



The Evidence of Malay Ethnicity in Sedanau and Its Surrounding, Natuna, 18–19 Century

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Abstract. This paper exposes the identity of the Malay people on Sedanau and its surrounding islands, Natuna, Riau Archipelago, which is reflected in their cultural heritage. Sedanau people consist of several ethnic groups, including Malays and Chinese. This paper applies archaeological methods combined with historical data. The primary data used are ancient tombstones and traditional houses. The ancient tombstones were analyzed and classified morphologically. Analysis of cultural heritage data shows that there are groups of Malay traditional tombs and houses. The Malay gravestones in Sedanau were then compared to similar types of gravestones outside Sedanau, including those in Daik Lingga, Penyengat Island and the Malay Peninsula to trace their origins. There are two groups of Malay gravestones type in Sedanau, they are cylindrical and flat ones. A cylindrical-shaped headstone is characterized by a cylindrical body that swells, the top of the headstone is smaller, a flat headstone has a flat and flat body that widens, while the top is narrow. Tombstones of this type are known to be found in the eastern coastal islands of Sumatra as the center of Malay civilization. The cluster of Malay-type tombstones in Sedanau is associated with traditional Malay-type houses. The Malay type gravestone in Sedanau after being traced shows that it is a development of the cylindrical type of Acehnese gravestone. Along with the times, the cylindrical Acehnese tombstone later developed into the Malay period of the 18th-19th centuries which was used in centers of Malay civilization such as Lingga and Riau. Based on data collection, analysis, and interpretation, it was concluded that the gravestones and the remaining houses as well as the names Orang Kaya, the titles Datuk and Wan are expressions of Malay identity in Sedanau and the surrounding islands in Natuna.

Keywords: Malay · Sedanau · Natuna · cultural remains

1 Introduction

This paper has an important meaning in studying one outermost region in Indonesia, namely Natuna and Malays ethnicity as the largest population who inhabiting it. Natuna is a district in the Riau Archipelago Province, which geographically formed from large and small islands. The Natuna Islands are located at the northern part of Indonesian territory and has a strategic position because they are close to other countries. On the northeast

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M. Hasyim (Ed.): ICLC 2022, ASSEHR 756, pp. 602–617, 2023.

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-070-1_53

it is bordered by East Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam; while on the west it is bordered by Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore and West Malaysia [1]. Natuna is on international shipping lanes between China, Vietnam, the Malay Peninsula, via the South China Sea. This research study the archaeological data found on Sedanau Island, Tiga Island and Bunguran Islam. Sedanau Island is the administrative center of West Bunguran District, Natuna Regency. Although the area of Sedanau Island is smaller compared to other large islands such as Bunguran Island, Sedanau is densely populated and active with its maritime activity. The sea is a connection between Sedanau Island and other islands as people would travel by boat and ship. Sedanau was formed due to inevitable maritime crossings, since it's the strategic position in the maritime area of the South China Sea. It has been used by shipping lanes and has grown the countries of Southeast Asia and East Asia since a very long time ago [2]. Sedanau has a main pier where ships dock, both domestic and foreign vessels (Vietnam, China) [3]. The main port is in Sedanau with a pier that can be used for docking, leaning on passenger and cargo ships. The Port of Sedanau is busy with the activity of ships loading and unloading goods, both ships from in and outside Indonesia. Vietnamese ships are one of the foreign ships that stop and anchor at the port of Sedanau. The people in Sedanau work as fishermen, traders and gardeners. The fact that Sedanau is in the outermost region bordering a neighboring country, cultural aspects such as the Malay ethnicity are an important issue and need to be discussed.

The presence of Malay culture in Sedanau has been going on for quite a long time, at least its presence can be traced back to the growth of Malay culture centered around the Malacca Straits. Malacca which was ruled by the Portuguese in 1511, did not stop the trade in the Malay world. The fall of Malacca would in fact strengthen trading centers and networks such as those in Aceh, Makassar, Sulu, Ternate, Tidore, and the coastal cities along the north coast of Java. During this period, the Malay language and Islam increasingly became the hallmarks of Malay society. Through Sulawesi, Javanese even spread the Malay network, not only in Southeast Asia but also towards the north coast of Australia. Towards the beginning of the 16th century the centrality of the Malay network began to spread to trading centers in almost all regions of Southeast Asia [4]. Malay culture develops its maritime area including on the islands as the activities are based on the sea, and trading traditions. Malays have a long tradition and culture of accommodating and assimilating the new trading systems and commercial organizations introduced by foreign traders [5]. Sedanau Island lies in centers of Malay civilization, to the west there is the Lingga Sultanate in Daik Pulau Lingga, the Riau Archipelago and the Johor Sultanate in Peninsular Malaysia [6, 7], to the The Sultanate of Pontianak, in West Kalimantan and the Sultanate of Brunei in Kalimantan Island [8].

The purpose of writing this article is to discover or trace evidence of Malays presence in Sedanau and its surroundings through the remains of their material culture. The main discussion in this paper is, from the perspective of the past, material cultures were not confirmed as proof of Malay existence, what this evidence include and what the relationship between Sedanau and other Malay cultural centers was.

2 Base of Study

This paper was based on the fact that Indonesia is a country with ethnic diversity. Malay is an ethnic group that inhabit many areas in Indonesia, including in Sumatra, Kalimantan and other small islands. Sedanau is a small island in the Natuna Islands, inhabited by various ethnic groups including Malays, Chinese, and Javanese. Malay culture colors the life of the people in Sedanau. Malay characteristic in everyday life can be seen in the way they dress and the language they use. Sedanau and the Natuna area are geographically located in the midst of the center of Malay culture. In addition, Malay culture in Sedanau has historical roots with the growth of Malay-style kingdoms, including Johor and Riau in the 17th-18th centuries. In fact, humans living in diverse societies will express their origin identities, as well as the ethnic Malays in Sedanau and in the surrounding of Natuna Islands. The Malay ethnicity with its culture in Sedanau certainly leaves traces of culture characterized by its material form.

The Malay kingdom developed since the fall of Malacca in the 16th century, the center of government was in Johor, the Malay Peninsula. The center of government moved from Johor, then Bintan, Riau and Lingga. The reason for relocating the center of government was, among other things, the conflict with the Portuguese. Bunguran (Natuna) has been part of the Johor-based Malay Kingdom since the 176th century. Since the Sriwijaya era, Natuna has become a sea route for shipping trade from China to Southeast Asia, until the period of the Malay empire. Around the 17th century, Bunguran Island (Natuna) and its surroundings were included in the territory of Johor under the authority of Orang Kaya. In the 18th century, Natuna entered the territory of the Lingga Sultanate - Riau. Sedanau is a port among other ports in the Natuna Islands such as the ports of Penagi, Tarempa, and Midai [9, 10]. As part of the dynamics of the development of the Malay kingdoms, at least the existence of Malays in Sedanau and its surroundings can be traced through the evidence of their material cultural remains.

3 Research Materials and Methods

The objects of the study in the Sedanau area and its surroundings in Natuna are in the context of a time when textual sources or historical data are available. Based on that, this study is included in historical *archaeology*. Historical Archeology is often associated with colonialism and capitalism without limiting or organizing the main theme. Then came the term cultural contact archeology or also often called historical archeology of indigenous peoples and colonialism. There are also those who interpret historical archeology as a combination of words and objects, texts and artifacts. Theoretically, the method is applied by combining historical document data and artifact materials [11]. The main method used is the archaeological method, and then completed by historical methods and historical data, by taking the data source from the remains in the form of written documents. Through the historical archaeological approach, the differences in social groups can be studied systematically through their material culture and documentary data, which may be very limited [12]. Data on the material cultural remains obtained through observation at several sites in Sedanau and the surrounding islands in the Natuna Islands were they are analyzed morphologically and then classified and later be interpreted.

4 Data and Discussion

4.1 Distribution of Ancient Tombs in Sedanau and the Surrounding Islands

The data of graves presented below are on Sedanau Island, Tiga Island, and Bunguran Island.

Genting Laut Cemetery, Sedanau. The Genting Laut Cemetery Complex, administratively located in Kampung Genting Laut, Kelurahan Sedanau, Natuna Regency at an altitude of 5 m above sea level (asl.) is resided in the lowlands in the middle of a residential area. There are 15 tombs, each of which has a pair of headstones with tombs, some have a circling fence (*tambak*), the direction of the tombs is north-south. The size of the tombstone varies from large to small sizes. There are 14 headstones made of granite, while 1 headstone is made of wood.

Based on its shape, it is categorized into two groups, group (1) round cylindrical gravestones and group (2) flat-shaped gravestones, flat and thin surfaces with no inscription or writing. The cylindrical round headstone is for men while the tombstone with a flat shape made of wood is intended for women, where it has an ornamental crown of flora by wood craft. All headstones are in intact physical condition, not damaged or broken. The existence of the tomb at the Genting Laut Sedanau cemetery is considered as an ancient grave and the absence of its inscriptions is unconfirmed for the period of its existence [3]. The shape of the group 1 tombstone is round, cylindrical and has a body and a head part. The body part is round in shape, the head is in the form of two circular protrusions or circular indentations. Group 1 headstones have a variety of shapes, some have two or three protrusions. The shape of group 2 gravestones is flat, thin, has a body and a head. The body widens on the sides, the head consists of two protrusions on the right and left arranged from bottom to top (Figs. 1 and 2).

Tomb of Datuk Menggung, Kampung Gayam, Sedanau. The administrative location of Datuk Menggung's tomb is in Kampung Gayam, Sedanau Subdistrict, while the geographical location is on the slopes of Gunung Menggung (hillside) at a height of 17 m above sea level (asl.), in the middle of a clove plantation. Mount Menggung is planted by clove trees and surrounded by the sea. Datuk Menggung's tomb consist of two



Fig. 1. Cylindrical shape made of stone tomb.



Fig. 2. Flat, thin, tombstone in Genting Sea, Lake (Source: National Archaeological Research Center 2019)

tombs inside the perimeter fence (*dam*) which are first main tomb and the second smaller tomb, both of which have gravestones and jirat. The direction of the tomb is north-south. The perimeter fence (*embankment*) is made of coral reef material, rectangular plan. Tombstones and headstones are made of granite. The tomb jirat consists of three parts, namely (1) the bottom / base jirat (2) the middle and (3) the top [3].

The main tomb has decorative carvings on the upper and side surfaces of the tomb. The condition of the tomb is intact but the decoration has weathered. The decoration that appears on the surface of the tombstone is patterned with diagonal cross lines on the hexagon-shaped plane as well as on the headstone, but the decoration on this part of the headstone is worn, delicate, and difficult to recognize. The main headstone of Datuk Menggung's grave has an ornamental decoration in the form of Arabic numerals inscriptions -1271 H together with 1855 AD in the 19th century. The decorative motifs on Datuk Menggung's main tombstone have been interpreted to be similarities with the symbol of the Ternate Sultanate in North Maluku, which is the symbol of the two-headed Goheba bird as the vidence of the relationship between Ternate and Natuna (Information from Mr. Hadisun, Culture Sector, Culture and Tourism Office of Natuna Regency). However, this interpretation needs to be studied further (Figs. 3 and 4).



Fig. 3. The main tomb of Datuk Menggung.



Fig. 4. Right decorative motifs on the upper surface of the main tomb of Datuk Menggung, Kampung Gayam, Sedanau, Natuna. (Source: National Archaeological Research Center 2019).

Ancient tombs on Pulau Tiga. Pulau Tiga Cemetery is administratively located on Pulau Tiga, Pulau Tiga District, Natuna Regency and geographically located on a hillside. Pulau Tiga Cemetery consists of two graves, made of stone (probably coral), and is in broken and tilted condition but parts of the tomb which consist of a tomb and a pair of gravestones are visible. The stone used in tomb 1 consists of several pairs of stone components and it is not monolith stones. Jirat consists of three levels which is the bottom, middle, and top. One of the gravestones has been broken so that the headstone is much shorter in size. This 1st tomb has worn out decorations on the sides of the tomb and headstone. Decorative motifs that can be observed are geometric (triangles (tumpal), circular ceplokan lined with circles, parallelograms/rhombuses), as well as floral shapes (leaves, flowers, or tendrils). This tomb has no inscriptions. The tombstone is rectangular in shape with a size almost resembling a mace, presumably the individual buried was a male [13] (Figs. 5, 6 and 7).

The 2nd tomb located beside the 1st tomb is made of rock, consisting of graves and gravestones, smaller in size than the 1st one. Jirat is made from several stone components using the hook technique. The shape of the gravestone is flat. The decoration is found on



Fig. 5. Two graves on Pulau Tiga, Natuna.



Fig. 6. Right. Decorative details on the main headsStone (Source: Research Center for National Archaeological Research 2013).



Fig. 7. The second tomb of Pulau Tiga, Natuna. (Source: National Archaeological Research Center 2013)

the headstone with geometric motifs in the form of triangular tumpals and floral or vine motifs. The headstone has been broken so that the shape is not visible. The tombstone of the foot is clearly flat, although at the top of the headstone there are parts of the stone that are broken. However, in general the decoration and shape are quite clear. The tombstone is carved with a tumpal motif on the front and back. The small size of the graves suggests that the person buried was children. By observing the shape of the flat headstone, it is suspected that the individual buried was female.

Ancient Graves of Datuk KAYa's Relatives in Segeram. The administrative location of the Datuk Kaya Soon relatives is an old settlement and believed to be the earliest settlement in Natuna. The location of the tomb is on the bank of the mouth of the Kapanm River. The location of the tomb is far from the city center and crowds. The occupation of the residents are fishermen and gardeners. These ancients' tombs are believed as the grave of Datukkaya's relatives. The ancient tombs in Soon was the center of government

in Natuna and moved to several places such Penibung, Binjay, Mahligai, Setui, Teluk Baru, and to Batukapal (information from Wan Suhadi).

The location of the tomb is on high ground in the form of a mound (small hill) with a mound height of 1 m and a width of about 2 m. The location of the tombs is near the Segeram River. The environment around the tomb is forest plants, bushes, and some of them are interspersed with clove plants. There are four mounds spread out, mound 1, mound 2, mound 3, and mound 4. There are eight tombs in the mounds. The tomb is made of coral stone material with no perimeter fence, consists of jirat and tombstone, stepped or multi-storeyed jirat, the condition is generally broken on its tombstone part, decorative patterns are carved on the jirat with geometric motifs, tumpals, tendrils of flora in the field of form triangle [13] (Figs. 8 and 9).



Fig. 8. The tomb of Datuk Kaya Kapan's relatives, Natuna (Source: National Archaeological Research Center 2014).



Fig. 9. The tomb of Datuk Kaya Kapan's relatives, Natuna (Source: National Archaeological Research Center 2014).

4.2 Distribution of Traditional Malay Houses

Traditional Malay Residential House in Sedanau. The traditional houses with Malay characteristics that have been collected consist of two houses in Sedanau location is in the West Bunguran District office complex. Two stilts' houses are located in front of the District office and the Sedanau District Military Command (KORAMIL). The house is made of wood, the architecture of the house looks uniquely different from other houses, it is a stilt house supported by low wooden pillars, the walls are made of wooden planks. The layout consists of a porch at the front of the house, doors and windows on the front and sides, the size of the building and windows are large compared to the windows of residential houses in general. The windows are large and have two shutters. The house has a variety of decorations that are placed on the upper part of the front porch of the house, carved on wooden planks, leaf motifs with pointed bottoms carved in a row. The roof of the pyramid-shaped house is covered with zinc sheets [3]. Information about stilt houses made of wood is still limited. The location of the house is in the central government area of West Bunguran District, the owner of the house is believed a rich person. Apart from being a residence, other functions were as government activities (Fig. 10).

Residential and Garden Houses in Central Kelarik. We study three houses, a house located in Air Mali Village and two houses located in Air Hitam Village, Kelarik Tengah Village, Bunguran Utara District. The position of Kelarik Tengah Village is located in the northern part of Bunguran Island, with its hills altitude at ± 40 m above sea level (asl).

A unique residence located in Kampung Air Mali has an interesting architecture and decoration. The house building is a stilt house that is not intact and has been damaged in several parts, vacant and uninhabited. The stilt house is made of ironwood, with a rectangular layout around 8 m long, 8 m wide, ± 12 m high, facing south. The stilt house is built on poles, the lower part of the house is an open empty space to place 16 round wooden bases. The pedestals are used to place 16 pillars of the house divided into four lines. The height of the pedestal is 35 cm, the height of the pole is 148 cm. The house consists of two floors, downstairs and upstairs. The stairs used as a link between the lower and upper rooms are on the inside of the house. The walls and floor of the house



Fig. 10. Traditional house in Sedanau

are made of wooden planks, on the front of the house there is a porch, windows and doors are on the front-side-back. The interior of the house consists of rooms. The technique of attaching wooden boards to one another is using a peg technique or a hook technique. The decoration carved floral motifs on the walls, windows and doors on the inside of the house. The outer wall of the house has no decoration. The horse saddle-shaped roof is covered with corrugated zinc sheets. Seeing the size of the house, it is suspected that the house used to be occupied by a large family. The location of the house is in the middle of a settlement on the banks of the Kelarik River which is a means of connecting transportation between Kelarik and Sedanau. Local residents said that the stilt house belonged to Wan Pangaji, a garden owner (Figs 11 and 12).

Two houses on stilts are located in the middle of a dense garden with plants, located in Air Hitam Village, Kelarik Village, North Bunguran District. The location of the house is in the middle of a garden covered with plants and shrubs, cloves which are quite dense. The condition of the house has been damaged and inhabited. The first and the second stilt house located side by side on the right and left consist of one floor. The two stilt houses have similarities in plan, materials, and layout. The house has rectangular shape



Fig. 11. The decoration at the top of the front porch under the roof of the house (Source: National Center for Archaeological Research 2019).



Fig. 12. Wan Pangaji house, seen from the front (south) .

and is supported by wooden pillars, walls are made of wood, the stairs leading up to the house are at the front, the doors and windows are at the front and back, there are only one to two rooms, the horse saddle-shaped roof is covered with corrugated zinc sheets. The lower part of the house is an open space to store rice pounding equipment and other natural products [14]. Based on the tools equipped it is suspected that these houses had different purpose. The first house is a residential, while the second house is used as a kitchen and a place to store natural products. Apart from that, looking at their location in the middle of a garden and far from residential areas, it is suspected that these houses functioned as houses for garden keepers (Fig. 13 and 14).



Fig. 13. Doors and decorations on the interior of Wan Pangaji's house, Kelarik Tengah Village, North Bunguran, Natuna. (Source: National Center for Archaeological Research 2017).



Fig. 14. A garden house in Air Hitam Village, Kelarik Tengah Village, Bunguran Utara, seen from the front. (Source: National Archaeological Research Center 2017).

4.3 Discussion

Traces of the Material Culture of Orang Kaya as a Malay Identity. Malay ethnicity covers most of Southeast Asia, from Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, as well as Brunei and also the southern Philippines. Many parts of the region were under Srivijaya influence between the 7th and 14th centuries with a culture characterized by Hindu-Buddhist influences. The aspect of equality that Islam brought from West Asia had a major impact on the development of Malay civilization [15]. This equality can be indicated from the way the Malay community is expressed in the central areas of government institutions to outer area far from the center of the big institutions.

Orang Kaya has become a separate identity and is quite well known in Malay society, including in the Riau archipelago. Honorary names such as Wan, Datuk Menggung, Datuk Kaya became this identity attached on them as a particular group for several reasons. One of them is because they are really materially rich. Second, because of their wealth, they become influential, even though they do not have a formal position in one area. Another identity that needs to be known is their role in obtaining wealth or prosperity where in general Malay community are traders and sailors. This Orang Kaya is very likely related to the trade that made his name. At the time, the popular trade that had the potential to gain large profits was spices or forest products. The existing data at the location, namely in Sedanau and Kelarik, there are a lot of clove plantations. Clove plantations are very interesting, firstly because clove plants are endemic to the Maluku Islands. Second, Malay merchants who previously had to take clove spice from its original source to the east, in Maluku, may then smuggle clove plants and plant them in an archipelago further west of the Indonesian. This is considered more efficient as merchants can take it directly from the source where it is safe. Since Sedanau and its surroundings are quite isolated islands, they are also used transit points for shipping routes from the west as far as Malacca up to Europe and to the east as far as the Maluku Islands. Because of this, there is also another identity attached to the rich Malay community which is Orang Kayo, as a trader and very possibly as a planter or spice gardener.

The centers of Malay civilization were in the sultanates on the Malay Peninsula and the east coast of Sumatra, including the Johor Sultanate, the Riau Sultanate, the Lingga Sultanate. Sedanau and its environs in the Natuna Archipelago can be considered to be Malays who are on the outer part from the center of Malay civilization which is on the Malay Peninsula and the east coast of Sumatra. The Malay people in Sedanau living in the outer part of Malay civilization represent Malays in similar way compared to the Malays who are in Lingga and Riau. Cultural remains in the form of tombs that were made and houses that were built in Sedanau, Pulau Tiga, Kapanm, and Kelarik, show similar characteristic to Malay communities in other areas such as Lingga, Riau, Barus, Brunei. The Genting Laut tomb complex is characterized by only having a pair of cylindrical and flat tombstones without a jirat. The Genting Laut tomb with a pair of cylindrical tombstones bears resemblance to the tomb of Raja Muhammad Yusuf Al-Ahmadi, Tomb of Tuan Taha, and the tomb of the Kenanga Palace tomb complex in Daik Lingga in the 1800s [6], as well as resemblance to the tomb of the first Sultan of Pahang in the Malay Peninsula. Meanwhile the tomb of Datuk Menggung, the tomb of Datuk Kaya Soon's relatives and the tomb on Pulau Tiga are characterized by having a pair of tombstones and a rectangular plan of stone or wood.

Malays in Sedanau and the surrounding islands represent their ethnicity through their homes and graves, and very likely their daily life, starting from customs, religious rituals from birth, marriage to death rituals of the Muslim Malay community. The Islamic ideology adopted by the Muslim community is represented through the tomb. Various models of shapes, sizes, ornate tombstones apart from depicting the ideology of the individuals buried also reflect the art that developed at that time. It is often described in the appearance of the Batu Aceh graves [15, 16].

In the archipelago and the Malay Peninsula, including Aceh and the Riau Archipelago, gravestones are not only representations of buried ideology, but also expressions of art from the communities in those locations, including those in Sedanau or Kapanm. Graves with a certain orientation, certain markers, are a cultural representation of the people who do it. Islam as an ideological and cultural basis has produced cultural products including graves with tomb markers which are similar to those in the Sedanau area and other islands in the vicinity. The graves that exist are a reflection of the people who made them. From the application of language, for example, there are the tombs of *Datuk Kaya* in Soonm, *Datuk Menggung* in Sedanau, and the use of the title *Wan Pangaji* Malay house owner in Kerarik. *Wan* is a title given to Arab-Malays in Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. A rich man with the title of *Wan Pangaji*, the owner of a garden in Kelarik represents his house with beautiful decorations. Traditional Malay houses such as Sedanau and Kelarik have the shape of a stilt house with a pyramid or horse saddle roof, as well as distinctive decorations on the walls and under the roof. The decoration of the house is the same as that found in traditional Malay houses in other places, for example in Riau. The decoration of the houses in the location is the result of Malayan art of expression [17].

A number of material cultural data collected, such as the tombs and traditional houses in Sedanau, Kapanm, and Kelarik which have been described in the previous section, can be an indication of the presence of Malays in the past. Cultural data is used as evidence of the existence of ethnic Malays and then combined with available written data such as archives. The dating of the tombs and traditional houses in Sedanau, Pulau Tiga, and Kelarik is incomplete because there are no inscriptions available. Graves whose dates are known are limited, including the tomb of *Datuk Menggung* in Sedau in the 19th century. There are still many tombs and traditional houses whose dates are not confirmed, but the date can be traced by observing other contexts, including by comparison with gravestone styles and house styles in other centers of Malay civilization, for example in Riau Lingga and Siak.

Morphologically, the shape of the gravestones in the Genting Laut cemetery, which is the cylindrical type of gravestone, is similar to the shape of the graves of the sultans of the Malay Lingga Kingdom of Riau in Daik Lingga, Riau Archipelago. The agreement between Sultan Badrul Alamsyah and the Dutch East Indies government, in this case the Resident of Riau on December 1, 1857, the 19th century, became the legality that the position of the islands in the Natuna Islands actually became a territory of the Malay Lingga Riau Kingdom [9, 18]. Natuna which is led by *Orang Kaya* is the supreme representative of the Sultan in Riau Lingga. Meanwhile, the traditional houses in Sedanau and Kelarik can be seen from the similar decorative architecture that they have with Malay houses in Siak Riau [17]. The ability of the materially rich Malays in Natuna can be indicated through their ownership of clove gardens. The ownership of clove gardens in its

development was followed by the supporting culture, which the establishment of houses and tombs that were richly decorated with clove gardens around them. It seems that the position of the Natuna Islands as the territory of the Riau Lingga Kingdom and the presence of ethnic Malays in the Natuna Islands have a comparable relationship. Apart from written agreements, the presence of Malays in the Natuna Islands is strengthened by material cultural data of traditional tombs and houses.

5 Conclusion

Sedanau, Pulau Tiga, and Bunguran are the islands in the Natuna Archipelago which considered to be the locations for the spread of Malays in the areas of the islands which are far from the center of Malay culture. As a remote area separated by the sea from Johor, Riau Lingga, it is indicated that the existence of Malays in Sedanau and its surroundings can be identified through their material cultural remains, honorary names, and written documents. Malay characteristics are attached to the names used for people or groups such as Orang Kayo, Datuk and Wan. These names are the names of the people who are buried and the names of the owners of the house is given because of their influential wealth. The cultural remains which are the evidence of the existence of Malays in Sedanau and the surrounding islands are expressed in the tombs and residential buildings of the 18–19 centuries. The comparison between the style of tombstones and houses in Sedanau and in the center of Malay civilization, Riau Lingga and other areas, shows similar style. The Malays in Sedanau were not a single kingdom, but the surrounding areas were outside the center of Malay civilization. The Malays in everyday life are the individuals of trading activities, plantations, and local rulers. The spread of Malays in Sedanau and the surrounding islands is very possible for the expansion of the Malay cultural area, because the new small islands are far from the center of Malay culture, providing opportunities for territorial expansion, expansion of trade relations and cultural relations.

Acknowledgment. The authors would like to thank to Nurul Adliyah Purnamasari for her willingness to complete the Mendeley for citations and bibliography in this paper, so it can be neatly arranged.

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