstrates such return to Malay-Muslim ideals.

Previously, we encounter Adam in *Adam & Hawa* as a party-goer and an alcoholic over the course of the start of his career. While forming the belief that a man is to live with a woman, and while convincing Ain to be his bride proves to be difficult, the final scenes of *Adam & Hawa* display the return to *adat*-Islamic teachings. In what follows, Adam accidentally meets Ain while finishing their prayers at the entrance of a mosque, in Mecca, where both happen to be performing *umrah* (a pilgrimage that can be taken at any time of the year by Muslims) at the same time. After repeatedly refusing to see Adam, Ain eventually agrees to have a conversation. Table 2 expands on their conversations.

Table 2 *Adam & Hawa*

1	Adam:	((follows through behind Ain))
2		<i>Mama kata sejak jumpa Ain kat Australia tu, dia selalu</i>
3		<i>paksa Am CONTACT Ain (0.0) AM je tak nak. Sebab tak</i>
4		<i>nak ganggu Ain kan. Dan Am redha dengan kemahuan Ain</i>

5		<i>la::Am tak nak jadi penghalang kepada Ain. Demi mengejar</i>
6		<i>cita-cita Ain(1.1) I WANT YOU TO SUCCEED.</i>
7		{Mommy said since she saw you in Australia, she
8		repeatedly forced me to contact Ain. I did not follow
9		through. And I consent to fate that tells me of your pursuing
10		what you want, so I don't want to bother Ain. And I don't
11		want to be the reason you fail, Ain. I did not contact you so
12		you can pursue your dream. I want you to succeed.}
13		
14	Ain	<i>Kenapa baru Am nak cerita sekarang? Am tau tak apa Am</i>
15		<i>dah buat kat diri Ain? Ain hampir putus asa kerana Am</i>
16		<i>berdiam diri macam tu. Am buat Ain macam tak de harga</i>
17		<i>diri langsung.</i>
18		{Why do you tell me now? Do you even know what you
19		have done to me? Ain almost give up because you were
20		nowhere to be found. You treated me as if I am no one.}
21		
22	Am:	<i>Am mintak maaf, Am takde niat pun nak buat Ain macam</i>
23		<i>tu. Dee yang nak sangat kahwin dengan Am.</i>
24		{I am truly sorry, Am doesn't have that intention at all.
25		Dee was the one who was dying to get married to me.}

In this scene, Adam is seen as an apologizer, negotiator, and coordinator, whose turn-takings can reflect this point. In the first turn, he thinks aloud and approaches the topic, pushing his two agendas to firstly have Ain forgive him (read: I am truly sorry) and secondly to have Ain re-examine the possibility of reclaiming their pasts (read: contact Ain). While he seeks for redemption, he also negotiates against the prospect for reminiscing their 'good old' memories. Ain, on the other hand, is signified as an actor, unveiling her agency by having her voice heard (read: Why do you tell me now? Do you even know what you have done to me?). By having her voices heard, Ain further supplies the schemata (Brown and Yule 120) for Am to further re-apologize and tell the truth behind Am's silence (read: *berdiam diri*). We can identify instances of Adam's divergence from and convergence with Ain's voice through understanding these positioning and linguistic units.

In broader terms, through the lenses of hybridity and social imaginary, we see an intensification of Malay moral currency. The triangulation of texts of TV fiction and audience response seems to highlight two agendas. Firstly, it unveils the re-establishment for peace and harmony that re-localizes the Malay subjects to leave behind negative or saddening life narratives. Secondly, it also reveals a rendering of a Malay subject who

takes full responsibilities for his or her actions, signifying accountability for severe repercussions by forgiving and repenting, impacting a powerful cause for reminiscing 'good pasts,' inviting a reading that, to a certain extent, allows a Malay subject to relinquish their local and cultural fragments.

Conclusions

Having sketched the above trajectories, how do we differentiate unconscious from conscious Malay psyche? To exemplify, let us revisit what Heron (1992) says regarding unconsciousness; he argues, "we are conscious of how we move the body and fall asleep," but we are unconscious about "how they go on" (140). In a similar vein, in our study, we know that there are deviant and exemplary Malay-Muslim precepts, but we do not know or we are not fully conscious of the direction of some of the ways in these two domains begin, move, leave, depart, and end. Unconscious Malay psyche, however, is distinct in its own verse, as it shows the "doing" vis-à-vis a non-linear process that helps to sustain unconsciousness. This is shown through the narrative exchanges of TV fiction which have somewhat helped to describe the 'movements' of unconscious Malay psyche. Thus, we dismantle the rigid reading of the constructs of consciousness which map good and deviant Malay-Muslim values and open up the possibility for audience of TV fiction to free themselves from colluding with the deep seated misconception of 'all Western' 'all diverging' values inconsequence of their consumption in popular culture.

More significantly, however, we are suggesting that the way each of the issues reflected such as alcoholism and forgiveness influences how they represent Malay unconscious experience. Each issue on popular TV fiction engage with the divergence from and convergence with *adat*-Islamic values, although, it is no way, argued that these glimpses are present in all other popular TV fiction. But what makes them important to analyze together is their common interests in the way narrative exchanges represent unconsciousness. Just as Ffytche argues, not only does "the unconscious pervade psychology," but also "popular philosophy, and religion," including "popular psychological and cultural elaborations in novels, poems." (9). In such a way that one can hardly begin to describe its 'specific' provenance" (9), the issue of Malay cultural

identities as displayed in TV fiction requires a similarly nuanced analysis. This essay stages promising opportunities for popular culture and ASEAN studies as contemporary cultural identity issues adopts increasingly recurring complicated perspectives in the ever-changing ASEAN media and cultural landscapes.

Implications for ASEAN studies practice and research

The development of this study reaffirms the principles and ideas adopted by scholars studying ASEAN pillars of cultural issues. Originating from ASEAN burgeoning interests with diverse cultural trends through a number of policies such as ASEAN Vision 2020 and ASEAN community (2009-2015), this research taps onto ASEAN's focus to excavate "deeper social and cultural understanding in the region" to maintain and "preserve the living standards of its people" (ASEAN Studies) in defense of the protection and commitment to confronting multi-faceted issues of cultural identities.

The study results suggests that studies on cultural identities, in light of the pressing changes in media globalization, can support ASEAN to gain social and cultural competences that turn them into agents of change for the problems experienced in the community. In our study, we have uncovered one of the many multiple mechanisms to disrupt our normal ways of looking at issues of Malayness as portrayed in TV fiction. Although the TV narrative exchanges maintain that Malay subjects depart from the preservation of Malay *adat* (customs), it also points to some of the more celebrated continual improvement by projecting issues reverting to the practices of the Malay masses, with the Malay subjects eventually finding themselves co-ordinated with each other. By repenting and forgiving, they suggest a magnification of processes within their minds and bodies which seem to operate unconsciously, signifying autonomous identities that normally engage in tensions of speaking identities for oneself or for the Malay communities. Thus within a social macrostructure, such readings can contribute to a beginning of future ASEAN cultural studies and implementation of policies stimulating healthy environments, perhaps overcoming the "Asia Paradox" (ASEAN Studies) or in our terms, signifying ASEAN engagements with globalization.

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Appendix A

Conversation analysis transcription symbols

.	(period) Falling intonation.
?	(question mark) Rising intonation.
,	(comma) Continuing intonation.
-	(hyphen) Marks an abrupt cut-off.
::	(colon(s)) Prolonging of sound.
wo:rd	(colon after underlined letter) Falling intonation on word.
wo:rd	(underlined colon) Rising intonation on word.
<u>word</u>	(underlining)
<u>word</u>	The more underlying, the greater the stress.
WORD	(all caps) Loud speech.
CAP ITALLICS	Utterance in subject's L1.
°word°	(degree symbols) Quiet speech.
↑word	(upward arrow) raised pitch.
↓word	(downward arrow) lowered pitch
>word<	(more than and less than) Quicker speech.
<word>	(less than & more than) Slowed speech.
<	(less than) Talk is jump-started—starting with a rush.
Hh	(series of h's) Aspiration or laughter.
.hh	(h's preceded by dot) Inhalation.
[]	(brackets) simultaneous or overlapping speech.
{ }	(curved brackets) translation of L1 utterance.
=	(equal sign) Latch or contiguous utterances of the same
(2.4)	(number in parentheses) Length of a silence in 10ths of a second.
(.)	(period in parentheses) Micro-pause, 0.2 second or less.
()	(empty parentheses) Non-transcribable segment of talk.
((writing))	(double parentheses) Description of non-speech activity.
(try 1)/(try 2)	(two parentheses separated by a slash) Alternative hearings.
\$word\$	(dollar signs) Smiley voice.