

Religionisation And Social Change In Orang Asli Communities: Perceptions From The Temiar Of Kelantan And The Semai Of Pahang

Nicholas Gani¹, Mohd. Shazani Masri²

^{1,2}Faculty of Social Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Sarawak, Malaysia.

¹gnicholas@fss.unimas.my, ²mshazani@fss.unimas.my

ABSTRACT

The Malaysian government, as part of its effort to integrate the Orang Asli into the national mainstream, has over the years initiated and implemented various socio-economic development programmes, which include building and provision of basic infrastructures and facilities, as well as education and health services, in Orang Asli settlements all over Peninsular Malaysia. These infrastructural and socio-economic benefits often come with socialisation packages, among them, religionisation. This paper explores the impact of religionisation on Orang Asli communities with the advent of non-native religions, particularly Islam and Christianity, amidst various development programmes brought by the state and independent bodies. A study of how the Orang Asli communities of Pos Balar in Gua Musang, Kelantan and Pos Sinderut in Kuala Lipis, Pahang perceive and respond to the coming of non-native religions in their community is conducted. In addition, this paper also demonstrates the role of religions as forces of social change in creating new social dynamics within these two communities. Finally, a reflection on the findings of this study with regards to the "Needs Analysis in Developing Telecentre among the Orang Asli in West Malaysia" project is provided.

KEYWORDS: Orang Asli, Development, Religion, Social Change